

Identify Existing Resources

At this point we hope you have looked at your community and examined what the veteran population looks like for you. You should have a basic understanding of how many veterans you have, if their active service members amongst your population and the general age range of those people.

By using the THRIVE Tool you will also have been able to discover what type of community gaps and risk factors your population face so now you need to better understand what already exists to serve the veteran population.

REMEMBER – Veterans return to communities NOT programs!



Having a strong community that is interconnected with services, provides the safest environment for veterans and their families. Navigating what services are available can be very challenging for people – so gaining a good understanding of what already exists and linking together those services with what you are wanting to provide is essential for success.

Ask these types of questions as you begin to gather information about what is already provided in the community that you live in:

- 1) If I am a veteran needing services – who do I call?
- 2) How does a veteran access mental health or physical health services in my community?
- 3) What National Veteran Services are available?
- 4) What veteran non – profit services exist for transport, recreation, family services etc.?
- 5) Do local towns have church groups, library programs, VFW, or veteran groups already?
- 6) What exists for families?
- 7) Are their Military or National Guard facilities in my community? What do they provide for community support?
- 8) What gaps are there in services?

Now is the time to have lots of conversations. Make lots of phone calls, meet and connect with those already working with this population. **Make Connections – they will help with what you are building!**