

## Supplementary Material: Interview Guide

*We are interested in learning how to improve the Caregiver Support Program. In order to do that we are speaking with those who participate in the program such as yourself– the experts – to get your honest feedback about your experiences. This includes learning how you used the program, what you like and do not like about it, and whether or not it meets your needs. Your responses are confidential and not linked to particular providers, so please feel free to say exactly what you think. There are not right or wrong answers. The most helpful thing for us is for you to give honest feedback about your experience with the Caregiver Support Program.*

### *Script for Permission to Record*

The following script must be completed with each Caregiver at the very beginning of the interview. Additionally, if the interview is interrupted and rescheduled, then the permission to record must be completed for both conversations.

“This is [insert name] and I am recording this conversation between myself and [insert name of caregiver]. Do you object to me recording this conversation [insert name of caregiver]?” Your response will not affect your ability to participate in the interview

If **NO**, then “[Insert name of caregiver] has given me permission on [DATE] at [TIME].

If **YES**, then stop recording and proceed with the interview.

### *Individual Interview about Use and Value of Caregiver Services: Semi-structured Interview Guide*

Let me begin by asking you to please tell me about your experience using The Caregiver Support Program (No pause – go right into question)

If caregiver’s information came from Peer Mentoring Program list, begin with the following prompts and then transition to the structured questions below:

1. How did you become involved with the Peer Mentoring Program?
  - a. How long ago?
  - b. How did you find out about it?
  - c. What contributed to you continuing to be engaged in the program (or not)?
    - i. Location?
    - ii. Additional dependents?
    - iii. Specific things about your mentor?

If caregiver’s information did not come from Peer Mentoring Program list, begin with the following prompts:

1. When did you start using it?
2. How did you hear about the program?
3. Why did you decide to participate in the program?

I want to ask you a little more about your role as your loved one's caregiver. When I say "caregiver", I mean a partner, family member, or friend who helps a Veteran with day-to-day responsibilities and provides emotional support? Examples of day-to-day support could include helping the Veteran with bathing, dressing, and eating, helping them relearn basic skills, arranging and taking them to medical appointments, managing their finances, and caring for their children. Caregivers may also provide protection and supervision for Veterans who have certain issues or illnesses. Now that I've explained what I mean by "caregiver," I'd like to ask you a couple of questions about how you may fill this role for the Veteran.

- a. What kinds of things do you help the Veteran with?
    - b. When, in your mind, did you become the caregiver? For how long have you been (his/her) caregiver?
  4. In your own words, how would you describe the quality of your experience with the Caregiver Support Program? How has it been for you?
    - a. What about the program has been helpful? (Listen, and ask to elaborate where general or vague description.)
    - b. What about the program has not been helpful?
  5. Which caregiver services have you used? (*If not arising spontaneously, ask about specific components.*) Did you have experience using (INSERT SERVICES LISTED ON PAGE 3 OF THIS GUIDE)?
    - a. When did your use begin?
    - b. How did you use it?
    - c. How did you learn about it?
    - d. How helpful was it?
  6. Sometimes caregivers receive additional help or services in the home. Have you used any services in the home, for example home-based primary care, skilled home care, respite care, or a home health aide?
    - a. When did your use begin?
    - b. How did you use it?
    - c. How did you learn about it?
    - d. How helpful was it?
- (SEE PAGE 4 FOR DESCRIPTION OF EXTENDED CARE SERVICES AS NEEDED)
8. Thinking about all of the services that you have used (NOTE: may repeat services that respondent has said he/she has used),
    - a. Tell me what you found most helpful?
    - b. Tell me what you found least helpful?
  9. What would you say has been the main benefit of this program for you?
  10. What would you say has been the main benefit of this program for the Veteran?

11. Tell me about any needs you had as a caregiver that were not addressed by the program.
12. Tell me about any parts of the program that you could not access?
13. What other services, if any, have you used for caregiving outside of this program?
14. If you could give us advice on how to improve the program, what would you tell us?
15. Is there anything else that you would like to say about caregiving support at the VA?