



Virtual Learning Course-Session 2
Special Populations Outreach Presentation Transcript
Tuesday, 21 April 2022

Steve Dudasik: Okay we'll get started welcome everyone, thank you for joining our NVTAC training today.

Today we're going to be talking about outreach strategies for specific, you know, underserved populations experiencing homelessness, and this is the second in our virtual learning series. Some of you, perhaps most of you, might have been on our beginning training where Jennifer Steigerwald of our team gave a talk on outreach one on one. Today's talk we're going to build upon kind of the outreach one on one, and really focus in on certain populations, LGBTQ plus, Native Americans, and those who are justice involved.

And let me introduce myself, my name is Steve Dudasik, I'm a technical and training and technical assistance coach with NVTAC.

I love this work. I'm a rehab counselor. I've been in the field for quite some time.

As you might see me on the screen here, I have gray hair, but I've been in the field, this is my 36th year of doing this work so I'm very excited for our talk today and I will say when we begin to talk, you'll have an opportunity to make comments.

You know, ask questions in the chat or, if you would like to raise your hand and speak to us directly, you'll be able to do that as well.

But I'll just say, you know, at the end of each section today, we'll be able to have that opportunity to talk to each other, that would be terrific. I just want you to start, you know, this is kind of what we do with every training, we go over just the general NVTAC role which you might be familiar with, but we always like to put it out there for those of you who may not be too familiar with NVTAC.

Our role is really to provide technical assistance to increase your ability to establish and operate successful HVRP grants.

We support, you know, the grantees through your period of performance to ensure any challenges that you might be experiencing are resolved quickly.

And we provide effective training and peer-to-peer learning opportunities that will help your knowledge base and further your successful efforts with this work.

We also work with federal staff and the DOL to assist in policy development.

Regarding HVRP oversight and strategic planning, we also quantify grantees' customer satisfaction and share promising practices and lessons learned. So that's who we are, we're here for you, for your support, training, you know, and anything you might need from us, please reach out.

So today we're really going to be, like I said before, highlighting underserved veteran communities.

Particularly, we're going to look at some outreach strategies by populations on the LGBTQ plus population and native American population.

And those veterans that you're honored to serve who might have had involvement, either currently or former involvement with the justice system.

All three groups are considered underserved but, as we know, you know, veterans experiencing homelessness in and of itself nationwide are considered underserved as well.



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I will point out, for you know, for each of these topics today, we're going to start out with some you know, basic knowledge and background and data and then we'll move on into more looking at outreach strategies that you might be able to apply or enhance with these particular populations.

So, I just want to start with some general statistics around homelessness and you know, what we're seeing on the ground right now, so you get a sense of you know, the national landscape.

Right now, you can see, according to the AHA, the most recent one, over 37,000 veterans are experiencing homelessness.

Over 9% of adults experiencing homelessness are estimated to be veterans, and veterans are 50% more likely to become homeless than other Americans due to such things as poverty, lack of support networks, and dismal living conditions. When we look at any data I will always caution, you know when we look at this number, 37,000 veterans, it's based on you know, annual PIT counts and as many of you may know, a PIT count is just that, it's a point in time count. So, it gives us a snapshot, but I generally feel that these numbers could be considered under reported because point in time is that point in time and some veterans experiencing homelessness, one may not be found or you know it's self-report, so they may not self-identify as a veteran during this point in time count. So, this number is a nice number to work on but, it's not something that you know is concrete and to me you know, to the third point here, since you know you can all work with veterans who are at risk of homelessness within your HVRP program.

You know, a recent study that I saw most recently through the Bloomberg foundation, estimated that about 1.4 million veterans are at risk of homelessness. Being at risk was defined as being at under 50% of the poverty level and spending more than 50% of income on rent or housing. So, that's something to keep in mind too.

To this third point here, 50% more likely to become homeless so that's kind of addressing the at-risk population and again the estimate, there is 1.4 million, so you could see it's a challenge for all of us moving forward, working with the folks we're honored to serve.

Um you know, you might be familiar with this, it's always good to put it out there though, that the common barriers individuals experiencing homelessness may face.

Some things here, lack of affordable housing, substance abuse challenges, mental illness, PTSD, and unemployment, and I will get on my kind of my rehab counselor hat or program developer hat, when I look at that word barriers, I know it's in the literature, I know we throw it around all the time.

But just from a practice perspective, I like to soften that word and call them challenges.

You know, to get on my horse a little bit to me a barrier is a brick wall, as you can see my hands going together and something that cannot really be overcome, whereas this challenge is something you could have an end around for or you could meet her head on and address, particularly when we're working with folks that you are working towards employment.

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I think you know, looking at that, as a challenge as opposed to a barrier. One informs the veteran that you're serving that yes, this is possible and doable into as an organization, it's not like you're hitting your, you know, up against the brick wall, so let me just throw that out there to everyone, and so, if you see me during this conversation today, when we look at barriers, if I re-address it as challenges, that is why.



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At the bottom here, you know, the greatest risk factors for homelessness include lack of support and social isolation after discharge.

But you know that that is true, but what polls found was the most common causes of homelessness or lack of affordable housing and lack of income.

So, I mean it goes hand in hand that employment is a solution to long-term, stable housing and affordable housing development, obviously, something that this country needs to look at, but when we look at our outreach, you know, lack of income, employment is a solution.

Um you know, the populations we're working with today, you know because of certain things will get into around stigma, really face higher barriers to employment.

More likely to feel at risk of discrimination and less likely to seek or receive help or support from community programs.

You know, this really goes to how these three groups were speaking to today or have been acculturated in this country, how they've been socialized both within the military and outside of the military, and really looking at, you know, because of that they might be disenfranchised, where they do not want to seek or engage in any kind of help or support because you know, the culture or the stigma they've experienced really causes them to, what I call, lose hope.

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And it behooves all of us when we're doing outreach to these communities to always think you want to create a sense of hope and that employment is possible and they could do it. So that's part of the communication strategy with outreach with these three particular groups but we'll get into that more as we go through this today.

And you know we're going to be talking a lot today around cultural competence, it really is going to infuse all the groups we'll be talking about today, so we put it here in the front to kind of give you an overview about why.

And this, this is kind of why, if we look at a 2012 Pew Research Center study, 84% of the veterans they spoke to say that Americans don't understand them.

And 71% of Americans themselves, civilians, say they have little or no understanding of veterans. Why is this? Well, we could see military, the military life as a culture in and of itself. A closed culture, a closed system, a way of doing things, a way when a person joins the military they acclimate and accommodate themselves and their behaviors within that structure, within that cultural structure, so you know when we're working with veterans, we need to understand this and begin to learn about military culture in and of itself, which you might hear a lot when you're working with veterans.

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But it's always good to kind of learn their experience in the military, from the veterans that your honored to be working with. What their experience was like and then how does that apply to them moving forward and your work with them for employment success.

So, when we talk about culture, you know, it's about cultural affects, culture and in and of itself as a social system, creates behaviors, it molds us, we all know this. But it's always good to know in our work, that this is true, that our environment can shape how we think and how we act with certain customs and traditions, achievements, social groups. How do we do that? Culture can also shape our perception of the world around us and, you know.



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The last thing here is value of self-reflection and awareness. I'll get into that in a moment, but let me just, you know, I don't know if you agree, maybe put in a chat with me, but when we talk about our environment and we're looking at, let's apply it to our American culture.

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How would that affect your behavior? I know in my life when I meet a person, for the first time, or for a while, one of the first questions that comes out in a social situation is about achievement.

Meaning, hey Steve, you know, nice to meet you, by the way, what do you do you? What do you do in terms of work, you know school life and so on and so forth? I will say around employment, we are a kind of an achievement focused culture around that we expect people to be working, we expect to hear what people do, and you know, talk about that; in a way that promotes employment for all of us.

And that could be challenging when you're working with a veteran who hasn't been employed for a while, how they feel about that. Um you know, what do they say when someone asks them, are you employed?

I've had veterans that I worked with that said, well, I tell folks you know, I'm a retired veteran. Oh, that's great, you know, that's great that you said that and then they'll say well you know kind of the difficulty I'm experiencing now, in not so many words, is then they asked me what I do now. So that is kind of things we have to be aware of when we're doing this work and outreaching to veterans to understand that feeling about that, and also employment as a motivator because what do I do now.

Well, great let's begin to help you answer that by looking at employment for you as an outcome in our HVRP Program.

I'm going to get into value of self-reflection awareness, which is more geared to us as individuals, doing this work, so let me just go to the next slide.

So, self-awareness is really how we maximize cultural competence. It's a process of learning self-examination and refinement of our own awareness, knowledge, behaviors, and attitude and what does that mean?

We'll need to have a core knowledge of learning of other groups, need to have recognition of the limitations of our own cultural knowledge, cognizant of language problems and communication styles, cultural manifestations of the stress values and power relationships. These are the core things that we need to understand when we're saying we're culturally competent.

You know, when we look at core knowledge of other groups, all well and good, but to take a learning approach, an unbiased approach, and open approach to learning about other groups other than yourself.

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Other than groups that you haven't been acculturated to or socialized with, hence maybe our groups today that we're talking about. And really dig down and recognize your, what I call, biases and limitations of our own cultural knowledge.

What are we bringing to the work with our own culture, our own learning, our own ideas of socialization? What are we bringing to the work and what are our biases around that when working with someone that society may perceive as other?



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And that goes into being cognizant of you know, the person's experience around language, communication styles, and their cultural surroundings and they're the culture, they reflect of and relate to which could be a variety of things. Again, all this cultural competence is another training, but I just wanted to emphasize some points here because it's going to frame the discussion today around this. Obviously, training could be developed and some of you might have gone to cultural competence training.

It's really a great thing to do. And the outcomes of that it's an improved your you know the health care and social service delivery.

Because you are responsive and culturally aware and unbiased and you're about diversity, equity, and inclusion in everything you do, and it decreases disparities. I will say, just you know, cultural competence is an internal thing for our work, but it also could be external to your organization.

You know, part of this is to you know if you're going to be working in a cultural competence way and with diversity, equity, and inclusion of everyone.

You may want to reflect on your agency's mission statement and your internal culture around that and see and question if it's fully there.

Cultural competence takes work it, takes effort it, takes hard conversations and it takes, you know, proactive action beyond that and infuses it should infuse every part of our work.

Okay, before we move on any questions or thoughts around what we just went over kind of the basic knowledge? Feel free to put something in the chat or if you'd like to raise your hand and give us a comment, please do and we'll set you up. So, I'll give you a few minutes if you have any comments about or questions right now.

Okay, seeing none.

You know, again feel free as we go along to put anything you would like into you know, in the comments or chat and we'll move on to really looking at outreach strategies by. you know. by population. We're going to start with the

LGBTQ plus population and again we'll come up with some, you know, general information and get... delve down into more of outreach strategies. You may want to think about utilizing or you know, improving upon what you're already doing.

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So, you know when you look at LGBTQ plus populations, it's really a loosely defined grouping of folks who identify as lesbian, gay, transgender, and other queer individuals united by a common culture and social movement.

It's an acronym for diverse groups of sexual and gender minorities with similar experiences of stigma, victimization, and discrimination.

Lesbian, gay, bisexual groups are related by sexual orientation and transgender groups are related by gender identity and gender non-conforming goes into this as well as part of this population who might identify as LGBTQ plus.

A Gallup poll, just so you know for population, the Gallup poll estimated about 7.1% of the US population identifies as LGBTQ plus.



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When we look at the veteran population again, these are estimates because, again, this is self-reported.

The most recent estimation about 1 million veterans identify as LGBTQ plus.

And outreach can be particularly challenging given previous policy preventing service members identifying as LGBTQ plus from serving openly in the military.

This goes back to don't ask don't tell, as you know, that policy was rescinded but you know these folks in the military who are LGBTQ plus... outreach becomes difficult because one they may not want to identify as such, because they are proud, they may not feel proud to be identified as a veteran because of what they experienced in the military under don't ask don't tell.

Again, it might be another discussion, but the military ended in and of itself remains as a culture misogynist in a lot of respects, not to trash the military, but if you're looking at the structure, you might notice that don't ask don't tell was rescinded, but you know military life, what is the experience now of folks who are LGBTQ plus in the military?

It's something we may want to learn, you know, with the veteran who, you know, learn from the veteran what their experiences was in the military. So, you know outreach for this group might be challenging because of that, mostly around identifying one as a veteran more than anything else, so hard to engage folks if they're not going to report that they're veterans.

Some things you know you can do for outreach is really rethink your approach to this population, and you can do that in a variety of ways which I'll get into in a minute.

Established supportive policies for LGBTQ plus veterans and that's more of an internal thing would, how does your organization work with you know, this community in and of itself beyond veterans. So, you want to create an environment that's safe, open, engaging, and you know, you can work together as a partner, as you move towards an employer/employment engagement.

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Network with local organizations focusing on services and support for individuals identifying as LGBTQ plus.

Train your staff and provide resources and share success stories.

You know, and it also say when you're looking at this population, you know, as you move to employment.

HVRP work often revolves around educating employers as well. So, it's always something to keep in mind when working with these populations we're speaking of today.

When we're talking in this section about training staff and provide resources, certainly that goes into cultural competence, you know, cultural surround nonbiased outreach approaches so on and so forth.

And we'll just move on, and you know with more information regarding that.

So, you know you can have great outreach practices for the LGBTQ population, but they'll only be sustainable, if you could provide quality services that meet the needs of veterans and underserved communities.



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It's always important as a whole, but you know with this population as well, identify challenges to serving individual veterans and underserved communities. Always ask, are you using language that is familiar, are you offering relevant supports and services and do program staff have experience working with underserved communities?

Um you know, each person is different but how they identify with their population makes a lot of sense and how they're moving forward, as we mentioned before, with their... how their behaviors were formed within the culture, they are identifying with.

So, it's always good to know that and to understand that when you're working with veterans with these community... within these communities, we need to understand these things.

And for LGBTQ plus populations, I mean, these are just some things that might work to create a safe, you know, good environment towards working towards employment.

You know, you and your work, maybe consider adding pronouns to your emails, correspondence, social media profiles, printed materials to demonstrate that your organization and you yourself are inclusive and accepting.

And you might know, be familiar with these pronouns and have them clearly stated.

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It may go a long way and creating an environment that so open and inclusive.

Ask clients, how they identify themselves with their pronouns, so you know hey how are you, you know, introduce yourself if you care, you could you know, what is your pronoun.

And most importantly, you might be you might know this, but it's just we put it out here don't assume that your perception of someone's gender identity is correct and that can inform your opening engagement with the LGBTQ plus population.

Okay, in terms of some resources within the VA, each VA does have an LGBTQ plus VCC or veteran care coordinator and it's great that they do because they're really the advocate throughout the VA system for LGBTQ plus identified veterans. They advocate for their services and quality care, handle any complaints around that. They engage or help LGBTQ plus veterans get started with services and this will be this talk today will be posted on our website and that's just a little website, you can go to get to your care coordinator in your community that you serve so if you're not hooked up with them already. Would be a good thing to maybe look into that.

And as you might know the VA does provide a wealth of services to LGBTQ plus veterans including hormone therapy, mental health, substance abuse treatment suicide prevention, treatment and prevention of sexually transmitted infections, partner violence reduction, to treatment if after effects, tobacco treatment and, of course, within HUDVASH they serve folks you know, with HUDVASH teams and, hopefully, you know. coordinate employment services with you all.

And we're going to go to a little poll, that you can answer and just the question is, do you know about the veteran support services a VCC can provide? And then we'll have a follow up question that you can put into the chat.

So, take a minute to answer that.

Okay, give you another okay.



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Great OK, so the results of the poll 26% of you are familiar and 74% are not familiar with the VCC.

So, you know again reach out to the VCC I think it would be a great a great thing to do, and the question is for those who do work with the VCC or developed a partnership with them, you care to put you know, some information in the chat about how that relationship might be going and what you've been doing that's been productive with the VCC? If you find that helpful?

Or, if you would like to talk to us, you could raise your hand and we'll put you right on speaker. So please feel free to do that, it would be great if you could make some comments around your work with VCCs.

And you know, do you feel this relationship productive, or you know, how it has it gone for you, if you could care to put something in the chat that would be great.

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Okay well feel free to do so great, to get your you know comments.

Again.

VCC, I think is, you know, a great resource for folks to look at and can be helpful, particularly providing services to folks who are experiencing or not experiencing. Oh, my goodness. Who identify as LGBTQ plus?

Okay.

Well let's move on, then to working with folks who onsite would go back there's one common in the chat for LGBTQ and a VCC it says I'm only aware of what they do, because I'm a veteran, I have not worked with them in this position okay.

Again. That link, we could provide to you and might be good to reach out to those folks. They are connected and with the community and services so it's always good to reach out to them as a relationship outreach strategy.

Thank you, thank you Jessica for that.

Hey, let's move on to talking about you know outreach to the native American community what that looks like and what things you may want to do again.

We always frame this around cultural competence and understanding cultural surround that applies to all of these populations today, so we could you know, look at that, too, with that in mind, that overarching thing in mind. I see there's another comment in the chat I'll get to it in a bit but let me move on to the native American population.

Again, some overall you know, statistics here.

They're also you know Native Americans are also identified as American Indians, first Americans and or indigenous Americans Native Americans aren't monolithic which you'd be surprised, a lot of people do think that but, as you know there are various cultures, and you know native American tribes across the country. There are 574 recognized tribes living within the US and 326 Indian reservations across the US.

In some western states reservations are called Rancherias, pueblos, or Indian colonies and there's a little you know if you're and we'll get this link to you as well, you can always click on that, and you can find out where they are.

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Not all tribes live on reservations and again we put this information here because you'd be surprised that this is the perception that many folks in this country have around that.

Regarding Native Americans in and of themselves.

In Labor, in 2009 you might know this, but Congress mandated the Secretary of Labor to submit a report assessing the employment needs of native American veterans living on tribal lands. So, these are native American veterans who are living on you know reservations, at the time.

And the report, so a lot of things, but a few things they recommended was you know, boosted an economic development on the tribal lands, collaborating across federal and state agencies with tribal governments, launch communications program focused on outreach to native American veterans.

They developed a map that inventoried the employment needs of native Americans against existing programs and services.

They wanted to create an advisory committee subgroup to institutionalize and focus on native American employment and allow for flexibility and existing employment programs to better meet the needs of native American veterans.

I will say this when you're thinking of tribal lands or reservations, just as a structure, you may or may not know this, that they have their own laws within the reservations. Then there's tribal law that they often that they respond to, as opposed to state law, so they file follow tribal laws and federal law.

And that might apply to employment as well, so it's good that the Secretary of Labor that time was concentrating on this, and it continues to be a focus within the Department of Labor to help our native American veterans become employed.

Either those who live on the reservation, or those who are not.

In terms of the you know people nationwide over 150,000 veterans identify as American Indian, Alaska natives and according to the 2020 census veterans identifying as American Indian AIAN and have lower incomes, lower educational attainment, and higher unemployment than other veterans.

Veterans identifying as such are more likely to lack health insurance and to have a disability service connected or otherwise you know, support or you know challenge to employment that they experienced, then other veterans. You may also know this, if you look like military folks joining the military this population disproportionately joins the military so there's quite a few folks then applying as native American within the military so that's part of this too.

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And you know just that's encourages potential providers to work with homeless that's applying for HVRP grants, particularly the folks you know, identifying as American Indian our native.

Review your organization's process towards outreach, marketing material, and policies for inclusive activity. Familiarize yourself with the health needs, housing conditions, and tribal relationships which is key. I'll get to that in a minute.



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Set and meet ambitious short- and long-term goals and increasing connections to employment, so you know, working with this population. It really has to be focused on developing relationships, tribal relationships, I think, is key to this approach, particularly if you're working in a community that you're serving the reservation, it's extremely important to develop that relationship.

The VA consults with tribal governments to develop partnerships. Native Americans are eligible for benefits and addition to these benefits the VA helps eligible Native Americans finance the purchase of a home, just some things you need to know.

So, you know when we're looking at tips for inclusion or outreach for this population, one of the things that I was involved in is working with HUDVASH in South Dakota and I will say through all of these principles they developed a wonderful relationship with the tribal government of the Pine Ridge reservation.

Some of you might know what that is, it's actually the largest, one of the largest reservations in the country experiencing very, very high levels of poverty and homelessness and, you know, within that reservation are quite a few veterans living there and being part of it, so the HUDVASH team and the VA in South Dakota actually developed a wonderful partnership with the tribal government. They're using these techniques.

I will say, if we look at this and I'll go over to each element in a moment, it takes a lot of work, the HUDVASH leadership and you know in the VA there in South Dakota mentioned to me at the time that it took a while to really develop a long ongoing sustainable partnership with the reservation with the tribal government there at Pine Ridge and once that was established, they were able to develop referrals and really have an impact within the reservation for the veterans living there. It takes work, though, it took effort and work and understanding. Listening, learning, unbiased and understanding how you know historically Native Americans have been disenfranchised both by the Federal Government with you know land taking and how that kind of acculturated tribes moving forward, so it took a lot of effort, but the HUDVASH team there developed a really, really good relationship and employment was a key process.

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Actually, that's why I was there to help their team engage better and employment resources and it worked out really well, so a few of the things they did use, and these are just great tips to use for anyone is really to collaborate with TEROs, which are tribal employment rights organizations.

Use education and partnering principles to create mutually beneficial relationships. We'll talk more about partnering techniques at our next talk, which is next Tuesday. So hopefully you'll be a part of that, but for this that's what you'd have to do.

It's an invaluable resource for employers seeking skilled applicants, so really, they're connected with employers, they're connected with people in their area that are looking for skilled laborers or skilled applicants, job applicants.

Request the subject matter experts, you can tap the sensitivity training.

Invite a local tribal representative to conduct sensitivity training, hence that relationship with the tribal council the tribal government.

Listen and learn with openness, in a nonbiased way and let the representatives and the subject matter experts communicate to you, their needs, wants, issues, and desires towards you know getting employment for the folks the veterans that they are working with.



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Engage tribal stakeholders for recruitment. Tribal leaders once engaged and partnered with can really be an advocate for your program and asked to join you as ambassador there at community engagement events.

You know, within your communities, if you are working with Native American populations, you're near a reservation.

Obviously, it's important to have tribal leaders, as part of your program if you have a an HVRP professional advisory council for, for instance, within your organization that would be great.

If there are board members that might be Native American within your organization and they're great contacts to promote employment and your HVRP program.

So, you can think of things about how to engage tribal stakeholders within your HVRP program and with your agency program and also connect obviously with tribal the tribal HUDVASH program if there's one in your community.

Okay.

Here's another poll and I see there's some words in the chat let me.

00:44:26

Why don't we go to the poll now and then we'll get to all the chat questions whether it's from the you know LGBTQ plus.

Or you know moving forward with this population, so why don't we take this question, and is there a reservation that you or someone in your organization is working with to build a community partnership?

So, take a moment to answer that.

Okay we're seeing here poll results are in 19% are actually working with reservations, 51% say they are not, and 30% are unsure.

Again, in the chat and I know there's some chat communication also going on and I haven't opened yet, but please, those of you who are working with a reservation, right now, if you could just describe what that partnership is like. Are you working with the tribal council? Are you working with the HUDVASH team, native American team within that partnership and what does that look like? And any questions or challenges, you might be facing around that.

So, feel free to comment in the chat and I'll get to the other chat comments that in the meantime.

Jennifer Steigerwald: I just wanted to mention one other thing because someone had asked in the chat for both the link to the LGBTQ plus veteran care coordinate care coordinator locator, so I linked that in the chat as well as the list of US Indian reservations so both of those links are in the chat now.

Thank you, thank you Jen.

I'm seeing here, let's you know, let's go to the comments um you know I again from LGBTQ plus one of the questions is VCC mainly catering to this population or all veterans? They are specifically looks like AR, well AR, thank you for that, but they cater to they're assigned specially to work with the LGBTQ plus populations of veterans within the VA system, so they are a specialist in that role.

And more comments around.



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Okay.

And Andrea.

Okay, they answered what I just said. Okay going down that the veteran care coordinator would be specially specifically for individuals who identify with the LGBTQ plus population.

But there are other VA representatives that would be able to assist all veterans, yep.

00:48:29

Here's some connections or comments around working with the native American community and reservations and Dennis rights do not expect fast results with tribal work.

The tribes move at their own speed, the best way to get started is to find someone who has worked with the tribe in question and get them to introduce you. Tribes as a rule, generally, are very distrustful of outsiders. The tribe has a big gaming operation that they were...

If the tribe has a big gaming operation, they will offer many services.

That's a great point that you made.

You know the thing is, Dennis, you know that reflects on the experience that I mentioned in South Dakota, and it took a long time for our relationship to develop. Tribes do move at their own speed.

This idea of disenfranchisement that tribal communities might feel is part and parcel to them, perhaps feeling very distrustful and that's part of you know their history of native Americans in this country. So that's a great comment and thank you for that.

Oh, wow you spent that has mentioned, he spent 30 years working with tribes all over the US that's amazing.

You know I would say to get you know how does that apply to HVRP Dennis if I can ask you and, what is your success with an HVRP program with this tribal relationship and employing you know the veterans that it is your honor to serve?

If you care to you know, to mention that or, if you want to raise your hand and speak to us that would be great.

That experience is so valuable.

Jennifer Steigerwald: One more while we're waiting for more information from Dennis, so Shannon says.

Jennifer Steigerwald: we are trying to collaborate with our partner tribe, they have their own employment and housing program so don't always seem keen to join with us, which I'm sure is something that other people have experienced as well, so I want to make sure we didn't skip that one.

Yeah, I mean you know Shannon to your point um that's very understandable and I'm sure that's a challenge for some other HVRP programs.

I will say you know again it's about you know it takes work, it takes communication, it takes strategizing, and you know when we talk about shared collaborative employment that's part of it.



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You know, I think that it's if they're not keen to join with us, I mean part of our talk on partnership development will address this.

But I will say that is something that you might run up against and certainly with HVRP.

00:51:43

You could look into dual enrollment, what would that mean? And the idea is that we could all work together to help the veterans that it is your honor to serve within the native American community will be able to help you too and let's communicate and share resources or work together with this individual or these individuals, so employment is the outcome, based on both of our resources.

You know that would be a comment I would have there. Not easy, but I hear what you're saying, definitely.

It looks...

Great comments everyone, let me just see if I have...

And Jen if I miss something, please let me know.

Angie has just made a statement. We work closely with the VA and SSVF programs and many area agencies. Okay, I think that might be just a reply and Dennis. Thank you.

You said with HVRP you've had limited success. You're in the Seattle area, most of the tribes in here in Seattle have huge gaming operations, so they are rich in provide services far in excess of what we can do. Okay that's a that's valid, good thought, but the idea is, if you know the native Americans experiencing homelessness or at risk on the reservations in Seattle, if they're able to engage in employment at the casinos...

You know that's a great thing.

And I know you've worked for many years with tribal organizations and I'm sure you know if they still have veterans experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness the idea would be well, what can we do from an HVRP perspective, our agency experience to help these people move on either into jobs within your casino or within the reservation or somewhere else?

You know, you know question, what is your experience you know kind of employing veterans experiencing homelessness, that's what we do, that's our expertise.

Or the challenges that have you have faced and you're you know, in your tribe doing that, so that you know I'm sure you've done that, but you know that would be something we would want to sell as an outreach strategy. HVRP, you're all experts and working with folks experiencing homelessness veterans experiencing homelessness or veterans at risk of homelessness.

You're a rare bunch, one that you're great at this work, two that you understand the challenges folks experiencing homelessness face in regard to employment.

00:54:52

So, Dennis also has a statement here, there is a map published by BIA that shows all federal reservations and also state recognized tribes each state has a native American Department.



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They can tell you about state recognized tribes.

Great.

And Andrea has a question, and again I guess Dennis you could address this because I thought would be her question is there such a thing as non-recognized tribes that may need to be served?

And Dennis you might have the answer to that I, I would not, so I'll leave it to Dennis who's the expert.

Not to put you on the spot Dennis.

Oh, okay great.

Thank you all, read this but I'll just read it along for everyone. Thank you so much Dennis. We appreciate this.

Let me...

Dennis replies, yes, there are tribes that are seeking recognition and they're trying to recognize by the state, and not the federal government, so you know, again as an HVRP provider, you may want to try to reach out to any contacts you might have regarding that, and again use your VA resources as well and Dennis goes on to comment, I am in no way, making this about race, so please do not read it that way. I am white and from New Mexico, where I was raised with several different tribes and participated in things like feast day. Trust can be broken in an instant because of the long history of the white man taking over their lands and other issues that have arose in the past few years, I have experienced this firsthand in the servant field, it does take a period of time to gain their trust.

Oh Deanna, not Dennis. Why I am, I'm sorry.

I'm so sorry Deanna. Oh, my goodness. Okay, I apologize Deanna, but that is just a great statement.

Thank you so much for that.

And, obviously, when we talk about culture that's part of it.

You know what happened in this country is very, very, very hard to understand, but again, not under very hard to understand, of what we did.

00:57:45

You know, and again when we talk about cultural competence that's part of the training, it takes like Deanna saying we have to dig down deep to that to understand what a great comment. Thank you so much, getting goosebumps for that Deanna. Thank you so much, I appreciate it.

Okay, great for the chat. Thank you, keep, you know, making your comments as we move along.

Tremendous group, great talk so far.

Let's move on to working with folks who are involved in the justice system um, you know as opposed to a specifically identified population or culture. We're looking now at the justice system in and of itself and veterans who have might have engaged in that system or had engagement in that system.



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So, you know here's just a term for all now just to put it out there that the term justice-involved veterans is used to describe former service members who have been detained or by or are under the supervision of the criminal justice system. Their involvement can range from arrest to court involvement, to incarceration in jail or prison.

Some statistics as of 2018, half of justice involved veterans experience mental health problems or substance abuse challenges disorders. In 2016, the estimate was about over 100,000 veterans were serving time.

Vast majority identified as male. The vast majority were in state prison, about half identified as white about a quarter identified as black and about 10% identified as Hispanic. So, of course, within you know veterans who are justice involved certainly there's culture within that situation with folks who are identifying as black, Hispanic, native American, white, so you know, again we go into cultural competency as well.

So over 100,000 overestimated in 2016 I haven't been able to come up with the most recent estimate, if any of you have you today, have that information that would be wonderful to post as well, so we just get a sense of what we you might be working with as your veterans come out of prison and want to work with you to gain employment.

You know the reason is, of course, we were probably all aware of this incarceration occurs, for a number of reasons, including police contact due to homelessness and mental health crisis.

01:01:01

Veterans are caught in the cycle of contact with the criminal justice system and I'm going to make a circle, you know that circle of in and out, in and out, homelessness arrested jail, homelessness arrested jail, you know that cycle of being involved with law enforcement. Involvement in the criminal justice system, maybe a risk factor for homelessness and or a consequence of homelessness. To that point, I guess, to maybe point one and three here.

You know homelessness is often criminalized across our country, so those folks those veterans who are currently living on the street often will have contact with the police at some level, and from that there might be arrests, such as being arrested for trespassing.

You know, public intoxication so on and so forth, and once arrested, they are often incarcerated because they don't have money to be bailed out or to you know leave that at that time of arrest, so you know arrest for maybe lower-level misdemeanors they end up in jail and then coming back out homeless discharged from prison to become homeless. So just something to be aware of how homelessness itself makes someone more apt to have law enforcement contact and perhaps more apt to be arrested on a charge.

So just to be aware of that I'm sure you know that.

Outreach to incarcerated or transitioning veterans can often be a challenge.

Particularly for incarcerated and means about access to the prison system, so you know, one of the strategies when you're doing outreach with this population is one learning where you know I be able to contact the veterans that are involved with the justice system, so through that is developing relationships are connecting with corrections departments.

And you know that have prevention strategies so preventive to prevent the homelessness of veterans reentering the community.



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I would hope some corrections department have that but I'm laughing to myself here in my experience, not many do, you know it's like oh you're out of prison, you know here's a bus ticket.

See you in Manhattan you know or wherever I used to work. I'm in Arizona, now that I used to be working in New York City, for many, many years, for example.

Law enforcement to divert veterans from jail courts to advance alternatives to incarceration.

If they are our jail diversion programs in your community for veterans, veteran jail diversion programs are homeless diversion courts in your community, great resource to reach out with and partner with.

01:04:31

Often you know, if you're offering employment services if you have a great partnership, you might be asked to speak for to advocate for the veteran at a court saying well, yes we're able to provide this particular service, we want to move towards employment with this individual, and that is a good diversion strategy, so you know, the recommendation might be they don't go to jail, but in fact they're diverted to your program or to gaining employment it's a great partnership to have so diversion courts is a good thing partnering with law enforcement, I will say that many police departments around the country now have you know they have outreach teams, social workers who are police officers, are trained for outreach. You might all be familiar with that, but they're always great to you know, connect with the social worker or the police doing outreach, because they are very connected to what's going on in the community and might be able to introduce you to veterans that are experiencing homelessness that you may not have been aware of.

And an important thing for all of us, criminal history does not prevent some successful employment or housing outcomes. In fact, and you know, maybe, many of you in this call might know this...

When I was working as a job developer, I place many folks were justice histories, who had experienced homelessness. Veterans and non-veterans and often I would they would become the most you know motivated, engaged employees for the company and move on in a productive career path.

Given the fact, and I would ask why you know why did that happen? They say, well you know this place this company gave me the opportunity, despite the fact that I was in jail or, despite the fact that I had you know some sort of justice involvement in my background motivated, engaged, great employees.

And I would often have companies call me as a result, saying Steve we'd like to have more folks.

You know that you're serving, do you have anyone else? We love you know, we love this person, or we love these people, you know, send more. So, it's a great strategy, one on the employer side of things, when you're doing job development and to know that folks who have justice history can work and they are often very, very successful in a workplace environment because of that that opportunity or that chance.

And again, HVRP work, employment work is about creating hope and that's what we do to a part of your engagement or outreach to these folks and, yes, you can work it is doable and possible.

And regardless we're going to be able to get around this challenge and help you help you become employed, so I think it's very important to know that you know colleague to colleague here it's really good stuff to talk about.



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So, what can you do you know, you could share information with community partners to connect veterans needing assistance, regardless of their circumstances?

You know their involvement in the justice system, you can remove as many barriers... challenges to housing and other supported services, although this is reflective of housing.

Many of you may not be housing providers, but it's always good to connect with housing providers such as mentioned, you know HUDVASH as SSVF.

01:07:35

You know GDPD which is more of a transitional program, but you know people who are providing housing, great to connect with them.

And this is more for those who have housing programs, but this is about employment as well, always promote employment as a doable outcome and engage all partners in work talk.

Work talk, what that means and what it is.

Again, it could be the focus of another training, but as HVRP providers everything you're doing, every outreach you're doing regardless of you know, especially with disenfranchised populations when you're doing individual outreach when you're doing systemic outreach, developing partnerships, you're always engaging and work talk. Meaning work is important, work is doable, work is a solution to homelessness.

And it's also, you know, and again I'm a rehab counselor, it can also be quote, you know, an engagement strategy or treatment strategy to help people move on with their lives in a productive way, because when you're doing outreach and you're doing individual outreach often, you will get the response hey, what can I help you with?

Well, I want a house and I want a job. That's what often you know the veterans I've contacted with our outreach with would say. I want a house and a job.

So, you know we often forget how important employment is to the person's self-esteem, their value, and where they want to go with their lives and how we could develop that as a counseling technique as an employment, training technique as a motivation technique.

And that's what work talk is. Wherever you go, whatever you do, you're saying yes, we're about employment, this is HVRP we are successful, we do this.

We know this could happen; we know it's an outcome that's doable for the veterans that we're honored to serve. It's a doable outcome for your system.

And we're going to end homelessness together, you know systematically because of that.

And I could go on all day about that, but I won't in this talk, but work talk, we're always promoting it and that's what we do and an outreach strategy and it's meaningful for the individual, it's meaningful for the systems that we're engaging with.

So, involvement, so you know VJOs many of you might be familiar with them within HUDVASH teams within the VA itself not necessarily just HUDVASH.



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01:10:18

But they're within the VA homeless programs offices, they provide outreach to services to justice-involved veterans in various settings including going to jails and courts so if you want to connect within the prison system or diversion courts, VJOs, would be a good people to connect with so you could get engagement and involvement there.

I've worked with HVRP providers back in the day, who would go into the jail with a VJO and really just talk about this is what we offer and again it's about that work talk, you know we're able to do this for you or help you, with your employment goals when you leave the prison system, but that introduction to getting into the jail and having that forum with incarcerated individuals came through the VJO and in a few incidents says that I was involved with.

So, here's the veteran treatment courts that's what I you know it goes without saying connect with them if you can, and if you already haven't.

Other things you know you could collaborate and CITs that might be in your community that really provide the full wrap arounds of services, often HVRP can be the employment elements of that and you'll let your CIT team teams, know that you can do that if they engage in a veteran that is justice-involved and happens to be experiencing homelessness or about to be evicted so on and so forth.

Always, and this applies to everything today, but we have it here under the justice-involved category, always use a trauma-informed approach to understand the needs of justice-involved veterans, again.

Learning. listening.

Understanding, being empathetic to where the experiences of folks are honored to serve have been and where they want to go. Always take that into your approach, and you can do that, and I always say anything you do individually as a technique you'd always do systemically as well, so keep that in mind.

Partner with a healthcare for reentry veterans HCRV, you might be familiar with that.

They provide outreach and prerelease assessments, referrals and linkages to all sorts of services, again wrap arounds and also, they have short-term case management, once the veteran is released so it's a good connection now.

Okay, so you know again, we'll go to a poll, and then we'll go into the chat. So, if you could care to answer this poll, have you or a member of your organization worked with a VJO and/or VTC?

Okay looks like poll results are in 46% said yes, they've worked with the VJO/VTC and 54% said they haven't.

01:14:05

Again, related to the other questions today, you know those in the chat who have worked with a VJO or VTC, can you give us any thoughts of how that relationship has worked within your HVRP program and um any challenges you might have experienced, or would it look like when you work with a VJO or the VTC connection, what did that look like? That would be terrific.

And thank you.

And we'll wait a minute we'll go to the chat.



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And it looks like in a chat, or we have one question looks like from Shedonna, I hope, I'm pronouncing that right Shedonna, you were asking what is the VJO or VTC stand for and here's specifically, that VJO within the VA is the veteran justice outreach program.

And they have VJO specialists to do this work with veterans who are involved in the justice system and the VTC is a treatment court, it's kind of a court diversion program for veterans.

And they work within that, as well as other veteran focus court programs, hope that helps.

Okay.

Shedonna already got it probably before I started talking.

Okay um you know feel free in the chat or if you'd like to raise your hand and any comments around this we could move on.

Oh, here we go.

Yet I mentioned, I have met with a day jail on one of my clients and he covers a lot of territory here in southern Missouri, so it has been difficult to connect with him, otherwise he's been very helpful for resources.

Great comment Deanna and again, you know that idea they're even if they're all-around southern Missouri, the idea is that they're connected with resources so right then and there you're you've been able to develop some maybe other resources or connections that you might have not already had prior to that connection with for your HVRP program.

Thank you, appreciate it.

Okay well you know feel free to continue with the chat if you'd like and I always say at the end of these any other questions comments about today.

01:17:44

Again, we're NVTC we're here for you there'll be two other trainings have left in this series. On Tuesday we're going to be talking about partnerships which actually I'll be doing that and then next Thursday Jennifer Stein...

Jennifer if you're on I'm having trouble mispronouncing your last name Steigerwald will be presenting on resources, so I hope you'll join us then.

But in the meantime, let's leave the chat open for any questions comments about today or anything in general about your wonderful HVRP programs. I will say thank you all for your work, it's great meeting with a bunch of colleagues.

And let's employ the veterans that we're honored to serve because it's going to end their homelessness.

Thank you very much.

There's you know, those of you still with us, I mean Dennis made a wonderful comment here and I'll just read it.

And I'll read it to you all because it's very impactful.

Let me see, let me find you Dennis there's a lot on here, hold on.



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Dennis mentions, as a former inmate there's one thing to remember, most crime is the result of unresolved pain. Identify the pain and address it, and you will be successful.

Thank you, Dennis.

Wonderful, thank you for that.

*TechSupport: Steve this is Jessica, we have one participant with their hand raised. I'm going to unmute Jessica Macallan.

Okay.

Hi Jessica.

Jessica McCowan: Hi Steve, how are you?

Good how are you?

Jessica McCowan: I'm doing well, thank you, I just wanted to make two points, one being on the section of information you covered and then really a general statement, and they kind of correlate together, and the first is in VET court, I have contacted the court is in my region. I'm actually the program manager for HVRP and cross southern Missouri so we have 39 counties that we cover.

01:20:16

Jessica McCowan: And while I didn't have a response that I would like from that court, I went on and contacted the probation and parole offices and one of the things that we identified in our conversation is that not many times do people want to identify as a veteran and so, when asked they won't say that they are a veteran, so it's hard to get them into that court or to get them into our services after they are released. So that's a little bit of a hurdle, and so we really have to make sure that probation and parole are aware of what we're offering and the work that we provide so that we can establish that relationship and also many times, and I'm saying this as a veteran myself and having many veterans in my family, there is a sense of honor in being recognized as a veteran and if you don't feel that you are entitled to that honor you won't assume that title. So, sometimes it's as easy as asking those within the community that you work with and other service providers, hey have you asked your clients if they ever served in the military? Because people will say they serve in the military, but they won't always identify that they are a veteran, so I just thought I'd bring that point across and that might help people when they're working with other community providers.

Right on Jessica. Thank you so much for that it makes so much sense and again HVRP providers, I mean to your point when you're developing partnerships and relationships, we'll talk more about that, on Tuesday, but it's about this is what we do, this is who we are, these are the people we're honored to serve, and we can help you, you know with the folks that it is your honor you know that you are serving the veterans that you're serving. Tremendous point. Thank you appreciate it.

I'm looking to see if there any more comments here. I'm scrolling, hope I'm not missing anything if it goes to you are still with us.

Let me just scroll down I'm sorry, those of you with us just give me a moment.



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Andrea mentioned at first, I did not like that they got out of jail, boots to the ground, but when I found out about accountability, I was all in. Okay.

This is a wonderful chat, by the way, you're all responded to each other, this is great keep doing that.

And Andrea said they have a list of companies that hire felons, it used to be temp agencies, but now it depends on the individual companies.

01:23:06

Great information here.

Again, this this, this will be on you know, on our website.

So, we'll keep this in mind, with all these comments.

And I don't see any more. Health care for reentry that's.

So those are you still on, thank you so much, I appreciate your time today looking forward to meeting with you again next week and beyond. Thank you so much for the for being with us today, we really appreciate it have a great rest of your day. Thank you so much.