

SD VISA Video 2015

Michael Adams: This is a collection of ships I started when I was 14 years old. I've had them most of my life.

Moderator: Just last year, veteran Michael Adams was at risk of nursing home placement.

MA: So there was a Veterans retirement home in Chula Vista. I said, no, I don't want to go into a retirement home.

Moderator: So he began looking for options. That's when he discovered a new program called SD VISA. It stands for Veterans Independence Services at Any Age.

Donna Brown (San Diego HHS): The VISA program is a veteran-directed program. It's a collaboration between the VA and aging and independent services. And the intent is to keep our veterans to be able to live independently in their home as long as they have a caregiver. So it's keeping them out of facilities.

Moderator: The program allows vets like Michael to decide what services, supports, and goods will best suit their community living needs. These plans go over such things as attendant services, medication management, transportation and more.

MA: I'm allowed now to take my caregiver's hours and move them where I need them for care. If I want to go to the VA at 6 am, I can go to the VA at 6 am. They're allowed to me take me to the doctors; they stay with me as long as I need. They can go to the pharmacy with me.

Caregiver: I think with me here with him and doing the cooking, the cleaning, transportation, it's really took a big load off of him.

MA: Renee's been with me for a little over a year now. She cooks in the morning. She makes sure I have a midday snack at 10:30 and then she makes an afternoon meal. Renee is here for me 100%.

Moderator: All the decisions are up to Michael and if he ever needs help, an Options Counselor is there. Together, they can work on a spending plan that is based on the unique needs of each veteran.

MA: The VA is 100% behind me. They want me to stay in my home in safety and dignity. So they've provided me with essentially the resources to do this. Spot resources.

Supervisor Bill Horn: This program, I hope, will continue to grow. This really serves a niche population in the veteran community.

Moderator: Part of that community is this Snyder family in Lomita. Theo Snyder is a retired Navy Chief. He also has dementia. His family wanted a way to keep him home.

Carole Snyder: Just knowing that the VA was going to take care of dad. Relieved a major amount of stress for my mom.

Moderator: San Diego County has one of the largest veteran populations in the United States so the Snyders are definitely not alone.

Donna Brown: So far as working and caring for veterans, we need to be a leader in this area. And the VISA program is demonstrating just that.

Moderator: The family members take turns giving the man who helped raise them the care and attention he deserves.

Carole Snyder: The fact that he is here in our home, in his home, the one that we all grew up in. This is dad's place.

Moderator: A place with a lot of love.