

Community Care Reform

The VFW's Concern:

While community care is a necessary component of Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) health care, administrative barriers prevent veterans from receiving timely, high-quality services. Despite seeing some improvements with the passage of the *VA MISSION Act of 2018* (Public Law 115-182), veterans still face confusing eligibility rules, delayed referrals, billing disputes, and inconsistent communication and coordination. These challenges are especially harmful for those in rural areas who rely heavily on community providers. Growing numbers of women veterans depend on community care for specialty care including mammograms, maternity services, and fertility treatment. Veterans in mental health crises may require immediate inpatient services outside of VA facilities. Additionally, veterans living overseas—many of whom support American military or diplomatic interests—face additional barriers when attempting to access VA health care through the Foreign Medical Program (FMP). This program currently restricts eligibility to those with service-connected disabilities or participation in rehabilitation programs, and requires veterans to seek out their own providers and apply for reimbursement. This uncoordinated care leaves many abroad without reliable access to medical services and poses unnecessary risks to national security.

For these reasons, the VFW strongly supports strengthening oversight, transparency, and coordination of these programs to ensure veterans receive clear information about eligibility, referrals, and scheduling, and to ensure community providers receive timely payments to maintain a strong network. The VFW also seeks to modernize the FMP by expanding eligibility to all veterans abroad, removing barriers tied to disability status or rehabilitation, modernizing payment systems, and exploring provider networks outside the United States. The combined result would improve health care coordination, reduce treatment delays, prevent gaps in care, and ensure that veterans in the states or overseas have timely access to services in their local communities.

The VFW Urges Congress to:

Pass H.R.740 / S.275, *Veterans' ACCESS Act of 2025*, to ensure veterans receive clear information and timely health care by improving the efficiency, oversight, and coordination of VA's community care program.

Pass H.R.467, *Foreign Medical Program Modernization Act of 2025*, to expand access to health care for veterans living abroad by modernizing reimbursement systems and strengthening global care options.

Note: For H.R.740 cosponsorship, please email Matt Brennan at matt.brennan@mail.house.gov.

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