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# VA-PALS – Improving Lung Cancer Screening For Our Veterans

January 25th, 2018 | [Hot Topics, News](#) | [0 Comments](#)

By: Angela Criswell, Senior Manager of Medical Outreach

Lung cancer among veterans is a serious issue because they face higher incidence rates of the disease and low survival rates compared with civilian populations. The disproportionate **impact of lung cancer on veterans** is c in part to higher smoking prevalence as well as occupational exposures including radon, asbestos and diesel exhaust among other known carcinogens.

Because of the vital need for lung cancer early detectic among veterans, Lung Cancer Alliance (LCA) is excited to join the inaugural summit of the Department of Veterans Affairs–Partnership to Increase Access to Lung Screening (VA-PALS) this week in Houston, TX. Funded by a grant from the Bristol-Myers Squibb Foundation, VA-PALS is an important step forward in better identifying veterans who may benefit from **lung cancer screening** and ensuring their access to this lifesaving service.

Here is what you need to know about this new initiative:

### Why is this important?

- The program will mobilize experts who bring **best practices** learned from current nationwide lung cancer screening programs, while **new workflow and software solutions** will help “uncomplicate” the

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screening process, according to VA-PALS Principal Investigator and LCA Medical and Professional Advisory Board member, Dr. Drew Moghanaki.

- **Ten VA sites will launch lung cancer screening services** this year, with hopes that success will lead to expanded site availability and an improved ability to reach veterans living in rural areas.

### How will LCA participate?

- We will contribute best practices to create awareness of screening availability in local communities through nuanced messages that communicate who is at high risk and highlight screening's unique risks and benefits.
- Specifically, members of our **Screening Centers of Excellence** network will demonstrate that responsible screening and outreach can be reproduced in medical centers all across the country whether their communities are small, large, urban or rural.

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### What can VA Centers tell us about lung cancer screening?

- VA centers empowered by VA-PALS can show us how a large healthcare system can share knowledge to improve services for those at risk for lung cancer.
- Such knowledge can help community-level civilian programs improve screening services by overcoming implementation barriers that drain time and resources.
- Information gained from veterans whose lung cancer will be detected early through screening will provide far more robust data on additional lung cancer risk factors, including occupational exposures.

The VA-PALS program demonstrates the importance of sharing best practices. In this case, community screening programs will inform the VA's efforts to bring lifesaving lung cancer screening access to veterans and the capacity of the Veterans Administration to roll-out, test and refine screening processes will help civilian screening programs provide more efficient, streamlined and patient-centered lung cancer screening to their communities.

Lung Cancer Alliance is proud to be a part of this effort. Stay tuned for future updates!

Lung Cancer Questions?

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