



DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

Veterans Health Administration
Washington DC 20420

May 7, 2001

CARES Stakeholder Communication Bulletin #2001-19

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

CURRENT NEWS

During the first week of May, the National CARES Project Team and the CARES contractor, Booz-Allen & Hamilton, took time to evaluate the CARES process to date. The VISN 12 CARES study is the first evaluation and some delays are expected. It was anticipated that there would be refinement of the process and timelines throughout the study. Lessons learned during the study are being documented, analyzed and implemented in order to improve the process for Phase 1 and subsequent phases involving the rest of the VA health care system. One of the lessons learned is that delivery options should be fully developed with supporting data before evaluation criteria can be applied.

On Tuesday May 8, 2001, Dr. Frances Murphy, Deputy Under Secretary for Health, members of the National CARES Project Team, and the CARES Contractor, Booz-Allen & Hamilton will meet with national Veteran Service Organization Executive Directors to discuss in additional detail the data bases, models, templates, and processes of the CARES pilot.

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES IN MAY

By June 1, it is expected that the CARES contractor, Booz-Allen & Hamilton, will provide the initial written report to the National CARES Project Team describing the data bases, models and templates utilized, and the service delivery options for VISN 12.

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?

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. To date, we have 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.

Comments and suggestions about the CARES study are encouraged 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

Comments have been coming in. All comments will be forwarded to the contractor for use in the development of the options and later to VA staff during 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

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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>