



Australian Government  
Department of Veterans' Affairs

# Veterans' Affairs in Australia An overview

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# Department of Veterans' Affairs Australia

The Department of Veterans' Affairs serves members of Australia's veteran and defence force communities, their war widows, and dependants through programs of care, compensation, commemoration and defence support services.





## Australian Department of Veterans' Affairs - Services to the Veteran Community

- health care
- pensions and compensation payments
- rehabilitation
- counselling services
- subsidised loans for housing and other housing-related benefits
- commemorative activities

The Department also provides counselling services through the VVCS - Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service.

Details on a selection of the major benefits and services provided to Australia's veterans will be covered in this presentation.



# Health and Treatment

Australian veterans and their dependants may be eligible for treatment at DVA's expense for a range of conditions.

- The services provided are dependent upon the holding of a Repatriation Health Card, commonly referred by the veteran community as a **white card** or **gold card**.



# Health and Treatment continued

## Gold card

- ❖ eligible for treatment for all conditions





# Health and Treatment continued

## White card

- ❖ eligible for treatment for accepted conditions





## Health and Treatment Services continued

Veterans and their dependants may be eligible for treatment at DVA's expense for a range of conditions, including for example:

- Hospital and day surgery
- Medical and specialist services
- Chiropractic and osteopathic services
- Community nursing
- Dental treatment
- Hearing services
- Occupational therapy
- Optometrical services
- Pharmaceutical benefits
- Pathology
- Rehabilitation aids and appliances
- Respite care
- Social work
- Speech pathology



## Health and Treatment continued

The Department authorises Local Medical Officers to arrange various services including hospital care and treatment by specialists, community nurses and allied health professionals. They may also refer veterans to other services.

### Travel

- DVA will also pay reasonable travel expenses for eligible veterans to attend the nearest provider of treatment, for example providing assistance with travel expenses.





## Health and Treatment continued

# Veterans' Home Care

Veterans' Home Care is designed to assist veterans and war widows who wish to continue living at home, but who need a small amount of practical help.

Services include:

- *domestic assistance:*
- *personal care:*
- *safety-related maintenance*
- *respite care*



## Health and Treatment continued

### Rehabilitation Appliances Program

- provides clinically required aids and appliances to help veterans and war widows maintain their independence as they grow older.

### HomeFront

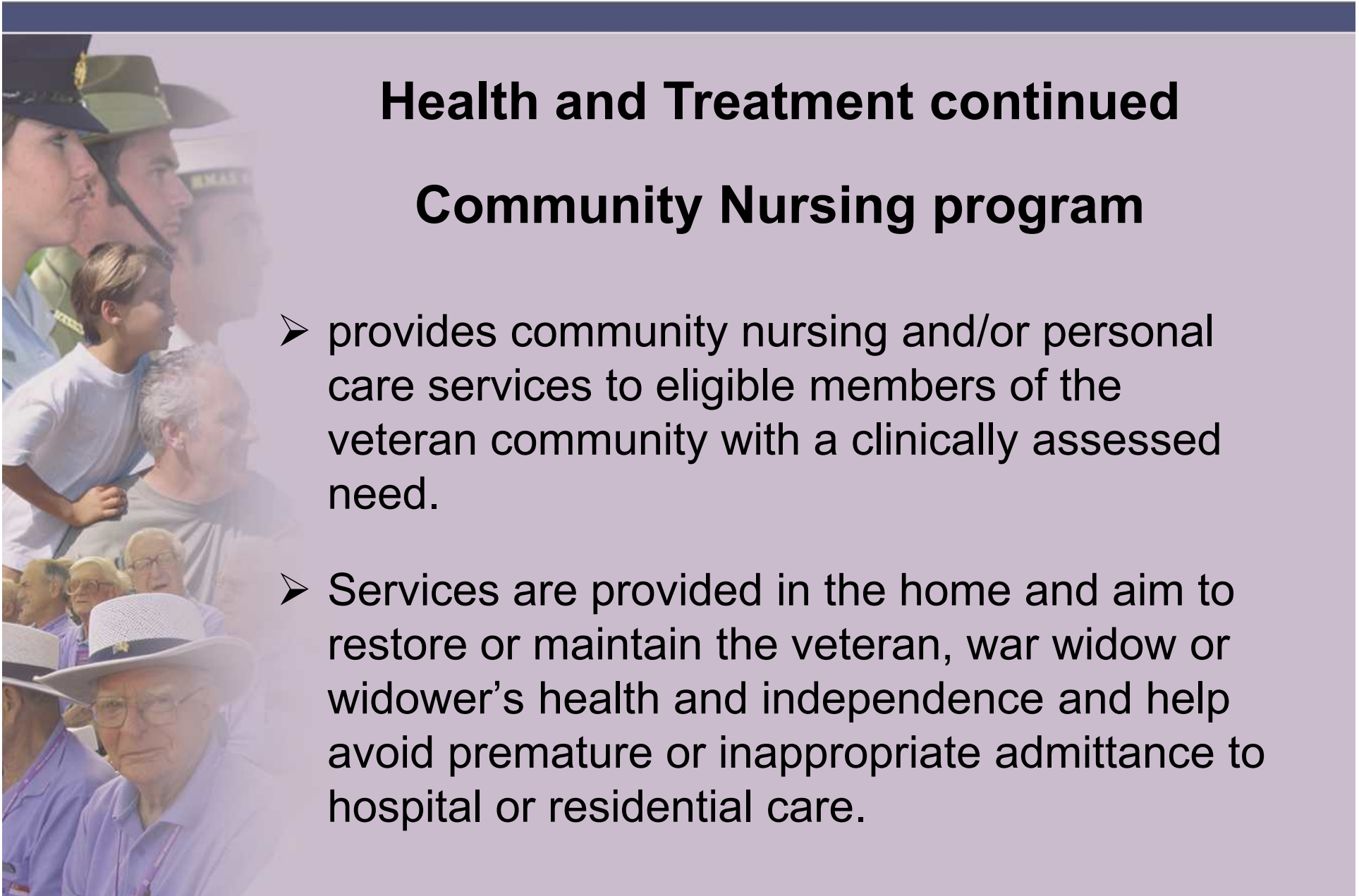
- falls and accident prevention program



## Health and Treatment continued

### Community Nursing program

- provides community nursing and/or personal care services to eligible members of the veteran community with a clinically assessed need.
- Services are provided in the home and aim to restore or maintain the veteran, war widow or widower's health and independence and help avoid premature or inappropriate admittance to hospital or residential care.

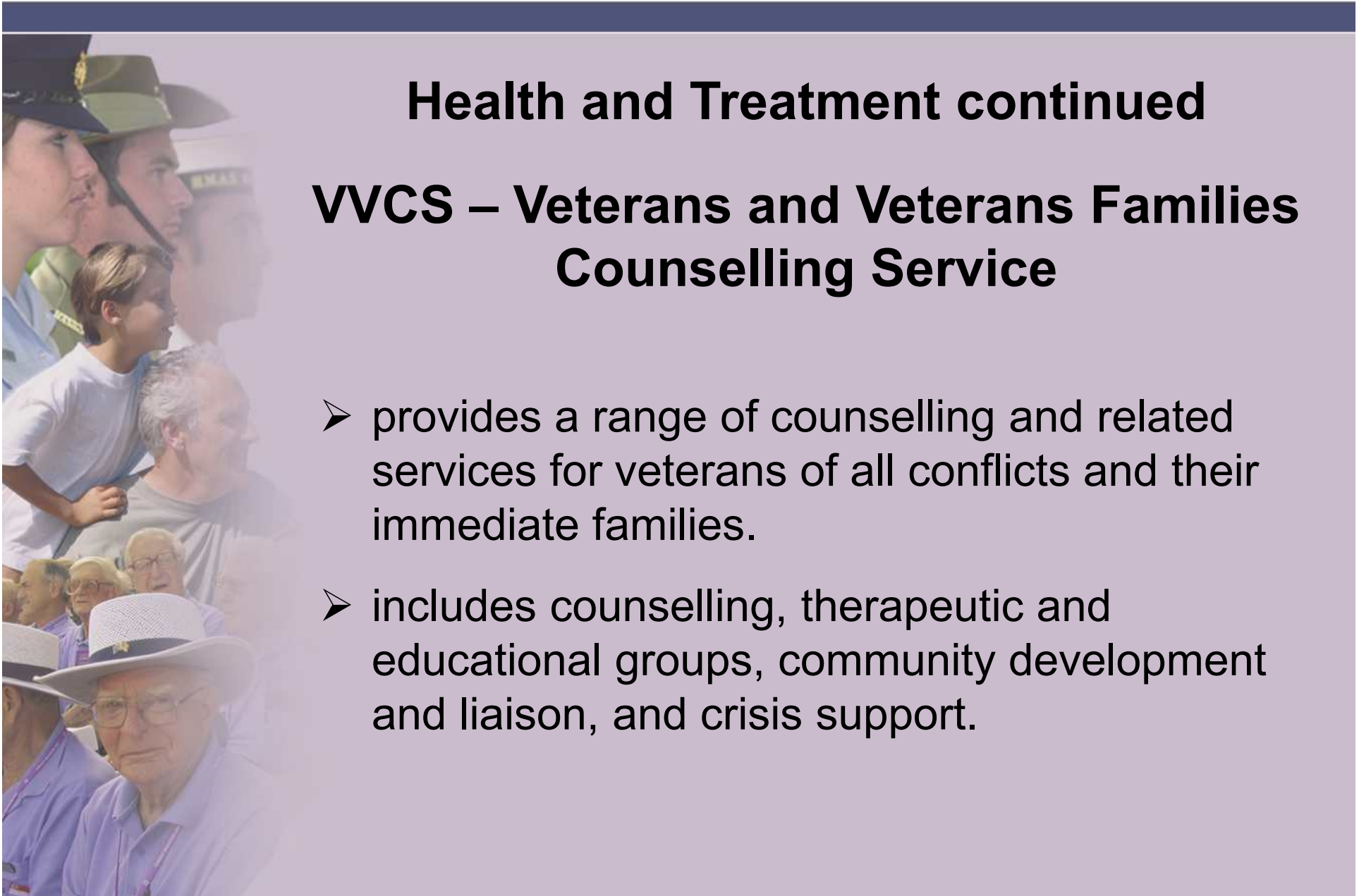




## Health and Treatment continued

### VVCS – Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service

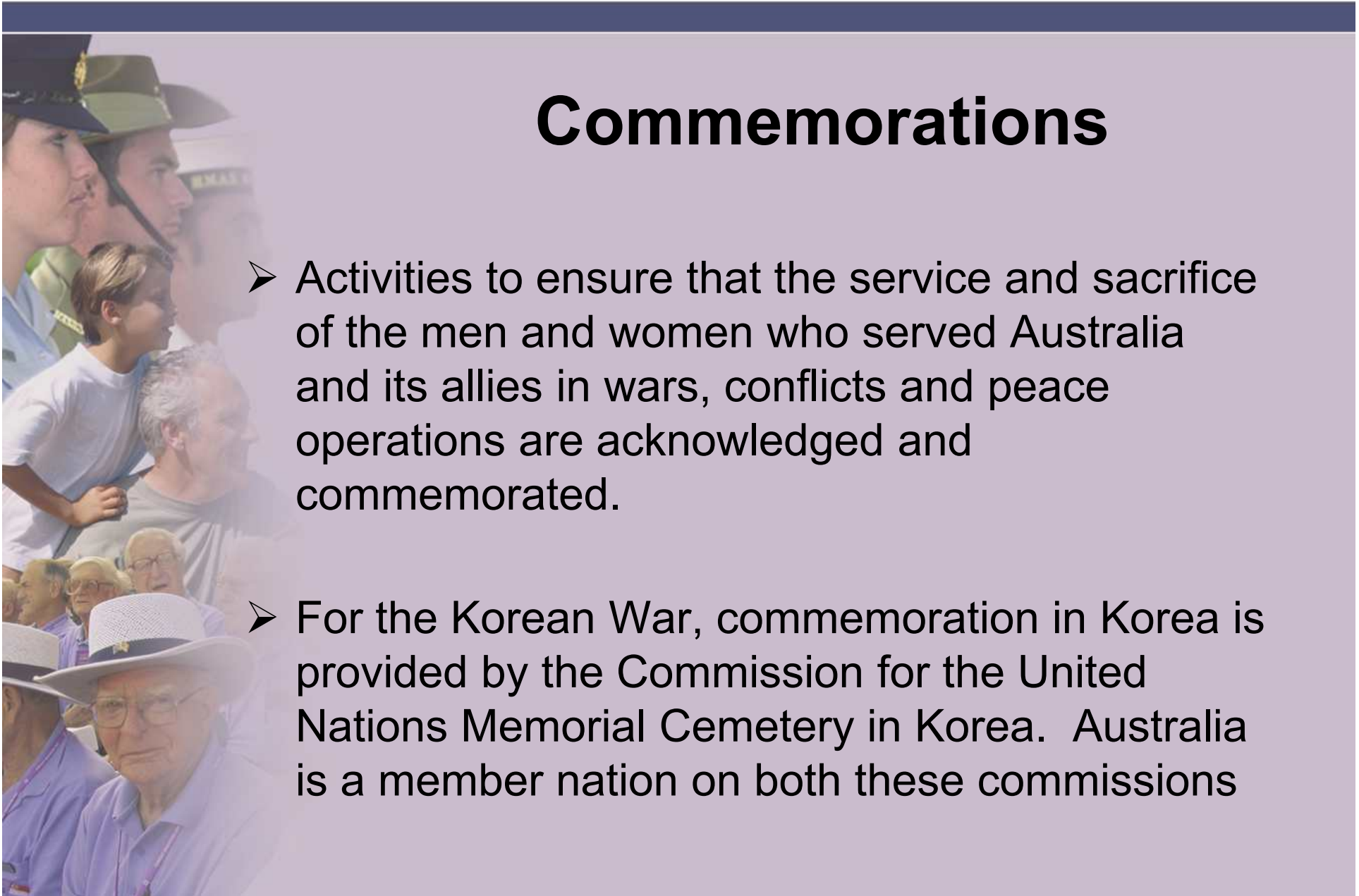
- provides a range of counselling and related services for veterans of all conflicts and their immediate families.
- includes counselling, therapeutic and educational groups, community development and liaison, and crisis support.





# Commemorations

- Activities to ensure that the service and sacrifice of the men and women who served Australia and its allies in wars, conflicts and peace operations are acknowledged and commemorated.
- For the Korean War, commemoration in Korea is provided by the Commission for the United Nations Memorial Cemetery in Korea. Australia is a member nation on both these commissions





# PENSIONS AND ALLOWANCES

The Australian Department of Veterans' Affairs provides financial and compensation support through a range of pensions and other payments to eligible members of the veteran community. The payments are broadly grouped as compensation and income support :

- compensation payments include disability pensions, war widows' pensions, payments for other dependants, and funeral benefits;
- income support benefits include service pensions, income support supplement and allowances such as rent assistance



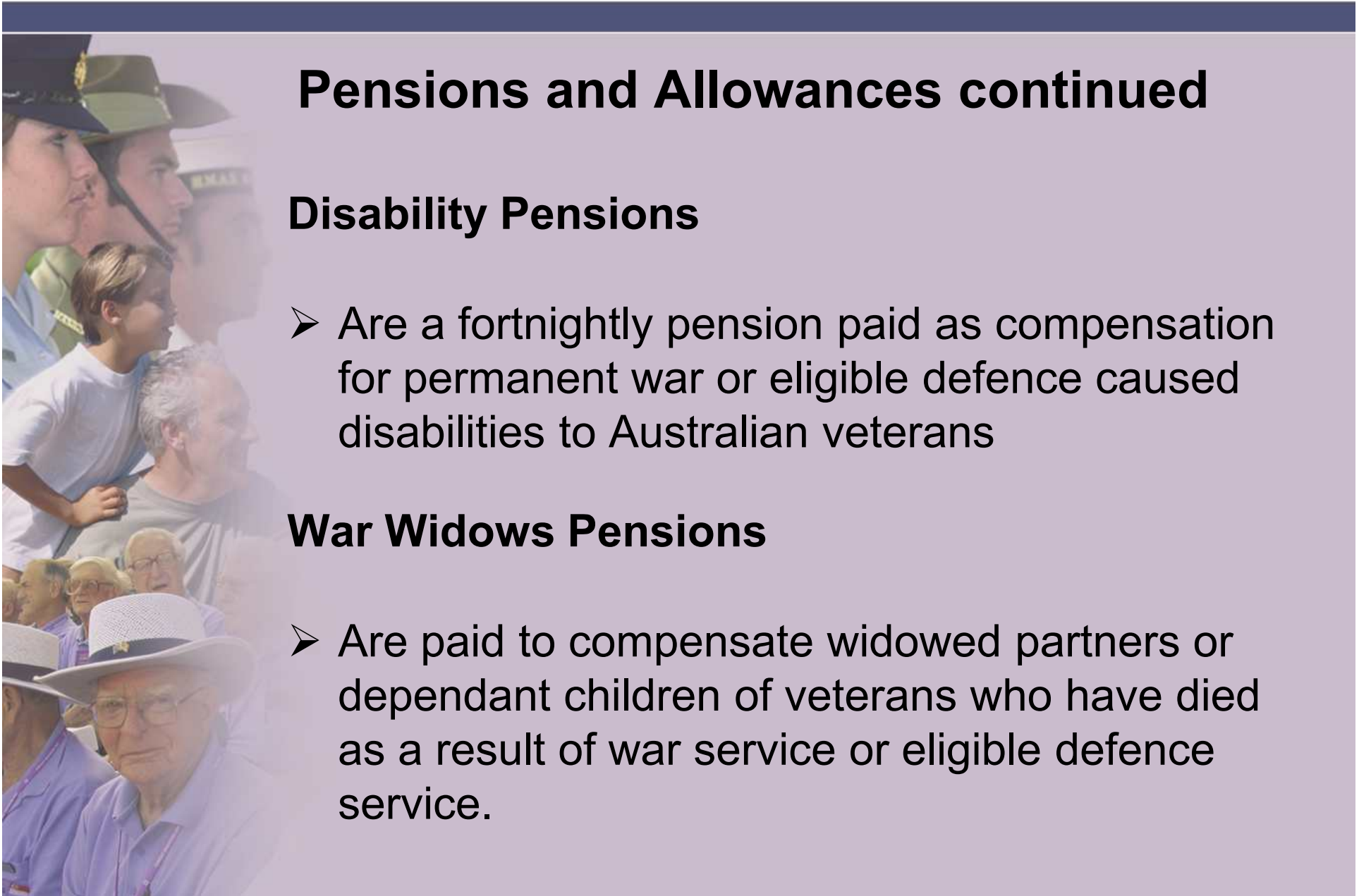
## Pensions and Allowances continued

### Disability Pensions

- Are a fortnightly pension paid as compensation for permanent war or eligible defence caused disabilities to Australian veterans

### War Widows Pensions

- Are paid to compensate widowed partners or dependant children of veterans who have died as a result of war service or eligible defence service.





## Pensions and Allowances continued

# Service Pension

Paid to veterans who:

- have served in operations against the enemy while in danger from hostile forces of the enemy

Are subject to income and assets tests.





# International Forums

Australia participates in international forums to allow and exchange of information and ideas on matters concerning the veteran community.

There are two international forums for veterans issues:

- o Ministerial International Forum (MIF)
- o Senior International Forum (SIF).
  - Participating countries – Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United States of America.
  - The forums are held approximately every 18 months
  - Next meetings to be held late 2011, hosted by Canada

## ***Officer exchange program***

The Department also participates in an officer exchange program with Canada.



## International Forums continued

### Ministerial International Forum

- Provides the opportunity for the relevant government Veterans' Affairs Ministers (or their equivalent) to discuss business developments and issues of mutual concern affecting veterans.
- Enables the beneficial exchange of information and ideas to improve policy for veterans.
- Issues discussed in previous forums have included operational and policy issues arising from Afghanistan/Iraq and mental health.



