



CARES Monthly VISN Communication Report OCTOBER 2003

The VISN-level CARES Communication Report for October 2003 is summarized on the attached spreadsheets. The first spreadsheet contains the "Stakeholder Outreach" summary; the second spreadsheet includes the unsolicited input or inquiries received from the stakeholders and others, and the third contains the substantive comments by VISNs.

In summary, there were 55,385 stakeholders, veterans, and members of the public briefed on the CARES process. This represents a substantial decrease of 353,850 stakeholders and veterans briefed from the total briefed in September 2003. Two VISNs reported a negative report for this month, and one VISN did not submit any CARES Stakeholder Outreach information. Most of the VISNs used communication modes consisting of briefings, websites, e-mails, media and mailings. Of the 2,126 Veterans & Relatives contacts, 705 or nearly 34% were from VISN 20 mainly in the form of newsletters, briefings, town hall meetings and publications. Of the 43,937 Employee contacts, 19,105 or nearly 43.5% were from VISN 1. Of the 1,264 volunteer contacts, 900 or 71.2% from VISN 11. Finally, of the 1,982 VSO contacts, 356 or 18% were from VISN 1 mostly in the form of briefings, and town meetings.

Overall, of the 55,385 total stakeholders and veteran's contacts 4,875 (other) or nearly 8.0% includes all outreach in the form of mail outs (e.g., e-mails, brochures, mass mailings and newsletters)

The October analysis showed that the outreach activities reported with the Affiliates, Unions, Local Organizations, and DoD showed a decrease from the previous month.

According to the Substantive comments concerns continue to be voiced in the majority of the VISNs focused on the overall CARES process (i.e., Congressional involvement, funding, accuracy of CARES data and impact), employee anxiety, mental stress on employees and veterans with regard to potential closures, and special populations. Most of the substantive comments continue come from (VISN, 2), Canandaigua, NY due to the recommendation to transfer current services to other VAMCs in the VISN. Other comments from (VISNs 4, 7 8, 11, 18,20, 21,22) had comments related to the status of the CARES hearings, web site address CBOC's, small facilities, demographics and realignment of facilities and services.



Additionally, of the 55,385 stakeholders contacts, 63 or 0.114% were face-to-face outreach contacts, and the contacts decreased from in September to 63 in October.

Now that the CARES Commission public hearings have been scheduled and meetings have occurred the Networks and VISN level staff are reminded **to report any questions dealing with the Commission in the substantive comment section, and to refer the stakeholders to the CARES Commission Web site, <http://www/cares commission.va.gov>. Also, this report will continue until the end of December 2003.**

•

November 17, 2003

Distribution: 00, 00A, 10, 10A, 10B, 10N
VHA/VACO Program Offices
VISN Directors, Communications Coordinators
VSO Representatives

ALL VISNs

October

2003

Outreach Audience

VISN	Employee	Veteran/Rel	Congressional	VSO	Affiliate	Volunteer	Union	Local Org	DoD	Other	Total
0											0
1	19105	10	314	356	43	0	61	100	4	15	20008
2	400	0	11	10	0	0	0	14	0	2550	2985
3	2934	540	15	8	5	0	16	45	1	9	3573
4	123	0	5	90	3	15	0	0	0	25	261
5											0
6	5071	150	8	241	204	225	3	3	0	1	5906
7	648	200	8	337	1	80	11	23	3	0	1311
8	50	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2000	2050
9	170	0	0	18	0	0	0	0	0	0	188
10	1628	0	0	38	0	0	0	0	0	1	1667
11	9410	300	47	249	20	900	28	0	0	1	10955
12											0
15	3065	103	21	131	9	9	24	4	2	19	3387
16	46	65	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	88	199
17											0
18	14	0	1	27	0	0	0	0	2	2	46
19	203	23	9	187	0	0	6	0	0	50	478
20	792	705	12	92	0	5	5	10	91	114	1826
21											0
22	10	25	2	13	0	0	0	2	0	0	52
23	268	5	2	185	0	30	3	0	0	0	493
	43937	2126	455	1982	285	1264	157	201	103	4875	55385

CARES Stakeholder Outreach

ALL VISNs

October/2003

Contacts															
VISN	Employee	Veteran/Rel	Senator	Representative	VSO	Affiliate	Volunteer	Union	Local Org	DoD	State Gov	Local Gov	Media	Other	Total
0															0
1		3			1										4
2	1	21					1						7	7	37
3															0
4				2											2
5															0
6		1	1										2		4
7					3						1				4
8	1														1
9															0
10															0
11			3	2											5
12															0
15															0
16			1												1
17															0
18				1									1		2
19															0
20														1	1
21					1										1
22					1										1
23															0
	2	25	5	5	6	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	10	8	63

Summary of Substantive Comments

For: October/2003

Facility	Who	What they said	Action taken / Impact on plan
Albany, NY	Michael R. Pastore	If at all possible, could I please receive more information regarding CARES and Mission and Vision of this.	A personal letter from the Director provided requested information and provided follow up numbers to PR if this individual had any further questions.
Albany, NY	Mr. Rober H. Lyle	Don't close the Veteran's Clinics. They are invaluable as a source of medical care and medications availability at a reasonable cost.	A personal letter from the Director was sent to this veteran. Follow up numbers with PR was provided should this individual have further questions.
Beckley, WV	Charlotte Moreland, Legislative Assistant	Ms. Moreland expressed interest in comments made regarding the Beckley VAMC during the Commission Public Hearings held October 14-16, Washington, DC	Director and Associate Director spoke with Ms. Moreland and provided information on her questions/concerns.
Bedford, MA	Italian American Legion	Really didn't ask any questions	
Canandaigua, NY	HARRY S. KENYON	TO MUCH TO WRITE. IT IS A DISGRACE TO CLOSE ANY VA HOSPITAL.	NEGATIVE IMPACT ON THE DRAFT PLAN TO CLOSE THE CANANDAIGUA VA MEDICAL CENTER.
Canandaigua, NY	DIANE S. JONES	IT IS LUDICROUS TO THINK THAT CARE WILL IMPROVE UNDER THIS PLAN. IN FACT, IT WILL PROBABLY INCREASE THE NUMBER OF PATIENTS NEEDING HELP.	NEGATIVE IMPACT ON THE DRAFT PLAN TO CLOSE THE CANANDAIGUA VA MEDICAL CENTER.
Canandaigua, NY	L. PARADISE		NEGATIVE IMPACT ON THE DRAFT PLAN TO CLOSE THE CANANDAIGUA VA MEDICAL CENTER.
Canandaigua, NY	JAMES E. HEFNER	DO NOT CLOSE THE VA MEDICAL CENTER.	NEGATIVE IMPACT ON THE DRAFT PLAN TO CLOSE THE CANANDAIGUA VA MEDICAL CENTER.
Canandaigua, NY	CYNTHIA LOUISE BLAIR	DO NOT CLOSE THE VA MEDICAL CENTER IN CANANDAIGUA, NEW YORK.	NEGATIVE IMPACT ON THE DRAFT PLAN TO CLOSE THE CANANDAIGUA VA MEDICAL CENTER.
Canandaigua, NY	WALTER DRURY	I USE THE OUT PATIENT SERVICES; AN CAN'T AFFORD TO TRAVEL TO SYR. OR BUFFALO.	NEGATIVE IMPACT ON THE DRAFT PLAN TO CLOSE THE CANANDAIGUA VA MEDICAL CENTER.
Canandaigua, NY	SHARON PATERSON	CLOSING THE VA HOSPITAL WOULD BE A WASTE OF RESOURCES, INSTEAD AN INCREASE IN VETERANS SERVICES WOULD BE BENEFICIAL TO THE AREA.	NEGATIVE IMPACT ON THE DRAFT PLAN TO CLOSE THE CANANDAIGUA VA MEDICAL CENTER.
Canandaigua, NY	CAROL L. DRURY	NYS HAS BEEN REDUCING THE MILITARY PRESENCE FAR TOO MUCH! TUPPER LAKE VA, PTATTSBURGH AFB, ROME AFB, GOVERNORS IS. FEWER BENIFITS ARE AVAILABLE TO THE NORTHERN VETS. WE DID WIN THE WAR DIDN'T WE????	NEGATIVE IMPACT ON THE DRAFT PLAN TO CLOSE THE CANANDAIGUA VA MEDICAL CENTER.
Canandaigua, NY	RAYMAOND MATHEWS	VA FACILITIES ARE NEEDED TO BADLY TO GIVE VETERANS PROPER CARE	NEGATIVE IMPACT ON THE DRAFT PLAN TO CLOSE THE CANANDAIGUA VA MEDICAL CENTER.
Canandaigua, NY	19 names signed to the petition	DO NOT CLOSE THE CANANDAIGUA VA	NEGATIVE IMPACT ON THE DRAFT PLAN TO CLOSE THE CANANDAIGUA MEDICAL CENTER.
Canandaigua, NY	TELEVISION STATION CHANNEL 10	REPORT CENTERED AROUND CONCERNS BEING RAISED REGARDING THE DRAFT PLAN TO CLOSE THE CANANDAIGUA MEDICAL CENTER.	NEGATIVE IMPACT ON THE DRAFT PALN TO CLOSE THE CANANDAIGUA VA MEDICAL CENTER.
Canandaigua, NY	TELEVISION CHANNEL WROC 8.	REPORT CENTERED AROUND CONCERNS BEING RAISED REGARDING THE DRAFT PLAN TO CLOSE THE CANANDAIGUA MEDICAL CENTER.	NEGATIVE IMPACT ON THE DRAFT PALN TO CLOSE THE CANANDAIGUA VA MEDICAL CENTER.
Canandaigua, NY	TELEVISION CHANNEL WOKR 13	REPORT CENTERED ON CONCERNS BEING RAISED REGARDING THE DRAFT PLAN TO CLOSE THE CANANDAIGUA MEDICAL CENTER.	NEGATIVE IMPACT ON THE DRAFT PALN TO CLOSE THE CANANDAIGUA VA MEDICAL CENTER.
Canandaigua, NY	GANNETT NEWSPAPER ROCHESTER DEMOCRAT AND CHRONICLE.	REPORT CENTERED ON CONCERNS BEING RAISED REGARDING THE DRAFT PLAN TO CLOSE THE CANANDAIGUA MEDICAL CENTER.	NEGATIVE IMPACT ON THE DRAFT PALN TO CLOSE THE CANANDAIGUA VA MEDICAL CENTER.
Canandaigua, NY	CANANDAIGUA DAILY MESSENGER	REPORT CENTERED ON CONCERNS BEING RAISED REGARDING THE DRAFT PLAN TO CLOSE THE CANANDAIGUA MEDICAL CENTER.	NEGATIVE IMPACT ON THE DRAFT PALN TO CLOSE THE CANANDAIGUA VA MEDICAL CENTER.

Canandaigua, NY	FINGERLAKES TIMES NEWSPAPER	REPORT CENTERED ON CONCERNS BEING RASIED REGARDING THE DRAFT PLAN TO CLOSE THE CANANDAIGUA MEDICAL CENTER.	NEGATIVE IMPACT ON THE DRAFT PALN TO CLOSE THE CANANDAIGUA VA MEDICAL CENTER.
Canandaigua, NY	R-NEWS	REPORT CENTERED ON CONCERNS BEING RASIED REGARDING THE DRAFT PLAN TO CLOSE THE CANANDAIGUA MEDICAL CENTER.	NEGATIVE IMPACT ON THE DRAFT PALN TO CLOSE THE CANANDAIGUA VA MEDICAL CENTER.
Canandaigua, NY	FLOYD B. FARMAN		
Canandaigua, NY	JAMES G. KINGSTON	CLOSE BATAVIA SAVE CANANDAIGUA	NEGATIVE IMPACT ON THE DRAFT PLAN TO CLOSE THE CANANDAIGUA VA MEDICAL CENTER.
Canandaigua, NY	ROSEMARY LUZUM	CLOSING THE CANANDAIGUA VA HOSPITAL WILL RESULT IN REDUCED CARE FOR LOCAL VETS AND INCREASE THE RISK THEY WILL FAIL TO SEEK MEDICAL CARE NEEDED ON AN ONGOING BASIS.	NEGATIVE IMPACT ON THE DRAFT PLAN TO CLOSE THE CANANDAIGUA VA MEDICAL CENTER.
Canandaigua, NY	CHRISTINE E. GRACHUS	IN THE CARES PAMPHLET PUBLISHED IN 2002, YOU HAVE MADE A GRAVE ERROR STATING THAT THERE WILL BE DECLINING NUMBERS (OF VETERANS) OVER THE NEXT 20 YEARS. KORRAN AND VIETNAM VETS ARE AGING, AS WELL AS GULF WAR VETS & THOSE THAT STILL HAVE NOT COME HOME FROM THE MIDDLE EAST. THE NEED IS AS GREAT AS EVER.	NEGATIVE IMPACT ON THE DRAFT PLAN TO CLOSE THE CANANDAIGUA VA MEDICAL CENTER.
Canandaigua, NY	WILLIAM F. CLARK	WHY CLOSE??	NEGATIVE IMPACT ON THE DRAFT PLAN TO CLOSE THE CANANDAIGUA VA MEDICAL CENTER.
Canandaigua, NY	KATE GEER	CLOSING THE CDGA VA HOSPITAL WILL MAKE MANY VERTERANS HOMELESS THAT NOW RELY ON THE HOSPITAL FOR SUPPORT.	NEGATIVE IMPACT ON THE DRAFT PLAN TO CLOSE THE CANANDAIGUA VA MEDICAL CENTER.
Canandaigua, NY	THOMAS J. PAGE	WAS INPATIENT IN PAST IN LATER TIME LEFT FACILITY A FEW TIMES A WEEK TO ATTEND CLASSES IN COLLEGE PASSED A COURSE. KEEP VA OPEN	NEGATIVE IMPACT ON DRAFT PLAN TO CLOSE THE CANANDAIGUA VA MEDICAL CENTER.
Canandaigua, NY	ROBERT E. MEYERS	IT WOULD HARM MY HEALTH CARE SHOULD CANANDAIGUA CLOSE. I WOULD BE A 2ND CLASS CITIZEN AS FAR AS HEALTH CARE.	NEGATIVE IMPACT ON DRAFT PLAN TO CLOSE THE CANANDAIGUA VA MEDICAL CENTER.
Canandaigua, NY	BOB BARKER	THIS IS THE BEST VA. MUCH BETTER THAN SYRACUSE.	NEGATIVE IMPACT ON THE CARES DRAFT PLAN TO CLOSE CANANDAIGUA MEDICAL CENTER.
Canandaigua, NY	DORTHY MANZER	PLEASE KEEP OPEN CANANDAIGUA HOSPITAL.	NEGATIVE IMPACT ON THE CARES DRAFT PLAN TO CLOSE CANANDAIGUA MEDICAL CENTER.
Canandaigua, NY	CATHY BARTOLONE	PLEASE KEEP OPEN THE CANANDAIGUA VA HOSPITAL.	NEGATIVE IMPACT ON THE CARES DRAFT PLAN TO CLOSE CANANDAIGUA MEDICAL CENTER.
Canandaigua, NY	NICLOE PALIONBO	PLEASE DO NOT CLOSE THE CANANDAIGUA VA HOSPITAL.	NEGATIVE IMPACT ON THE CARES DRAFT PLAN TO CLOSE CANANDAIGUA MEDICAL CENTER.
Canandaigua, NY	ELIZABETH YOUNG	DON'T CLOSE VA MEDICAL CENTER IN CANANDAIGUA.	NEGATIVE IMPACT ON THE CARES DRAFT PLAN TO CLOSE CANANDAIGUA MEDICAL CENTER.
Canandaigua, NY	CHRIS TRUNER	DO NOT CLOSE THE VA MEDICAL CENTER IN CANANDAIGUA.	NEGATIVE IMPACT ON THE CARES DRAFT PLAN TO CLOSE CANANDAIGUA MEDICAL CENTER.
Canandaigua, NY	EUGENE RIVERA JR.	DO NOT CLOSE THE CANANDAIGUA MEDICAL CENTER.	NEGATIVE IMPACT ON THE CARES DRAFT PLAN TO CLOSE CANANDAIGUA MEDICAL CENTER.
Canandaigua, NY	JUDITH C. O'DANIEL	CANANDAIGUA VA HOSPITAL IS ESSENTIAL FOR MANY OF US IN UPSTATE N.Y. INSTEAD OF RE-ALIGNMENT OF EXISTING VA HOSPITALS THEY SHOULD BE BUILDING MORE!	NEGATIVE IMPACT ON THE DRAFT PLAN TO CLOSE THE CANANDAIGUA VA MEDICAL CENTER.
Canandaigua, NY	RALPH CALABRESE	CUTS - ADJUST- REFUSE- ELIMINATES SERVICES, THATS WHAT CARES MEANS TO THE VETERANS.	NEGATIVE IMPACT ON THE DRAFT PLAN TO CLOSE THE CANANDAIGUA VA MEDICAL CENTER.

Central Arkansas HCS	Lori Neal, new staffer in Lincoln's D.C. Office, called for general information about CAVHS, including proposed SCI Center as part of CARES.	Appreciated the information	None
Columbia, SC	Alta Milling, President	Predominantly positive comments about involvement in the CARES process. Spoke about the need to ensure that resources and programs were available for female veterans, especially those with mental health issues related to battering or sexual trauma. Strongly in support of realigning resources to increase the budget for SC.	Supportive of Market Plan.
El Paso, TX OPC	Staffer for Cong. Naugebauer	Requested information on upcoming hearing and map.	
El Paso, TX OPC	WACO Tribune reporter	Requested information on upcoming CARES hearing and map	
Philadelphia, PA	Amy Simmerman - Constituent Services	Requestin update on Gloucester County CBOC and CARES Update	Update Given on Implementation Plan
Philadelphia, PA	Amy Simmerman - Constituent Services	Congressman Andrews is interested in making a personal call to express his interest in seeing that the Gloucester County Clinic is approved. We know that the general idea is to keep things quiet, but at the same time, he wants to make sure that his strong support is clear to the VA. When you have a second, can you comment to me on whether this makes sense and at least won't hurt our case? (It seems like a good idea to me.) Additionally, can you tell me where the call would best be placed--Lawrence Biro? Someone who oversees CARES? Obviously, we want to go to the top, but I'm not sure who the "top" is at this point. Please let me know if I should give you a call to discuss this.	Strategy Under Discussion at PVAMC
Saginaw, MI	Brian Sutter, Staff, Congressman Camp's Office	Requested Demographics and CARES results	None.
Saginaw, MI	Mr. Jim Lewis, Staff from Congressman Kildee's Office	Requested workload, demographics and CARES results	None.
Saginaw, MI	Mike Kuiken, Staff from Senator Levin's Washington Office	Requesting impact information on the impact of the Small Facility PI	None.
Saginaw, MI	Staffer calling for CARES information.	Wanted information on the Small Facility PI for VAMC Saginaw	None.
VISN 11 Office	Mr. Mike Kuiken, staffer for Senator Levin's Washington Office.	Very interested in the reduction of beds (small facility PI) at the Saginaw VAMC.	Sent him the Michigan Market overview and was generally supportative of initiative.
VISN 20 Office	Congressional reps, VSO reps, veterans and employees contacting VISN or facilities.	A number of calls for information or expressing concern about effects of possible realignments at Walla Walla, White City and Portland Vancouver Division.	Answered questions and reaffirmed that CARES is about maximizing, not reducing, services and determining the best ways to do that now and in future.
VISN 21 Office	Gwendolyn Rankin, State President, Ladies Auxiliary to the VFW, California	Protesting the closure of Livermore facility.	Network Director responded by letter explaining the components of the realignment & the CARES process.
VISN 22 Office	Member of the Blinded Veterans Association in Los Angeles	Member of the Blinded Veterans requested that the new Blind Rehab Center in VISN 22 be placed on the West LA campus.	Referred letter to the CARES Commission
VISN 7 Office	Fred Burns	Wanted operating bed numbers for Uptown Augusta VAMC, to prepare for making remarks at the Oct. 7, 2003 national CARES hearing.	N/A
VISN 7 Office	Tommy Smith	Inquired as to possibility of putting a CBOC in Alma, Georgia.	Responded with criteria for new CBOCs.

VISN 7 Office	Robert Ray Hendrix	Wanted to see about the possibility of adding a CBOC in Statesboro, Georgia.	Described criteria for selecting new CBOCs.
VISN 8 Office	Kerri Childress	Mrs. Childress emailed information to VISN 8 regarding the CARES National Plan. Included are a series of questions and answers.	