



## System Worth Saving Site Visit Report

- **Date:** November 17, 2020
- **Location:** Virtual Meeting (via Conference Call)
- **Attendees:**
  - Rehab Committee Members*- Chairman Wilson Spence, Gary Munkholm, Daniel Tengwall, Lynn Lyons and Jim Finley
  - *Department Service Officer*- Jeremy Wolfsteller.
  - Luverne Veterans Home*– Administrator Luke Schryvers and Voluntary Services Director Duane Mabon.

- **Purpose**

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 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.



### **Luverne Overview**

Luverne is just 30 miles from Sioux Falls, SD, the Minnesota Veterans Home offers three distinct living spaces to meet each Resident's unique needs, including a 17-bed special care unit for those with advanced dementia. Their staff follows the Eden Philosophy social model of care to help provide spontaneity and make life worth living for Residents in their care. Each one features a living room, dining room, kitchenette, laundry room and several sitting/conversation areas. A computer and gaming room are available for Resident use.

The Eden philosophy allows for creating a home-like atmosphere for Residents and their families. The Home is committed to creating a community where life is truly worth living - with activities and interactions that Residents find meaningful and enjoyable. Residents have access to the outdoors, to plants and animals, and to numerous opportunities for interaction with the community. Creating this Eden-centered environment is a never-ending process.





## Overview continued

Residents are a vital part of the Luverne community. Dedicated volunteers provide special activities. School kids visit regularly in our popular Adopt a Grandparent Program. There are abundant opportunities for shopping trips, meals out, participating in the fair and much more. Luverne's internal environment is enhanced through consistent staffing and a range of small group activities.

The Home offers everything to meet Residents physical, social and spiritual needs:

- Skilled Nursing Care, including specialized Dementia Care
- Medical Service with 24-hour Nursing Care
- Social Services
- Individualized Recreational Services
- Rehabilitation Services, including Physical, Occupational and Speech Therapy
- Mental/Behavioral Health Service
- Chaplain and Spiritual Care Service
- Nutritional Service
- Pharmaceutical Service
- Medical Transportation Service, locally and to Sioux Falls
- Barber and Beauty Service
- Wireless Internet (in portions of the building)

## Meeting Minutes

Luverne Veterans Home is an 85-bed facility that is currently operating 76 beds due to the pandemic. Luverne is primarily double- bed rooms with 40 doubles and 5 singles. The Home is averaging 2 admissions per month since the pandemic started early March. New admissions must be quarantined for 14-days.

- **Wait Times:**
  - o **Veterans** wait times to access Luverne Veterans Home has increased from 1-3 months to 3-4 months for during the pandemic. This is a direct result of policy changes implemented in the *March 13, 2020 Governor's Emergency Executive order 20-32, "Ensuring that Healthcare Providers Can Respond Quickly and Safely During the COVID-19 Peacetime Emergency and MDVA's Executive Order 20-03, "Protecting Residents of Minnesota Veterans Homes During The COVID-19 Peacetime Emergency"*. This mandates the Homes must allocate certain amount of beds to "isolation rooms" for residents that need to be quarantined. Luverne has 9 of their beds for this mission. For residents that may have been transferred from a hospital or felt symptoms, 8 isolation beds are for a 14-day quarantine. 1 of the 5 private rooms is for a 14-day quarantine for new admissions before they transfer to their permanent room.
  - o **Spouses** wait times have drastically increased from 1-2 years to 4-5 years. This can be contributed to Luverne's layout of the facility only having 5 private rooms.





## Staffing:

- o Currently the Home is doing very well on staffing. Challenges typically are for Health Service Technicians (HST) or LPN's. There is 4 part-time HST positions available although there are 3 new candidates taking the CNA course offered at the Home at no-cost if they pass the course, they will fill those available positions. The HST turnover rate is 20% which is below the national level. The turnover can be contributed to college students returning to college after break.
- o The Home also offers a \$500 referral bonus for HST's
- o 25 of the Homes staff have been with the facility since its inception. This shows these people are vested in their duty to assist our vulnerable population of veterans at the Home.
- o Administrator Luke Schryvers is leaving to the private sector. Scott Buchanan Fergus Falls Home will be replacing him. Silver Bay Administrator will be replacing Scott in Fergus leaving Silver Bay looking for an Administrator.

## Surveys:

- o Luverne is surveyed by the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) and The Center for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS). Both surveys' have been put on hold due to the pandemic. Currently the Home meets all resident safety requirements.

## Facility Demographics:

- o Luverne has a 17-bed special care unit for dementia/Alzheimer patients. This unit is locked down to keep residents from wondering. During the pandemic certain staff maintain a responsibility assigned to this specialty care unit.
- o Currently the Home has approximately 15%, (11 veterans) of its residents rated 70% disabled by the VA.
- o The Home has 85 beds, 40 are double-bed rooms and 5 are single-bed rooms. Due to the pandemic the Home can only fill 76 beds, 9 beds are isolation rooms.
- o The Home had 25 new admissions during the pandemic, this is including a 60-day shutdown of new admissions. An average year the Home see's around 40 new admissions.
- o 50% of the Homes residents come from a 50-mile radius, although many come from all over the state that may be on the wait list for other facilities.

## Funding Breakdown: *Luverne's annual operating budget estimate \$10,000,000*

- o The Home receives funding from four primary sources, a maintenance charge, basic per-diem, prevailing rate per-diem and state allocations from the legislature.
- o Maintenance Charges revenue FY20: \$2,310,460. Maintenance charges are charges residents must pay to stay at the Home. These charges vary depending on individual circumstances.
- o Basic Per-diem revenue FY20: \$2,551,062. Basic per-diem revenue is the reimbursement the Homes receive from the Federal VA. It pays around \$109 per veteran per day.





**Meeting Minutes Continued:**

**Funding Breakdown Continued:**

- o Prevailing Per-diem revenue FY20: \$1,764,114. Prevailing per-diem rate is the reimbursement the Homes receives from the Federal VA. It pays around \$409 per veteran per day that is VA service connected at 70% or grater or is in the Home because of a service-connected condition.
- o State legislative funding FY20: Estimated \$4,000,000.
- o CMS reimbursement is minimal, part A and part B \$150,000 a year.

**Medical Services:**

- o Luverne Veterans Home partners with Sanford for their Medical Doctor and Physicians. The MD conducts rounds every 60 days whereas physicians conduct rounds twice a week for preventive health care needs. Majority of these rounds are all done virtually via iPad.
- o Veterans can also see their VA provider virtually if they prefer. Sioux Falls VA Health Care System is the catchment area for Luverne residents and can facilitate many different specialty care services.

Department Rehabilitation Chairman: Wilson Spence III

Department Service Officer & Committee Secretary: Jeremy Wolfsteller

