



## VA CENTER FOR CARE AND PAYMENT INNOVATION (CCPI) VETSmile Program Frequently Asked Questions

### DENTAL CARE PARTNER FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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### What is VETSmile?

VETSmile is a new U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) [Center for Care and Payment Innovation](#) (CCPI) collaboration with community dental care providers to improve access to continuous and comprehensive oral health care for VHA-enrolled Veterans who are currently ineligible for dental benefits through VA.

### Who is eligible to receive dental care from a VA provider?

Veterans who access dental care through the VA do so through an eligible service-connected disability. The VA defines a service-connected disability as a "physical or mental injury or condition that was 'incurred or aggravated' in the line of military duty, and that results in a disability. A service-connected disability need not be connected to combat or service during a period of war."

### Who is eligible to receive dental care through the VETSmile Program?

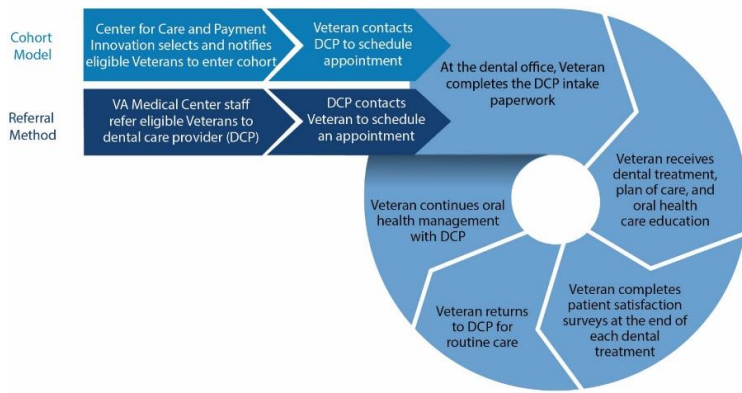
Eligible Veterans are those enrolled in the VA health system who are not eligible to receive dental care through VA.

### How are Veterans enrolled in the VETSmile program?

There are two methods through which eligible Veterans may enroll in VETSmile:

1. **Referral Model:** Providers at a local VA Medical Center send a list of eligible Veterans to a partnering Dental Care Provider (DCP).
2. **Cohort Model:** CCPI identifies a cohort of eligible Veterans based on DCP eligibility criteria. CCPI notifies the eligible cohort via email and mailers, including an invitation to contact the DCP and schedule an appointment.

Figure 1: Eligible Veterans' Enrollment into VETSmile



**What services are Dental Care Providers expected to provide through this program?**

The program intends to connect Veterans with basic dental care services (e.g., preventative oral care, cleanings, exams) as a minimum. DCPs can propose additional services offered to VETSmile patients.

**Are there capacity requirements for DCPs?**

There are no capacity requirements for the minimum number of VETSmile patients to treat at a time.

CCPI works with each Dental Care Partner to establish additional criteria as needed to accommodate capacity for new Veteran patients (e.g., dental insurance status, residency, or income status relative to Federal Poverty Level).

**What are the steps to onboarding as a VETSmile Dental Care Provider?**

After an initial introductory meeting with CCPI, interested Dental Care Providers are provided a Memorandum of Agreement following the initial call for signature. but begin to work with them regardless of whether or not the MOA is signed and approved. CCPI then works closely with the DCP to tailor the VETSmile program for its dental care sites.

**How long is the VETSmile pilot going to last?**

VETSmile is Congressionally mandated to continue through 2026. After the five-year pilot phase concludes, Congress and VA administrators will evaluate the program for further scaling or extending the pilot phase. Since the program is designed to provide Veterans a dental home where they can continue to receive comprehensive care for the rest of their lives, the conclusion of the pilot will not affect the Veterans already in the program

**Does a DCP need to adjust their fee scheduling to participate in VETSmile?**

DCPs can use their existing fee schedules to determine the cost of care for VETSmile patients. There are no requirements to provide a VETSmile-specific discount.

**Are there payment or funding opportunities to cover the cost of care?**

Not from VA. However, some DCPs have received grants and funding from philanthropic sources to help with costs at their particular pilot location(s). VA does not reimburse DCPs for the care Veterans receive. DCPs on their own determine how to help reduce or offset the cost of dental care Veterans receive.

**Does VETSmile use a data agreement in addition to the MOA?**

VETSmile Program includes data-related language in the MOA that explicitly details the following: 1. data usage, 2. transfer, 3. sharing, 4. consent, 5. security, and 6. privacy.

**What are current data sharing expectations?**

VETSmile will be collecting only summary-level data on a monthly basis while efforts are underway to create a secure web submission portal for PHI/PII data.

**Does VETSmile have their own data use agreement?**

DCPs can request CCPI to sign a data use agreement, but data use agreement requests come from the DCP.