

## Readying Nebraska Communities to Serve Veterans and Their Families

Rural veterans, service members, and their families face unique challenges and barriers to care. The Nebraska Association of Local Health Directors' (NALHD) VetSET Nebraska project is bridging the gap — growing and connecting community resources to better serve this population. We have adopted three initiatives to increase community awareness, build collaboration, and connect rural veterans, service members, and their families to local support services.

**More than 145,000 Veterans live in Nebraska.**

**VetSET Nebraska aims to increase Military Cultural Competence across rural Nebraska.** Through networking and training opportunities, we prepare community providers and partners to recognize and address the unique culture, experience, and language of military service members and their families. As a result, veterans, service members, and their families encounter informed providers who better understand the opportunities and challenges of military life.

**VetSET Nebraska strengthens a network of community resources available to veterans, service members, and their families.** The Local Health Departments' VetSET Coordinators are championing multi-disciplinary, cross-sector partnerships and using tools like the Network of Care to facilitate connections between stakeholders. As a result, an extended continuum of providers — from employment, financial, health, educational, spiritual, and various other sectors — are better networked to leverage services for the benefit of veterans, service members, and their families.

**VetSET Nebraska helps veterans, service members, and their families connect to and access resources within their communities.** VetSET Coordinators make connections with veterans, service members, and family members to identify their needs. Through outreach activities and one-on-one interactions, VetSET Coordinators also assist with accessing and navigating resources. As a result, veterans, service members, and their families can identify and access the services they need close to home.

### Background

VetSET Nebraska is a Rural Veteran Coordination Pilot project funded through a grant from the VA Office of Rural Health to the Nebraska Association of Local Health Directors (NALHD). The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) created this grant program to support Veterans and their families who reside in rural or underserved areas.

NALHD was selected as 1 of only 5 organizations across the nation to receive this grant. NALHD member Local Health Departments and their community partners are building their capacity to meet the distinctive needs of veterans, service members, and their families.

VetSET Nebraska is assuring that veterans returning to rural Nebraska have the support and resources to successfully reintegrate into their families and communities.

**The use of community providers by veterans, service members, and their families has increased dramatically in recent years — a trend that is expected to grow.**

### Contact VetSET

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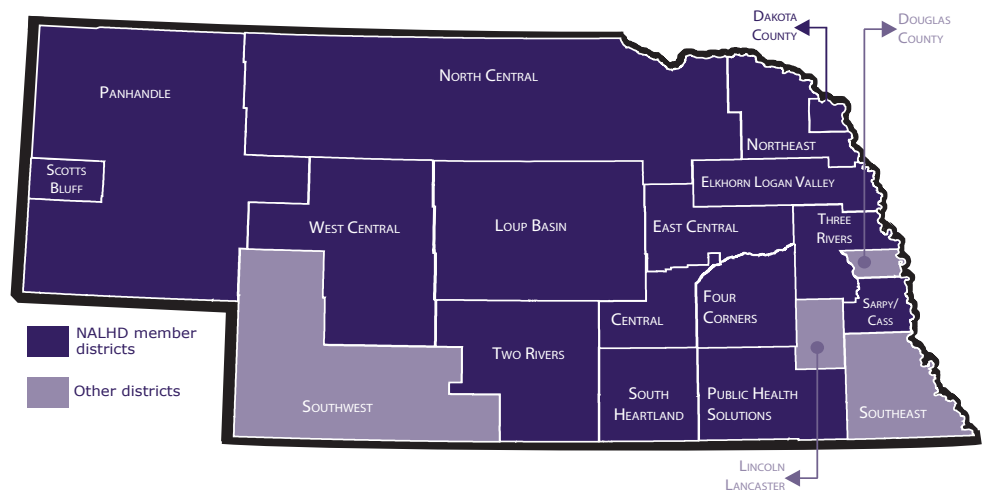
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“ How does a nation develop communities of care that maximize resilience and minimize the health risks that military children and their families face?... [We must] develop a public health approach that harnesses the strengths of the communities that surround them. ”

—from *Building Communities of Care for Military Children and Families* (Kudler and Porter, 2013)