

How VA Community Care Works for Veterans and Providers

The **VA Community Care Network (CCN)** is the system that allows eligible Veterans to receive care from **community (non-VA) providers** when receiving that care outside a VA facility is in the Veteran's best interest. CCN expands access while maintaining VA oversight, authorizations, and coordination.

CCN does **not** replace VA healthcare. It works alongside VA services to reduce travel burden, wait times, and gaps in specialty care—while maintaining accountability through clear rules.

What CCN Is (Plain Language)

- **Community Care** is the option to receive authorized care outside VA facilities.
- **CCN** is the national network VA uses to credential providers, manage referrals, and process claims.
- **VA** decides eligibility and issues authorizations.
- **Community providers** deliver care within the authorization.
- **Records return to VA** to keep care coordinated.

How CCN Works — For Veterans

1. Eligibility review

Your VA care team determines whether Community Care is appropriate based on VA criteria (such as access standards, service availability, or continuity needs).

2. Authorization issued

VA provides an authorization listing the approved service(s), number of visits, and valid dates. This document guides what is covered.

3. Scheduling care

You schedule with an in-network provider using a CCN. The provider verifies the authorization before your appointment.

4. Care delivered locally

You receive care from the community provider. Medical decisions remain between you and licensed clinicians.

5. Records returned to VA

Visit notes and results are sent back to VA to maintain continuity and inform next steps.

Veteran tip: Keep your authorization details handy and confirm your appointment matches what's approved.

How CCN Works — For Providers

- **Credentialing & enrollment**

Providers join CCN by completing credentialing and administrative setup (licenses, locations, specialties).

- **Authorization verification**

Before scheduling, verify service scope, visit limits, and valid dates.

- **Care within scope**

Deliver services exactly as authorized. If needs change, request VA review rather than adding services independently.

- **Documentation & claims**

Return records promptly and submit claims through the CCN process so VA can coordinate care and payment.

Veterans & Caregivers: Common Questions

Eligibility · How do I know if I qualify?

VA determines eligibility. Community Care may be approved when travel or wait times exceed standards, the service isn't available at VA, or continuity considerations apply.

Process · What if my needs change?

Contact your VA care team or community provider promptly. VA may review and issue an updated authorization if appropriate.

Costs · Will I have out-of-pocket expenses?

Most authorized Community Care is covered under VA rules. Non-authorized services may cause billing issues—confirm coverage if unsure.

Provider Choice · How do I find CCN providers?

Ask your VA care team, use VA referral tools, and confirm with the provider's office that they accept CCN authorizations.

Support · Who helps if there's a problem?

Start with your VA care team or Community Care office. Education platforms like Mendry and Veterans Desk can help you understand the process (education only).

Where Education Fits

Understanding CCN helps Veterans and caregivers ask better questions and avoid delays. Mendry provides **plain-language, state-aware education**—guides and workshops that explain rules, risks, and care boundaries without clinical advice or product promotion.

Learn More

Explore our education resources to better VA Community Care and CCN—designed to support informed, coordinated care.