

The Support She Needed:

VETERAN BRENDA DANIELS TAKES CONTROL OF HER WEIGHT WITH MOVE!®

Veteran Brenda Daniels says that the MOVE! Program was a “last resort” for her.

She’d struggled with her weight ever since she could remember, and was close to giving up—she just didn’t have the energy anymore. “I tried every weight-loss program under the sun and experienced some success with all of them,” she recalls. “But eventually, I’d get tired of restricting certain foods and quit the program.” And she’d always gain back all the weight she’d lost.

Why Not?

Brenda first heard about MOVE! when she took a friend to a different program at the Lexington (KY) VAMC. One of the speakers that day was clinical dietitian Becky Schlueter, who was part of the local MOVE! team. “Becky passed out a MOVE! pamphlet,” she recalls, “and my friend and I thought, ‘Why not give this a try?’”

Brenda was introduced to the Leestown Division’s MOVE! Program, which she started in December of 2013. Almost immediately, she appreciated the program’s multi-disciplinary approach. “I loved having each specialty present at the group sessions,” she says. “To this day, I use the helpful ideas I got from the psychologist, dietitian, and recreational therapist.”

Keeping It Off

VA staff, in particular Becky, also went above and beyond to ensure Brenda’s success. “They were there whenever I needed them and were always full of encouragement,” she says. “It also helped that I was able to do MOVE! with a friend, because we supported one another.”

Over the past 15 months, Brenda has lost over 48 pounds—24 percent of her body weight! She’s dropped to a size 12/14, and has successfully kept her weight off for the



better part of a year. “I come every month to the group drop-in session and will continue to as long as I’m physically able,” she explains. “And every 3 months, I see Becky individually for extra accountability.” Though she drives 40 minutes to and from the VAMC, she says it’s worth it to get the support and see other’s MOVE! successes—such as her friend’s 35-pound weight loss.

Nearing Her Goal

Now weighing 152 pounds, Brenda is excited as she nears her ultimate goal of 145 pounds. Dropping the weight has helped her come off many of her medications and avoid heart surgery. Being lighter is also helping her lead a more active life. “I teach church school, work at the library, and drive a friend to her appointments,” she says. “I have less arthritis and more self-esteem, and I feel better.” And for the first time in years, Brenda’s paying attention to her physical appearance.



She continues to weigh in every day using TeleMOVE!, which helps her closely monitor her weight. She’s also tracking her calories and exercising regularly—things she’s learned are critical to maintaining a healthy weight. “I walk over a mile 5 days a week, and 3 days a week, I do light strength training for 45 minutes,” she explains, “And on Tuesdays, I do an hour-long tai chi class.”

Brenda is very grateful for the MOVE! Program and the great support she’s received from program staff. “MOVE! is wonderful,” she says. “If you’re willing to put in the work, it can be successful for you, too!”