

TO: Chad Schulken – Dirksen, Room 125
Sue Quantius – Capitol H-310
D'Ann Lettieri – Hart, Room 125
Matt Washington – Longworth, Room 1001

SUBJECT: Transmittal of Report Requirements

As requested in the House Appropriations Report, 113-90, I am transmitting the following:

- A report on the Assignment to Health Care Centers

Maureen Walsh

Maureen Walsh
Deputy Assistant Secretary for Budget

3/21/14

Date

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS (VA)

REPORT TO CONGRESS ON ASSIGNMENT TO HEALTH CARE CENTERS

Issue: Assignment to Health Care Centers. *The Committee has heard complaints that some Veterans travel long distances because of the locations VA directs them for care even though there are closer, more easily accessible health center locations. The Committee requests the VA to report to the Committee about the method used to assign Veterans to VA health care centers. The report should include a description of how often service areas change, what notification is made to Veterans of such changes, and what appeal rights Veterans have to use a different facility than the one they were assigned. HAC Rpt. 112-491, p. 39.*

Discussion:

When applying for enrollment in VA health care, Veterans select their preferred location of care from over 1,700 hospitals, outpatient clinics and other care locations. Once enrolled, Veterans' coverage accompanies them when they travel or move. VA continues to reassess the need for new care locations to make health care more accessible to Veterans. As new locations are deployed, VA reviews its patients' care needs and offers care to those who live closer to the new facilities. If a new facility is able to provide the needed care and the patient is interested, VA transfers his or her care to the new location.

Additionally, at any time, Veterans may opt to receive all or some of their care at a different facility. When a Veteran expresses a desire to receive care at a different facility or site, VA reviews the patient's needs and schedules an appointment at that alternate location, as long as it has the capacity and available resources to provide the necessary care. In the event the facility lacks the capacity at that time, VA will place the patient on a "Transfer List" and schedule future appointments at the desired location when capacity becomes available.