



Improving Veterans' awareness and access to VAC Benefits

July 2018

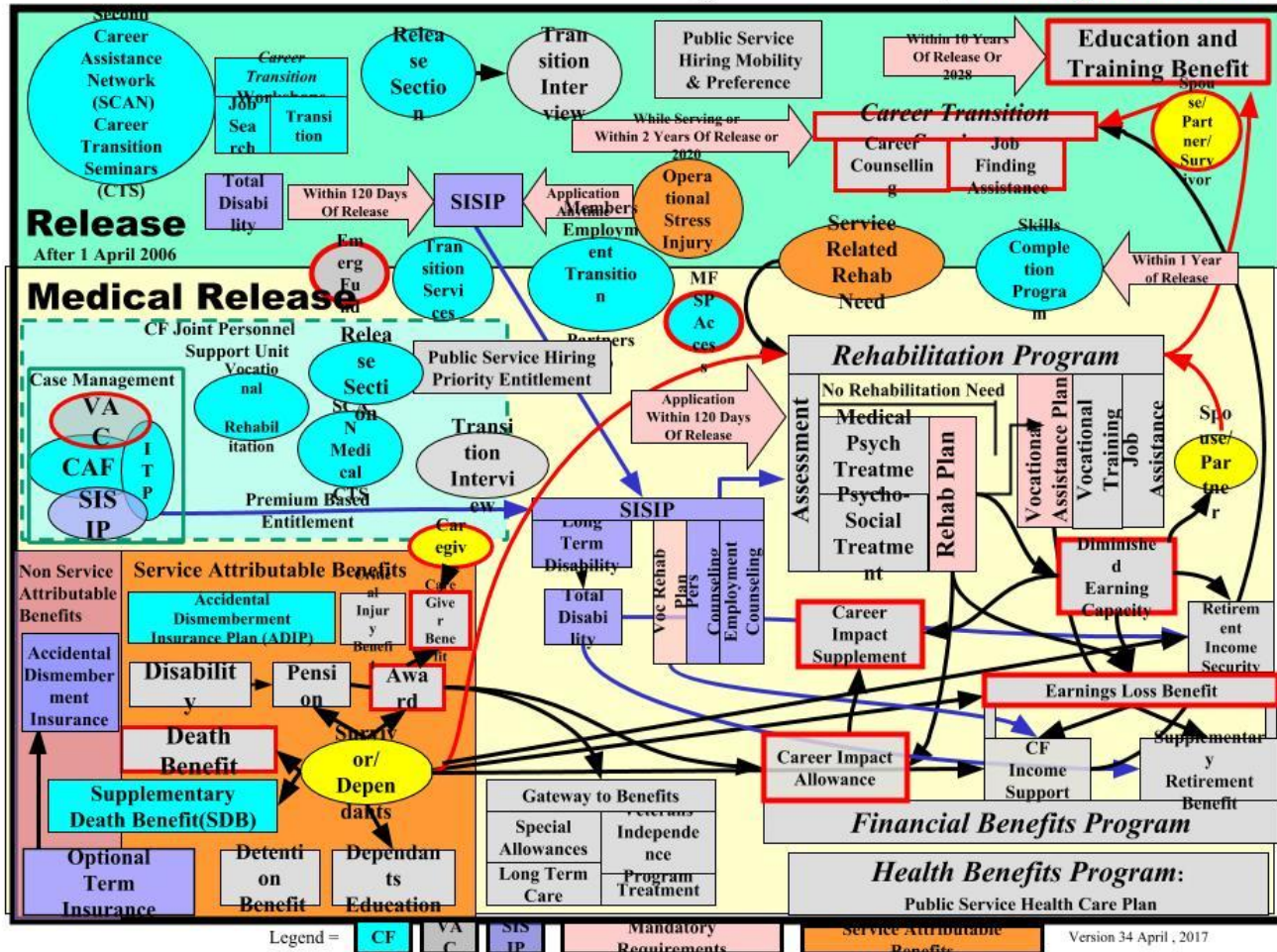
658,000


30%

19%

Canadian Forces/Veterans Affairs Canada Program Relationships with Budget 2016 & 2017

Benefits offered across CAF and VAC





Benefits have become more and more difficult to understand



Promise to modernize Service Delivery

“We are trying to effect a culture change at Veterans Affairs Canada. Instead of the onus being on the Veteran to attempt to research and figure out exactly what programs and services they're entitled to – they are owed – **the onus is on us.**”

Hon. Seamus O'Regan
Minister of Veteran Affairs Canada



Discovery findings

1. Low familiarity with VAC services
2. Decreased uptake of benefits



User research

1. User's worldview, not experts worldview.
2. Develop in-depth understanding with small sample sizes. Not formulating large-scale predictions.



Research focus

What are Veterans' needs and goals?

What is the Veteran's journey to VAC services?

Range of users, range of needs



Canadian Armed Forces



War Service Veterans



Allied Veterans



RCMP



Veterans' Families



Health care providers

2017

658,000

Veterans

58,000

World War and
Korean War Veterans

600,000

Modern-day Veterans

Profile for Veterans

- CAF, Regular Force
- 25–50 years old
- Recently released & still serving (in transition)
- Owns smartphone or computer with internet access
- Not vulnerable or high risk



Field Research

- 4 Weeks
- 75+ Recruiter referrals
- 40+ Participants reached
- 9 In-depth interviews

Collecting 'thick data'

12	Hours of research
200	Pages of notes
10	Researchers
5	Locations



400+ Observations


80+ Themes



Findings



**Modern-day Veterans are
disconnected from VAC's
brand engagement**



Military culture makes it hard to ask for help. This makes applying for benefits a stigmatized subject.

“

I needed someone to say the words.
Address some of the irrational fears I had.

”



VAC's outreach efforts aren't reaching Veterans at the right time and place.

“

You go go go your whole life and suddenly
you don't know what to do with yourself

”




False perceptions and myths
surround VAC services.

“

At the back of my mind I'm going to be
perceived as someone gaming the system

”



The most influential source encouraging Veterans to apply for benefits is their social network.


“

It was my friend who got me going
They said, you got hurt, you've got to file.

”

2

**Veterans cannot
relate to the content
on VAC's website**



New Veterans are figuring out their lives.
They don't see how VAC can help them.

“

While they hear of Veterans Affairs, they're
not ready to hear their message

”

3

**Veterans find VAC's
website complex and
overwhelming**



Veterans spend more time navigating than learning.

“

There's a lot in there. There's no roadmap.
The website is not good if you don't know
what you're looking for.

”



Veterans need plain language instead of bureaucratic descriptions.

“

They are so word specific. Certain words written
in a specific way. It's not necessarily positive.
It's not really right either.

”

4

**Veterans feel that
VAC relies too much
on their website.**



Applying for a benefit is a big decision.

Veterans need human guidance to provide advice, reassurance and emotional support.


“

Can VAC create a network of people to help more people apply? A safe, informal place?

”

5

**Veterans are frustrated
by lack of transparency
and unclear process**



Veterans need realistic expectations of the application process to decide if it's worth their time and effort.

“

I need more clarity on how claims are accepted or denied. We need a more open process.

”

Our Approach

Disconnect, guidance, and expectations

As a user, I want to **find relevant benefits** and
confidently **take my next steps**.



What we've done so far

- Co-created content VAC and partners
- Prototype development
- Usability testing


DEMO



Link to prototype:

<https://vac-poc.herokuapp.com/A?section=BB&lng=en>

ALPHA For testing only.

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Find benefits relevant to you

Veteran Affairs Canada offers over 20 benefits to help you and your family.
Use the filters below to find benefits that are relevant to your needs.

Show me benefits for:

Recipient

Veteran or serving member

Family members

Organizations

[Clear](#)

I need help with:

Select all that apply


Emergency funds

Showing all benefits


Remember to read the eligibility criteria for each benefit before applying.

Sort By: **Popularity**


[FAVOURITES \(0\)](#) [PRINT](#) [CLOSE ALL](#)

Disability Award  +


Financial support for injuries or illnesses related to military service.

Disability Pension  +

Pension for injuries or illnesses related to military service.

Rehabilitation Services 

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Show me benefits for:

Recipient

- Veteran or serving member
- Family members
- Organizations

Service type

- Canadian Armed Forces
- Royal Canadian Mounted Police
- WWII or Korean War Veterans




[Clear](#)

Showing 19 benefits for you to consider


Remember to read the eligibility criteria for each benefit before applying.

Sort By: Popularity

[FAVOURITES \(0\)](#) [PRINT](#) [CLOSE ALL](#)

- Disability Award  +
Financial support for injuries or illnesses related to military service.
- Disability Pension  +
Pension for injuries or illnesses related to military service.
- Rehabilitation Services 

ALPHA For testing only.


 Government of Canada / Gouvernement du Canada

[FRANÇAIS](#)

Find benefits relevant to you

Veteran Affairs Canada offers over 20 benefits to help you and your family. Use the filters below to find benefits that are relevant to your needs.

Show me benefits for:

Recipient

Veteran or serving member

Family members

Organizations

Service type

Canadian Armed Forces

Royal Canadian Mounted Police

WWII or Korean War Veterans

Service status

Showing 18 benefits for you to consider

Remember to read the eligibility criteria for each benefit before applying.

Sort By: Popularity

[FAVOURITES \(0\)](#)
[PRINT](#)
[CLOSE ALL](#)

Disability Award ♥

Financial support for injuries or illnesses related to military service. +

Disability Pension ♥

Pension for injuries or illnesses related to military service. +

Rehabilitation Services ♥

Show me benefits for:

Recipient

- Veteran or serving member
- Family members
- Organizations

Service type

- Canadian Armed Forces
- Royal Canadian Mounted Police
- WWII or Korean War Veterans

Service status

- Released
- Still-serving
- Deceased

[Clear](#)





Showing 16 benefits for you to consider

Remember to read the eligibility criteria for each benefit before applying.

Sort By

Popularity ▾

[FAVOURITES \(0\)](#) [PRINT](#) [CLOSE ALL](#)

- Disability Award 
Financial support for injuries or illnesses related to military service. +
- Disability Pension 
Pension for injuries or illnesses related to military service. +
- Rehabilitation Services 
Personalized support to improve your health and find a new career. +
- Veterans Emergency Fund 
Financial support for urgent and unexpected situations. +

I need help with:

Service status

Released

Still-serving

Deceased

[Clear](#)

I need help with:

Select all that apply

Emergency funds

Finding a job


Education and training

Financial support


Medical expenses

Anxiety


Chronic pain

Rehabilitation Services  +


Personalized support to improve your health and find a new career.

Veterans Emergency Fund  +


Financial support for urgent and unexpected situations.

Veterans Independence Program  +

Financial support to help Veterans stay independent with everyday life at home.

Career Transition Services  +

Access to a career counselor to help you find a new job.

Priority Hiring  +

Priority hiring for positions within the Federal Public Service.

Service status

Released

Still-serving

Deceased

[Clear](#)

I need help with:

Select all that apply

Emergency funds

Finding a job


Education and training

Financial support


Medical expenses

Anxiety


Chronic pain

Rehabilitation Services  +


Personalized support to improve your health and find a new career.

Veterans Emergency Fund  +


Financial support for urgent and unexpected situations.

Veterans Independence Program  +

Financial support to help Veterans stay independent with everyday life at home.

Career Transition Services  +

Access to a career counselor to help you find a new job.

Priority Hiring  +

Priority hiring for positions within the Federal Public Service.

Popularity ▾
FAVOURITES (0) PRINT CLOSE ALL

Recipient

Veteran or serving member

Family members

Organizations

Service type

Canadian Armed Forces

Royal Canadian Mounted Police

WWII or Korean War Veterans

Service status

Released

Still-serving

Deceased

[Clear](#)

I need help with:

Select all that apply

Emergency funds

Finding a job

Rehabilitation Services ♥

Personalized support to improve your health and find a new career.

Depending on your needs this program can provide:

- Case-manager and personalized plan
- Coverage for treatment costs such as physiotherapy, chiropractor costs and massage therapy
- Education costs and course materials

FIND OUT MORE

With this benefit the Veteran may have access to:

Group Health Insurance	+
Career Impact Allowance	+
Earnings Loss Benefit	+

With this benefit the Veteran's family may have access to:

Earnings Loss Benefit	+
Vocational Assistance	+

Show me benefits for:

Recipient: **Veteran or serving member**
Service type: **Canadian Armed Forces**
Service status: **Released**

I need help with:

- **Finding a job**
- **Education and training**

Showing 4 benefits for you to consider

Career Transition Services

Access to a career counselor to help you find a new job.

Education and Training Benefit

Financial support to help you achieve your education and career goals.

Priority Hiring

Priority hiring for positions within the Federal Public Service.

Rehabilitation Services

Personalized support to improve your health and find a new career.



Key performance indicators for Product

- Increase product **completion rate**
- Increase user **comprehension**
- Increase user **confidence**



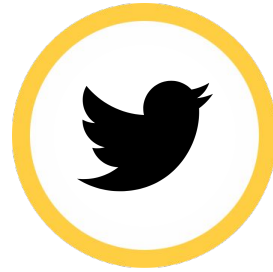
Asks to complete Alpha

- 1) Host internally Underway
- 2) Update content Underway
- 3) Program content validation
- 4) Testing with area office and NCCN staff
- 5) User testing at area offices and NCCN
- 6) Operations data on VAC services

Thank you



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Appendix