

Our Secretary, John Fenton, attended a workshop by the Parramatta VAN Office which updated ESO Welfare Officers on several topics throughout their area of responsibility. The following is a brief summary of the workshop.

**Pension Rates per fortnight**

Disability Pensions – Special rate \$1,069.30  
Intermediate rate \$725.50  
EDA \$590.20  
General rate 100% \$379.90

War Widows - Indexed Component \$644.20  
Non indexed component \$65.40  
Pension \$709.60/fortnight

Service Pension Single \$701.10 maximum  
Married Couple \$528.50 maximum each

**Podiatry Services**

Podiatry services include diagnosis, routine maintenance, soft tissue surgery & physical therapy on your feet & may include prescription of medical grade footwear, footwear modifications & orthoses. There is a selection of 500 shoe styles available on the DVA list of approved footwear.

DVA will pay for Gold Card holders to meet your clinical needs. DVA will pay for White Card holders who require podiatry services because of an accepted war or service caused injury or disease.

To access the DVA podiatry service with a practitioner who is registered with Medicare Australia a referral is required from your LMO/GP, Specialist, Hospital Discharge Planner or another Podiatrist. Refer to DVA Fact Sheet HSV20.

### **Home Front & Veterans' Home Maintenance Line(VHML)**

All DVA Gold & White Card holders are entitled to a FREE assessment yearly which is designed to prevent falls & accidents around the home. An assessor will look for potential hazards (cluttered walkways, unsafe steps & railings, poor lighting etc). After an assessment & if the veteran agrees a registered tradesperson will carry out the work & DVA will assist with the cost of the work.

The VHML is a toll free number (1800 80 1945) to provide advice on general home maintenance matters, provides referral to reliable local tradespeople, provides 24 hour access for emergency repairs. The veteran pays for the repairs; it is not a cost to DVA.

### **National Relay Service**

This is a Commonwealth Government initiative funded by a levy on Telecommunication Carriers (Telstra, Optus etc). The service is not provided by DVA but is recommended by them, it is a free service.

- I can't hear but I can speak
- I can't speak but I can hear
- I can't hear & don't use my voice
- I'm hard to understand on the phone

There may be the need for equipment which your telecommunication company can provide (such as TTY). The service is available 24/7 & provides a Relay Officer who either speaks on your behalf to anybody you are phoning if you have a speech impediment or will type onto a screen the spoken word from somebody you are phoning so that you can read whatever the called person or caller is saying if you have a hearing impediment.

The Relay Officer is totally silent or neutral & experience shows that customers initially are concerned that a third party is involved in a private telephone conversation but this is soon overcome with usage.

**For more information on any of the above subjects contact your Association Welfare Officers who can provide you with more details & contact numbers.**