



Minneapolis Veterans Home FY19 SWS Site Visit Report



Date: December 20, 2018

Location: MPLS Veterans Home

Dept. Rehab Committee Members: Wilson Spence, Darrel Redepenning, 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 Healthcare 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, Wilson Spence, Dan Tangwall, Roy Bressler, Gary Mulkholm and Jeremy Wolfsteller. Administrator Tom Paul, Associate Director, **Steven Fritzke** Public Relations Sandy Larson.

Minneapolis Overview:

The Minneapolis Veterans Home is located on a peaceful, 53-acre wooded campus overlooking the Mississippi River near Minnehaha Falls. The campus contains 291 skilled nursing beds and 50 domiciliary beds in private and semiprivate rooms.

The Home's legacy began in the late 1800s when, what was then called the Old Soldiers Home, was built for indigent Veterans of the Civil War. Providing care for Veterans for the past 130 years, the shift in focus to making the health care needs of Veterans Homes a primary concern began in the 1960s.

The services are delivered by a dedicated staff of professionals who are passionate about providing the quality care our Veterans deserve - in a highly personalized manner. This care is enhanced by the natural beauty of the surroundings.

Residents enjoy an assortment of services designed to meet their physical, social and spiritual needs which include:

Skilled Nursing Care with a specialty in Dementia Care

Medical Services, with 24-hour Nursing Care

Recreational Therapy

Rehabilitation

Chaplain and Spiritual Care Services

Diet and Nutritional Services

Pharmaceutical Services

Assistance with VA Benefits

Social Services

Barber and Beautician Services

Work Therapy

Transportation to Minneapolis VA Health Care

Mental Health Services

Resident council

Family Council

Spouse Support Group

Volunteer Services

Award-Winning Nursing Care Approaches

Private and double rooms

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Meeting Minutes:

- Minneapolis Veterans Home has approximately 100 deaths a year on average. Recently the Home has seen more deaths which has led to finding a more efficient admissions process to keep the beds occupied. Currently there's a 7-day admission time window to get a new resident in the Home. This is compared to the private sector where they typically have a bed filled within 24 hours. The committee recommended that MDVA's Field Operations Team at the Home may be able to assist with the admissions team to speed up process tracking down the veteran's paperwork. The DSO emailed their Supervisor "Jim Miller" informing him of the possible collaboration at the Home.
- The wait list to be admitted to the Home is around 800. This number includes both veterans and spouses. Typically, only 100 are considered "actively waiting" meaning they need skilled nursing care immediately and the other 700 will eventually need skilled nursing care within the next few years.
- Staffing at the Home consist of 633 employees, of those only 570 are FTE. The Home sees around 70 of the 570 FTE turn-over per year. Because of the turn-over there is constant overtime that's needed, although no mandating in place. The Homes model of care is better than the private sector averaging 1 aid for every 6 residence, compared to an average 1 to 10-14 residents.
- LPN and RN positions have not been a hiring issue although HST's, because of physical requirements and low wages and trades positions like engineers, because of competitive wages remain challenging to fill. The Home still operates off a high-pressured steam system which is unique and will be challenging to find an affordable engineer to maintain the system long-term. They can change to low pressure but very costly.
- The Home's newly fixed dental clinic has been a success over the year but will need to find ways for sustainability for the future to help offset costs with Elder Dental Care Dental program. The Home is looking at enrolling as many veterans as possible into VA's Dental Insurance Program (VADIP) so Elder Care can bill veteran's insurance.

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Meeting Minutes Cont.

- Cost of Care remains around \$400 a day per veteran. Some of this is made up through VA per-diem, (high & low rates). Currently residents that are at higher rates which is 70% SC or greater is at 17% around 50 residents. Lower rate is around \$105 a day per veteran and higher rates are \$400 per day per veteran. The Home has MD's that provide clinical care at the Home for the residents. The MD's are MDVA employees and apart of the cost of care. If residents need specialty care, they're referred to a community provider through an agreement or contract the Home has. Veterans will have Co-pays for these services. A close look needs to happen to ensure veterans are receiving the free care, (10%SC) they're entitled to within the VA system including specialty care and not being billed for co-payments from private providers in the community. Also, to ensure the Homes aren't paying for specialty care in the community when VA will provide at no cost to eligible veterans.
- The Minneapolis Home operates a domiciliary 50 bed unit. Possible future goals are to change the model to a domiciliary plus program more like assisted living type.
- The Locked 12 bed unit is set to open soon. This unit is not for dementia or psych patients but rather those that may be at a higher risk of wandering.
- To maintain full beds at the home for specific clinical care they're collaborating with VA to move veterans from contract nursing homes in the community into the Veterans Home.
- Pharmacy- Billing CMS Part D has been in the positive and showing to be a success. Partner with Federal VA for their central pharmacy formulary.
- No new updates with the bridge which is still in negotiations and the smoking free changes.

Chairman: Bill Brockberg

Secretary: Jeremy Wolfsteller



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Minnesota Veterans Home Facility Questionnaire

Executive Leadership

- **Facility name:** Minneapolis Veterans Home

- **Wait times:**
 - What are the average wait times for veterans to get into the Home? 10-12 months

 - What are the average wait times for spouses to get into the Home? 3 years

- **Staff Vacancies (by occupation):**
 - What is your total number of vacant positions and what are the positions? 113

 - How long have the positions been vacant? Average 62 days

 - Reason for vacancies? Retirements, terminations, new jobs

 - Do you have a succession plan in place to address your current and future vacancies? We do not have a succession plan.



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➤ **Facility Demographics:**

- What type of care/services is unique to your Veterans Home? In house Dental clinic, Dementia Care both semi-secure and secure.
- What percentage of residence are SC 70% or greater? 17%
- What is your authorized and operating bed capacity? 300
- How many admissions did you have the last fiscal year? 88
- Please provide a breakdown of your funding allocations for the past three fiscal years. See attached exhibit #1
- Of the number of enrolled veterans/spouses, please provide the number of:
 - Men 258
 - Women 26
 - Spouses 24 of the 26 women are spouses, 2 ore Veterans

➤ **Patient Safety:**

- If available, please provide copies of your last annual Patient Safety Reports. See attachments exhibit #2

➤ **Outreach Activities:**

- How many outreach events did your Veterans Home participate in during last fiscal year? 25, see attached exhibit #3
- How many outreach events is your Veterans Home to participate in this fiscal year? 24, see attached exhibit #4



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➤ Facility Upgrades:

- What are new remodeling projects completed or wanting to develop? Opened building 22, 88 beds transferred from bldg. 6, plus 12 new licensed beds. Task Force working on future development of build 6. Resurfaced ½ of campus parking lots and road ways, balance to be completed in spring of 2019. New floor covering building 19 first floor hall, building 19 community room and Atrium, summer of 2019. Digital communication signage 2019.

➤ Medicare Certification:

- Where is the Home currently with being certified? All 300 beds are certified for Medicare.
- How does the process work to receive compensation? Invoices Generated based on contract with Medicare and Rug rates establish for various level of services identified through MDS process. Billed within 30 days after services rendered.

Comments: