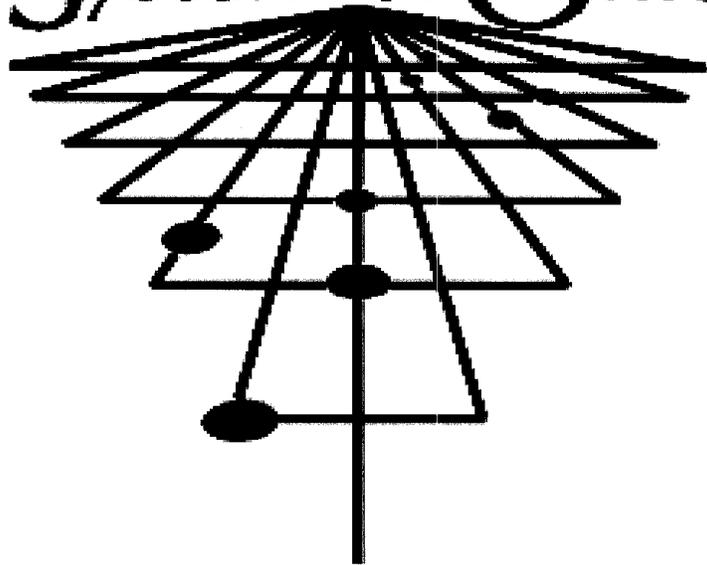


VA Healthcare
System of Ohio



**CAPITAL ASSET
REALIGNMENT
FOR ENHANCED
SERVICES**

VA Healthcare System of Ohio, VISN 10
Mr. Clyde Parkis, Network Director
Written Testimony
Columbus, Ohio
August 19, 2003

The Mission, Vision, and Values of the VA Healthcare System of Ohio continues to form the cornerstone of our organizational identity. VISN 10 staff continuously reassesses our mission to ensure we meet the healthcare needs of our veterans and other stakeholders. Our mission helps maintain our focus on the provision of high quality, timely, accessible, and cost-effective healthcare services to veterans.

VA Healthcare System of Ohio

Mission:

To offer the enrolled veteran population, a continuum of care that is accessible, value-added, cost-effective, and of the highest quality, within an environment of outstanding education and research. To promote a culture that supports and develops a caring, compassionate, competent and service-oriented workforce.

Vision:

Our vision is to be recognized as the healthcare provider of choice for veterans and as a leader in education and research.

Values:

All of the efforts within the VA Healthcare System of Ohio will be based on the VHA core values of:

Trust, Respect, Commitment, Compassion, Excellence

Domains/Key Drivers:

Quality, Access, Functional Status, Satisfaction, Cost, Building Healthy Communities

The VA Healthcare System of Ohio is one of 21 Veterans Integrated Service Networks (VISNs) in the Veterans Health Administration. The VA Healthcare System of Ohio--VISN 10--operates major medical centers in Cincinnati, Cleveland, Chillicothe, and Dayton, as well as one large Independent Outpatient Clinic in Columbus. Health care services were provided to 158,850 users in fiscal year 2002. There were 20,465 inpatient admissions and 1,795,956 outpatient visits last year. VISN 10 continues to evolve as an integrated health care delivery system that provides high-quality health care to veterans in 82 counties in Ohio, 7 counties in Northern Kentucky, and 5 counties in Southeast Indiana, resulting in a combined service area of 36,153 square miles. A network-wide approach promotes patient-centered care through provision of full continuum of care and services to support movement a previous inpatient focus to a primarily outpatient system of care.

VISN 10 spent more than \$2 billion in Ohio in 2002 to serve approximately 1.1 million veterans who live in our service area. Last year, 183,926 people received health care in VISN 10 facilities. In 2002, the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) provided 112,666 Ohio veterans and survivors with disability compensation or pension payments, more than 14,000 veterans and their families with GI Bill

payments for their education, and 88,734 veteran-owned homes purchased through administered through VA's home loan guarantees program. Approximately 1,827 were interred in the Dayton and Cleveland Ohio Western Reserve national cemeteries.

To provide improved access to services, especially for veterans living 30 miles or more from a medical center, VA has 23 Community-based outpatient clinics (CBOCs). These clinics provide both mental health and primary care services. The Dayton VA Medical Center houses a network-wide telephone program that provides medical advice 24-hours a day. VISN 10 is one of the few healthcare entities in the country to have a Computer Assisted Design/Computer Assisted Manufacture (CAD-CAM) system for the manufacture of artificial lower limbs which provides amputees with a perfectly fitted limb almost immediately, thereby shortening the time for being fitted with a limb and rehabilitation. VISN 10 also houses seven Programs of Excellence in VA: Open Heart Surgery, Geriatric Evaluation and Management, Substance Abuse Care, Care of the Homeless, Medical Care of the Homeless, Care of the Seriously Mentally ill (the first network-wide designation), and Spinal Cord Injury Care. This recognition is based on clinical outcomes and the comprehensiveness of the program.

In VISN 10, more than 79,500 persons age 65 and older (nearly half the veterans treated) received medical care from VA last year. The Geriatric and Evaluation Management program in Cleveland is designated as a Center of Excellence. VISN 10 currently offers a variety of extended care services, which include 681 nursing home beds, respite care, hospice and palliative care, adult day health care, homemaker and home health aide programs and home-based primary care. Veterans may be moved from one program to another as their needs change. Additionally, comprehensive medical care, including occupational and physical therapy, as well as recreational activities are provided. All of the extended care programs focus on helping veterans reach their optimum level of functioning and stay in their homes and communities as long as possible. Additionally, VISN 10 has placed a strong emphasis on pain management and end of life care, thereby preserving dignity and the quality of life for veterans through an interdisciplinary team approach to medical and supportive care. Dayton VAMC's Hospice Program was recently identified as a model for best practice within VA.

VISN 10 is committed to research that meets the highest ethical, administrative and scientific standards, evaluating the quality and productivity of research activities and ensuring best use of resources. With a budget of more than \$20 million, the Cleveland Medical Center ranks among the top centers in funding of 106 VA medical centers conducting research. Cleveland currently has 49 investigators pursuing research in the areas of dermatology (T-cell Lymphoma), infectious diseases (antibiotic resistance), nephrology (Autoimmune Renal Disease) and oncology. A research project of note is a joint venture between the Cleveland medical center, Case Western Reserve University, and the MetroHealth Medical Center. This is a high profile, internationally recognized program that focuses on the research and

development of devices to assist motor functions in paralyzed people. Cincinnati VAMC also has an active research program with the University of Cincinnati. During FY 2002, total research funding was greater than \$14 million. Active medical research programs exist in mental health, neuroscience, endocrinology, gastroenterology, nephrology, and hematology/oncology. Clinical trials are active, particularly in substance abuse and other areas of mental health, cardiology, diabetes mellitus, hepatitis C, stroke, and oncology. The VA Cooperative Studies Program, National Institutes of Health, and the pharmaceutical industry support these studies.

VA homeless programs in Ohio are based in Cleveland, Cincinnati, Dayton, Columbus and Chillicothe. The Cleveland comprehensive homeless center, one of eight nationally, is a designated VA Center of Excellence. The Cleveland, Cincinnati and Dayton medical centers provide domiciliary care for homeless veterans. A new Chillicothe domiciliary program began in 1999 and serves homeless veterans in southeastern Ohio. Last year, more than 2,908 veterans participated in Ohio's specialized programs, which represented an increase of approximately 249. This increase was partially due to the expansion of the homeless chronically ill program at Columbus and the homeless outreach services in major metropolitan areas in northern Ohio, in collaboration with local agencies and municipal partners. Therapeutic work programs, which are a key element of the continuum of rehabilitation for the homeless, were significantly expanded at the Cleveland, Cincinnati and Chillicothe campuses. In 2002, therapeutic work services were provided to nearly 4,065 veterans, up from 3,710 in a comparable period during 2001.

THE CENTRAL MARKET

VA Medical Center, Chillicothe, OH



Sites of Care: The Chillicothe VA Medical Center provides acute and chronic mental health services, primary and secondary medical services, and a wide range of nursing home care services to the veterans residing primarily in southeastern and south central Ohio. The Medical Center also serves as a mental health referral center for medical centers in VISN 10 and parts of West Virginia. Care is provided through 35 acute medical beds (including the Special Care and Telemetry Units), 25 acute psychiatric beds, 25 PR RTP beds, and 50 domiciliary beds. Long-term care is provided through a 162-bed Nursing Home Care Unit (including Hospice and Respite Care services).

Outpatient services are offered mainly through the use of five Primary Care Teams. Other outpatient services include medical/surgical specialty clinics, and a wide range of mental health services such as Dual Diagnosis, PTSD Clinical Team, a Community Residential Program, MICHM and a CARF accredited Vocational Rehabilitation Program (IT and CWT).

The medical center had 190,754 outpatient visits in FY02 and treats 23, 418 enrolled veterans.

Affiliations: VAMC Chillicothe has affiliations with The Ohio State University College of Medicine, the Ohio University College of Osteopathic Medicine, and the University of Cincinnati College of Medicine for the purposes of education, training and research. Nearly 150 university residents, interns and students are trained at this medical center each year. There are also nursing affiliations with The Ohio State University, Southern State Community College, Hocking Technical College, and others. Other educational program affiliations exist involving dentistry, optometry, pharmacy, social work, psychology and physician assistants. Through sharing agreements, there is collaboration in the areas of medical and dental services with the Naval Office of Medical Dental Affairs, optometry with Inactive Duty Training (IDT) National Army Medical Department (AMEDD) Augmentation Detachment.

Research: The Chillicothe VA Medical Center's research program has been incorporated as part of the VAMC Cincinnati's program. The University of Cincinnati Institutional Review Board is used by both facilities. A Memorandum of Understanding between Chillicothe and Cincinnati became effective December 12, 2002. VAMC Chillicothe has been added to the Federal-wide Assurance (FWA) for the Protection of Human Subjects for Domestic (U.S.) Institutions. Currently there is one multi-site drug study that includes VAMC Chillicothe as a research site.

VA Independent Outpatient Clinic IOPC, Columbus, Ohio



Sites of Care: The Chalmers P. Wylie Department of Veterans Affairs Outpatient Clinic (VAOPC) is an Independent Ambulatory Care facility located at 543 Taylor Avenue, Columbus, Ohio, serving veterans in 17 counties of Central Ohio and is Clinic of Jurisdiction for 57 counties in Ohio and 1 in Indiana. The VAOPC is the parent facility for a Veterans Readjustment Counseling Center (Vet Center) located in downtown Columbus.

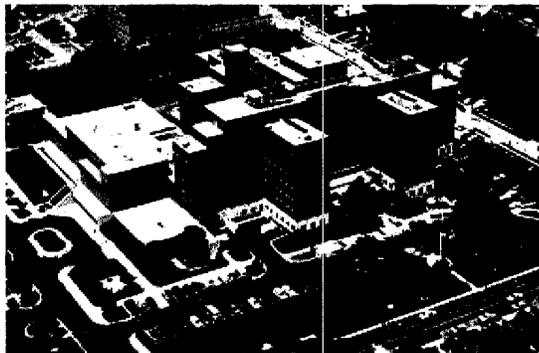
As an ambulatory care facility, Columbus VAOPC offers clinical services such as primary care, mental health, audiology, optometry (including outpatient cataract surgery), dental, prosthetics (including a VIST program), laboratory as well as limited services in cardiology, gastroenterology, renal, neurology, and dermatology onsite. The VAOPC works cooperatively with the VISN 10 medical centers to meet inpatient needs or other consultative services not available at the clinic.

The clinic was one of the first VAs in the country to enter into dental sharing agreements with the Department of Defense - Departments of the Army, Air Force and Navy. Comments regarding the agreements and services received are always positive. A newly equipped dental laboratory allows for the fabrication and the construction of dental appliances such as crowns, bridges, and dentures on site. This markedly reduces the time from the initial fitting to the final placement.

The VAOPC Columbus has recognized a need for expansion to provide for additional Primary Care and specialty services due to the number of new enrollees in the Columbus area. Additional leased office space approximately two miles away has been acquired to move administrative offices. The vacated space is being remodeled into expanded treatment areas for Primary Care and additional specialty services. This initiative should be completed in the fall of 2003.

Affiliations: VAOPC is affiliated with The Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio,

VA Medical Center, Cincinnati, OH



Sites of Care: The Cincinnati VAMC consists of 2 divisions located in Cincinnati and Fort Thomas, Kentucky. The VA serves 15 counties: Ohio, Kentucky and Indiana.

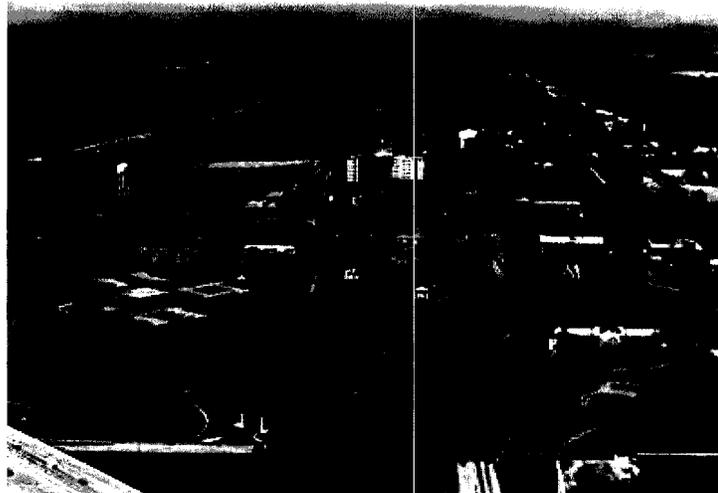
The VAMC is a tertiary care facility classified as a Clinical Referral Level II Facility. It is a teaching hospital, providing a full range of patient care services, with state-of-the-art technology as well as education and research. Comprehensive healthcare is provided through primary care, tertiary care, and long-term care in areas of medicine, surgery, psychiatry, physical medicine and rehabilitation, neurology,

oncology, dentistry, geriatrics, and extended care. The Cincinnati VA is a part of VA Network 10, which includes facilities in Cleveland, Chillicothe, Dayton and Columbus, Ohio.

Affiliations: The VAMC has active affiliations with the University of Cincinnati Medical School. Cincinnati VA Medical Center is connected both physically and functionally to the University. Over 100 University residents, interns, and students are trained at the Cincinnati VA Medical center each year. There are also over 30 other affiliations involving dentistry, pharmacy, social work, and psychology.

Research: The Cincinnati VA has a large funded research and development program with investigators of excellent caliber, many of whom have received either national or international recognition.

VA Medical Center, Dayton, OH



Sites of Care: The Dayton VA Medical Center provides a continuum of care, which encompasses all levels of acute, nursing home, and domiciliary care. A very active ambulatory care program is provided through a variety of clinics including a primary care program designed to assure that we offer an atmosphere of friendly, personal and individualized patient care. It is a teaching hospital, providing a full range of patient care services, with state-of-the-art technology as well as education and research. Comprehensive healthcare is provided through primary care, tertiary care, and long-term care in areas of medicine, surgery, psychiatry, physical medicine and rehabilitation, neurology, oncology, dentistry, geriatrics, and extended care. The Dayton VAMC is the third oldest VA Medical Center in the country, having accepted its first patient in 1867. The medical center sits on a 382-acre tract of land (including a national cemetery).