I am a family member. What can I do?

There are many different ways that a family member can support their loved one’s mental health recovery.

**TALK TO THE TREATMENT TEAM**

Ask your loved one for permission to talk to his/her treatment providers.
- Request information about his/her illness and treatment.
- Request a referral to family services or a support group.
- Share your observations about your relatives with his/her treatment team.
- Call your relative’s treatment team if you have a question or concern.
- Attend regular or occasional meetings with your relative’s treatment providers.

**TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF**

- Make time to do things you enjoy
- Make use of supports
- Talk to friends and family

**PROVIDE SUPPORT**

- Learn about your loved one’s condition and its treatment.
- Educate other family members about his/her condition.
- Provide practical supports such as transportation and financial assistance, when you can.
- Maintain a positive, supportive atmosphere at home.
- Make efforts to include your family member in family and social activities.

**REMEMBER THAT YOU ARE NOT ALONE**

- Connect with other families that have similar experiences.
- Consider attending a support group for family members.
- Consider engaging in family therapy with your loved one.
- Join a VA Caregiver Support Group!

*As a parent of a disabled Vet who has required VA medical center services many times, I have interfaced with provider staff on several occasions. I have found the staff to be very helpful, dedicated, caring and compassionate not only to my Vet but to me as well.*

- Father of Veteran

*It is very helpful to be able to contact his counselors to get advice on how to handle situations in a manner that is beneficial to him.*

- Partner of Veteran

**FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT:**

http://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/families.asp
MENTAL HEALTH RECOVERY AND THE FAMILY

Family can play a crucial role in a Veteran’s mental health recovery!

When family members become involved in a Veteran’s mental health treatment, there are benefits for everyone in the family:

- Better understanding of the Veteran’s diagnosis and treatment plan
- Increased feelings of hope
- Decreased worry/concern
- Improved well-being
- Reduction in stress
- Higher self-esteem
- Improved family relationships

FAMILY RESOURCES

NAMI
Offers free support and education programs for family.
1-800-950-6264
http://www.nami.org

National VA Resources

Coaching Into Care
A national hotline that provides information about how to motivate your loved ones to seek care.
1-888-823-7458
http://www.mirecc.va.gov/coaching

Caregiver Support Line
A national hotline that provides information about caregiver support services you may be eligible.
1-855-260-3274
http://www.caregiver.va.gov

Veterans Crisis Line
A national hotline for Veterans and their family and friends in crisis, where you can get access to caring, qualified responders.
1-800-273-8255, then press 1
http://www.veteranscrisisline.net/

Having the opportunity to meet with my husband’s clinicians and participate in his care helped improve our interactions at home and enabled me to be more supportive.
- Partner of Veteran

FAMILY SUPPORT FOR MENTAL HEALTH RECOVERY