



DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

Veterans Health Administration
Washington DC 20420

June 13, 2001

CARES Stakeholder Communication Bulletin #2001-22

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

CURRENT NEWS

On June 8, 2001, the CARES contractor, Booz-Allen & Hamilton (BA&H), provided the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) its first CARES report outlining a range of service delivery options for VISN 12.

A new internet web address has been established for you to send your comments and suggestions concerning the service delivery options outlined in the BA&H report to the CARES Program Director in VA Headquarters. It is: vhacocares@hq.med.va.gov. A formal 60-day comment period will occur later this summer, although informal comments are encouraged at any time.

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

On June 19, 2001, at 2:00 PM to 3:30 PM (Central Time), the Deputy Under Secretary for Health, Frances M. Murphy, M.D., and the CARES contractor, BA&H, will present the results of the CARES VISN 12 report during a satellite broadcast. The presentation will discuss the service delivery options developed as a result of the market-based analysis of the health care needs of Veterans for 2010. Medical Center leadership, service chiefs, product-line managers, local union leadership, academic affiliates, VSO representatives, and Congressional representatives are invited to attend this broadcast. Unfortunately, due to the limited seating available at VISN 12 facilities, we will be unable to accommodate all of the employee recipients of this bulletin. However, Medical Center Directors will ensure that this broadcast is videotaped, as well as provide future briefings to employees and other individuals who were not accommodated during this CARES presentation.

On June 19, 2001, the complete VISN 12 CARES Report, including analytical methods and supporting data, will be posted on the national CARES website for your review and comments.

June 20-22, 2001, physicians from VA Headquarters and the VISN 12's CARES Clinical Workgroup will convene in Washington, D.C., to apply the absolute criteria to the range of service delivery options (SDOs) discussed during the satellite broadcast on June 19, 2001.

June 25-27, 2001, members of the National CARES Project Team will apply the discriminating criteria to SDOs that meet or exceed the absolute criteria.

June 28-30, 2001, members of the National CARES Steering Committee (NCSC) will convene to evaluate the results of the application of the absolute and discriminating criteria to the SDOs completed by the Headquarters and VISN 12 Clinical Workgroups and the National CARES Project Team. This evaluation will result in a recommendation about the options to the VHA Under Secretary for Health. This will be followed by a 60-day formal comment period.

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 hired outside health care consultants. Actuarial consultants conducted 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 used this data, incorporating information from stakeholders, and analyzing current operations during their visits to the facilities to develop options to meet the future needs of veterans. The consultant will be facilitating the application of a standard set of pre-approved criteria to various options at the end of June.

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

VA has attempted to maintain open communication during the VISN 12 CARES study. This has been accomplished through a web site, bulletins and briefings. Comments and suggestions for improvement have been solicited at each step of the process. Input into the CARES process will continue to be collected from both internal and external stakeholders. We received valuable information from VA 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.

Please send your comments and suggestions concerning the VISN 12 SDOs contained in the CARES Report, via mail or e-mail, to the following destinations:

Mail: Department of Veterans Affairs
CARES Program Director (10AC)
810 Vermont Ave., NW
Washington, D.C. 20420

E-mail: vhacocares@hq.med.va.gov

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

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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):

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

E-mail comments to: CARES.Mailbox@med.va.gov

Washington Website: <http://www.va.gov/CARES>