



American Association of  
NURSE PRACTITIONERS®

## **VA Maintaining Internal Systems and Strengthening Integrated Outside Networks (MISSION) Act of 2018**

On June 6, 2018, the *VA Maintaining Internal Systems and Strengthening Integrated Outside Networks (MISSION) Act of 2018* (the Act) was signed into law. One of the provisions of this legislation was the establishment of the Veterans Community Care Program, which went into effect on June 6, 2019. This program replaces the Veterans Choice Program and aims to:

- Provide Veterans, who meet the criteria of the new program, with the option of receiving care from community care providers.
- Authorize the provision of care from certain non-VA providers, including NPs, for veterans needing hospital care, medical services, and extended care services. In order to facilitate this care, non-VA providers must enter into agreements with the VA.
- Require the VA to establish quality standards for health care provided to veterans through community providers, along with a system of monitoring the quality of care.
- Prohibit health care providers from providing non-department health care services to veterans if the provider was removed from employment with the VA due to conduct that violated a VA policy relating to the delivery of safe and appropriate health care or violated the requirements of their licensure which resulted in the loss of such license.
- Mandate that community providers comply with the VA Opioid Safety Initiative to ensure safe prescribing of opioids to veterans.
- Require prompt pay of community providers by the VA (which further rulemaking is expected to address at a later date).

The Act also includes a new urgent care benefit for veterans, establishes the Center for Innovation for Care and Payment, creates the Asset and Infrastructure Review Commission, expands the current VA family caregiver program, and extends the VA pension reductions for Medicaid-covered veterans in nursing homes.

On June 5, 2019, the VA finalized regulations on [community care](#) and [urgent care](#) to implement the VA Community Care Program. As noted above, additional regulations are expected at a later time. For more information on the Veterans Community Care Program please visit the VA's [Community Care Program website](#). Provider enrollment information can be found [here](#).