VA Ending Veteran Homelessness in Manistee, Wexford and Missaukee, Michigan

The United States Department of Veterans Affairs has been committed to ending homelessness among Veterans. In their collaboration with the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH), a mission to end homelessness among Veterans was developed to guide the work of Veterans Affairs Homeless Programs. This mission includes establishing “Functional Zero” within communities. Functional Zero is reached when the number of Veterans experiencing homelessness within a community is less than the average number of Veterans being connected with permanent housing each month.

To achieve Functional Zero, communities must have practices in place to ensure all Veterans experiencing homelessness are identified and sheltered immediately, if the Veteran chooses. In addition, communities have the ability to quickly place Veterans experiencing homelessness into permanent housing, only using transitional housing programs on rare occasion. Communities achieving Functional Zero have shown evidence of chronic and long-term homelessness among Veterans dissolving.

Efforts are coordinated by the Aleda E. Lutz Veterans Affairs Medical Center (VAMC) Homeless Program and Community Homeless Service providers. Veterans experiencing homelessness have received outreach services and case management, in addition to public housing subsidies. VA and Community Homeless services have been efficiently and promptly provided to any Veteran in need. As a result, Manistee, Wexford, and Missaukee counties have achieved the benchmarks for Functional Zero among Veterans experiencing homelessness. These areas are the second in Michigan to meet this goal and the first within the Michigan Balance of State Continuum of Care.

The Aleda E. Lutz VAMC Homeless Program encompasses three services.

1. The Grant and Per Diem Program is comprised of two contracts to provide Veterans with transitional housing placement for up to two years.
2. The Health Care for Homeless Veterans Program provides outreach services to homeless Veterans, as well case management to those Veterans in emergency shelter beds with one of the five contracted providers.

3. The Housing and Urban Development, Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing Program provides permanent housing placement through rental subsidies and case management for Veterans to prevent the recurrence of homelessness. There are currently 229 HUD-VASH vouchers managed by the Aleda E. Lutz VAMC Homeless Program.

The VA is committed to serving all its Veterans and is proactive in ensuring homeless Veterans transition to stable housing and help them on the next phase of their lives.

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The Aleda E. Lutz VAMC in Saginaw, Michigan operates an 81-bed skilled nursing and rehabilitation Community Living Center, with an additional 8-bed acute medicine and telemetry wing. It provides care to over 36,700 Veterans in a 35-county geographic area, from mid-Michigan to the Mackinac Bridge. Veterans also receive care at one of our nine VA Community Based Outpatient Clinics located throughout Michigan. More information about this VA can be found at www.saginaw.va.gov.

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