

# VHWC DISPATCH

September 2025

## FOUNDATION

The VHWC brings together parties to build or expand pathways through which Veterans of the U.S. Armed Forces and their care partners optimize health and wellness outcomes.

## CONTACT US

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## CORE TEAM UPDATE

The Administrative Core Team continues promoting partner activities aligned with the 2025 priority areas: housing insecurity, oral health, suicide prevention, and transition. We encourage you to share these opportunities through your networks to maximize their reach and impact. We welcome questions, concerns, and suggestions through email at [ihp.vhwc@msu.edu](mailto:ihp.vhwc@msu.edu). If you have not signed up for our list-serve, you can do that [here](#).

September marks Suicide Prevention Month, and we focus on highlighting events and resources to support our veteran and care partner communities. In partnership with the Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency (MVAA) and Patrick Forystek of Michigan State University's Center for Veterans and Military Affiliated Students, a flyer promoting the Veterans Crisis Line was developed and disseminated. The flyer is available for download at <https://vhwc.msu.edu/> and can be edited to incorporate individual logos. We encourage all partners to post and circulate the flyer within their communities. This message is important regardless of the time of year.

## SPOTLIGHT:

We are sharing a unique opportunity for veterans experiencing chronic low back pain to participate with a research project being conducted by our University of Michigan partners. Additionally, several upcoming events are scheduled for October. Please share with veterans in your network and post the flyer in community spaces.

### Brief Pain Reprocessing Therapy (BPRT)

Researchers at the University of Michigan are seeking participants for a Department of Defense-sponsored clinical trial testing Brief Pain Reprocessing Therapy (BPRT). Veterans with chronic low

back pain may learn strategies to manage their condition and related challenges. Participation will be done using zoom so individuals who are interested and reside outside of the Ann Arbor area may be eligible to participate. Eligibility information and more information is available by emailing the team at [BPRTveterans@med.umich.edu](mailto:BPRTveterans@med.umich.edu). You can also scan the QR code to find out more.



## Operation Injured Soldiers (OIS)

[OIS \(https://injuredsoldiers.org/\)](https://injuredsoldiers.org/) is a 501-C3 organization focused on offering recreation activities to wounded veterans. All activities are free to eligible veterans. Eligibility criteria include a disability rating  $\geq 30\%$  or combat exposure during their service. OIS sponsors a variety of opportunities for connection including OIS Riders, Operation Sisterhood, and Operation Renewed Hope. In addition to recreational events, 1-hour seminars on health and wellness are offered with past seminars available on the website.



An exclusive resource of OIS is Brave Hearts Estate in Pellston, MI. This is a 238-acre retreat space having a 7 bedroom, fully equipped house that is wheelchair accessible on the main floor. This estate is available to veterans and their families. OIS welcomes individuals wanting to volunteer with their events or to act as an Estate host to contact them. A complete roster of events occurring in Michigan as well as in collaboration with out-state organizations is available on the website. Featured MI-

based October events include an Annual Freedom Ride and an Independence Hunt on October 16-19, 2025, at the Brave Hearts Estate. See the website for eligibility criteria and additional future events. For information, contact Michelle Tomasek at [michelle@injuredsoldiers.org](mailto:michelle@injuredsoldiers.org).

## Lansing Area Veterans Coalition

The [Lansing Area Veterans Coalition](#) (LAVC) is hosting [HeroFest](#) on Saturday, October 4, 2025, from 11am-3pm. The event will take place at the Alfreda Schmidt Community Center located at 5825 Wise Road in Lansing. Representatives from VA Battle Creek and MVAA along with others will be available. Sponsorships and volunteer opportunities are still available. The [vendor form](#) is available online and the event flyer is attached. Questions can be directed to the [Facebook page](#) or by phone: 517-898-0591 or 727-365-9157.

## Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency 2025 Calendar of Events

Many additional events around the state are advertised on the MVAA [events page](#). Events include those hosted and sponsored by MVAA in addition to other veteran organizations. Partners are encouraged to share this resource widely.

## UPDATES: 2025 PRIORITY AREAS

We invite organizations to let us know if they have local, regional, or state events they want to advertise. Events needing volunteers may also reach out to recruit assistance. We will not ask collaborative members for monetary contributions to support VHWC related activities. Our goal is to emphasize sharing of *time and talents* between partners.

**Housing Insecurity:** No specific activity. A [PsychArmor](#) financial wellness webinar was shared as part of suicide prevention programming. We continue exploring the connection between financial literacy and stable housing. Also under consideration are community events to encourage landlord participation with veteran-related housing programs.

**Oral Health:** Information is being collected regarding dental-related occupation trainings available through the state.

**Suicide Prevention:** VHWC, MVAA, and Patrick Forystek of the Center for Veterans and Military Affiliated Students developed and distributed a flyer promoting the Veterans Crisis Line. The [PsychArmor](#) webinar was promoted. We also secured permission to link to supplementary trainings included in their Financial Wellness & Mental Health course bundle. Webinars targeting a variety of audiences are available [here](#).

**Transition:** We remain interested in a resource having multiple individual modules as referenced above in the Housing Security section.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS AND EVENTS

### Researcher Training Opportunity:

The VA [Office of Rural Health](#) has opened a Request for Applications for a Rural Health Career Development Award (RHCD) opportunity with the Iowa City VA. This competitive award provides early career investigators support for up to a two-year period to develop and pursue a research trajectory emphasizing rural Veterans' health. Information is available from the RHCD Program Director Dr. M. Bryant Howren ([Matthew.Howren@va.gov](mailto:Matthew.Howren@va.gov)).

### Webinars:

We would like to curate MI-based webinars in addition to sharing national resources. Reach out if you have a topic that you would like to present to our members. The goal is to offer one hour of content and record sessions, so they are available afterwards. Email us at [ihp.vhwc@msu.edu](mailto:ihp.vhwc@msu.edu) to introduce yourself, your idea(s), or make referrals to subject matter experts. Our staff is available to arrange for technical support(s). Occasionally, continuing education credits for health professionals may be available.

## Events:

Don't hesitate to inform us about your upcoming events! We promote these through the [Resources and Events](#) tab of our website and emails to help boost engagement in addition to directed emails and inclusion in our newsletter. Here are more opportunities offering throughout the state to get involved.

- Veterans FREE Dental Care Day scheduled for October 16, 2025, in Marquette, MI. Advance registration is required and can be done at 906-226-9992. Proof of service will be required. More information is available on the [VHWC Resources and Events](#) webpage.
- 2025 Veteran Health Conference. The 2nd Annual Veteran Health Conference hosted by the University of Michigan Chronic Pain & Fatigue Research Center and the Publicly Engaged Research Core. Saturday, October 25, 9:00 a.m.–3:00 p.m., at the UM Detroit Center (3663 Woodward Ave #150, Detroit, MI 48201) with a virtual Zoom option. [Register here](#) or use the QR code.
- Military, Veteran & First Responders THRIVE Resilience Fundamentals training sessions are still available. Two October sessions are scheduled in Adrian and Grand Rapids. A November session is available in Vassar. [Registration](#) for all sessions is available online.



## HOW TO GET INVOLVED

- Subscribe at our website and share with your networks.
- Participate with Advisory Council or subcommittee activities.
- Volunteer your expertise: Whether you have ever served in the military, are a health care professional, community leader, or advocate, your input can make a difference.

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*“Honor to the soldier and sailor everywhere, who bravely bears his country's cause. Honor, also, to the citizen who cares for his brother in the field and serves, as he best can, the same cause.”*

*Abraham Lincoln*

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