

FACT SHEET FOR AMPUTATION SYSTEM OF CARE

The Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Amputation System of Care (ASoC) is an integrated, national healthcare delivery system that provides patient-centered, lifelong, holistic care and care coordination for the Veteran and Service Member with an amputation. VHA provides care for over 50,000 individuals with major limb loss, including those with amputations secondary to combat. Through the provision of quality rehabilitation services and prosthetic care, the ASoC enables the highest level of function to include social, vocational, and recreational re-integration.

ASoC PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

The ASoC is founded on a tiered system of care across all Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) facilities with 7 Regional Amputation Centers, 18 Polytrauma Amputation Network Sites and over 100 fully integrated amputation specialty clinic teams.

Upper and Lower Extremity Clinical Practice Guidelines, jointly developed by VA and Department of Defense (DoD), ensure evidence-based care. The integrated telehealth network enhances availability of amputation rehabilitation and prosthetics specialty care that includes state-of-the-art rehabilitation services, adaptive equipment, and prosthetic technology.

Vision

To be a world leader in providing life-long amputation care.

In 2008, the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) began to offer specialty accreditation for programs with distinguished levels of amputation care and expertise. Of the 63 programs that have been recognized by CARF worldwide, 24 (38%) are VA Medical Centers.



The ASoC partners with the DoD and the Extremity Trauma and Amputation Center of Excellence (EACE) to improve care and care coordination for Service Members with traumatic amputations. Close collaborations with the Prevention of Amputation for Veterans Everywhere (PAVE) program provides for preventive care of primary and secondary amputations. The ASoC also works

with the Amputee Coalition for implementation of comprehensive peer visitor and patient education programs.

ASoC COMPONENTS

Regional Amputation Centers provide the highest level of specialized expertise in clinical care and prosthetic technology, as well as rehabilitation for the most complex patients.

Polytrauma Amputation Network Sites provide a full range of clinical and ancillary services to Veterans within their local Veterans Integrated Service Network catchment area.

Amputation Clinic Teams are located at sites with more limited inpatient and prosthetic capabilities. These sites provide regular follow-up care and address ongoing needs.

Amputation Points of Contact are smaller facilities that will ensure that at least one person is identified to act as the point of contact for Veteran consultation, assessment, and referral to a facility capable of providing the required level of services.

POPULATION SERVED

Those served include eligible Veterans and Service Members with extremity amputations from any cause. The ASoC also serves individuals who have a high likelihood of requiring an extremity amputation due to disease or injury.

Individuals who have sustained extremity trauma requiring limb salvage procedures with subsequent complex orthotic and rehabilitation needs also qualify for care.

ACCESS TO CARE

Care is based on individual needs, goals, and preferences. Factors to consider include the level of services required to maximize function, health of the residual and contralateral limb, the geographic proximity to the patient’s home, and the patient’s personal preference.

Telehealth Amputation Clinics (TACs) maximize access to specialty amputation care for rural areas. TACs provide excellent, specialized care irrespective of where a Veteran resides. Clinical Video Telehealth clinics are continually expanding to VA healthcare centers across the country.



ASoC REHABILITATION GOALS

The primary goals of the rehabilitation system of care for Veterans and Servicemembers with amputations are to:

- Enhance the environment of care and ensure consistency in the delivery of rehabilitation services for Veterans and Servicemembers with amputations
- Provide specialized expertise in amputation care incorporating the latest practices in medical rehabilitation, therapy services, and prosthetic technology.
- Establish a well-defined and coordinated care program to meet the needs of all Veterans and Servicemembers requiring rehabilitation following amputation.

- Ensure access to the most advanced and appropriate prosthetic components to Veterans across the system of care regardless of geographic location.
- Provide care that focuses upon patients’ expressed individual needs during the entire continuum of care and ensure the highest level of patient satisfaction.
- Provide innovative systems of care including telemedicine, educational programs, therapeutic interventions, and prosthetic devices.

ASoC ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

The ASoC is organized under Patient Care Services, Rehabilitation and Prosthetic Service, and the Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation Program Office.

