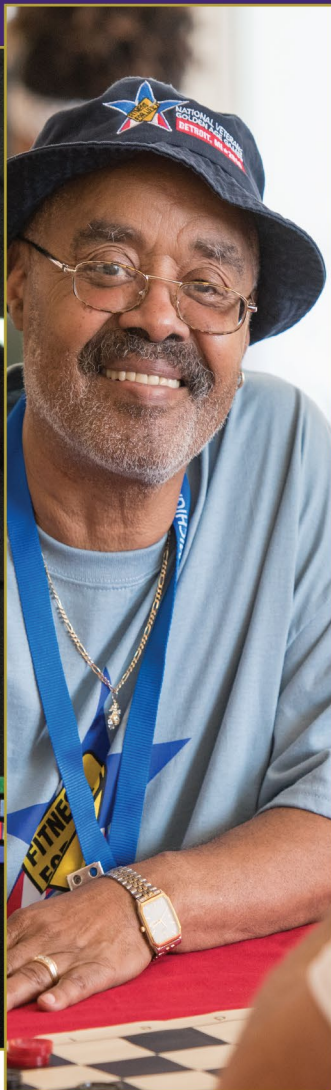




**MILLION  
VETERAN  
PROGRAM**



VHA Million Veteran Program (MVP)

## **Strategic Outreach and Communications Plan FY 22–26**

***DRAFT – FOR INTERNAL USE ONLY***

**VA**



U.S. Department  
of Veterans Affairs

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## Executive Summary

The Veterans Health Administration’s (VHA) Million Veteran Program (MVP) has achieved tremendous success enrolling over 850,000 Veterans over the past ten years. Recruitment and enrollment remain vital to the longevity of the program, especially as MVP aims to enroll one million participants by Veterans Day, November 11, 2022, with additional recruitment goals spanning through 2026. While traditional outreach methods like in-person recruitment and mailers were historically successful, the temporary pause in in-person activities during the ongoing coronavirus pandemic has significantly slowed recruitment. To achieve recruitment goals and increase the overall diversity of the Veteran cohort, MVP is adapting its communication and outreach capabilities to meet Veterans where they are – including online and in the community – with specialized messaging that resonates with targeted population segments.

This five-year MVP Outreach and Communications Plan is designed to outline, inform, and generate support among MVP stakeholders regarding proposed communications and outreach implementation plans to achieve both short and long-term awareness, education and training, recruitment and enrollment objectives. The approach is derived from MVP outreach lessons learned since the start of the program, primary research from Veterans, information intermediary and SME focus groups and in-depth interviews (related to MVP and associated with other VA programs over the past decade), outreach best practices from previous VA national outreach campaigns, public and private sector communication, outreach and recruiting evidence-based best practices, and the expertise from contractor communications, marketing and outreach SMEs.

## MVP Phased Communications and Timeline

The MVP Plan has four campaign phases spanning the next 60 months. The four campaign phases serve as a guideline for generating impactful MVP communications, with built-in flexibility to support adjustments and shifts in priorities based on achieving outcomes and Objectives and Key Results (OKR).

Each phase will include specific strategies and tactics to meet identified objectives and population recruitment goals. While the phases appear sequential, some processes and activities during the initial part of the plan will occur concurrently to efficiently move activities forward. This structure and timeline will also ensure that MVP resources are available and incorporated into planning, and that key internal stakeholders, who are critical for recruitment, are aligned and actively participating in campaign and messaging plans.

### *MVP Communications Plan Phases*

Phase	Description	Timeline
<b>Phase I</b>	MVP Branding & Content Creation and Internal Staff Outreach and Education	<i>Dec 2021 – June 2022</i>
<b>Phase II</b>	MVP Campaign Launch, Awareness and Recruitment: 1 Million Veteran Target and Reaching Select Priority Populations	<i>Jan 2022 – Dec 2022</i>
<b>Phase III</b>	Continuing Awareness and Recruitment: Reaching Priority Populations; MVP Online Enrollment and Alternate Specimen Collection Promotion	<i>Jan 2023 – Dec 2023</i>
<b>Phase IV</b>	Sustaining MVP with Integrated Outreach: Sustaining MVP Outreach, Recruitment, Priority Populations, Optimizing Awareness and Engagement Activities	<i>Jan 2024 – Dec 2026</i>





Phase I ●	Phase II ●	Phase III ●	Phase IV ●
<p><b>MVP Branding &amp; Content Creation; Internal Staff Outreach and Education</b></p> <p>Formalize MVP Campaign implementation Project Plan for FY22-23.</p> <p>Develop new MVP brand and collateral toolkit and revitalize MVP Online to facilitate long-term awareness, recruitment and enrollment activities.</p> <p>Focus on VA staff and partners, especially those tied to recruitment and enrollment activities.</p>	<p><b>MVP Campaign Launch, Awareness and Recruitment</b></p> <p>Launch new integrated “You’re one in a million” MVP Campaign tied to one million Veteran goal.</p> <p>Disseminate branded content and MVP stories via earned, owned and paid media and outreach channels.</p> <p>Implement “My MVP Moment” social media video campaign to encourage recruitment.</p> <p>Host and Promote MVP Goal Event when hit one million mark.</p> <p>Conduct outreach with internal and external stakeholders.</p>	<p><b>Continuing Awareness and Recruitment; MVP Online/Tasso Kit</b></p> <p>Continued outreach and promotion to reach new FY recruitment targets and priorities.</p> <p>Focus on promoting MVP online and self-service via Tasso kits.</p> <p>Leverage (non-VA) Veteran email lists to reach new potential recruits.</p> <p>Collaborate on increased community and in-person engagement pending shifts in pandemic.</p> <p>Assess and refine campaign tactics and messaging based on testing of content and outcomes data.</p>	<p><b>Sustaining MVP with Integrated Outreach</b></p> <p>Maintain and expand engagement with stakeholders promoting MVP enrollment/ MVP Online.</p> <p>Focus on recruiting prioritized Veteran populations.</p> <p>Focus on enhanced community-based engagement and use of partners and influencers.</p> <p>Leverage VA and non-VA Veteran email lists for recruiting and digital engagement activities.</p>

### MVP Recruitment, Enrollment & Communications Objectives

The strategies and tactics in this plan support the following MVP objectives:

Recruitment and Enrollment Objectives

Objectives	Fiscal Year Date
<p>Enroll 1-million total Veterans by November 11th, 2022 (Veterans Day)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>150,000/FY22; average 12,500 Veterans/month (50% via MVP Online)</li> </ul> <p>Improve recruitment and enrollment for underrepresented Veteran demographics groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase number of enrolled women Veterans by 20,000 (currently ~80,000, target 100,000)</li> <li>Increase number of enrolled Black/African American Veterans by 15,000 (currently ~150,000, target 165,000)</li> <li>Increase number of enrolled Veterans ages 18 – 49 by 30,000 (currently ~115,000, target 145,000)</li> </ul> <p><b>*Data reflects self-reported demographics on the 850,000 cohort (11/16/2021)</b></p>	2022
<p>Enroll 1.45 million total Veterans by November 11<sup>th</sup>, 2026</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>150,000 Veterans in FY22; 100,000/year from 2023 – 2026 (x% via MVP Online)</li> <li>Increase number of enrolled Hispanic/Latino Veterans by ## (currently #, target #)</li> <li>Increase number of enrolled Asian American/Pacific Islander (AAPI) Veterans by ## (currently #, target #)</li> <li>Increase number of enrolled Native American Veterans by ## (currently #, target #)</li> </ul>	2023–2026

Communications Objectives

Internal Objectives	External Objectives
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Achieve buy-in on all core aspects of the MVP plan and support necessary education and training, infrastructure and networks that will assist with coordinated implementation of the MVP strategy.</li> <li>Provide VA staff and partners with the education, training, and tools to successfully understand and communicate about MVP recruitment.</li> <li>Create awareness, understanding, and buy-in among internal VA stakeholders for the new and enhanced communications and enrollment campaign.</li> <li>Create clear measures of success; collect data that can effectively track the progress of campaign implementation and promote optimization to meet recruitment goals.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop compelling updated MVP branding, messaging, and resources that activate stakeholders to enroll in MVP.</li> <li>Further elevate the visibility/profile of MVP as an important VA research program.</li> <li>Reach, educate, inform, and activate Veteran and transitioning Service member populations about enrolling in MVP.</li> <li>Reinforce a strong external VA partner structure of collaboration and ongoing communication to facilitate long-term MVP recruitment and enrollment.</li> <li>Facilitate external VA partners to support MVP recruitment and enrollment by providing the necessary knowledge, resources, and tools.</li> </ol>

**MVP Stakeholders**

The MVP outreach and communications campaign is intended to reach and resonate with diverse Veteran audiences. However, effective engagement with Veterans also involves the strategic engagement of key players or information intermediaries who can facilitate awareness and engagement with the effort. The following chart highlights all relevant stakeholders that will be engaged as part of the MVP strategy.

Veterans & TSMs	Personal Networks	Partners	Government	Media
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Transitioning Service Members</li> <li>•CY 22: Veterans with priority outreach to young Veterans, Black Veterans and Women Veterans (Targets adjusted in following years)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Spouses and dependents (immediate family); Extended family</li> <li>•Caregivers and advocates</li> <li>•Friends and Peers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Interagency partners, DoD in particular</li> <li>•Veteran Service Organizations (VSO), Military Service Organizations (MSO)</li> <li>•Private Sector, Academic and Community Organizations</li> <li>•Veteran Influencers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•VA leadership, Executive Branch, and Congress</li> <li>•VBA, VHA, interagency partners</li> <li>•TAP</li> <li>•VAMCs, CBOCs, Vet Centers, MVCs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Mass Media</li> <li>•Niche Media (Military/VA/Health care)</li> <li>•Military Publications</li> </ul>

**MVP Messaging**

The strategies and tactics that VA uses to raise awareness, educate, and recruit Veterans to enroll in MVP must contain the right messages and calls to action for key audience segments. Each target audience and partner stakeholder group may require slightly different messages and should receive information through diverse, multimodal channels.

For internal stakeholders, the messaging will focus on MVP’s purpose, benefits to Veterans, the importance of MVP research, and guidance on how to share information about MVP.

For external stakeholders, the messaging will focus on raising awareness of MVP, providing easy access and enrollment guidance, and demonstrating how Veterans of today and tomorrow will be positively impacted through research participation, including tangible examples of MVP research. Messages included in this plan will be continuously refined based on performance and achievement of OKRs.

**Strategic Engagement**

A program of this magnitude requires a multi-modal, multichannel, strategic communications and engagement effort to raise awareness and encourage enrollment. A coordinated approach is crucial to raising awareness and providing trusted, consistent information about MVP ultimately reinforcing it as an important initiative for Veterans and the public.

MVP will implement a series of coordinated and aligned strategies and tactics according to the defined recruitment and communications objectives and communications phases. To effectively engage Veterans, the goal is to create “surround sound” communications where they are exposed to consistent, clear recruitment and enrollment messages and content through multiple channels and touch points on a regular basis. Key values of this integrated approach include the following:

- Share a transcendent idea (continuing to serve through joining MVP; supporting the future of Veteran health) that can carry through multiple platforms.
- Expand awareness where Veterans and transitioning Service Members live, work, socialize (in person and virtually) and make enrollment easy-to-understand and do.
- Educate internal VA and external non-VA stakeholders and partners, gaining their support to amplify communications messaging, content, goals, and best practices for outreach and enrollment.
- Ensure the inclusion of Veteran, and staff/partner-generated feedback, and campaign evaluation data to refine and optimize core messages, strategies, tactics, and activities.

Throughout the course of the next five years, MVP will use a series of aligned and coordinated products, channels, activities, tactics, and events to achieve key results. The creative content for the MVP campaign, including promotional materials, paid advertising, web and social media content, trade show booths, and all other communications and education documents, will be strategically derived from research on Veteran audiences, and will be designed to resonate with intended audiences and catalyze enrollment.

This communications plan outlines ways to strategically reach key audiences, using multiple coordinated communications channels and customized messages directed at all Veteran and priority populations as needed. Core areas of integrated activity include research; campaign monitoring and evaluation, and optimization activities; MVP brand, web and content enhancements; web, digital and social media activities; advertising and media buying; direct email and mail; public relations and special events; clinic/field recruitment and outreach alignment; and stakeholder engagement (partners, influencers). These activities will be implemented and staggered based on fiscal year objectives and key results stemming from campaign monitoring, evaluation, and optimization activities.

This MVP communications and outreach effort is an important undertaking at a critical time in the program’s trajectory to support the recruitment efforts and enhance diversity. In the weeks and months ahead, MVP will socialize plans, further expand on proposed strategies and tactics within a more detailed operating plan and set the stage for achieving its short- and long-term objectives, which ultimately will advance VA research, clinical care, and Veteran outcomes.



## Introduction

The Million Veteran Program (MVP) is one of VA’s most successful research programs, attributable largely to the expansive recruitment and enrollment efforts over the past decade. No other VA research program has a comparable goal of enrolling over one million Veterans, and MVP reinforces VA as one of the nation’s premier research organizations.

Historically, MVP’s recruitment and enrollment efforts have focused on in-person recruitment at VA Medical Centers, with local site teams stationed at high-trafficked areas including reception and phlebotomy, as well as paper mailers sent to Veteran homes, inviting them to join the program.

## Opportunity Statement

While in-person recruitment and paper mailers laid the successful groundwork for recruitment and enrollment, the challenges with in-person visits during the COVID-19 pandemic has forced MVP to explore new strategies to recruit 150,000 additional Veterans by November 11, 2022. Recent and significant expansions to MVP Online and to email campaign capabilities are opening the door for advanced communications that will reach Veterans where they are, including online and in the community.

Additionally, the demographic makeup of MVP’s cohort matters. It is imperative that MVP’s participants are diverse and representative of all ages, genders, ethnicities, and races. This is the only way to allow MVP researchers a large enough sample size of each group to effectively study genetic markers and extrapolate findings both in and among sub-populations of Veterans. As such, every single Veteran who enrolls in MVP brings their unique genetic code and lifestyle experiences; at MVP, each enrollee is truly “one in a million.” New and enhanced communications capabilities will tailor marketing materials to ensure all populations of Veterans across age, gender, race and ethnicity, and location are aware of and enrolled in MVP.

The plan presented in this document outlines how MVP will implement a unified, integrated, multi-modal approach to reach, educate and motivate all Veteran audiences to enroll in MVP.

## Formative Research

To inform the development of MVP’s five-year strategic communications plan, the MVP communication team conducted the following formative research:

- Human centered-design Veteran Insight Sessions with strategic demographic groups of Veterans to understand their awareness levels and perceptions, feelings, and attitudes about MVP and a sampling of existing recruitment materials, including MVP Online, a brochure, a women Veteran factsheet, and MVP’s core messages.
- A series of in-depth interviews with MVP subject matter experts (SMEs) to learn more about MVP program operations and opportunities to better disseminate MVP’s research findings.

Findings from the Insight Sessions and interviews were synthesized and analyzed for **core findings** that informed **MVP communication objectives (Table 1)**, messaging and strategies.

Table 1. Core Themes and MVP Communication Priorities

Core Finding	MVP Communication Objective
Veterans feel a continued sense of duty to help other Veterans and Service members	MVP communications should clearly communicate how participation benefits future generations of Veterans and Service members.



Core Finding	MVP Communication Objective
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Across age, ethnicity, and gender, Veterans expressed sincere desire to participate in activities that will improve care and outcomes for other Veterans and Service members.</li> <li>• Veterans expressed preferences for marketing content that appeals to Veteran patriotism, duty and the continuation of “service” beyond military separation</li> </ul> <p><b>Marketing materials should not address participants as “partners”</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most Veterans across age, ethnicity, and gender did not want to be referred to as a “partner,” as they associate the term with business relationships. A new term for participants should be tested with Veteran populations before being implemented.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Different demographic groups want outreach materials to address their unique backgrounds and experiences; some groups are hesitant to participate in research</b></p>	<p><b>Marketing campaigns must be tailored to meet the needs, expectations, and perceptions of different demographic groups.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Women Veterans expressed hesitancy to enroll due to unclear information about the benefits of MVP for women</li> <li>• Black and Hispanic Veterans expressed discomfort, fear, and distrust with VA research participation based on historical treatment in research and/or their communities</li> <li>• White and AAPI male Veterans of all age groups expressed willingness to participate in VA research</li> </ul>
<p><b>Veterans want plain language recruitment messages and content to better understand program specifics and to dispel myths and incorrect assumptions</b></p>	<p><b>Marketing materials should be written at about an 8<sup>th</sup> grade reading level with clear, plain language to support greater program understanding.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Veterans shared that promotional content needs more upfront, direct sharing of a simplified, step-by-step path to participating in MVP, including how their information will be used and safeguarded.</li> <li>• Some Veterans were not aware that enrolling means agreeing to provide MVP access to their private medical records over time.</li> </ul> <p><b>Marketing messages and content must reinforce MVP as a trusted program that will have real-world impact while safeguarding their personal medical information.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some Veterans assumed their genetic information would be mishandled or misused.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Different demographic groups of Veterans prefer different types of outreach</b></p>	<p><b>To diversify the MVP cohort, communications must consider how different age groups and demographics prefer to receive information.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Women Veterans value time and want outreach materials to be short and to the point</li> <li>• Veterans from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds expressed interest in seeing more videos, commercials, and digital ads promoting MVP</li> <li>• Older Veterans expressed interest in receiving letters and emails from MVP inviting them to enroll, or on their Facebook timelines.</li> <li>• Younger Veterans prefer to receive information from VA via email, text, securing messaging, or YouTube.</li> </ul>

## Evidence-Based Activities

This recruitment and enrollment plan is built on evidence-based best practices in study recruitment, as well as best practices informed by quantitative research from MVP's women's campaign, formative qualitative research conducted among MVP Veteran target audiences, and knowledge of Veteran and VA stakeholder preferences and behaviors through other program work. The strategies and tactics in this plan follow industry best practices for audience outreach and engagement, including audiences from diverse backgrounds. Our approach supports research-based planning, a grounded analysis of the effectiveness of outreach interventions, and the efficient use of resources. This plan is based on the following principles:

1. Build and compile rigorous evidence about what works, including costs and benefits.
2. Monitor program delivery and measure outreach effectiveness.
3. Use rigorous evidence to improve tactics, scale what works, and redirect funds away from consistently ineffective activities.
4. Encourage innovation and test new approaches.

The plan leverages research on clinical study participant recruitment from the [Michael J. Fox Foundation](#) (Accelerating Clinical Trials: Based Practices for Recruitment and Retention) and leverages over a decade of experience from successful communication efforts across VA, VHA, and VBA, including but not limited to VA National Center for PTSD, VHA Innovation Ecosystem, VA Blue Water Navy, VHA Women's Health, VA Office of Transition and Economic Development, and VA's Suicide Risk Management Consultation Program.

## Target Audiences

The MVP communications activities intend to reach and resonate with diverse Veteran audiences. However, effective engagement with Veterans also involves the strategic engagement of key players and information intermediaries who can facilitate awareness and engagement with the effort. The following chart highlights all relevant stakeholders that will be engaged as part of MVP strategy.

### *Direct/Primary Target Audiences*

MVP communications aim to reach **all Veterans from diverse age, racial/ethnic, and gender/sex demographic categories** who may be interested in enrolling in MVP. Additionally, to expand the diversity of current underrepresented Veteran populations, **tailored micro-campaigns** will be directed at different population segments, pending evolving program priorities and recruitment numbers.

**For FY 22** to reach the one million Veteran goal, the following populations will be prioritized:

- Young Veterans (Aged 18–49)
- Black/African American Veterans
- Women Veterans

MVP will also target subsets of Veterans who represent may be more likely to enroll through MVP Online:

- Veterans who are enrolled in MyHealtheVet (this population is already VA-authenticated and may be more likely to enroll online)
- White male Veterans aged 60+

**For FY 23 and beyond**, longer term or optional special target populations may also include:

- Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) Veterans
- Native American Veterans

- Hispanic/Latino Veterans
- Veterans who have experienced mental health and substance abuse conditions (MVP MIND Cohort)
- Others (TBD)

**Indirect/Secondary Target Audiences**

Those connected to Veterans through their personal networks will serve as important information intermediaries raising awareness about the programs well as the ease and benefits of enrollment. These audiences include:

- Family
- Friends
- Caregivers
- Medical providers
- Veteran peers

**Key Stakeholders**

Effective engagement with Veterans also involves the strategic engagement of key players and information intermediaries who can facilitate awareness and engagement with the effort. The following chart highlights relevant stakeholders that will be engaged as part of the MVP strategy.

Figure 1. Key Stakeholders

Veterans & TSMs	Personal Networks	Partners	Government	Media
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Transitioning Service Members (TAP)</li> <li>•Veterans with priority outreach to younger Veterans, black/African American Veterans and Women Veterans</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Spouses and dependents (immediate family); Extended family</li> <li>•Caregivers and advocates</li> <li>•Friends and Peers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Interagency partners, DoD in particular</li> <li>•Veteran Service Organizations (VSO), Military Service Organizations (MSO)</li> <li>•Private Sector, and Community Organizations</li> <li>•Veteran Influencers</li> <li>•Academic Institutions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Executive Branch, and Congress</li> <li>•VA leadership, VBA, VHA</li> <li>• Interagency partners</li> <li>•VAMCs, CBOCs, Vet Centers, Mobile Vet Centers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Mass Media</li> <li>•Niche Media (military/VA/Health care)</li> <li>•Military Publications</li> </ul>

**Internal VA Stakeholders**

Critical aspects of any communications and outreach activities are awareness, education and engagement of stakeholders including VA staff and trusted partners that interact directly with Veterans or who can promote MVP and MVP Online. The following information intermediaries will be engaged as part of the communication efforts:

- VA Central Office:
  - VA Secretary; Deputy Secretary; VA and VHA Chief of Staff, USH, DEAN & other senior leaders; Office of Strategic Partnerships; Chief Information Officer/Chief Technology Officer and VA IT; Board of Veterans Appeals Leadership; Office of Congressional and Legislative Affairs; Office of Public and Intergovernmental Affairs (OPIA), including regional Public Affairs Offices and Outreach Coordinators; VHA

Communications such as Broadcasting, Media Relations, and Digital Media; Veteran Canteen Services; and

- **VA Office of Research and Development:** Health Services Research & Development (HSR&D), Quality Enhancement Research Initiative (QUERI), Women's Enhanced Recruitment Process (WERP)
- **Outreach Partners:** Center for Women Veterans; Center for Minority Veterans; Office of Health Equity; Office of Rural Health; Office of Academic Affiliates under the Office of Discovery, Education and Affiliate Networks (DEAN); Office of Small & Disadvantaged Business Utilization; VSO Liaisons; OPIA; Office of Health Equity
- **VBA:** VBA Office of Transition and Economic Development (OTED) and the Solid Start Program, Transition Assistance Program (TAP)
- **U.S. Digital Services** (thinking of instances when we should consult folks like Danielle Thiery and others in USDS to make sure our messaging and web material is as equitable and accessible as possible, )
- VHA/VA Medical Centers:
  - VHA, VISN, and Facility Leadership
  - MVP Coordinators
  - Clinic Program Managers and Contract and in-house Exam Providers at clinics frequently visited by target Veteran populations
  - VBA Hospital-based Benefits Coordinators
  - Hospital/Community Based Outpatient Clinics (CBOC)/Vet Centers
  - Appt Scheduling Staff and VHA Call Centers
  - Minority Veteran Program Coordinator
  - Women Veteran's Medical Director
  - Outreach coordinator under WVPM (if position is filled locally)
  - Women's Mental Health Director
  - Warrior Renew Program Coordinator
- Vet Center/Mobile Vet Centers

### ***External Partners (non-VA)***

Partners are an essential group to help spread awareness about MVP, accept, validate and champion the program, as well as provide valuable feedback as collaborators in improving the communications efforts. Below are examples of the types of partners that will be engaged as part of this effort.

- Interagency Partners
- Veterans Service Organizations/Liaisons; Military Service Organizations (MSO)
- State Women Veterans Coordinators
- State Departments of Veterans Affairs/State Women Veterans Coordinators
- Veteran influencers
- Universities and colleges (through the Office of Academic Affiliates)
- Veteran-owned corporations and other companies that have large Veteran followings, especially among our target populations

### ***Media***

Earned media engagement is essential to promote program successes, shape a positive public opinion of MVP and amplify reach from initial awareness to policy makers. Media channels such as the following will be leveraged to support wide dissemination of communications:

- VA media
- General media



- News media that may cover VA, health care, military-related news and other issues that matter to the target Veteran populations
- Digital and Social Media Platforms (e.g., RallyPoint, Veteran hosted podcasts, relevant Reddit feeds, etc.) and Influencers targeting Veteran and military audiences and their family, friends and caregivers; other platforms, identified through ongoing research and insight sessions, that specific demographic groups are most likely to use

## Communications and Outreach Principles & Messaging

The number one objective for the strategic communications efforts is to show the value and benefits of participating in MVP for Veterans in a way that compels them to make an informed decision to enroll. The key principles the MVP communications and outreach strategy aims to achieve are to:

- ❖ Overcome known barriers and misconceptions about participation in research and VA programs
- ❖ **Create awareness of the value MVP brings to Veterans health and well-being.** Position MVP as a valuable way for Veterans to support fellow Veterans and invest in their long-term health and wellbeing. The campaign will position MVP as a Veteran-centric, trustworthy, innovative, efficient, and effective research initiative supporting advancing knowledge of and ultimately improving the health and well-being of Veterans.
- ❖ **Promote ease of understanding and participation.** Promote a consistent and accurate understanding of what enrollment in MVP means and provide a clear “call to action” describing how to enroll, especially via MVP Online. Messages will include a simple, clear description of MVP and call to action identifying exactly what people can do to easily enroll and why its beneficial.
- ❖ **Promote enrollment online.** Empower Veterans to enroll and participate from anywhere, at any time. The goal is to highlight the easy process with the new “self-service” capabilities so Veterans can more effectively engage with MVP in ways that fit with their lifestyle.
- ❖ **Use trusted channels.** Reach Veterans where they are, using channels and sources they trust, with targeted messaging. Veterans should hear about MVP via preferred digital engagement outlets, radio and television channels, and through trusted associations, organizations and community venues that give them support and a sense of community. Outreach messaging and tactics must feel personalized, so Veterans believe and feel VA is speaking directly to them. Campaigns must create a connection between their identity as Veterans and how VA and its partners are tirelessly working to meet their needs and improve processes for their long-term health and wellbeing.

## Strategic Messaging Themes

Messaging is the foundation for all communications materials, talking points, and other resources. The right message should effectively explain MVP and encourage Veterans to enroll while also addressing potential personal objections, fear, distrust, or suspicions. Each Veteran stakeholder group may require slightly different messages and should receive information through preferred channels.

Key messaging themes will guide the creation of new content blocks that will be submitted for IRB approval as appropriate. Content blocks will be tailored for different groups of Veterans across age, gender, and race/ethnicity or other special needs. Messaging will be split between two major groups.

- **Internal Stakeholders:** Messaging will focus on educating information intermediaries and enrollment stakeholders on how they can support MVP recruitment and enrollment through using key messaging, materials, and best practices.
- **External Stakeholders:** Messaging will focus on raising program awareness, encouraging enrollment, and demonstrating how Veterans will be positively impacted by participating in MVP.

Based on the Veteran Insight Sessions, the following impressions were surfaced as important to convey in MVP messaging. These themes resonate with the target audiences in ways that will encourage understanding, engagement and enrollment with the program.

- Essential Research Program
- Trusted Veteran Resource
- Driving Veteran Healthcare Innovation
- Accessible and Easy
- Patriotic Opportunity to Serve and Impact/Benefit Others
- Addressing the Unique Needs of Diverse Veterans

What follows are sample messages that will be further refined in collaboration with key MVP stakeholders.

Table 2. Key Messages for Veteran Outreach

Message	Theme
<p><b>Help MVP be one million Veterans strong. Join MVP online today.</b></p> <p>Our goal is within reach. You can make a difference.</p>	Patriotic Opportunity to Serve and Impact Others
<p><b>You are one in a million.</b> Join the Million Veteran Program and help advance Veteran healthcare with your unique contribution.</p>	Patriotic Opportunity to Serve and Impact Others
<p><b>Join the Million Veteran Program to help other Veterans and Service members.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participate in MVP to join a community of Veterans continuing to serve.</li> <li>• Join MVP to improve lives for other Veterans like you, today and tomorrow.</li> </ul>	Patriotic Opportunity to Serve and Impact Others Driving Veteran Healthcare Innovation
<p><b>Participate in MVP to help shape the future of Veteran health.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Imagine walking into your doctor’s office and receiving personalized care, designed for your unique needs. By joining MVP, you can help make that a reality.</li> </ul> <p><b>You are part of the future of Veteran healthcare when you participate in MVP.</b></p>	Trusted Partner Driving Veteran Healthcare Innovation Addressing the Unique Needs of Diverse Veterans
<p><b>The diversity you bring matters.</b></p> <p><b>The Million Veteran Program needs <i>all</i> Veterans to participate.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If more women Veterans join, then MVP will have more breakthroughs in research to improve care for women like you.</li> <li>• If more Black Veterans join, then MVP will have more breakthroughs in research to improve care for Veterans like you.</li> <li>• If more Hispanic/Latino Veterans join, then MVP will have more breakthroughs in research to improve care for Veterans like you.</li> <li>• If more Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) Veterans join, then MVP will have more breakthroughs in research to improve care for Veterans like you.</li> <li>• If more Native American Veterans join, then MVP will have more breakthroughs in research to improve care for Veterans like you.</li> </ul>	Essential Research Program Driving Veteran Healthcare Innovation Addressing the Unique Needs of Diverse Veterans

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If younger Veterans join, then MVP have more breakthroughs in research to improve care for younger Veterans like you.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>We believe Veterans and their diverse health experiences matter.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Every Veteran counts – can we count on you?</li> <li>No matter your background, your Veteran experience counts.</li> </ul> <p><b>Better health for all Veterans is possible with your help. Join MVP.</b></p> <p><b>Participate in MVP today to impact the future of Veteran Health.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MVP is your chance to add your unique experience.</li> </ul>	<p>Driving Veteran Healthcare Innovation</p> <p>Addressing the Unique Needs of Diverse Veterans</p> <p>Essential Research Program</p>
<p><b>The Million Veteran Program needs <i>more</i> than one million Veterans to join.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Genetic research improves with every individual person who joins the program.</li> <li>MVP has one million Veteran participants – and we’re just getting started!</li> <li>Join over one million Veterans who are continuing to serve – participate in MVP today.</li> </ul>	<p>Essential Research Program</p> <p>Patriotic Opportunity to Serve and Impact Others</p>
<p><b>You can improve Veteran healthcare from home. Join MVP online.</b></p> <p><b>You can improve Veteran healthcare with a simple act. Join MVP online.</b></p> <p><b>Be a member of MVP without having to leave your home. Join MVP online.</b></p>	<p>Essential Research Program</p> <p>Accessible and Easy</p>

Messages to support internal VA staff and partner involvement may include:

Table 3. Key Messages for Partnership Engagement

Message	Theme
<p><b>You have an important role in helping Veterans get connected to MVP</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MVP participation supports critical research efforts to improve health and well-being for the Veterans of today and tomorrow.</li> </ul>	<p>Essential Research Program</p> <p>Driving Veteran Healthcare Innovation</p> <p>Trusted Resource</p>
<p><b>Do you know how MVP benefits the Veterans you serve?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learn how you can help VA hit its “You’re one in a million” Veteran goal.</li> <li>Help us educate and empower Veterans to continue to serve and support their fellow Veterans by enrolling in MVP, especially via the new MVP online portal.</li> </ul>	<p>Trusted Partner</p> <p>Driving Veteran Healthcare Innovation</p> <p>Addressing the Unique Needs of Diverse Veterans</p>
<p><b>Help MVP reach its historic milestone in 2022 to advance Veteran health.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learn about and promote MVP online with the Veterans you serve.</li> </ul>	<p>Essential Program</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Help improve future Veteran health.</li> </ul>	<p>Driving Veteran Healthcare Innovation</p>
<p><b>Empower Veterans to support VA research innovation through MVP.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Empower Veterans to access MVP information and resources through the MVP online portal. Direct Veterans to <a href="http://mvp.va.gov">mvp.va.gov</a> for program and online enrollment information.</li> </ul>	<p>Patriotic Opportunity to Serve and Impact Others</p> <p>Accessible and Easy</p>
<p><b>Help Veterans act to support the millions of Veterans of today and tomorrow.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If a Veteran is receiving health services at VA, enrolling/participating in MVP is a simple, easy process. Veterans can enroll online, or it can be done the same day as their VA visit.</li> </ul>	<p>Accessible and Easy</p> <p>Essential Research Program</p> <p>Patriotic Opportunity to Serve and Impact Others</p>
<p><b>(OTHERS TBD)</b></p>	



## Phased Communications

This Plan will be finalized no later than December 2021 with execution scheduled for Calendar Years (CY) 2022–2026.

Given these important milestones, MVP communications are structured following a phased approach in the coordination and strategic timing of all communications. The core phases serve as a guideline for generating expanded recruitment and enrollment as evolving or new target groups are prioritized and communications and outreach activities are sustained.

Each phase outlines specific sets of strategies and tactics. While the phases appear sequential, some processes and activities will occur concurrently to efficiently move the initiative forward. This structure and timeline will ensure that key internal stakeholders are engaged and actively participating in the execution of MVP campaign and messaging plans. It will also guarantee that key implementation decisions are finalized, and available resources will be effectively incorporated before any new efforts begin.

Figure 2: MVP Strategic Communication Phases

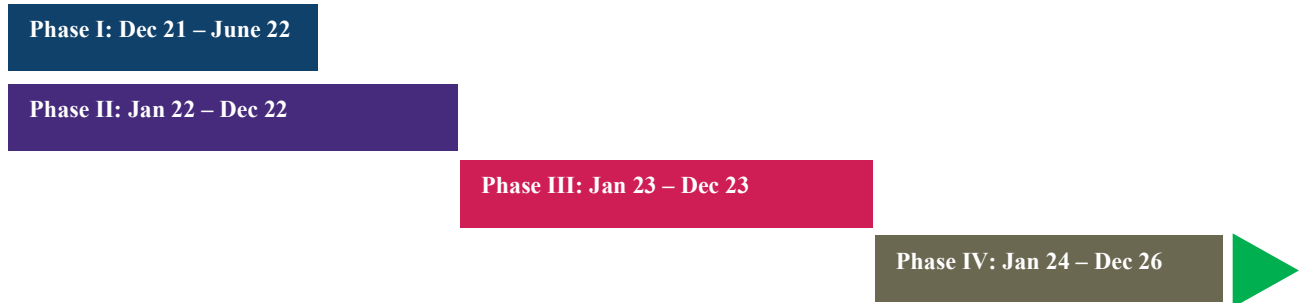


Table 4. MVP Communications Plan Phases

Phase	Description	Timeline
<b>Phase I</b>	MVP Branding & Content Creation and Internal Staff Outreach and Education	<i>Dec 2021 – June 2022</i>
<b>Phase II</b>	Launch Communications Campaigns, Awareness and Recruitment: 1 Million Veteran Target and Reaching Select Populations	<i>Jan 2022 – Dec 2022</i>
<b>Phase III</b>	Continuing Awareness and Recruitment: Reaching Priority Populations; MVP Online Enrollment and Alternate Specimen Collection Promotion	<i>Jan 2023 – Dec 2023</i>
<b>Phase IV</b>	Sustaining Recruitment with Integrated Outreach: Sustaining MVP Recruitment, Priority Populations, Optimizing Awareness and Engagement Activities	<i>Jan 2024 – Dec 2026</i>

## Strategies & Tactics

This communications plan outlines ways to strategically reach key MVP Veteran audiences through effective channels and messages. Knowledge of the messages and channels to use with specific audiences will also guide the creation of micro-campaigns to increase enrollment with prioritized or special populations.

MVP’s strategic communications will include the following integrated activities and tactics: research; campaign monitoring and evaluation, and optimization activities; MVP brand, web, and content enhancements; web, digital and social media activities; advertising and media buying; direct email and

mail; public relations and special events support; clinic/field recruitment and outreach alignment; stakeholder engagement (partners, influencers).

Figure 3. Communication and Outreach Strategies



Based on previous outreach and engagement campaigns, and the MVP insight sessions, the following strategic lessons will be leveraged.

- **Data-driven optimization is essential in the crowded media landscape.** It is essential for our communications activities to break through the noise of other messaging to encourage individuals to participate in MVP. Deploying a sophisticated, data-driven communications campaign—one that reaches audiences with the messages most likely to appeal to them, through the channels by which they are most likely to engage—and then measuring and adjusting as needed, will increase ROI. The goal is to optimize strategies and tactics as well as quickly shift and adapt communications and messaging in real time throughout the campaign.
- **Media buying should be audience focused.** To conduct a cost-effective media campaign given limited resources, media buying will be structured in a way that is expansive enough to reach diverse Veterans while also directly targeting priority populations with specific, tailored messages.
- **Importance of traditional outreach.** Although digital outreach is effective for reaching many audiences, not all Veterans can or prefer to be reached online, and some audiences with a strong online presence may still not be willing to respond to MVP online. Traditional forms of advertising outreach—through print, outdoor, and broadcast media, and through personal networks and influencers, for example—continue to be important, to reach those who prefer traditional forms of media or who are less likely to trust communications from an unknown source and delivered digitally. Because some audiences may have concerns about their data being shared or may be distrustful of VA and/or research, the strong support of partners is very important as well.
- **Grassroots and local outreach still matters.** It is important to execute communications and outreach locally to make an impact. The interests and needs of audiences, particularly Veteran audiences, vary greatly, and local influencers are often best positioned to know what will engage and persuade their

audiences and contacts, especially when trying to engage with hard-to-reach target populations who may not trust VA and/or research. Using communication modes, messaging, and creative elements that are familiar or relatable at the local level helps build an emotional connection between the campaign and its target audiences. We recommend deploying such outreach alongside traditional and digital media and community partnerships to appeal to audiences and encourage participation in MVP.

- **Personal network influencers are trusted voices that lend validity to MVP.** It is important for MVP participants with personal Veteran networks and for Veteran influencers to convey the value and benefits of MVP to Veterans in their communities. These partners are trusted voices whose statements resonate with their respective communities. When provided with customizable messaging materials, influencers can communicate the relevance of MVP to encourage participation.

Nine primary strategies are identified to meet the established MVP communications goals and objectives. The associated tactics address “what will we do” and “how will we do it.” Based on specific environments and conditions, target audiences, and objectives, the execution and timing of strategies and tactics may need to be adjusted, revised, or added as needed.

## Research

*Strategy: Utilize formative research to inform content creation—to ensure messaging and tactics align with the knowledge, attitudes, needs and behaviors of Veterans, Service members and dependents—and summative research to test the success of content, messaging and tactics.*

Conducting formative research before and periodically during creative and strategic activities is critical to ensure accurate targeting and the highest return on investment (ROI). It helps ensure creative campaign and messaging are tailored to audiences' needs, attitudes, behaviors, and preferences. Summative research is also helpful in evaluating content performance in achieving its stated objectives and drawing out lessons learned for the next phase of implementation.

While MVP is using existing research as a foundation for launching new campaign activities, the following ongoing research methods through phases 2-4 will ensure the efficacy of campaign approaches and inform ongoing modifications throughout the 5-year period.

- **Insight Sessions.** Hold insight sessions with key Veteran stakeholder audiences to determine their knowledge, attitudes and perceptions related to MVP recruitment and promotional practices, and the enrollment and engagement process.
- **Materials Testing.** Test new web, PSA, and collateral support materials for appeal with target audiences.
- **Partner Feedback Surveys.** Using the MVP partner network, solicit feedback on recruitment and enrollment campaign efforts and how collaboration and outreach can be improved. Field a survey a minimum of 1x annually.
- **Feedback from Internal VHA/MVP Stakeholders.** Engage VAMC field staff and other relevant VHA and MVP internal stakeholders to gather feedback on campaign activity implementation to date. Recommend surveying a minimum of 1x annually.
- **Ongoing process and outcome evaluation.** Monitor and measure effort and direct outputs from campaign implementation to evaluate the campaign's reach (process evaluation) as well as measure effects and changes that result from the campaign (outcome evaluation); for example, are target audiences responding to calls to action, enrolling in MVP? Implementation will be adjusted, as needed, to maximize reach and impact based on ongoing campaign evaluation.



## MVP Branding and Content Development

*Strategy: Create and update MVP branded content and resources, including updating the MVP website, to appeal to key Veteran stakeholders and generate awareness and enrollment in MVP.*

Phase I communications will focus on expanding and up leveling the MVP brand and key content/resources, based on feedback from Veteran Insight Sessions and industry best practices, to facilitate long-term buy-in, awareness, and recruitment activities. The goal of this phase is to have the right approved communications resources in place for all MVP rollout activities and ensure that stakeholders use MVP content in a coordinated and aligned way that meets the needs of all parties.

To support the overall recruitment and engagement goals, MVP will update and generate new content required to effectively implement integrated multi-modal strategies and tactics. Existing materials to date will be leveraged as baseline content. Products will focus on developing consistent, tested language and will include but are not limited to emails, brochures, fact sheets, blogs, social media content, and FAQs. Materials will be tested, as resources are available, to ensure efficacy with target audiences.

- Revitalize MVP Online to drive towards a call-to-action and inspire enrollment
  - Insight Session findings reveal that Veterans using MVP Online are not inspired to enroll because the information is hard to understand and difficult to navigate. Veterans of all demographic groups across age, gender, and ethnicity requested clearer information about MVP’s purpose, findings, and goals; a stronger call-to-action; and a redesigned site structure for improved navigation.
  - **Conduct website audit** with recommendations for site improvement (navigation and usability); rewrite key content blocks to improve user experience.
- Create new marketing content based on updated themes and messages
  - **Content Blocks.** Create new communication content blocks based on key themes; submit content to Central-IRB for approval.
  - **Print and Digital Collateral.** Create new digital and print collateral with refreshed design, images and updated messaging (brochure(s), factsheet(s), mailer(s), digital billboards, email newsletter content)
  - **Video.** Create live-action video testimonials and a motion-graphic “MVP 101” video; tailor products for specific demographic groups.
- **Stakeholder/Partner Toolkit.** Create an electronic toolkit that can be tailored for media and marketing outreach, to include: an intro letter, fact sheet, tip sheet, FAQs, ROP (run of paper) advertisement, poster, infographic, and website badge/widget to facilitate dissemination of MVP recruitment messaging within partner websites and communication materials.
- **Event Booth Displays.** Develop updated MVP booth displays for use at national outreach events.
- **Tabletop Displays.** Develop Tabletop display content for use in 180 VHA cafes and 100+ canteens around the country.
- **VA Ads.** Develop MVP ads for VA publications (e.g., the VA Nutrition Guide for distribution to 100+ VA canteens).
- **Conference Content.** Create content for outreach events and conferences including but not limited to VSOs and State Veterans Affairs Agencies.
- **Templates.** Create standard communication templates, including a Briefing Deck and Status Report to be used for VA leadership and congressional briefings.

## Web, Digital & Social Media Engagement

*Strategy: Develop an integrated, mobile-first web, digital and social media engagement strategy that maximizes MVP awareness and engagement, driving Veterans to enroll.*

In today's highly sophisticated digital landscape, MVP's web and digital properties are critical tools helping to educate, engage, and motivate response across the Veteran population. Those properties also provide materials and information for use in paid and earned media and partnership efforts.

Given that the latest research indicates that mobile (including all smartphones and tablets) has overtaken desktop as the primary source of internet traffic (StatCounter Global Stats, 2019), MVP will emphasize a mobile-first approach to its website to work effectively on the devices that most visitors use, while also providing a positive experience for desktop users.

Accessibility will be another key priority in web design, per the Biden Administration's presidential agenda, which is defined as the "design, construction, development, and maintenance of facilities, information and communication technology, programs, and services so that all people, including people with disabilities, can fully and independently use them" (<https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/presidential-actions/2021/06/25/executive-order-on-diversity-equity-inclusion-and-accessibility-in-the-federal-workforce/>).

- **Optimized Web Approach.** The MVP landing page design, strategic calls to action, and other web content will all be optimized for mobile devices—to help drive response and enable users to find more information, share content, and access data. Content is tailored for users based on their audience segment and how they arrive at the website (whether by clicking on an ad or manually navigating to the site). Regardless of their entry point, users will see consistency between web and other communications activities such as digital advertisements—ensuring seamless, integrated audience engagement.
- **Developing Public Facing Content with a Consistent MVP Brand.** Website content remains integrated into the larger communications campaign, with consistent branding across all platforms. The webpage and content on it will maintain a consistent, branded look and feel—including similar fonts, colors, and trusted symbols such as the MVP logo—to maintain seamless engagement and engender trust among visitors. As audience research dictates, we are designing content to be interactive and shareable, while also directing site users to enroll online. Web content includes:
  - **Video and written testimonials** that speak to MVP's promise and benefits and seamless enrollment process.
  - **Blog posts and editorials that discuss MVP topics**, such as the benefits of joining MVP, the ease of completing online enrollment, and examples of partners that are encouraging participation in their communities.
  - **Brief, visually rich tutorial** that clarifies, or alleviates the stress of, the enrollment process, which may show how easy the process is to complete.
  - **Shareable social media content** for a variety of platforms, making it easy for users to share relatable, promotional posts with their audiences.
  - **Easy-to-understand, shareable content**, including infographics and other visual components, hashtag campaigns, and more.
  - **Content in both English and Spanish** that can be shared among social networks and understood by multiple generations.
  - Where relevant, we will feature trusted voices and images that are tailored and targeted to website visitors from different regions.

- **Continuous Digital Analysis and Optimization.** Site analytics will measure the effectiveness of landing pages and other web content driving traffic to the site. The data will allow MVP to refine the landing page for audience segment appeal and identify landing page traffic sources. The number of visitors, where they come from, and what they do on the site will also be reported, offering insights that can be used to further optimize the campaign.

## Social Media

*Sub-Strategy: Implement a dynamic and flexible social media campaign that shares content in real time to encourage engagement with MVP and drive program enrollment.*

Social media will play an important role in ongoing recruitment and enrollment. Primary objectives include raising awareness of MVP, particularly among priority audiences; motivating people to enroll; and fostering engagement with the various MVP campaigns. Social media will also enhance Veteran customer experience efforts, promote partner recruitment efforts, and assist with disseminating research findings. MVP will align content and outreach strategies by channel and audience, and integrate ongoing monitoring and analysis, and partner and stakeholder input to continually refine social media efforts.

MVP will implement the following:

- **Content Calendar.** Create and deploy a social media content calendar to guide activities through the campaign period, to be coordinated with other VA and ORD research engagement and recruitment activities. Content placement goals linked to overarching media strategies include:
  - Social media posts 4x/month via owned channels (ORD Twitter and Facebook; VHA Twitter and Facebook); combination of video, copy, and live content.
  - Social media posts 1x/quarter via partner channels (dependent on successful partnership engagement and compelling partner toolkits).
  - Video placement 1x/quarter via VA channels (VHA YouTube, Veterans News Network, VHA Facebook).
  - Video placement 1x/quarter via partner channels (dependent on successful partnership engagement and compelling partner toolkits).
- **Rich Content Development.** To break through the saturated social media landscape, MVP will develop rich media, interactive graphics, and timely hooks. Content will be customized for each channel and tailored by audience segment, interest, language, and geographic area. This ensures we engage audiences with the right message, through the right channel. Content may include:
  - Cutdowns (short edited clips) of live-action footage, in formats and lengths optimized for the channel and audience.
  - Animated videos, as the content type allows.
  - Cutdowns of advertising production assets for repurposing on social media.
  - Other graphics and static content, repurposed as slideshows, images, infographics, and more.
- **Partner engagement.** Created content will be shared with partners to use in reaching their audiences. Partners will amplify messages, adding credibility and impact via their own social media channels, newsletters, and events.
- **User-Generated Content.** As part of the drive to reach one million enrolled Veterans, develop a “One in a million” campaign to employ user-generated content to help amplify Veteran voices and leverage peer interactions on social media. This may include encouraging users to participate directly in MVP’s social media activities by posting or sharing stickers, badges, hashtags, and filters that feature a message about participating in MVP.
- **Social Media Listening.** Perform research on the social media landscape to understand how MVP is being mentioned, how VA’s ORD accounts could engage with other accounts on behalf of MVP

through likes/comments/shares/etc., and how we can use current topics to promote MVP recruitment and enrollment.

- **Integrate social media tactics across MVP campaign.** MVP will integrate social media with public relations to promote events, with paid media activities to create content for distribution, and with any relevant crisis communications to uncover topics and trends through social listening.
- **Social Media Events.** Develop live and interactive social media events with partners to promote MVP enrollment. Special events could include health awareness months directly tied to research initiatives, Veterans Day, Flag Day, etc.
- **Metrics and Evaluation.** Analyze the use and performance of social media content and networks; evaluate new social media features and tools against established benchmarks. While metrics for each platform vary, we will capture data to understand the impact of social media communications, including reach, engagement, leads, and conversions.

## Advertising and Media Buying/Placement

*Strategy: Implement a multimodal, optimized paid advertising campaign that reaches targeted Veterans through channels they connect with on a daily and weekly basis.*

Paid advertising and media buying plays a crucial role in raising awareness of MVP and driving recruitment through online and traditional modes. Increases in technology and in the number of available media channels create numerous opportunities to rapidly expand audience reach and penetration. While the use of digital media is rapidly expanding, TV, radio, print, and out-of-home media are still viable and useful channels for reaching Veterans, especially with certain populations with more limited internet access.

To be effective, MVP will use a diverse channel mix across campaign phases to achieve broader reach and increase awareness. High awareness levels are best achieved through frequent and multichannel audience advertising. However, channel penetration and frequency will be contingent upon available campaign resources. To achieve the greatest ROI, reach and efficiency, MVP will balance broad and targeted reach to motivate Veterans at the right place and time. Continual optimization will also require flexibility to adapt campaign elements based on MVP enrollment response rates.

The proposed paid advertising channels have been selected based on their ability to reach and resonate with the intended Veteran audience groups. The media mix encompasses channels identified as most appropriate for reaching target audiences, with consideration given to how the channels can be leveraged to reach priority Veteran groups. These channels include but may not be limited to:

- **Digital Advertising.** Digital media, more than any other medium, can deliver tailored messaging to target audiences and can be optimized based on real-time results. Results can identify priority geographic areas and individuals, which MVP can use to create geofenced digital ads, exclusively targeting internet users in high-priority areas. Given the opportunities presented by evolving technologies, MVP may also use channels that allow for custom content, nontraditional advertising, and traffic-garnering tactics. (See more in-depth digital approach for Phase One and Two under *Digital Advertising Campaign*, below.)
- **Radio & TV PSA Advertising.** National PSAs can have a positive impact on generating national awareness with Veteran audiences, generating between 260 and 300 million impressions for each campaign. Therefore, we recommend developing and distributing both television and radio PSAs that will serve to anchor the MVP campaign with national Veteran audiences.
  - **Radio PSAs.** Radio advertising includes a combination of national and local placement and incorporates ads read live by local hosts as well as prerecorded ads. Network radio may serve as an effective channel within our national media mix, employing approved, trusted voices,

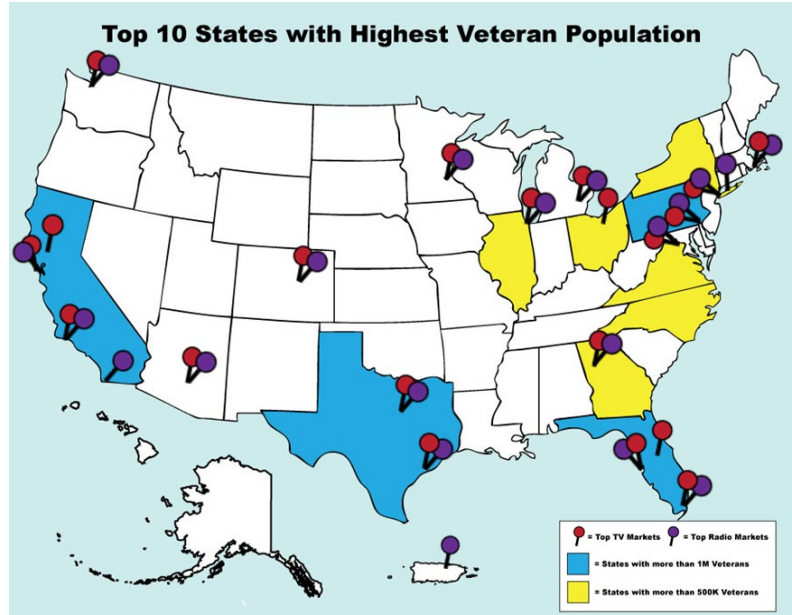




such as well-known radio DJs, to reinforce MVP messages. To extend the reach of radio among key audiences, we may use paid podcast advertising as well.

- **TV PSAs.** Like radio advertising, TV PSA advertising includes national and local placement across cable and network TV. Our plan prioritizes programming, networks, and genres based on their effectiveness in delivering messages to our target audiences. In addition, given the rise in popularity of digital streaming services and connected devices, we will also consider incorporating these channels into our strategy.
- **Distributing and Tracking PSAs.** While Veterans reside in every city and state around the country, data on where the largest pockets of Veterans reside will shape the distribution strategy along with our knowledge of target audience preferences and behavior that indicate listening and viewing habits.

We will place an emphasis on markets and states with the largest Veteran populations and increase our distribution to more targeted outlets within those areas, as well as states and regions that have low enrollment due to lack of participating sites. Through augmenting this broad national approach with VA channels, social media, and partner outreach, the PSAs are more likely to reach a large percentage of our country's Veterans, Service members, and their families. The accompanying map provides an overview of top Veteran states and



Top TV and Radio Markets

television and radio markets. Following the completion of both television and radio PSAs, we will develop and implement a complete distribution strategy covering all aspects of duplication, distribution, follow-up and reporting.

- **Print Advertising.** Print advertising includes magazines, newspapers, and other publications at the national, regional, and local levels that appeal to Veteran audiences. This may include advertising in localized publications where high concentrations of Veterans live.
- **Out-of-Home (OOH) Advertising.** OOH advertising is another component of the media mix. Campaign research has helped identify those who are most likely to see and be persuaded by OOH advertising—for example, people who spend a lot of time driving or who live in rural areas. Poster and billboard placements may be considered for reaching prioritized targeted groups, pending funding availability. We may also use digital OOH ads. The ability to quickly adjust messages and creative elements based on environmental factors, such as the time of day or the weather, would allow us to implement innovative and responsive advertising.
- **Event-Based Advertising and Sponsorship.** Advertising at events can help reach key audiences, particularly those that may be difficult to reach through traditional or online media. Advertising at cultural events and coordinating closely with outreach programs is important in reaching multicultural audiences.









## Digital Advertising Campaign



MVP’s digital advertising campaign will consist of broad outreach to 500,000 Veterans across the country paired with tailored micro-campaigns that message to an overall 150,000 Veteran audience of diverse demographic and ethnic subgroups (Table 3). These numbers are placeholders based on an estimated FY22 budget, and are subject to change based on available resources. The effort will reach audiences who have self-identified as Veterans on multiple advertising networks. Keyword targeting will place ad impressions in front of Veteran audiences looking for more information through search engines or discussing MVP topics online.

The micro-campaigns will also utilize geo-fencing to reach Veteran audiences where they live whether on desktop, on the go, or offline. Device ID identification and cross-device retargeting on YouTube, video, display, social, and search networks will reinforce the message with the targeted audience as efficiently as possible. The campaign will balance link clicks with overall reach, ensuring that ad performance is used to boost delivery to audience members most likely to engage with the ad and visit MVP Online.

- Ads will be placed among relevant search results through **Google** and **Bing** based on keyword targeting, driving Veterans to MVP Online.
- **Pre-roll, mid-roll, post-roll, and ConnectedTV** video placements will reach Veterans on websites throughout the Internet and on streaming video services.
- Flights of newsfeed ads will be placed on **Facebook and Instagram** to drive Veterans to MVP Online.
- Ad targeting on **YouTube** will show video impressions to audience members who are either searching for or consuming content about MVP. These impressions can be targeted using relevant keywords that are identified and refined through the search advertising campaign.
- **Micro-campaigns will use geo-targeting** to serve video and display ads to Veterans within specific communities and on reservations. This will be paired with placements on local and audience-specific news websites as well as digital out of home placements in the community.

Table 5. Key Messages for Veteran Outreach

Digital Advertising			
NATIONAL OUTREACH CAMPAIGN			
	Platform	Timing	Estimated Impressions or Clicks
	Facebook/Instagram	Three 3-week flights	2,258,064 impressions
	Video	Three 3-week flights	1,896,551 impressions
	Google Search	Continuous for 33 weeks	14,200 clicks
	Bing Search	Continuous for 33 weeks	20,000 clicks
DIVERSE VETERANS MICRO-CAMPAIGNS			
	Platform	Timing	Estimated Clicks or Impressions
	Facebook/Instagram	Three 3-week flights	1,290,322 impressions
	Display	Three 3-week flights	4,166,666 impressions

	Video	Three 3-week flights	862,068 impressions
Local News Properties	High Impact Website Placements	Three 3-week flights	TBD
	Digital Out Of Home	Three 3-week flights	750,000 impressions
<b>Associated media buy costs can be scaled up or down pending available funding.</b>			

## Stakeholder Engagement (Partners and Influencers)

*Strategy: Engage, collaborate with, and educate external partner stakeholders to strengthen their capabilities to promote MVP, validate its importance, and encourage Veteran enrollment.*

Stakeholders are key participants in awareness and recruiting efforts, and they are well positioned to identify the opportunities, challenges and concerns that affect Veteran populations. For example, understanding communication preferences and cultural intricacies in ethnic communities like native American/native Alaskan Veterans can improve engagement strategies. Many stakeholders are well positioned to champion the value of MVP as they have established trust and open communication in respective Veteran communities.

Throughout the five-year plan, MVP will increase and support open lines of communication with stakeholders, ensuring that they have the information and resources to participate in and generate support for MVP recruitment and enrollment activities.

Key tactics will include:

- **MVP Partner Network.** Leverage and build on existing MVP partner relationships to develop a more coordinated partner network that will be regularly engaged on ongoing and new outreach activities.
  - **Open Communication.** Communicate through periodic group and individual partner calls, briefings, toolkit/material dissemination, email communication, and event participation as applicable.
  - **Holding Education Sessions for Stakeholders.** Education familiarizes stakeholders with key MVP topics, messaging and processes, and can equip stakeholders to brief their own networks about MVP research and recruitment.
  - **Sharing MVP Information.** Encourage partners to highlight and use MVP content in their communication channels and to expand their knowledge and understanding of MVP.
- **Partner Engagement prior to and during “One in a Million” Campaign Launch.** Engage with stakeholders prior to new campaign launch to gather early feedback on creative content, media plans, and other outreach integration plans to validate or adjust recruitment strategies and tactics. Briefing sessions will kick off longer term relationship building and feedback through the five- year engagement plan.
  - **Social Media.** Social media provides a platform for credible influencers and trusted voices to connect with their Veteran constituencies. MVP will collaborate with stakeholders and partners to identify opportunities to integrate messaging into online conversations and share monthly messages.
  - **“One in a Million” Viral Video Campaign.** Enlist stakeholder support in promoting participation in uploading/sharing videos about their “one in a million” moment, explaining why they chose to join MVP.
- **Engage with Internal VA Partners.** Engage with internal VA partners (ORD, VHA Communications, OPIA, SECVA/Senior Leadership) to socialize MVP partner toolkits and enhance earned media via partner channels.
- **Partner Toolkit Dissemination.** Disseminate an MVP partner toolkit to VSOs, Military associations, SDVAs, academic research organizations, and other partners. All content will be posted on the MVP website to enable easy access to campaign materials.
- **Public Relations and Events.** Stakeholder engagement must be intertwined with earned media and related efforts. VAMC clinic and field staff and associated PAOs who regularly engage with

stakeholders will provide clear and consistent messaging opportunities for participation in PR and outreach activities. (See public relations and events strategy for details).

- **Host briefings and produce materials for distribution to Congress, relevant federal government agencies, tribal governments, and/or state governments.** Send a campaign letter, key content, web badge, social media posts and links to post as resources for constituents.
  - **Congressional Engagement.** Encourage members and their staffs to post information on their web pages with links to MVP online and share/speak to MVP in any relevant communication and presentations.
- **Partner Engagement Database and Tracking.** A partner database, or customer relationship management tool, will support categorizing partners by organization type, level of visibility, audience groups reached, and opportunities for collaboration. A database also provides the ability to log outreach and engagement efforts. Leveraging a tracking tool to document partner interactions and how various stakeholders are using and participating in MVP activities will assessment of outreach effectiveness.

## Clinic/Field Recruitment and Outreach Alignment

*Strategy: Educate VA staff, volunteers, and external partner stakeholders to strengthen their capabilities to promote MVP and encourage Veteran enrollment.*

Clinic/Field outreach has served as the core channel for MVP recruitment and enrollment to date, and it will continue to be essential for future recruitment. Clinic/Field recruitment activities can capitalize on expanded social and paid digital media activities to maximize Veteran exposure and drive traffic to VAMCs to complete enrollment, as well as MVP Online.

Developing campaign positioning that motivates VHA service providers at medical centers to champion MVP in their service to Veterans is necessary for effective engagement. A successful communications plan depends on strong partnership engagement and purposeful change management directed at VAMC staff. Incorporating a field partner engagement strategy will provide a more integrated, multi-level approach that will generate greater “consistent surround sound” and touchpoints for intended stakeholders. Clinic/Field engagement includes internal communications, change management best practices, proactive outreach, and long-term relationship building.

Given MVP is looking to create greater messaging and outreach alignment and uniformity related to how VA staff conduct recruitment and enrollment, engagement will be implemented with Prosci’s ADKAR framework as the backdrop.

<b>Awareness</b>	Create persuasive <b>Awareness</b> of the new strategic communication plan and associated changes among local site staff (Local Site Investigators, Research Coordinators, and Research Assistants); Recruitment and Enrollment leadership; scientific program support staff; and MVP executive leadership.
<b>Desire</b>	Instill a <b>Desire</b> for MVP team members to promote new communication materials and adopt recruitment tactics that will increase the diversity of the cohort.
<b>Knowledge</b>	Ensure MVP team members have <b>Knowledge</b> of all new communication efforts and recruitment collateral, including access to partner toolkits, best practice guides for recruiting different demographic groups of Veterans, and media outreach guides.
<b>Ability</b>	Validate that MVP team members have the <b>Ability</b> to successfully implement partner toolkits and utilize new outreach collateral.
<b>Reinforcement</b>	<b>Reinforce</b> communication strategies through modeling of behaviors, consistent messaging, communicating appreciation for compliance, and easy access to information for all staff on new partner toolkits and outreach efforts.

Table 6. ADKAR Change Management Methodology for MVP Communications

- **Message Development & Clear Communication.** To ensure a smooth, uniform recruitment effort associated with the expanded outreach strategy and to build trust with VA staff, MVP will reinforce a singular and consistent recruitment brand and voice. MVP messages to staff will leverage ADKAR change communications depending on where people fall within the phases of engagement. Early materials dissemination and staff engagement during Phase One are key to the strategy.
  - **Material Distribution.** Distribute new marketing products to local site staff (phlebotomy lab; clinic check-in areas) including brochures, demographic-specific fact sheets, pins, stand-up banners.
- **MVP Recruitment Change Management Education.** To ensure all VA staff in the field are aware and on board with understanding and using new integrated recruitment and enrollment practices, activities and materials, MVP will integrate change management education along with promotion and outreach education activities.

- **Education and Training:** Develop and implement 101 and 201 outreach and communications education webinars (live and taped for future use) addressing outreach best practices, overcoming recruitment and communications challenges, and how to use new outreach materials for effective recruitment.
- **Clinic/Field Coaching Toolkit Dissemination:** Create a one-on-one coaching toolkit that can be used for internal coaching purposes by National Program Coordinators, LSIs and RCs (immediate knowledge transfer at time of implementation). This includes "hands on" coaching session resources (including job aides, checklists, templates, and reference cards).
- **Quarterly Field Content Updates.** Disseminate quarterly field toolkit updates (as developed) with MVP products (social calendar, print collateral, and/or video products) for VAMC staff to ensure they are aware and using the latest recruitment and enrollment materials.
- **MVP Recognition and Rewards.** Create MVP recognition and reward collateral (certificates, special web badge, Buttons, pens, etc.) to promote recruitment success and reward staff/teams who meet or exceed recruitment objectives. Develop a SharePoint location to recognize outstanding personnel/teams for their effort.



## Public Relations and Events

**Strategy:** *Implement a proactive, targeted national and local media strategy to generate increased positive press about MVP and its enrollment campaign.*

As a complement to partnership and advertising activities, public relations and related media activities can help reach diverse Veteran audiences nationwide, including priority or special populations. Public relations efforts anticipate and address common questions about MVP, including questions about research and health privacy, the importance of MVP, and the ways that MVP data will be used and protected.

Goals for public relations include:

- Educate the public about MVP and the one million recruitment goal, its importance, and the enrollment process.
- Assure the public of the confidentiality, safety, and security of personal health information.
- Encourage engagement and enrollment in person and online.
- Reach communities that are prioritized for enrollment.
- Support the reputation of VA and MVP.

Core activities will include:

- **Editorial Calendar.** Develop a 12-month editorial calendar and content topics for release across VA and external channels.
- **Talking Points & Messaging.** Develop talking points for VA/MVP leadership and PAOs to facilitate on-message communications about MVP.
- **Earned Content Placement in VA Vehicles.** Leverage existing VA vehicles to promote MVP messages, stories and milestone. Develop monthly blurbs and newsletter content for inclusion in internal VA intranet sites, newsletters, and e-mail distributions. Suggested placement goals include:
  - Article placement 1x/quarter in VA publications and/or newsletters (Vantage Point, VetResources, etc.)
  - Social media posts 4x/month via owned channels (ORD Twitter and Facebook; VHA Twitter and Facebook); combination of video, copy, and live content
  - Video placement 1x/quarter via VA channels (VHA YouTube, Veterans News Network, VHA Facebook)
- **Proactive Media Engagement.** To build awareness of MVP and the renewed push to reach one million Veterans by November 2022, pitch broadcast, print, and digital media outlets with stories tailored to both national and local markets. The goal is to educate reporters about the MVP push and the benefits of participation for respective Veteran populations. Prioritized engagement will also be given to media outlets that serve prioritized or special populations.
  - **Story Development.** Create stories to generate interest in MVP, the campaign and MVP's mission and benefits. Stories will be organized around distinct themes such as exploring what MVP is and how to enroll; reinforcing that participation is easy, and that all data will be kept safe and secure; the relevance of MVP to people's daily lives; the importance of everyone participating; and connecting MVP messages and calls to action with trending topics, relevant news cycles, and the previous reporting of targeted journalists.
    - **Targeted Media Story Placement.** Coordinate with select media outlets to create visual stories and shareable content (e.g., infographics, podcasts, b-roll video, animations) that illustrate the importance of MVP in the future of Veteran precision health care.

- **Targeted Opinion Content.** Targeted Op-eds, blog posts, and letters to the editor written by regional VAMC spokespeople and other MVP stakeholders to highlight the importance of the program.
- **Activate Stakeholders to Support Media Efforts.** Augment media outreach activities by identifying and using trusted influencers, including possible community leaders and media personalities to add credibility and build awareness.
- **Million Veteran Milestone Event.** Hold an MVP milestone event to promote achieving the one million Veteran target. Include VA, VHA, ORD, MVP as well as field leadership and staff in the milestone celebration. Pending pandemic conditions, hold an in-person and live streaming component.
- **Promote MVP Partner Events.** Promote any MVP/partner collaboration events that may be media newsworthy. This may include livestreaming these events with social media platforms (protecting privacy as applicable).
- **Media Monitoring.** Conduct ongoing media monitoring activities to determine whether key messages are breaking through, to correct any misinformation and identify opportunities to link with timely, relevant topics.
- **Collaboration Among National MVP and VAMC Teams.** MVP will coordinate closely with MVP field-based teams, VAMCs, and PAOs to provide guidance on messaging and talking points about MVP recruitment and enrollment. In addition to hosting coordination calls, MVP may provide media training to regional leaders and/or their appointed spokespeople.
- **Community Outreach and Events.** MVP's NOCT-T (National Outreach, Communications and Training Team), with contractor support, will leverage national and local in-person events to reach groups of Veterans in communities; some events will support in-person enrollment (dependent on accessible phlebotomist and private blood draw room), while other events will encourage enrollment via MVP Online and/or build MVP community. Event frequency and locations to be determined based on availability and resources of NOCT-T.
  - **Community forums.** Host periodic community forums to present the information directly to Veteran audiences in a format that includes a short presentation, CTA, and Q&A.

## Direct Mail and Email

*Strategy: Coordinate an optimized direct mail and email strategy that complements digital and other communications and engages known Veterans and those who are newly transitioned to join MVP.*

Direct engagement with Veterans and newly transitioned Service members is a critical component of an effective outreach and recruitment campaign. Direct mail and email marketing aren't an either-or proposition. Combining these two marketing methods creates a powerful synergy that can enhance recruitment response rates through capturing Veteran attention through direct mail and driving them to action through email/digital. Some audiences prefer email and digital engagement only, but data suggests that direct mail is still a powerful tool for many Veteran constituencies.

MVP's direct engagement efforts are part of the larger integrated, multi-channel communications campaign to encourage Veterans to enroll in MVP. The full complement of channels will drive people to go to their nearest VAMC/intake site or to MVP Online to help move them through the conversion funnel to enrollment. The direct response component is built on three core principles to achieve that goal: consumer segmentation; testing; and data drives decisions.

- **MVP mailers.** Distribute MVP Mailers (4x/year) to existing VA mailing lists.
  - **Coordinate Direct Mail and Email Campaigns.** When executing direct mail with known Veterans (those in VA's system), it is important to send direct mail first. When done correctly, combining direct mail and email has a higher likelihood of better response rates. Approximately one week after prospects receive a letter, email follow up will be initiated. Email follow up should occur up to four times for each printed mail piece. MVP will test different calls to action (CTA) in both email and direct mail pieces to determine which provides the best results.
  - **Tie Direct Mail to Interactive Marketing.** Combining direct mail with digital marketing can drive greater engagement with Veteran audiences and amplify messaging. Scheduled direct mail and email activities will be coordinated with the larger paid and earned media engagement activities to contribute to Veterans receiving multiple, simultaneous touch points.
- **Email Chase Campaign.** MVP will use a "chase" style campaign using the existing gov.delivery and/or Mautic platforms where we send all Veterans in a segment the same or similar message on a given day/time determined by an editorial calendar. Using a chase approach, A/B and multivariate tests occur to optimize everything from the email template to messaging frames and specific copy executions. These tests are divided into three prioritized tiers.
  - **Tier 1: Early Strategic Priorities:** Tier 1 contains the highest priority tests to address broad strategic questions that impact multiple segments across the entire campaign. These tests should run during the first 3 months of the campaign. Tier 1 also includes high priority tests to new Veteran or priority populations.
  - **Tier 2: General Testing Priorities:** Tier 2 contains both tests with broad application to the Veteran segments—but are less critical than Tier 1—and tests that are targeted at priority segments. These tests focus largely on optimizing message content and body copy (i.e., personalization, overcoming obstacles language, etc.). These messages start in early March and run for the entire campaign.
  - **Tier 3: Tactical Optimization Efforts:** Tier 3 tests aim to identify optimization tweaks to be made to the style and copy of MVP emails, to be performed after higher priority strategic questions have been addressed. These include answering optimization questions around items like button color, tracker style, copy tweaks, subject line punctuation, and more.

- **Testing and Optimization.** Testing and optimization of the direct mail/email program happens at two levels to generate both long-term programmatic improvements and short-term optimizations. Campaign-Level: Test different consumer experiences to determine the most effective way to run the campaign. Message-Level: Test specific elements of an email/mail piece to optimize performance of particular messages or tactics.

## Campaign Monitoring and Evaluation, and Optimization

*Strategy: Use qualitative and quantitative campaign data and measure, monitor, and assess communications and outreach strategies and activities to optimize the MVP campaign and response rates.*

MVP communications efforts will remain agile and iterative to ensure continuous improvement and maximum ROI. The team will run pilots for both national and tailored micro-campaigns to test messaging and channel efficacy as part of ongoing research and optimization activities. MVP will focus on key activities, outputs, and outcomes (key results) that lead to MVP objectives.

- **Enrollment Monitoring.** Monitor enrollment response rates relative to modeled response benchmarks to date to understand campaign performance.
  - Review email, direct mail, digital/social, event and VAMC reach and response rates.
  - The communications team will work closely with the recruitment and enrollment team to leverage their advanced email campaign analytics via Mautic as well as website traffic and other statistics monitoring.
  - Print campaigns (newsletters, mailers) will be evaluated by total number of distributed materials and link to enrollment.
  - In-person outreach at clinics will continue to be evaluated by the coordinating center and local site teams.
  - In-person outreach events conducted by NOCT-T will be evaluated by total number of Veterans enrolled at each event as well as number of individuals engaged (provided information/talked to) and additional activities such as talks, advertisements, and requests for MVP outreach packages to be shared.
- **Optimized Paid Media Strategy.** Execute an optimized paid media strategy leveraging creative materials and advertisements that demonstrate the greatest impact leading audiences to respond. Assessing campaign performance of our optimized paid media strategy will allow strategic reallocation of content and resources to boost engagement and enrollment responses. Key metrics include:
  - Total reach (total number of Veterans exposed to campaign content)
  - Landing page clickthrough rate (percentage of Veterans who land on MVP Online via the campaign)
  - Registration rate (percentage of Veterans who enroll via MVP Online because of the campaign).
- **Social Media Listening.** Identify and diagnose potential carriers or issues, such as viral posts or events that could affect enrollment, via data from social media listening platforms
- **Earned Media Monitoring.** Review media clips that may help identify and diagnose issues or opportunities that may hinder or boost the recruitment campaign.
- **Internet tracking survey (optional task).** Conduct an internet survey of those who opt-in to a social media ad to track awareness and intent to join MVP.
- **Analyzing and Reporting on Data.** Generate dashboards and reports on a minimum of a monthly basis, or as needed for ad hoc data analysis. Analysis will focus on who is responding and how to boost engagement and enrollment.

## Appendices

### Appendix A: Veteran Insight Session – Participant Demographics

<p>The MVP Communications Team conducted <b>four</b> virtual insight sessions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Women Veterans Session (six participants)</li> <li>• Diverse Veterans Session (five participants)</li> <li>• Veterans ages 30-49 Session (five participants)</li> <li>• Veterans ages 60+ (six participants)</li> </ul> <p><b>Total: 22 Participants</b></p>	<p><b>Age*</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3 Veterans were 30 – 39</li> <li>• 7 Veterans were 40 – 49</li> <li>• 2 Veterans were 50 – 59</li> <li>• 8 Veterans were 60+</li> </ul>
<p><b>Branch</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 12 Army Veterans</li> <li>• 2 Air Force Veterans</li> <li>• 3 Marine Corps Veterans</li> <li>• 2 Navy Veterans</li> <li>• 3 National Guard/Reserve Veterans</li> </ul>	<p><b>Race/Ethnicity*</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 5 Black/African American</li> <li>• 3 Latino/Hispanic</li> <li>• 12 White</li> <li>• 1 Native American</li> <li>• 2 Asian American/Pacific Islander</li> </ul>
<p><b>Rank at discharge*</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 11 E4-E6</li> <li>• 4 E7 and above</li> <li>• 1 O1-O3</li> <li>• 1 O4-O6</li> </ul>	<p><b>Gender</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 12 male Veterans</li> <li>• 10 Female Veterans</li> </ul>
<p><b>*Note:</b> Not all participants completed all parts of the demographic information forms; some Veterans identified as more than one race</p>	



## Appendix B: Veteran Insight Session Quotes

### Veterans Feel a Continued Sense of Duty to Help Other Veterans and Service Members

Statement	Gender	Race/Ethnicity
“If I know I’m going to help my brother, my sister, that person coming after me, then yes, I’m going to [participate]; but absent that information, you’re not selling me on the research.”	Male	Latino/Hispanic
“I would participate in a program that would help other Vets, especially the young. I see these young Veterans who are hurt, their lives destroyed. I would do what I could to help them.”	Male	White
“...my personal view would be if I can help somebody down the road by having some blood drawn and whatever they do with it and come up with answers, that’s who I am as a person and as a Veteran. We all support each other.”	Male	White

### Different Demographic Groups of Veterans Have Varying Comfort Levels with Research Participation

#### Women Veterans

Statement	Gender	Race/Ethnicity
“The problem is there is all of this research, but they’re not listening to when women Veterans speak. Women are having such a challenge getting the proper help looking at the genetic markers that exist for women.”	Female	Black
“My only issue...is if you found something that would genetically predispose or cause my children to be unable to serve based on information...Being that we [the military] recruit from our own, it does give me hesitation [to join].”	Female	White
“There has to be some kind of assurances that the information won’t be used in any way to change current records or disability status or health status; any way that will impact ability to get benefits or services.”	Female	Latino/Hispanic

#### Black and Hispanic Veterans

Statement	Gender	Race/Ethnicity
“What is the purpose of the research? Because at the end of the day, people don’t have the interest in providing time and data to an organization they don’t feel is going to have any information...that will benefit me.”	Male	Latino/Hispanic
“I think about own community, the Black community, think about the Tuskegee Airmen, Henrietta Lacks and her blood being used without her permission. You aren’t going to get people wanting to just volunteer their blood and not know that some company is going to make billions of dollars off their blood and they’re not going to see a dime.”	Female	Black
“...it’s important to make sure that the research that’s being used with my blood, which consists of blood from my family and generations and generations, is not being abused.”	Female	Black

#### White & AAPI Male Veterans

Statement	Gender	Race/Ethnicity
“It seems like a no-brainer to have Veterans participate in research.”	Male	White

“I’ve been close to a few guys that have been injured pretty badly on deployments and miraculously, a bunch of them were able to go back on active duty...none of that would have been possible without military medical research.”	Male	Asian American/Pacific Islander
“To me, if [genetic research] is voluntary and the subject that’s participating is educated, I don’t have a problem with it.”	Male	White
“I kind of look at it [medical research] as my duty...if my medical records or me participating in a study is going to help...I would absolutely do it in a heartbeat.”	Male	Asian American/Pacific Islander
“...I’m totally open to new things like MVP.”	Male	White

**Veterans Ages 60+**

Statement	Gender	Race/Ethnicity
“That’s key, we have to ensure that this stuff is staying in the right hands and not going to be exposed or hacked or something like that. We need to make sure that’s communicated.”	Male	White
“I’m 83 and I don’t care who has my health records right now...they probably have them anyway.”	Male	White
“My thought on research is that it can be beneficial to people other than Veterans. The reason why I’m on this call today is I’m a rotary member...Rotary’s motto is service above self...I think if this research can benefit everyone, it’s more important than just Veterans.”	Male	White
“I think VA care has been outstanding for years...I would agree to genetic testing too. I wouldn’t care.”	Male	White

**Veterans Want Honest, Understandable Recruitment Language**

Statement	Gender	Race/Ethnicity
“I am enrolled, but this is the first time I’ve ever heard that they have access to my health care records... I thought it was an anonymous aggregation.”	Female	White
“I’m already assuming you’re doing other things with my blood.”	Female	Black
“When I read the line about how we can ‘prevent certain illnesses in the first place,’ how about great healthcare? How about our doctors paying attention? Because a lot of these questions can be answered by a PCP who is actually paying attention.”	Female	White
“I just want to point out the number of needles I had to take involuntarily while I was in.”	Male	White
“I don’t want [my genetic information] on the front page of the New York Times.”	Male	White

**Veterans Want to Know Their Participation Will Benefit Themselves and Others**

Statement	Gender	Race/Ethnicity
“You need to get to the ‘so what?’... How is it going to benefit other Veterans that come behind us? What’s going to change specifically? You have to be able to communicate that and make the person understand how this is going to not just benefit you, but an entire group of people for their betterment.”	Female	Black
“I’m going to call tomorrow [to sign up for MVP]. Because I’m a Pacific Islander. I want to make sure the Pacific Islanders blood is in there because it’s going to help more Pacific Islanders...so I need to do it...”	Female	Asian/Pacific Islander
“We want to feel of service. We don’t even know if our blood work or our DNA was of service to someone.”	Female	Black
“...what’s in it for us and our brothers and sisters, past and present and future? That’s really what can be used to appeal to recruiting more and more Veterans to be associated with it or to participate in it. From what I understand, you give your contribution to the program and that’s it. There’s no report sent to you. There’s no option to learn what MVP stumbles upon with your contribution to the program.”	Male	Latino/Hispanic

**Underrepresented Veterans Want Outreach Materials to Address their Unique Backgrounds and Experiences**

*Women Veterans*

Statement	Gender	Race/Ethnicity
“Add a tab for languages [to the website]...the Army opened itself up to other Pacific Islanders. These kids can read and talk English, but they are more comfortable in their native language...they’ll be glad to read it because it’s in their language.”	Female	Asian/Pacific Islander
“If the VA is saying research is needed on minority groups... then don’t lump [all the groups] together.”	Female	Asian/Pacific Islander
“Put something on a piece of literature to let me know this is geared for the woman Veteran.”	Female	Black
“What about all these women not identifying as Veterans anymore? How do we get to them? How do we find them?”	Female	White
“Enroll us while we’re at the appointment, right? Why? Because I’m here anyway.”	Female	Black
“If [a survey] is really long, I get so many, it’s impossible to sit there and do them all. I’m more inclined to do stuff when I go into the VA.”	Female	White
“Haven’t we given enough? Is someone finally going to recognize that we’ve given enough? We’re taking time away from our children, our family, our jobs to fill out surveys.”	Female	White
“If it’s a two, three-minute survey, that’s one thing. But if you’ve got to sit there for 20 minutes to fill out a survey, I don’t have that kind of time during the day.”	Female	White
“For us, service never ends. We go from serving God, country, and family, to serving community.”	Female	White
“Do not call me, I’m not going to answer.”	Female	White

*Black, Hispanic, AAPI, and Native American Veterans*

Statement	Gender	Race/Ethnicity
“People learn different ways. Some people need an email, some people need a video, some people need live conversation.”	Male	Latino/Hispanic

“I try to approach whatever population of Veterans I’m dealing with from the vein that they potentially only have an eighth-grade education. So, if you have all this information available about the research, but it’s online, who’s going to look for that?”	Female	Black
“Reach me on my cell phone. You know, you have those pop ups of those commercials when you’re playing a game or you go into the Internet...VA needs to up their budget on outreach, if they want to hit the max factor of capturing all Veterans in the United States....but make sure the commercials are at the level of an eighth grader.”	Female	Asian/Pacific Islander

**Veterans Ages 30-49**

Statement	Gender	Race/Ethnicity
“Nothing that says ‘post 9/11’ works for me at all. I believe in ‘SAVE’ which is ‘Serve All Veterans Equally.’ So I’m [participating] just as much for my Agent Orange parents as I am for my kids when they come in.”	Female	White
“Post 9/11 does nothing for me. Remove it.”	Male	White
“I don’t think I’m the target audience for brochures.”	Male	White
“This DNA strand is kind of cool but looking at this brochure folded up, it looks like a VFW convention... put a couple fresh faces in there.”	Male	White
“If you’re seeking to gain participants for MVP in the future, I think a good time to target or engage them is before they separate [from service].”	Male	Asian/Pacific Islander

**Veterans 60+**

Statement	Gender	Race/Ethnicity
“I use Facebook; I don’t use it as much as I go through it.”	Male	White
“I think email is probably the safest at this point [to communicate with me]. I mean there’s text, there’s all kinds of crazy stuff...pretty much 99% of what I get in the mail is just junk. So, for me, email is pretty safe.”	Male	White
“Probably a letter would be best to reach me.”	Male	White
“You know, a three-minute video is pretty good. I like to read, but a short video that’s informative and to the point is great.”	Male	White

## Appendix C: Sample Subject Matter Expert Interview Guide

Date: 9/28/21

Time: 1-1:30 PM ET

Interviewee: [Insert Name]

Topic	Script
<p><b>Background/Introductions (5 min)</b></p>	<p>Thank you for joining today’s call! We greatly appreciate your time.</p> <p>We’re contracting with VA to gather some insights about how to increase enrollment in MVP through various communication channels, including the MVP online portal. Ultimately, we will help craft a plan to enhance MVP marketing materials so that Veterans have a better understanding of the program, what’s in it for them, the program’s accomplishments, and are motivated to enroll. Your insights will go a long way to helping us craft an impactful MVP communication plan and achieve VA’s goal of enrolling 1 million Veterans by next fall!</p> <p>For your awareness, we just recently conducted some insight sessions with Veterans to get an understanding of how they perceive MVP communication materials such as messages in the MVP brochure, MVP online, and women Veterans factsheet.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do you have any questions for us before we start?</li> <li>• Our understanding is that you are the [insert title] for MVP. Can each of you tell us a bit more about your roles and what you do on a day-to-day basis? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Can you give us an idea of who you oversee/who makes up the MVP research team?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Experience with MVP communication materials (10 min)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have you used any MVP marketing materials in your roles? If so, how? (e.g. brochure, factsheets?) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Have you ever received feedback on MVP messages or marketing materials?</li> <li>○ Is there anything you feel is missing from these materials? Anything that could be improved?</li> </ul> </li> <li>• What has been your experience with MVP online thus far from a recruitment, enrollment, or participant engagement perspective? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Any recommendations for the website moving forward?</li> <li>○ Any challenges we should keep in mind when thinking about recommendations for the website?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Ideas to better disseminate MVP’s accomplishments (e.g. scientific discoveries) (15 min)</b></p>	<p>Based on VA and Veteran feedback, we know we’d like to find better ways to communicate MVP’s accomplishments, and particularly scientific breakthroughs or discoveries.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What have you done in the past to communicate research findings? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Did you receive any feedback from Veterans?</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Are there any research areas that you think would be important to highlight in our communications or of particular interest to Veterans moving forward?</li> <li>• Are there any specific messages you think would be effective in communicating the research? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ We’re trying to communicate how the research impacts the Veteran</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Veterans want concrete information about research findings that will impact their specific demographic group</li> </ul>
<p><b>Experiences with recruitment (if time)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can you please explain at a high level the process a Veteran goes through for recruitment/enrollment?             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ What challenges have you worked to address?</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Can you tell me about any challenges you’ve experienced with enrollment?             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Are there any venues or strategies that you felt worked particularly well to increase enrollment?</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Do you have any overall recommendations to increase enrollment rates? (e.g. digital advertising)             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ If we were to suggest one of these recommendations to VA, who on your team would implement the recommendations?</li> <li>○ Are there any implementation challenges we should keep in mind?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Other info interviewee would like to share</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>



## Appendix D: MVP Outreach and Communications, FY22 Logic Model

