



Walla Walla VA  
Medical Center

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## Media Alert

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
May 5, 2004

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### Department of Veterans Affairs Official to Announce CARES Decision

WALLA WALLA, WA – VA's Acting Under Secretary for Health Dr. Jonathan B. Perlin will hold a news conference on Friday, May 7, 2004 at 11:30 a.m. to announce the Secretary's final decision on the agency's Capital Asset for Enhanced Services (CARES) initiative as it relates to the Walla Walla VA Medical Center.

**Date:** Friday, May 7, 2004  
**Time:** 11:30 a.m.  
**Place:** Walla Walla VA Medical Center, Bldg. 78, Theater Room 103  
77 Wainwright Dr.  
**Participants:** VA Acting Under Secretary for Health Dr. Jonathan B. Perlin  
Walla Walla VAMC Director Bruce Stewart  
VA Network Director Dr. Leslie Burger

CARES is the most comprehensive examination of the department's VA's health care system in decades. VA launched CARES to bring its aging health care system into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The goal is to ensure that VA, which operates 158 hospitals and more than 800 clinics, provides services to veterans where those services are most needed. A 14-member independent commission conducted 38 public hearings and 10 public meetings around the country, heard from 770 witnesses, including 135 members of Congress and seven governors, and received written comments from more than 212,000 people since it began its work last year. The Commission handed over its recommendations to the Secretary in February 2004.

Dr. Perlin will make brief remarks and answer questions from media in attendance. Media are requested to notify the facility's public affairs officer, Carol Blehm at (509) 527-3458 or Megan Streight at (360) 619-5934 if they plan to attend.

The final report will be posted on the Department of Veterans Affairs website on May 7 at <http://www.va.gov/CARES> after 12 noon PST.

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Attachment: Dr. Perlin Bio