

Contact the VA to Encourage Implementation of the VA Assisted Living Pilot Program

The National Center for Assisted Living (NCAL), representing more than 5,000 assisted living communities across the country, continues to applaud the Congressional passage of the [Senator Elizabeth Dole 21st Century Veterans Healthcare and Benefits Improvement Act](#). The bill, signed into law earlier this year, includes provisions that offer assisted living to eligible veterans, paid for by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).

Aging and disabled veterans can benefit greatly from the services provided in assisted living communities. They deserve to have the freedom to choose how and where they receive the long term care they need. NCAL advocated for this VA AL pilot program; it is a sensible approach to add the benefit of assisted living for veterans and provides the VA critical flexibility to address the needs of our rapidly growing veteran population – many of whom may be unable to live at home.

In this pilot program, the VA Secretary must select two Veterans Integrated Service Networks (VISNs) of the Department of Veterans Affairs to carry it out. The locations of communities included in the pilot will be in geographically diverse areas and the pilot program will serve no more than 60 eligible veterans in each VISN. Not later than one year after the initiation of the pilot program and annually thereafter for the duration of the pilot, the VA Secretary shall submit to the Committees on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives and the Senate a report on the program.

The timing is right to get this pilot program implemented. A December 2023 VA report to Congress on long term care strategy and projections noted that VA expects the proportion of Veterans over age 85 to increase by 58% and the number of women Veterans to increase by 160% between fiscal years 2022 and 2033.

We request that members of Congress and their staff contact the VA Secretary and his team directly to urge this pilot program get underway.



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