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# Veterans Outcomes – Shaping Tomorrow

Veterans Ombudsman  
May 9<sup>th</sup>, 2016



# Purpose of the presentation

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- To provoke discussion on re-thinking benefits and the outcomes we hope to achieve for Veterans

“ “ Veterans need hope. To have hope, you need forward movement. To have forward movement, you need better options ahead of you than behind you. ” ”

Guy Parent  
Veterans Ombudsman

# Opportunity for change

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## Fixing Today

- Veterans were heard in Budget 2016
  - Enhancements to benefits for most vulnerable
  - Some improvements to service delivery

## Shaping Tomorrow

- Opportunity to re-think benefits and services for Veterans
- Requires a focus on what we want to achieve
- Requires clearly defining outcomes, for example:
  - What does “reasonable financial security” mean?
  - What does “Veteran-centric service delivery” look like?

# What are the challenges we hear?

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## Benefits are complex and fragmented

- Benefits are not well understood
- Longstanding culture of layering regulations and programs, often with multiple providers
- Confusion re income replacement benefits vs. compensation for pain and suffering

## Service delivery is ineffective

- Onus on the Veteran to know how to apply and what to apply for
- Veterans need to apply multiple times for multiple benefits
- Lack of support to navigate the process
- Reasons for decisions are not well communicated



# This is achievable...

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- Veterans transition seamlessly and successfully from military to civilian life
- Apply once to VAC for all benefits/services and having a single point of contact for all their questions
- Benefits are simple to understand and meet the needs of Veterans and their families
- Decisions are clear and timely
- Veterans and their families are well supported



# How do we get there?

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## **Focus the discussion on outcomes for Veterans**

- What outcome do we want to achieve?
- What is the benchmark to measure success?
- What is the status quo?
- How are different veteran populations affected?
- How do we achieve the desired outcome?



# More specifically, consider...

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## Service delivery

- What does “Veteran-centric service” mean?
- How can VAC deliver services simpler, easier, faster?
- How do we integrate and streamline service delivery across multiple providers?

## Financial benefits

- What does “financial security” mean?
- How do we simplify benefits and ensure they meet needs?
- How do we consider the needs of families in their own right?

# Financial security outcome

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- Need a benchmark to measure success that is fair and recognizes sacrifice
- Proposed benchmark for a Veteran who is totally and permanently incapacitated (TPI):

The income a TPI Veteran would have received had they completed a 35-year career on a normal career path

# Comparison for Benchmark

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1. Current method of providing income replacement creates inconsistent outcomes because the outcome to be achieved has not been defined
2. Short-service Veterans are generally disadvantaged compared to Long-service Veterans
3. Officers receive proportionally less income replacement than Non-Commissioned Members (NCMs)
4. The benefits used to compensate for lost career progression and job opportunity use a common payment value which does not take into account that economic impact is based on years of service and salary
5. Tweaking existing benefits is not going to change delivering inconsistent outcomes that disadvantage some and reward others



# Without clearly defined outcomes...

...analysis is impossible

- Don't know the impact of a program
- Don't know if outcome is different for different Veteran populations
- Don't know the impact of changing one variable on the overall outcome
- Aren't able to explain the outcome to the Veteran

Additional outcomes need to be defined (e.g., injured veterans not TPI)

# Current work

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- Joint Transition Project
- Review of Family Support
- Non-Economic Benefits - Review and Report
- Determinants of Successful Transition
- Analysis of all financial benefits (actuarial model)





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