

The Chart Page

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Veterans and the VA

The US estimates that the veteran population numbers 25 million. Some 4.7 million this year will receive medical care through the Department of Veterans Affairs. That is more than twice the number (about 2.3 million) that used the VA health care system in 1991. (See Fig. 1.)

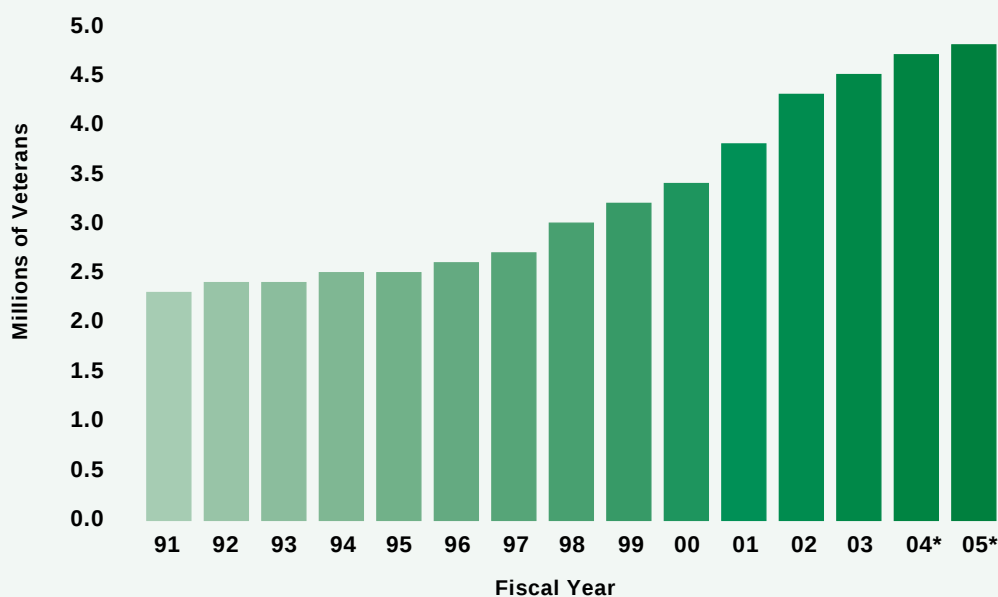
The increase in usage is attributed to two major factors. One is the

VA's shift in 1995 from hospital-based care to a system that features a full range of community-based health services. The second is 1996 legislation that directed establishment of a priority system and authorized the VA to open enrollment to all veterans.

VA projects that, over the next 20 years, the number of veterans in the

system will decline, but not as much as the overall veteran population. (See Fig. 2.)

Fig. 1 Growth in Number Receiving VA Medical Care



* Numbers for 2004 and 2005 are estimates.

Fig. 2 The 2022 Prognosis

	2007	2012	2017	2022
Veteran population	22.8 million	20.6 million	18.6 million	16.9 million ↓26%
Enrollment	6.3 million	6.3 million	6.1 million	5.7 million ↓9.5%

Source: Department of Veterans Affairs