



VETERAN DIRECTED CARE PROGRAM

Veteran Directed Care (VDC) COVID-19 Listening Session Three: Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

The following FAQ addresses questions related to COVID-19 raised during the third VDC Provider COVID-19 Listening session. The VDC technical assistance (TA) team continues to monitor COVID-19 related questions from VDC providers as the situation evolves.

Table 1. Question and Answer VDC Provider COVID-19 Listening Session Three

Topic	Question	Response
Assistive Technology	When we are talking about stands, are we talking about pop-sockets? Or tablet covers where the iPad can lean?	Amy Goldman, AT3: Essentially, you want to have a secure surface that will support your tablet or phone. If you are doing video conferencing, you'll want to emulate a face-to-face meeting and consider elevating the device so that the camera is eye-level. There are commercial devices and "do-it-yourself" (DIY) ways to achieve this. As you prepare for the visit, think of how you'll stabilize your technology so that the work area is functional for you (i.e., taking notes). You'll also want to discuss this in advance with the Veteran so they do not experience similar challenges.
Assistive Technology	Who maintains the loaner devices?	David Baker, Missouri State AT Program: In Missouri, we are responsible for the devices. We take care of sanitation, software updates, app updates, etc. We take full responsibility while the devices are in our possession so that they function to their full capacity. Amy Goldman, AT3: Loaners are maintained by the state AT program. Of course, they now are using ENHANCED sanitization in accordance with CDC (and manufacturer) guidelines. Some states are challenged with obtaining sufficient PPE, but are working these kinks out. If you are interested in more information on sanitization, check out the AT3 Center's Emergency Management page: https://www.at3center.net/repository/EmergencyManagement .



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Assistive Technology	Are State AT Programs able to provide device demonstrations or loans during the COVID-19 pandemic?	Amy Goldman, AT3: As states "reopen" or figure out the best and safest ways to do business, the status of the programs (especially device loans and reuse) are in flux. Most states are doing remote demonstrations successfully. We've noticed an increasing trend in programs beginning curbside, no contact pick-up/drop-off for lending programs and device reuse programs. Some AT programs may have used tablets as part of their reuse programs (Note: these are OLDER versions and are in high demand). State AT programs may also have online trainings (i.e., to ensure materials are accessible, how to turn on accessibility features, etc.) that may be helpful. We encourage that you connect with your state AT program, and follow their progress as they increase engagement and modify activities.
Assistive Technology	What if the Veteran does not want to access technology at all?	Marty Exline, AT3: Sometimes Veterans may not want to use technology because they are simply unfamiliar or uncomfortable with it. If someone is able to do a virtual demonstration for the Veteran and reassure them that using the device is much easier than it looks, the Veteran may be more comfortable using the technology.
Assistive Technology and the VDC Program	Will the Veterans Affairs Medical Center (VAMC) consider purchasing tablets and/or supply Wi-Fi for Veterans who do not have these devices? Are there other sections of the VA that could assist?	<p>Daniel Schoeps, VA: VA does not supply Wi-Fi, however, VA is approving tablets and other devices in Veteran's budgets. We have made tablets and other devices available to certain VA-operated nursing homes and state Veteran's homes via the VA Office of Connected Care. We are not aware of other sections of VA making this available, but will confirm this with the VA Office of Connected Care.</p> <p>Marty Exline, AT3: There are some internet companies offering 60 days of free Wi-Fi, and others are suspending their overage costs for a short period. This is something to watch out for in your area.</p>



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Assistive Technology and Telehealth	Is the VA providing devices for telehealth? Can Veterans use VDC funds to purchase devices for telehealth?	<p>VAMCs potentially have programs to make telehealth technologies available for Veterans, like Veterans Video Connect. Veterans and VDC providers should explore these options, with the help of VA VDC coordinators, as well as State adaptive technology programs before considering using VDC funds to purchase devices for telehealth. All uses of VDC funds will be reflected on spending plans approved by the Veteran, VDC provider, and VA VDC coordinator.</p> <p>Joy Sobczak, AgeGuide (Northeastern Illinois Agency on Aging): A helpful link through the Red Cross provides information on Wi-Fi and devices for Veterans. “Eligible Veterans and caregivers can now receive free Portal from Facebook video calling devices. The devices, which will be distributed in pairs, will help Veterans connect with their caregivers, families and friends to reduce isolation and improve social connectedness.”</p>



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VDC Monthly Reporting Tool	Are we able to enter data into the new reporting tool?	<p>The Administration for Community Living (ACL) is launching the VDC Monthly Reporting Tool on a new platform that will offer improved data reporting capabilities for users. While ACL continues to develop the new tool, ACL created an interim tool to showcase four new Veteran census questions that are featured on the VDC Monthly Reporting Tool. The interim tool is built in an easily accessible platform called Smartsheet. To use the interim tool, please note the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The interim tool will be available beginning May 1, 2020 until the formal reporting platform is complete. The interim tool can be accessed using the following link: Interim VDC Monthly Reporting Tool• Attached below is a “How To” user manual that provides instructions for accessing and using the interim tool to enter data. If there is a new VA Medical Center relationship that is missing from the options provided, please contact us at veterandirected@acl.hhs.gov. <p> Interim_VDC_Monthly_Reporting_Tool_Usr</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• As of April 30, 2020, the VDC Ticker website will no longer be available. However, if you need to access any of the data that was captured in the VDC Ticker website, please contact us at veterandirected@acl.hhs.gov. <p>If you submitted your user profile information for the purposes of the final version of the VDC Monthly Reporting Tool, we still have that information and are creating user profiles using that information. If you have yet to submit your contact information for the new tool, please contact us at veterandirected@acl.hhs.gov so we can collect that from you.</p>