



## **DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS**

Veterans Health Administration  
Washington DC 20420

April 13, 2001

### **CARES Stakeholder Communication Bulletin #2001-16**

**CARES: The right care, at the right place, at the right time**

#### **CARES IN VISN 12**

\* Many individuals have provided useful information and comments on the VISN 12 CARES study. To date over 100 comments have been received. They come from many veterans and also from health care providers at the VISN's facilities. While some make suggestions, many provide a look at the level of veteran satisfaction with the services they are now receiving. Of the 100 comments received, nearly half concern the special emphasis programs.

While it is not possible to respond to each comment due to the volume, each comment is reviewed by a member of the VISN's CARES Support Task Force (CSTF) before a copy is forwarded to the contractor. Booz-Allen, the CARES contractor, takes each comment and ensures that it is brought to the attention of the team member who is dealing with that area of the study. Further, a summary of all comments is provided to the National Cares Project Team (NCPT), the entire contractor project team, and the VISN periodically.

Comments can be submitted by mail or e-mail using the form attached to this bulletin.

\* Questions have been posed recently concerning the projections for future demand for veteran health care services. Many have asked how factors, which are now uncertain, are being factored into future demand.

Recognizing that future predictions are speculative, Booz-Allen is analyzing seven key factors that may have the greatest impact on future veteran use of VA health care facilities as part of a sensitivity analysis. Booz-Allen worked with VA to identify the key factors that historically have had the greatest impact on VA health care and is assessing their potential impact on VISN 12 demand through the year 2020.

The seven factors are:

- \* Unmet Demand
- \* Increased VA-DoD Resource Sharing
- \* Military Conflicts
- \* Changes in Medicare Policy
- \* Significant Shifts in the Economy
- \* Changes in Medical Practice and Technology
- \* 2010-2020 Workload Impacts

The analysis is being conducted from a broad economic perspective, where VISN 12 supply is based primarily on capacity and demand varies based on the seven factors. This assessment will measure each service delivery option's adaptability to future change scenarios.

\* On Friday April 6, 2001, meetings were held in the VISN office with representatives from Veterans Service Organizations (VSOs) and local Congressional offices. One of the topics discussed was CARES. The discussions focused on the recent release of demand data. All the information that was shared is available on the CARES web site: [www.va.gov/CARES](http://www.va.gov/CARES).

\* Booz-Allen and Hamilton is continuing the telephone survey on veteran preferences for health care delivery. As of April 10th over 800 phone calls have been made asking for veteran input. The responses from veterans have been very helpful in providing Booz-Allen with an understanding of veteran preferences regarding healthcare. This information is a critical element to the CARES study and represents one of the discriminating criteria that will be used to evaluate service delivery options.

To reach veterans in special programs (such as domiciliary care and homeless) who may be difficult to reach by telephone, Booz-Allen conducted face-to-face interviews with veterans on location within VISN 12.

Veterans for each type of interview were randomly selected according to protocols set by the contractor and reviewed by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). Participation in the telephone survey is voluntary and individual information is confidential.

## **WHAT IS CARES?**

CARES (Capital Asset Realignment for Enhanced Services) is about providing veterans the right care, at the right place, at the right time. It is about providing appropriate access and service for those who currently use VA's health care system, and for those who will use it in the future. The program will assess veterans' health care needs across

the country, identify delivery options to meet those needs in the future, and guide the realignment and allocation of capital assets to support the delivery of health care services. Through CARES, VA will optimize care delivery in terms of both quality and access.

## **WHO IS CONDUCTING CARES?**

To ensure objectivity in this analysis, VA has hired outside health care consultants. Two companies are involved in the study. Actuarial consultants are conducting a study of factors, such as demand for VA health care services, demographics, and other data, to project what services will be needed and where. Booz-Allen & Hamilton will be using this data, incorporating information from stakeholders, analyzing current operations during their visits to the facilities and develop options to meet the future needs of veterans. The consultant will be applying a standard set of pre-approved criteria to various options.

## **WHAT OPPORTUNITY IS THERE FOR PEOPLE AND GROUPS TO HAVE A SAY IN CARES?**

Input into the CARES process will continue to be collected from both internal and external stakeholders. To date, we have received valuable information from our stakeholders during the facility visits that occurred during January. Additionally, we have received e-mails and letters from interested persons and groups about the CARES study. This input will be very valuable in developing the health care service delivery options.

Input into the CARES process will be considered throughout the process. Send comments or questions via mail, or e-mail.

Mail: CARES Comments  
VISN 12 Office (10N12)  
P.O. Box 5000, Building 18  
Hines, IL 60141-5000

E-mail: [CARES.mailbox@med.va.gov](mailto:CARES.mailbox@med.va.gov)

All of the comments will be forwarded to the contractors for their use during the development of the options.

Comments have been coming in. While individual comments cannot be acknowledged and answered individually, comments will be forwarded to the contractor for use in the development of the options and later to the National CARES Project Team (NCPT) for their use in the evaluation of the options.

### **HOW CAN I GET MORE INFORMATION ON CARES?**

There will continue to be regular bulletins about CARES with updated information. It is expected that these bulletins will be sent out weekly. The CARES web site will also be updated periodically. There are now two web sites that individuals may use. For VA employees and any others who have access to the VA Intranet, there is a link on the VISN 12 Home Page for CARES. In addition, VA's Internet web site has been established at the following address-[www.va.gov/CARES](http://www.va.gov/CARES)

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Capital Asset Realignment for Enhanced Services (CARES) Comment Form  
VISN 12 CARES STUDY

Areas of Interest: \_\_\_\_\_

Comments (Please add additional pages if needed):

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While all comments are taken into consideration, comments cannot be acknowledged and answered individually.

Name (please print): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Mail comments to: CARES Comments  
VISN 12 Office (10N12)  
P.O. Box 5000, Building 18  
Hines, IL 60141-5000

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