

CARES Monthly VISN Communication Report September 2002

The VISN-level CARES Communication Report for September 2002 is summarized on the attached spreadsheets. The first and second spreadsheets contains the "Stakeholder Outreach" summary; the third spreadsheet includes the unsolicited input or inquiries received from the stakeholders and others, and the fourth contains the summary of substantive comments from the VISNs.

In summary, there were 930,610 stakeholders, veterans, and members of the public briefed on the CARES process. This represents an increase of 577,560 stakeholders and veterans briefed or over 2.6 time as many stakeholders/veterans as in August 2002, and over five times as many in July 2002. For this month, all VISNs submitted CARES Stakeholder Outreach information. Most of the VISNs used communication modes consisting of briefings, websites, e-mails and mailings (e.g., brochures, newsletters). Of the 589,695 Veterans & Relatives contacts, 370,060 or 62.0% were from VISN 18, and 22, mainly in the form of newsletters. Of the 115,126 Employee contacts, 29,221 or 25.4% were from VISN 1. Of the 7,890 Volunteer contacts 3,668 or 46.4% were from VISN 5 and VISN 7. Finally, of the 6,062 VSO contacts, 1,585 or 26.1% were from VISN 18 and VISN 20 – most in the form of briefings.

Overall, of the 930,610 total stakeholders and veteran's contacts 812,936 or 87.3% were in the form of mail outs (e.g., e-mails, brochures, newsletters,).

There still continues to be concerns in the majority of the VISNs focused on the overall CARES process (i.e., Congressional involvement, funding, and impact), employee anxiety, potential closures, and special populations. In meetings with national VSO representatives at the VHA-VACO levels, a concern continues to be voiced that there has been insufficient contact to local, state, and regional VSO representatives regarding the CARES process.

Several areas were identified for improvement in the communication reporting process. These are summarized below.

- The National CARES Program Office (NCPO) has recognized the need for a more standardized reporting process. There are some VISNs who are not submitting numbers for the stakeholder outreach report and are placing a check mark in its place. We need the numbers by categories.
- Some VISN's are submitting consolidated numbers and not separate entries by each category.

Summary by VISN
CARES Stakeholder Outreach

VISN	TYPE*	Employee	Veteran/Rel	Congressional	VSO	Affiliate	Volunteer	Union	Local Org	DoD	Includes Mailings/ E-mails , Other	Total	Comments	Response / Action / Impact on Plan
1	B, E,W,TH,M,O	29,221	21	250	562	55	232	77	18	6	329	30,771	Closures.Media concerns. Stakeholders are represented.	Market Teams/Network will answer comments
2	B,M,TH,O	3,153	1,517	165	132	15	574	0	453	0	110,550 - TV interview	116,559	100,000 TV interviews. Capital Business review.	Nothing was stated/written
3	B,O, E,M,TH	5,051	45	85	397	50	242	21	57	17	62 2,057(m)	6,027	Employee concerns. Hospital/facility concerns.	Updates to follow/comments welcomed.
4	B,E TH, W,O	14,770	23	64	491	0	375	53	45	0	352 14,137(m)	16,173	Market areas. Waiting times	Whether VAMC Wilkes-Barre will close. Will continue to provide updates
5	T H,E,M,B,O,E	3,800	49,100	60	261	1	1,800	4	0	12	1,000 54,713(m)	56,038	Nothing started or written	Nothing stated or written
6	B,E,M, O,TH	4,358	162,023	25	454	29	0	9	0	0	0 163,848(m)	166,898	Mail telephone newsletters	No negative comments/no specific issues raised. Continue to keep brochures in public
7	B,W,M,TH, E,O	8,615	259	20	446	15	1,868	28	694	56	11,463 25,556(m)	37,019	Concern about facility closings. Request Congress to stop facility closings.	Response sent to Senator.
8	M, TH	332	0	0	271	1	0	0	0	0	0	604	Town Hall meetings.	Presentations in August/September at PR.
9	B,M,O	363	0	0	100	7	45	2	0	0	2,000 (m)	2,517	Newsletters, briefings.	Concerns about closures of Leestown.
10	B, E, M, O, TH	344	1,008	5	53	17	150	0	1	0	8 19,669(m)	21,255	Bulletins, newsletter, brochures	Neutral, meeting planned with congressional offices.
11	B,FG	1,757	307	5	84	17	66	6	43	0	400 25(m)	22,710	Community letters. Town Hall meetings	Nothing was stated/written
12	N/A											0		
15	B,M. E,O	2,179	296	5	84	1	1	10	97	23	2	2,698	Can't determine the number of mailings, Consolidated total no breakout	Nothing stated or written

TYPE*
FG=Focus Groups
TH= Town Hall
W=Website
M=Mailings
E= E-Mails
B=Briefing
O=Other

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16	W,O,B,	7,576	2,277	2	31	35	32	9	0	4	4 8,888(m)	9,966	Newsletter/brochures.	No definite decisions on Priority 7
17	M,B	3,331	1,360	58	412	16	521	17	333	5	5,523 9,920(m)	11,376	Publications, news magazines	Job concerns, transportation issues.
18	M, B,TH, O,E	1,818	180,060	75	702	22	127	16	55	4	14 183,577(m)	185,118	Quarterly Newsletter on CARES. Monthly newsletter	Distrbuted VISN 18 CARES handouts, and brochures,
19	B,E,TH,M.,	818	756	10	232	5	16	46	10	10	38 2,174(m)	2,996	Brochures, newsletters, pamphlets	Nothing stated /written.
20	E., B,M, O,W	13,928	586	62	883	18	1,607	28	11	0	162 15,341(m)	17,285	Ongoing communications with PSHCS/DOD. Concerns about bed closures.	Nothing stated/written
21	B,O,TH,M	3,302	30	14	104	0	234	23	107	0	308 338(m)	3,814	Vet populations, projection concerns, and facility closures.	Local focus groups briefed on vet populations, and newsletters
22	B,M, TH	10,058	190,000	4	337	12	0	0	0	0	200,143(m)	220,348	Nothing stated/written	Nothing stated/written
23	B, TH	352	27	27	26	0	0	5	0	1	0	438	Nothing stated/written	Nothing stated/written
	Total	115,126	589,695	936	6,062	316	7,890	354	1,924	138	19,665 O) 812,936 (m)	930,610	O=Other, M(Mailing)	

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**September 2002 Communications Report Summary by VISN:
CARES Stakeholder Input and Issues**

VISN	Type of Input*	Employees	Veteran/Rel.	Congressional	VSO	Affiliate	Volunteer	Union	Local Org	DoD	Other	Total	Comments
1	L,EV	0	3	0	15	0	0	0	0	0	1	19	Veterans seeking more information on CARES. Waiting list, priority 7 concerns.
2	V,	0	20	0	3	0	0	0	10	0	0	33	Concerns about services for veterans after CARES completed.
3	E	8	11	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	19	18 individuals register on CARES website to receive information
4	L, E, V,T,	0	1	1	3	0	1	0	0	0	2	8	Congressional information on CARES process.
5	T, P	0	3		0	0	0	0		0	0	3	CARES process, and closures concerns.
6	T, L, V,E	2	23	1	8	0	0	0	0	0	1	35	Staffer from Senator John Edwards office thanked the VISN for being kept informed.
7	L	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	Concern medical centers will close
8	L	0	0	0	100	0	0	0	0	0	0	100	Referred CARES stakeholders Outreach
9	Nothing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Nothing written/stated.
10	Nothing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Nothing written/stated.
11	V	1,757	307	30	84	17	66	6	43	0	400	2710	Nothing written/stated.
12												0	
15	Nothing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Nothing written/stated.
16	V,L	1	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	13	Director received 12 contacts, 10 from Veterans & 2 media and urged to preserved CAVHS
17	V	60	13	0	13	0	0	0	13	0	0	99	National Commander of American Legion dismiss CARES as unnecessary
18	V	1,565	0	0	18	0	45	8	11	0	0	1647	Questions continue on the process and to obtain further clarification.
19	V,T,P,L	5	1	0	27	0	2	4	0	0	3	42	Questions regarding local input.
20	EL	0	0	2	7	0	0	2		0		11	Concern about primary care access, job loss, closure.
21	L,E	0	0	2	3	0	0	0		0	0	5	VSO concerned about 1990 census for CAREs
22	Nothing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		0	0	0	Nothing written/stated.
23	L,P	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	Reporter from Sioux Falls wanted information of CARES. Local AFGE preseedent wrote letter to local newspaper editor opposing cares
	Totals:	3399	392	36	282	17	114	20		0		4748	

*TYPE:

L-Letter

E-e-mail

P-Petition

T-Telephone

V-Visit (personal)

CARES Stakeholder Issues

Summary of Substantive Comments

Who	What They Said	Action Taken/ Impact on Plan
VISN 1 State Commander/Vet. Affairs	Concerns, on vet pop. Did not take acuity level in account. Aging pop.concern	Demand Analysis provided, and offer to discuss further.
VISN 1 VSO member	CARES process ignores end user. Feel that VSO should be on planning committee	Comments referred to CARES Steering Committee
VISN 4 (60% SC veteran) .	Concern that CARES is delaying CBoC in Warren, Pa, and the need for the clinic	Explained CARES process, explained moratorium on CBOC's.
VISN 4 (ABR)	Concern about the CARES initiative	Explained the CARES process is expected to take 18 months.
VISN 4 Military Order of PurpleHeart	Concern on the cost of the CARES process.	Reinforce the mission of CARES.
VISN 4 Veteran	Concern on the homeless and woman's program	PVA MC will keep stakeholder informed and assured the these are included in the CARES data.
VISN 6 VSO	Concerned about site evaluation visits, and when results will be available	Explain process, send comments to NCPO
VISN 6 Veterans	What is a stakeholder, would CARES affect his healthcare	Defined stakeholders, explained the CARES process
VISN 6 Employee	Question on VISN 12 outcomes	Explain some of the changes that have taken place
VISN 8 Dr. Headley	Dr, Headley enforced CARES objectives and procedures during his presentation	Referred to CARES stakeholders Outreach
VISN 17 VSO	Disagreed with statement that VISN was interested involving VSO 's in CARES	Forward comments to 10N
VISN 19 Congressman /Senators	They requested to be briefed on the CARES process. They feel that CARES	
VISN 19 Colonel	Downsizing hospitals to clinics in DoD resulted in decrease services/need	None
VISN 19 Employees./VSO/Union	Questions regarding local imapct. Concerns regarding funding.	Answered questions
VISN 19 VFW Auxillary, Volunteers	Concerns about travel distances, and income levels too low to eliminate this service	Explained we had applied for a Fischer House
Summary of Substantive Comments	Concerns that old hospitals and beds will be closed, access for rural patients across market lines.	Personnel or letter responses. They will be informed of process.
VISN 21 Congressman	Interested in CARES data sources and its validity to assess veterans needs and services	Assured VISN 21 with share data and welcome their input