

**Department of Veteran Affairs
Veteran's Health Administration (VHA) -Uber Health Connect Initiative (VUHC)**

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Objective of Program: Transportation fragmentation for Veterans is one of the biggest barriers to increasing access to health services and costs the VA nearly \$4.4 billion each year due to cancelled appointments as a result of transportation issues. The VHA-Uber Health Connect Initiative (VUHC) pilot is a public-private collaboration that aims to offer a supplemental transportation option for Veterans/Caregivers to get to/from care and solve the transportation barriers to healthcare for Veterans.

The objective of this pilot initiative was to demonstrate the benefits of this ride sharing solution in two Veterans Integrated Services Networks (VISNs 9 and 15). Learnings from the pilot implementation would be used to then roll the program out nation-wide. The goals for this collaboration effort are to:

- Reduce No-Shows / Missed Appointments for Veterans
- Improve Veteran Experience
- Cut Healthcare System Costs

Planning/Research Methods: The Veterans Health Administration Innovation Ecosystem (VHAIE) leadership team entered a public-private collaboration between VHA and Uber Health through a Cooperative Research and Development Agreement (CRADA) allowing VA to obtain program management services from Uber Health, a non-VA and commercial provider. VHAIE gathered a cross-functional team comprised of VHAIE, Veterans Transportation Program (VTP), Uber Health, VA Medical Centers (VAMC), and VISN (Veteran Integrated Service Network) team members to plan and launch VUHC.

Implementation Methods: In January 2022, the VUHC was launched across ten VAMCs in two VISN region. [VA Debuts New Health Services Transit Program with Uber \(governmentciomedia.com\)](#). For each VAMC, VHA provided an Uber Health Account training, virtual training session on processes and expectations, and an official site launch. Throughout the pilot, VHA facilitated regular huddles with pilot VAMCs to answer questions, troubleshoot challenges, and track progress. The VUHC team developed a dashboard to track and monitor the number of unique rides, cost savings and VA employee/customer experience. Throughout the pilot, the team conducted a human-centered design and Veteran experience surveys to capture feedback from employees and Veteran users on their experience using Uber Health services.

Results: The supplemental transportation option provided by VUHC between January – December 2022 was effective in increasing Veteran's access to health care and cost-savings.

- There were more than 3,671 unique Veterans that took over 21,000 Uber Health rides to and from their medical appointments.
- As a result of these Uber Health rides, VAMC savings have been estimated at over \$25M, primarily from faster discharges from the emergency department and inpatient care services (saving more than 1,300 bed days) plus a reduction in no-shows and appointment cancellations (avoiding more than 20,000 missed appointment).
- Through user feedback surveys, 89 percent of Veterans agreed or strongly agreed that they were satisfied with Uber Health and 90 percent of Veterans surveyed indicated they would recommend Uber Health to another Veteran.
- Additionally, 83% of survey respondents indicated they would have missed their appointment without the service of Uber Health.

Based on the success of the VHA-Uber Health Connect Initiative pilot, the pilot is being expanded to nearly 60 VAMC facilities across 9 VISNs in 2023