

CARES Commission Site Visit Report

VISN 8

Dates of Visit: Sep. 11, 2003

Site Visited: VAMC Tampa, Florida

CARES Commissioners/Staff:

Commissioner Ray Boland
Commissioner Charles Battaglia
Rebecca Wiley, Commission Staff
Randy Estes, Commission Staff

Overview of Site Visit:

VAMC Tampa is a tertiary medical center with a large and growing veteran population. The increasing workload demands have placed the facility under tremendous stress causing overcrowding, increased waiting times and an underserved demand. Unique veterans served has increased from 48,000 to 120,000.

ATTENDEES

Service Organizations

Dawn Poscich	American Legion Auxiliary
Mary Ann Keckler	Disabled American Veterans
Marilyn McKay	Jewish War Veterans
Harold Drier	American Legion
Ed Sitton	Military Order of the Purple Heart
Paul Wolbert	Executive Director PVA

Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs
Col. Warren McPherson Executive Director

Congressional Representatives

Congresswoman Brown-Waite	Shirley Anderson
Congressman Adam Putnam	Mathew Joyner

VA Representatives in Attendance/Name & Title:

VISN

Elwood Headley, M.D
Kaye Green

Bay Pines

Susan Angel, Ph.D
Marty Traxler
P.K. Mohanty, M.D.

Tampa VA

Richard A. Silver
Steve W. Young
Thomas E. Bowen
Sandra Janzen
Ed Safdie, Corporate Planner
Russ Pritchard
Carolyn Clark, Public Affairs
James Behrens, Adm. Asst/Chief of Staff
Rick Pugh, Chief Acquisition & Materiel
Management Svc.

Judy Berglund, Chief Business Office
Steve Scott, D. O. Chief,
Physical Medicine & Rehab. Svc.
John Merritt M.D. Chief, Spinal Cord Injury
DeWayne Hamlin Chief,
Facilities Management Svc.
Patricia Odorica, M.D. Chief, Behavioral
Julia Yonce, Florida Nurses Association
Ira Napier, NFGE

Briefing with Facility Leadership:

A large conference was held with all the significant leadership both clinical and administrative to evaluate the current and future workload and needs of the Tampa Medical Center. Significant input was received from stakeholders, local employees, and VISN leadership. Major points of discussion include the following:

- Insufficient capital investment and improvements have resulted in a space deficit of 500,000 square feet.
- Space and Functional Survey and Facility Condition Assessment show poor code compliance, privacy issues, and infrastructure problems with an estimated cost of repair between 100-150 million dollars. Most of this funding need is NRM dollars, not capital.
- VSO's appreciate the quality of care received but feel more resources are needed to meet demand.
- Tampa would be a good location to pilot a program to evaluate how much usage of the VA facility from Medicare eligible patients if Medicare funds would follow.
- Desperate need for additional parking. They feel they will never get approval for a parking structure out of the revolving fund account unless seed money is provided for this purpose.
- Major capital dollars are needed immediately to provide additional inpatient space by construction additional floors above the SCI unit.

Recommendation:

The Tampa Medical Center is a tertiary care facility and a vitally important resource for the veteran population in the central Florida market area. However, it is in close proximity to the Bay Pines VAMC that is approaching tertiary care status and a projected decline for medicine and surgery beds and increased demand for psychiatry beds. This raises into question the need for more in-patient services at both facilities when data indicates the great need for outpatient services. For the Tampa VAMC, significant investment is needed to maintain the existing infrastructure, to provide for a parking structure and additional inpatient capability for the next 10 years.

Prepared by: Randy Estes, CARES Commission Staff, September 19, 2003

Approved by: _____ Date: _____
Charles Battaglia, CARES Commissioner

Approved by: _____ Date: _____
Ray Boland, CARES Commissioner