

"Planning for Eldercare" February 7, 2010

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Caring for Senior Veterans – VA Long Term Care Benefits

In the month of February we celebrate Presidents Day in honor of two great United States Presidents; George Washington and Abraham Lincoln. Both were heroes of wars fought on U.S soil for freedom and unity of our great country.

The United States has fought many wars throughout the world since that time to keep freedom here at home and continues to do so. From the beginning our country has established a program to care for the men and women of our military who fought in those wars.

The veterans assistance program goes back to 1636 when Pilgrims of Plymouth Colony fought with the Pequot Indians. The Pilgrims enacted a law from English law that reads, *"If any man shall be sent forth as a soldier and shall return maimed, he shall be maintained competently by the colony during his life."* In 1789 U. S. congress passed as law that pensions were to be provided to disabled veterans and their dependents and in 1811 the first domiciliary and medical facility for veterans was completed.

Since that time the Department of Veterans Affairs has opened a multitude of care facilities nationwide. An article from the US Department of Veterans Affairs website states:

"VA's health care system has grown from 54 hospitals in 1930 to 157 medical centers in 2005, with at least one in each state, Puerto Rico and the District of Columbia . More than 5.3 million people received care in VA health care facilities in 2005, a 29 percent increase over the 4.1 million treated just four years earlier. VA operates more than 1,300 sites of care including nearly 900 ambulatory care and community-based outpatient clinics, 136 nursing homes, 43 residential rehabilitation treatment programs, nearly 90 comprehensive home-care programs, and more than 200 Veterans Centers."

State veterans homes have been built or are approved for future construction in many states. For a list of state veteran nursing homes go to http://www.longtermcarelink.net/ref_state_veterans_va_nursing_homes.htm#List

Here are some of the benefits provided for Veterans by the Department of Veterans Affairs:

- Health Care Clinics
- Mental Health
- Counseling
- Job training
- Burial and Memorial benefits
- Education
- VA Home Loan
- DIC
- Compensation
- Pension
- Care Management
- Home Renovation for Disability
- Assisted Living
- Prosthetics
- Rehabilitation
- Weight management