Date: April 17, 2019

Location: VISN 23 Eagan, MN

Dept. Rehab Committee Members: Wilson Spence, Gary Munkholm, Bill Brockberg, Roy Bressler and Dan Tengwall. Dept. Service Officer, Jeremy Wolfsteller.

RE: The American Legion Dept. Rehabilitation Committee is tasked with staying engaged with agencies that aid Minnesota veterans. The committee does this by conducting System Worth Saving Site Visits throughout the year. These locations include Sioux Falls, Fargo, St. Cloud and Minneapolis VA Health Care Systems, St. Paul and Fargo Regional Offices, Minneapolis, Hastings, Luverne, Fergus Falls and Silver Bay Veterans Homes. Additional Site Visits are conducted at VA CBOC’s, Vets Centers, and Minnesota nonprofits that serve veterans when the budget allows.

Meeting Attendance: Chairman Bill Brockberg, Roy Bressler, Wilson Spence, Gary Munkholm, and DSO Jeremy Wolfsteller. Robert McDivitt, Network Director.
2019 VISN 23 System Worth Saving Site Visit

Meeting Minutes:

• The American Legion Dept. of Minnesota donated a total of $158,000 to Minneapolis VA and $207,000 to St. Cloud VA Health Care Systems.

• In Minnesota there is a gap in community based out-patient clinic, (CBOC) coverage that creates a challenge for many of our veterans accessing their VA Health Care provider. The areas of challenge in Minnesota start in the Twin Cities and ranging as far north as Duluth, MN. Because Minnesota being a large rural state and the location of the current CBOC’s could lead to more veterans choosing to use the new “Veterans Community Care Program” in June 2019. Another factor in veterans choosing to use community care under the new programs rules is better access to specialty care services. Currently, only the Minneapolis VA Medical Center provides specialty care for the surrounding VA Health Care Systems like St. Cloud, Sioux Falls and Fargo. Could specialty care go into CBOCs to prevent veteran from using community program? This is being considered as VA is directing more funding into the CBOC’s.

• All current provider agreements need to be converted to a Veterans Care Agreement (VCA) under the new Veterans Community Care Program by June 6, 2019.

• In FY19 we are completing a 2-year plan that added over 100 FTE to our community care operations and close to 50 FTE in Primary Care and Mental Health (Suicide Prevention) services.
2019 VISN 23 System Worth Saving Site Visit

Meeting Minutes:

- VHA Pilot Project Atlas was discussed, which is a partnership between VSO’s like The American Legion and VFW to utilize their Post as community access points to offer veterans a place to have their medical appointment virtually through VA provided tele health equipment. VISN 23 currently has 16 atlas sites. In Minnesota there are several county veterans service

- 2019 VA Healthcare budget 76.5 billion: 14.2 billion for community care. VISN

- The annual expenditures in VISN 23 for community care have increased 75% over the last three years to over $600m annually.

- VISN 23 will have a national market assessment conducted in the next couple months. This could assist with enrollment, and an understanding to why veterans may be choosing care in the community rather than a VA facility.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Name</th>
<th>Locations</th>
<th>FY19 Funding Request</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Advanced Care Planning via Group Visits</td>
<td>Fargo, Des Moines</td>
<td>$94,874</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clinical Pharmacy Specialist (CPS) Providers</td>
<td>St. Cloud, Chip Valley, Des Moines, Iowa City</td>
<td>$1,072,391</td>
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<tr>
<td>Home Based Primary Care (HBPC)</td>
<td>Fargo, Omaha, Mason City, Knoxville, Ottumwa</td>
<td>$3,469,844</td>
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<tr>
<td>National Telestroke Program</td>
<td>Fargo</td>
<td>$145,061</td>
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<tr>
<td>PACT Health Advocate, Scribe, DMNE Model</td>
<td>Des Moines, Iowa City, Mason City</td>
<td>$323,214</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rural Health Training Initiative</td>
<td>Grand Island</td>
<td>$194,997</td>
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<tr>
<td>State Veterans Homes Telehealth Initiative</td>
<td>Jamestown, Minneapolis, Marshalltown</td>
<td>$230,364</td>
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<tr>
<td>Technology-based Eye Care Services (TECS)</td>
<td>Omaha</td>
<td>$553,006</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teledermatology Hub</td>
<td>Iowa City</td>
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<td>TeleICU Hub</td>
<td>Minneapolis</td>
<td>$1,143,684</td>
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<td>Telemental Health Hub</td>
<td>Minneapolis</td>
<td>$2,096,547</td>
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<td>Tele-Primary Care Hub</td>
<td>Minneapolis</td>
<td>$1,964,120</td>
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<td>Telemhabilitation Hub &amp; Spoke</td>
<td>Minneapolis, Sioux Falls, Mason City</td>
<td>$696,233</td>
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<tr>
<td>Transitions Nurse Program</td>
<td>Minneapolis, Iowa City</td>
<td>$326,879</td>
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<tr>
<td>Women Veteran Care Coordination and Management</td>
<td>Fargo, Fort Meade, St. Cloud, Grand Island, Des Moines, Iowa City</td>
<td>$712,087</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TOTAL** $13,224,301
2019 VISN 23 System Worth Saving Site Visit

Meeting Minutes:

- Challenges: declining number of users with increased utilization of services, growth in community care program, coverage gaps with new access standards & rurality limited CBOC access and mobile phone service.

- Entry points to attract veterans to the VA Health Care System could be through audiology and optometry being such a high demand service. If VA makes these services readily available throughout their CBOC’s, it could lead to increased enrollment.

- Podiatrist pay scale has recently improved which will assist with hiring challenges.

- The 16 billion-dollar Cerner Electronic Health Record (EHR) will complete implementation to all VHA facilities by 2028. VISN 23 will be the later side of implementation timeline. Dec 2018 VA terminated its $624 million-dollar scheduling package with Epic and adopted Cerner’s patient scheduling system. VISN 23 should be made available this scheduling package prior to full EHR implementation.
2019 VISN 23 System Worth Saving Site Visit

Meeting Minutes:

- Current wait time average for veterans in VISN 23:
  
  - **New Patients:** All HCS’s
    - Primary Care < 24 days
    - Specialty Care < 23 days
    - Mental Health < 18 days
  
  - **Established Patients:** All HCS’s
    - Primary Care < 9 days
    - Specialty Care < 9 days
    - Mental Health < 8 days

- Future Expansion Projects:

1. **Minneapolis VA**
   - Rochester CBOC, replacement & expansion, occupy July 2019
   - Hayward CBOC, replacement & expansion, occupy August 2019
   - Shakopee & Albert Lea CBOCs convert from contract to VA-staffed clinic, occupy 2020
   - Outpatient Mental Health expansion, under construction
   - Comprehensive Women's Clinic and Mammography addition, construction ~ 2021
   - New private patient Med/Surg bed ward, construction ~ 2020
   - Renovate Transitional Care Center to private beds for Women & Complex Rehabilitation Veterans, construction ~ 2022
   - Outpatient Mental Health Center, construction ~ 2022
   - Expand Spinal Cord Injury Disorder (SCI/D) Center for Long Term Care (LTC), construction ~ 2023

2. **St. Cloud VA**
   - Women’s Clinic, construction starting Summer 2019
   - Renovation for RRTP, construction ~ 2021
   - Acute Diagnostic Imaging Center, construction ~ Fall 2019
   - Outpatient MH clinic expansion, construction Summer 2019
   - Adult Day Health Center, construction ~ Fall 2019
   - Optometry expansion, construction ~ 2020
   - Outpatient Primary Care Clinic, construction ~ 2021
2019 VISN 23 System Worth Saving Site Visit

Meeting Minutes Cont.

Future Expansion Projects

3. Fargo VA
   o Urgent Care remodel & expansion, construction complete Fall 2019

4. Sioux Falls:
   o Watertown CBOC replacement & expansion, occupy October 2019
   o ED expansion with addition of Infusion/Oncology Center, construction complete Summer 2019
   o Lab addition, construction ~ Fall 2019
   o Outpatient Mental Health, construction ~ Fall 2019
   o New Sterile Processing Service, construction ~ 2021

Chairman: Bill Brockberg
Secretary: Jeremy Wolfsteller