

October 9, 2002

CARES PHASE II OUTREACH
National CARES Program Office (10NCARES)

June 2002

June 4	CARES briefing for the Deputy Secretary VA
June 5	VSO CARES briefing HVAC & SVAC briefing CARES Communications Broadcast to field
June 6	CARES DoD briefing CARES briefing before Don Marsh – White House CARES Communications Broadcast Conference Call – CARES briefing for National Partnership Council
June 7	CARES briefing for the Presidential Task Force CARES Technical Briefing to OMB
June 11	Conference Call – CARES Communications
June 12	CARES NPR Radio Interview CARES briefing at VA/DoD Executive Council Meeting
June 13	CARES Funding Model Briefing before The Under Secretary for Health
June 26	CARES Briefing at VHA/VSO Meeting VAKN Broadcast VAKN Conference Call
June 27	CARES briefing to National VSO Representatives CARES Hill briefing – Congressman Stephen D. Buyer

July 2002

July 2	CARES Valuation Briefing for AEW Consultants
July 10	CARES Update for National Leadership Board
July 11	CARES Update for National VSOs
July 22	Communications Training – CARES Presentation Clearwater, Fla.

September 17	CARES Briefing for the National Association of State Directors of VA (NASDVA)
September 17	CARES Presentation for VSO Liaison Meeting
September 18	CARES briefing for PVA Deputy Executive Director & Associate Executive Director for Government Relations
September 19	CARES briefing for the Homeless Veterans Advisory Committee (HVAC)
September 19	CARES update for Rick Weidman, VVA
September 19	Presentation at VFW National Service Officer Regional Training Session, Boise, ID
September 23	Northeast Regional Healthcare Leadership
September 24	CARES update on the Office of Academic Affiliations' Conference Call
September 26	One-day CARES seminar for Hill Staffers and National VSOs in Washington, DC
September 27	CARES briefing or VFW Executive Director
October 2002	
October 1	CARES update for SMC Meeting
October 2	CARES seminar for VA headquarters employees in Washington, D.C.
October 3	7th Annual VA Oncology Symposium
October 3	Monthly National VSO briefing
October 3	Fred Malphurs filmed a Management Perspectives on CARES with the Office of Public Affairs
October 8	Briefing for executive director of Non-Commissioned Officers Association

October 9 Briefing for the Eastern Paralyzed Veterans of America

October 10 Briefing for Senate Appropriations (VA/HUD) Staffers

CARES VHA Office of Communications Outreach

1. CARES Communication Training Conferences

VHA and the Office of Public Affairs jointly conducted three training conferences for CARES communication coordinators, and VISN and facility directors.

The conferences were each 2 ½ days long and were conducted in Clearwater, Fla.; St. Louis, and Las Vegas.

More than 300 people attended the conferences, which emphasized key talking points and VSO and other stakeholder outreach.

2. Weekly CARES Conference Calls

The VHA Office of Communications and the CARES Program Office hold weekly meetings with CARES communications coordinators and Regional Office of Public Affairs Officers. Last week there were 60 people on the call. Numerous issues have been covered, including:

- National and local initiatives to involve DoD in the CARES process
- Products such as Market CDs, CARES brochures, posters
- American Legion letter and contacts – Pamela Howell, VISN 6, talked about her meeting with the designated Legion contact for her VISN
- Taping of CARES conference on the 26th
- How to access and understand the Milliman Report
- CARES Web site – who has them, who doesn't and what we can do to help. What needs to be on them
- Briefing on monthly outreach reports
- Phase I funding news release and Qs&As – how this will help Phase II marketing
- AFGI Letter and outreach to unions
- VetPop Vs. Census numbers

3. Visits to the field to coordinate local outreach efforts

I have traveled to Dallas Office of Public Affairs (OPA) and will go to New York OPA next week to work with the OPAs and their respective Network CARES Communication coordinators to put together detailed local public affairs talking points and programs. Emphasis is placed on areas where the public affairs officers are inexperienced and where hot spots are anticipated. Trips to the five other Regional OPAs are planned.

3. Electronic Communications

Through email, the Network CARES Communication Coordinators and facility public affairs officers share information about town hall meetings, letters to affiliates and unions and employee briefings. Because there is an atmosphere of trust between us, people share both the good and bad. This allows everyone to learn from one person's mistakes and copy those initiatives that work.

Almost daily I send out reports to Network CARES Communication coordinators and facility public affairs officers on matters relating to CARES. These reports have included information on:

- Forecasting Data and the Methodology behind it
- General CARES letter from CO
- CARES Qs&As on the Market Areas
- Nominees for Planning Initiative Selection Process
- How to handle the issue of Waiting Lists
- American Legion Testimony
- National AFGE Letter
- Media coverage
- VSO briefing on CARES data
- White Paper on VetPop vs. Census
- Updated Commission Fact Sheet
- Information on VA/DoD sharing agreements
- Enhanced Use initiatives
- Facility data – how it's reported and how it's used
- Updates on Hill and National VSO briefings