

Halls of Hope/Lebanon Mental Health Court **Grafton County Alternative Sentencing** **Veterans Track**

The Halls of Hope (HOH)/Lebanon Mental Health Court is pleased to be providing specialized services tailored to veterans. The Program actively seeks to identify potential veteran/service member referrals through a coordinated effort with the Veteran's Justice Outreach Worker (VJO) from the White River Junction, VT VA (Veteran's Administration). The HOH referral form specifically asks if the individual referred ever served in the military. HOH staff and the VJO are both actively involved with all levels of law enforcement and criminal justice, therefore veterans can be referred to HOH directly through the Grafton County Mental Health Court Coordinator or through the VJO worker, since both receive referrals from the jail and from community law enforcement. This approach attempts to ensure that veterans won't slip through the cracks, and have access to needed services.

If a veteran is referred to HOH releases are signed, and if not already involved, the VJO is pulled in to the application/evaluation process and supports are immediately connected to the veteran being considered for the HOH Veteran Track Program. The veteran applicant is offered services from the White River Junction, VT VA and/or the community mental health center/West Central Behavioral Health. This collaboration offers the best range of options for treatment and geographical proximity to supports.

Utilizing the Mental Health Court structure and Team, collaborating with the VJO and White River Junction VA (including Veteran Peer Support Specialists) we can maximize existing resources to monitor treatment options, progress and compliance to improve the health and well-being of veterans, as well as the safety of our communities.

HOH is an intensive and comprehensive Mental Health Court Program designed as an alternative to incarceration for individuals with mental health and co-occurring disorders.

Veteran/service member participants are served and guided by the principles of the HOH Mental Health Court Program:

- 1) Maximize the communication and cooperation between the community mental health system, the VA, law enforcement, and the criminal justice system;
- 2) Improve access to the VA and/or community mental health services;
- 3) Expedite case processing time with a team approach;
- 4) Reduce recidivism;
- 5) Better protect the safety and well-being of the community;
- 6) Improve appropriate treatment for identified defendants;
- 7) Ensure that punishment for non-compliance with the treatment plan be swift and graduated to fit the circumstances;
- 8) Incorporate VA and community-based educational, vocational, counseling, vocational training and self-help courses and programs into a comprehensive treatment plan of self-improvement; and a Treatment Plan is created with each individual and typically includes, but is not limited to, counseling, case management, taking prescribed medications, educational/vocational services and substance use treatment;
- 9) Encourage family members and others who provide significant natural supports to become involved in the treatment and recovery process, when appropriate.