



VA Mid-Atlantic Health Care Network (VISN 6) PLANNING INITIATIVES OVERVIEW

December 2002

WHAT ARE CARES PLANNING INITIATIVES?

“Planning Initiatives” are the gaps between the services we provide now and the projected services we will need to provide in the years 2012 and 2022. It is important to remember that Planning Initiatives are not decisions and not plans; they simply identify gaps in services. Plans will be developed as we analyze the gaps and decide the best approach to meeting those projected needs for the future. Planning Initiatives for all of the VISNs can be viewed at <http://www.va.gov/cares/>.

BACKGROUND

As you know, VISN 6 identified 4 Market Areas (Northeast, Northwest, Southeast, and Southwest) that have sufficient population and geographic size to benefit from coordination and planning of health care services through either VA facilities, DoD or private sector facilities, to support a full health care delivery system (i.e. primary care, mental health care, inpatient care, tertiary care, if available, and long term care). CARES Planning Initiatives represent the gaps between the current supply of services and predicted future workload demand within each market area.

WHAT HAPPENS NOW?

For the next few months, each of the four markets will develop market plans to deal with the gaps and identify strategies for meeting the projected demand in their particular market. The four market teams will come together to develop and finalize a VISN plan to meet all identified planning initiatives. During this process, the VISN and medical centers will be conducting briefings with employees, veterans service organizations, affiliates, union leaders, congressional representatives, and other stakeholders as they develop ideas and recommendations. In February 2003, the VISN 6 CARES Steering Committee will review the recommendations of the four market areas. On February 28, 2003 the VISN will forward the CARES Market Plans to the National CARES Program Office. After that, an independent national CARES Commission will hold stakeholder meetings throughout the country and review the draft National CARES Plan before a recommendation is made to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs. In other words, this is a long-term strategic planning process, and nothing is final until the national plan is approved.

WHAT OPPORTUNITY IS THERE FOR STAKEHOLDERS TO HAVE A SAY IN CARES?

Throughout the development of CARES Market Plans, stakeholders (veterans, VA employees, union officials, academic affiliates, local and national elected officials, veterans service organizations, and others) will be involved through CARES briefings and solicitation of comments. Comments may be provided by mail, e-mail, phone, or at local meetings. To provide input or obtain more information about CARES, contact the CARES Communication Coordinator at your local facility. For your convenience, an electronic CARES comment card is available on the VISN 6 CARES Internet Web site at: <http://www.va.gov/netsix-cares/>

**VISN 6
PLANNING INITIATIVES OVERVIEW, Continued**

WHAT DO THE VISN 6 PLANNING INITIATIVES TELL US?

The complete list of Planning Initiatives for VISN 6 can be found on the VISN 6 Web site at: <http://www.va.gov/netsix-cares/>. If you do not have access to the Internet, contact the CARES Communication Coordinator at your local facility and a copy will be provided. When looking at the Planning Initiatives, keep in mind that the gaps identified can be projecting both increases or decreases in what is needed, and the initiatives are reflective of what the data shows. Each CARES market planning team will need to analyze the data and decide what to do with the gaps. In summary, the Planning Initiatives suggest that, at a minimum, the market teams need to develop market plans to include the following:

Northeast Market (Richmond, VA and Hampton, VA)

- Gaps in outpatient mental health, outpatient specialty care, outpatient primary care
- Access to primary care
- Veterans Health Administration/Department of Defense (VHA/DoD) collaboration potential between Hampton VA with Portsmouth (Navy) and Langley (Air Force)

Northwest Market (Salem, VA and Beckley, WV)

- Gaps in outpatient specialty care, outpatient primary care and inpatient psychiatry
- Access to primary care
- VHA/National Cemetery Administration (NCA) collaboration potential with Salem VA
- Small facility issue in Beckley

Southeast Market (Durham, NC and Fayetteville, NC)

- Gaps in outpatient specialty care, outpatient primary care and outpatient mental health.
- Access to primary and hospital care
- VHA/DoD collaboration potential between Durham VA with Cherry Point (Navy)
- VHA/DoD collaboration potential between Fayetteville VA with Ft. Bragg (Army) and Camp Lejeune (Marines)

Southwest Market (Asheville, NC and Salisbury, NC)

- Gaps in outpatient specialty care, outpatient primary care, inpatient medicine
- Access to primary care
- VHA/NCA collaboration potential with Salisbury VA

HOW CAN I GET MORE INFORMATION?

CARES information is available on the VISN 6 Internet Web site at: <http://www.va.gov/netsix-cares/> or on the National CARES Web site at <http://www.va.gov/CARES/>. If you have questions or need more information, contact the CARES Communication Coordinator at your facility or Pam Howell, VISN 6 CARES Communication Coordinator, at 919.956.5541.