



Australian Government
Department of Veterans' Affairs

Community Nursing Program

DVA-contracted Community Nursing Providers

Bulletin
November 2012

Veteran Mental Health Training Package for Community Nurses



Online

Mental health is an important issue for the veteran and ex-service community with poor mental health often arising from war service. The Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) is committed to ensuring appropriate, accessible and evidence-based mental health care for the veterans. One way this can be achieved is by offering professional development opportunities that assist community nurses to support veteran clients with mental health issues.

You may have heard of, or participated in, one of the vetAWARE workshops which commenced nationally in July 2011 and concluded in May 2012. Just over 300 community nurses attended the workshops and the response has been positive.

DVA is pleased to announce that **vetAWARE** is now available **online**.

The online training aims to raise community nurses' awareness of the common mental health issues facing the veteran community and will provide information and referral options available to veterans, their families and carers.

vetAWARE online has been developed by DVA, in consultation with community nurses and other mental health professionals.

vetAWARE online training is for registered and enrolled nurses who provide services to veterans through DVA's Community Nursing Program.

Why should I undertake the vetAWARE online training?

vetWARE online is:

- *Specialised* - the training has been specifically tailored to the identified needs of community nurses
- *Quality care focussed* - this training aims to enhance the quality of services nursing staff provide and their response to veterans presenting with mental health issues
- *Free* - the training is free to participants
- *Endorsed* - the training is endorsed by the Royal College of Nursing Australia and offers 10 Continuing Nursing Education points and Continuing Professional Development
- *Accessible* - being an online course you can participate in the training from your home or workplace whenever you have the time
- *Easy to use* - the training is interactive, engaging and user friendly
- *Flexible* - the training has been designed to cater for all levels of experience and allows you to participate at your own pace - you can stop and resume as your time permits

Training Key Components

The following key components will form the basis of training content:

- Understanding the veteran experience
- Overcoming the stigma attached to mental health issues
- Understanding the role of community nurses
- Identifying factors that can affect or co-exist with mental health disorders
- Recognising and responding to mental health disorders
- Building skills to establish trust, communicate effectively and work with resistance
- Setting boundaries and applying self care strategies
- Understanding referral pathways and available resources

How can I access the training?

To access vetAWARE online go to dvatraining.dva.gov.au/register. As a first time user you will be required to register before commencing the training. Your registration code is **nurseVet1**.

For more information on accessing vetAWARE and navigating the DVA learning management system please see the Quick Reference Guide at www.dva.gov.au/service_providers/community_nursing/Pages/index.aspx

If you have any queries regarding this matter please email the DVA Mental Health training mailbox mh.training@dva.gov.au.

Please ensure that all relevant community nursing staff in your organisation are made aware of the information contained in this Bulletin.