

Paralyzed Veterans of America – Iowa Chapter

Effectiveness Assessment & Charting Impact Report

What is the organization aiming to accomplish?

The **Paralyzed Veterans of America – Iowa Chapter (IPVA)** is a nonprofit veterans service organization chartered by Congress and one of 33 chapters representing the national organization, **Paralyzed Veterans of America (PVA)**.

Our **mission** is to improve the quality of life for Veterans with spinal cord injuries or diseases (SCI/D), their families, and all individuals with disabilities. Membership is **free** and open to U.S. Armed Forces Veterans with SCI/D diagnoses.

We strive to:

- Improve **medical care** and access
 - Secure necessary **benefits**
 - Offer **life-enhancing programs** and **community opportunities** for our members and others with disabilities
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What are the organization's key strategies for achieving its mission?

- **Claims Assistance:** Provide a National Service Officer to assist Veterans in navigating the Veterans Administration (VA) claims process
- **Sports & Recreation:** Sponsor member participation in events like the *National Veterans Wheelchair Games*, *Midwest PVA Fishing Event*, and *Shooting Sports*
- **Healthcare Support:** Provide funding for patient programs at Iowa's VA Medical Centers (Des Moines and Iowa City) and the Iowa Veterans Home in Marshalltown
- **Professional Training:** Fund training opportunities for medical personnel who treat individuals with SCI/D

- **Research Support:** Contribute to local and national organizations promoting quality-of-life improvements and cures for SCI/D
 - **Advocacy & Accessibility:** Promote public accessibility and educate communities on the needs of individuals with disabilities
 - **Social & Family Engagement:** Offer events, caregiver support, and peer mentoring to encourage connection and healing within our community
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What are the organization's capabilities for doing this work?

- **Collaboration with VA Systems:** We maintain close partnerships with Des Moines and Iowa City VAMCs and the Iowa Veterans Home through advisory committees and system-wide collaboration on healthcare barriers and prosthetic access
 - **Direct Service Support:** Through our National Service Officer, we provide **individualized assistance** with benefits, appeals, and care navigation
 - **Peer Mentorship Program:** A committee of IPVA members with SCI/D, MS, or ALS connects with newly injured Veterans to offer support and understanding through shared experiences
 - **Annual Member Outreach:** Every member is contacted yearly by a board member to assess healthcare satisfaction and identify unmet needs using a consistent outreach script
 - **Newsletter Communications:** Our bi-monthly newsletter keeps members informed, highlights successes, and provides a vehicle for feedback
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How will we know if we are making progress?

Progress is assessed through:

- **Annual program reviews** by the Board of Directors to ensure alignment, efficiency, and fiscal responsibility
- **Direct member contact** by board members and the peer mentorship committee to evaluate satisfaction with VA services and identify needs

- **Event participation metrics** to gauge engagement and impact (e.g., Fishing Event capacity, increased attendance at Trapshoots)
 - **Community feedback** through newsletters and donor responses, which serve as informal barometers of organizational performance
 - **Strategic adjustments** based on program reviews, member input, and shifts in the SCI/D care landscape
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What have we accomplished so far, and what's next?

- Membership has grown slightly, but **member participation has significantly increased**
- Our **Board of Directors is holding strong at 11 members**, with more candidates than openings in our latest election.
- The **Midwest PVA Fishing Event** was another massive success serving over 20 veterans and their caregivers.
- Our **annual Trapshoot** remains one of the largest in the National PVA circuit
- In 2025, IPVA sent the largest team we've ever had to the National Veterans Wheelchair Games.
- We now co-host an accessible bowling event with United Spinal Association.
- Plan to add more partnerships with other non-profit groups geared toward accessibility such as Birdability.

Our partnerships are a vital part of our success. Organizations like **ITC, BJL, AI's Bri, All Hands On Deck**, and our loyal **monthly and annual donors** make our work possible. We are committed to nurturing these relationships to ensure that **every member can benefit from the programs we offer**.