

THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of the Press Secretary

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 11, 2014



Fact Sheet: First Lady & Dr. Biden Applaud Commitments to Support Caregivers

As part of their Joining Forces initiative – and the Administration’s ongoing efforts to engage all sectors of society to give our service members and their families the opportunities and support they have earned - First Lady Michelle Obama and Dr. Jill Biden hosted former First Lady Rosalynn Carter, former Senator Elizabeth Dole and caregivers of veterans and active duty service members to discuss ways to improve the support and resources available for caregivers.

The White House announced and applauded the commitments made by many organizations to launch additional support networks and other resources for caregivers.

New programming and commitments include:

Caregiver Peer to Peer Support Initiative

[The Department of Defense](#)

The Department of Defense is going to support all military caregivers through a peer-to-peer support initiative. Over the next 14 months, the Department of Defense will form in-person peer-to-peer forums for caregivers at every military installation around the world that serves wounded warriors and their caregivers. Through online tools and webinars, caregivers who are not able to attend an in-person forum can connect to their peers as well.

Military and Veteran Caregiver Peer Support Network

[Elizabeth Dole Foundation](#), [Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors](#), [American Legion Auxiliary](#), [Caregivers Action Network](#), [Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America](#), [Blue Star Families](#), [Wounded Warrior Project](#), [Military Officers Association of America](#), [Association of the United States Army](#), [National Military Family Association](#), [National Guard Association of the United States](#)

Using the spoke and wheel model of the Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS) peer mentorship program, TAPS, in conjunction with a network of Military Service Organizations, Veteran Support Organizations, non-profit, and faith-based organizations commit to training 10 master trainers, 50 trainers and 10,000 peer mentors in the next year. Through this process, they will reach 50,000 caregivers with peer support using one-on-one mentoring, online communities and community-based peer support groups. This commitment will also serve to increase caregiver knowledge and use of information and services through the VA Caregiver Helpline and the National Resource Directory.

Expanded Access to Training for Caregivers

[Easter Seals Dixon Center](#), [Rosalynn Carter Institute for Caregiving](#), [National Alliance for Caregiving](#), [Family Caregiver Alliance](#), [Caregiver Action Network](#), [Atlas Research](#)

This innovative collaboration across several prominent organizations will provide countless caregivers expanded access to valuable training. A series of bi-monthly online educational seminars will provide educational support for military and veteran caregivers. Topics will focus on gaps as identified in the Elizabeth Dole Foundation RAND Study, including self-care, accessing legal and financial resources, and other issues of critical importance to caregivers. These training sessions will engage thousands of caregivers across the country reaching beyond those caregivers who are already connected with the VA Caregiver Support Program. Partner organizations will conduct rigorous outreach to register military and veteran caregivers – as well as other interested stakeholders – who may benefit from the information and training.

Free Financial/Legal/Social Resources for Military and Veteran Caregivers

[MOAA](#), [USAA](#), [ABA](#), [Public Counsel](#), [Google](#)

The Military Officers of Association of American (MOAA), with assistance from USAA, the Elizabeth Dole Foundation, and the American Bar Association (ABA), is launching a web-based guide to aid caregivers in contingency planning and decision-making. The website will be a major public portal for caregivers across the country to access free financial, legal and social resources, benefitting tens of thousands of military families. Resources include military and veteran benefits, finance and legal issues counsel and support during or after transitioning from the military and long term planning. This initiative will be further enhanced through a major national collaborative effort—Lawyers for Heroes—a partnership between the Center for Veterans Advancement (CVA) at Public Counsel, ABA and MOAA to offer free legal support to military families who are struggling the most financially. Google will incorporate its online collaboration service Helpouts into the site, giving military caregivers the ability to speak online with social workers who can provide free screening and resource assistance.

Creating Jobs for Military and Veteran Caregivers

[US Chamber of Commerce](#)

The successful Chamber of Commerce Hiring Our Heroes program will pilot an initiative aimed at helping caregivers find jobs. The Chamber of Commerce will expand its current job fair program focused on veterans by developing and piloting a targeted program in areas with high concentrations of military caregivers, namely, those around military treatment facilities. Recognizing that many military caregivers have limited flexibility, the Chamber of Commerce will also incorporate caregivers into an innovative virtual job fair program it is unveiling that will help caregivers find rewarding jobs. Additionally, the Chamber of Commerce will host a summit for the business community in September 2014 to promote employment and workplace-friendly environments for military caregivers.

Providing Support for the Nation's Jewish Community's Military and Veteran Caregivers

[Jewish Chaplains Council](#), [Jewish Community Centers Association of North America](#)

The Jewish Chaplains Council and the Jewish Community Centers Association of North America will incorporate the needs of caregivers into a new program to welcome home veterans, called Project Welcome Home. A key focus of the JCC's will be to coordinate with community organizations to engage in activities such as: providing the respite opportunities identified as a critical need for caregivers. To remove barriers to community engagement and prevent isolation of caregivers and those they care for, each participating JCC will create cost-effective ways to make available the resources of their center such as child care, senior care, day and overnight camping, fitness centers and more.

###