



**Department of Veterans Affairs
Veterans Health Administration**



CARES Review Processes

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3 Basic Levels of CARES Reviews

- ◆ **Review by the Under Secretary for Health**
- ◆ **Review by the CARES Commission**
- ◆ **Review by the Secretary**



1st Level Review

- ◆ **Role of Review Groups – recommendations to Under Secretary for Health:**
 - ❖ **NCPO (National CARES Program Office) – VHA/VACO-based**
 - ❖ **CCAG (Clinical CARES Advisory Group)**
 - ❖ **COVAC (CARES One VA Committee)**



1st Level Review

NCPO (National CARES Program Office) – includes:

- ❖ **VA/VHA Staff (DC & Field-based)**
- ❖ **CARES Planning Group – a multidisciplinary, oversight group**
- ❖ **VSSC (VISN Support Service Center Staff)**

Clinical CARES Advisory Group (CCAG)

- **Clinicians from all major clinical programs (including Special Populations, Nursing & Informatics)**
- **National Center for Patient Safety**
- **Academic Affiliations**
- **Research**
- **Quality & Performance**
- **Field representatives**
- **Dept. of Defense**



Role of the CCAG

- ◆ **Review VISN Market Plans**
- ◆ **Review draft National CARES Plan**
- ◆ **Request clarifications/changes (if necessary)**
- ◆ **Make recommendations to the Under Secretary for Health**

Criteria for CCAG Review

- ◆ **“Basic” or “threshold”** (clinical need over the continuum of care, patient safety, quality of care)
- ◆ **“Impact”** (access, community, efficiency, and mission-related – i.e., academic, research, DoD contingency)

CARES One-VA Committee (COVAC)

- ◆ **Membership**: Representatives of VBA, NCA, and VHA/VACO
- ◆ **Criteria**: Examines draft National CARES Plan for opportunities to collaborate or co-locate
- ◆ **Role**: Recommendations to the Under Secretary for Health



*Dept. of Defense Involvement:
To maximize opportunities for*

- ◆ **Joint Ventures & Sharing**
- ◆ **TriCare Contracts**
- ◆ **DoD Contingency Planning**
- ◆ **Coordination with DoD's Medical Strategic Planning**



2nd Level Review

- ◆ **Role of Reviewing Bodies – recommendations to the Secretary:**
 - ❖ **USH – must approve the draft National CARES Plan & forward to the CARES Commission**
 - ❖ **CARES Commission – reviews plan and stakeholder input – reports to the Secretary**



2nd Level: Review Processes

- ◆ **Publication of the draft National CARES Plan**
- ◆ **Public Comment period – 60 days post-publication**
- ◆ **CARES Commission – reviews public comments & conducts site visits or public hearings *before* making recommendations**



3rd Level Review

- ◆ **Office of the Secretary**
- ◆ **Considers the draft National CARES Plan and the recommendations of the CARES Commission**
- ◆ **Secretary's decision**



SUMMARY (1)

- ◆ **3 Levels of Review of the draft CARES Plan**
- ◆ **Under Secretary for Health is advised by 3 groups (NCPO, CCAG, COVAC)**
- ◆ **Primary recommendations to the Secretary are from the CARES Commission (after USH sign-off)**



SUMMARY (2)

- ◆ **Publication of draft CARES Plan with 60-day comment period.**
- ◆ **CARES Commission review of the draft National CARES Plan, public comments, and stakeholder input and involvement.**
- ◆ **CARES Commission recommendations to the Secretary of DVA.**
- ◆ **Secretary's decision.**



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