



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER
287 West Street
Rocky Hill, CT 06067



Thomas J. Saadi
Commissioner

DVA COVID-19 Update: April 8, 2021

The Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) Healthcare Center (HCC) has no COVID-19 positive Veteran Patients in the HCC Isolation Unit. Five Veteran Patients are in self-isolation for monitoring as they recently returned from acute care or other community-based healthcare facilities or were recently admitted to the HCC. These Veterans have tested negative for the virus but are in Self-Isolation out of an abundance of caution until clinically cleared for release. The HCC did have a staff member test positive for COVID-19 earlier this week and in response we conducted contact tracing, additional cleaning and implemented weekly COVID-19 testing of all Veteran Patients.

The DVA Residential Facility has its first case of a COVID-19 positive Veteran Resident two weeks ago. The COVID-19 positive Veteran Resident is among the few Veterans Resident who declined receiving the vaccine. Consistent with DVA protocols we conducted immediate contact tracing, tested all Veterans living in the same residential wing and who work with the COVID-19 Positive Veteran with all results negative for COVID-19. We also conducted a full point prevalence testing this week of Veterans residents with all results negative for COVID-19. The one COVID-19 positive Veteran was off Campus when learning of the positive COVID test and remains off Campus with a friend. There are no Veteran Residents in the COVID-19 positive section of the Isolation and Recovery Unit or in the protective monitoring section of the Isolation Unit. The DVA is testing Residential Veterans once per month with additional testing of Veteran Vocational Therapeutic Program participants. To date the DVA has tested two hundred and forty-four Veteran Residents and Patients (most multiple times) for COVID-19 with seventy testing positive or retesting positive since March 2020. Of those testing positive, sixty-three recovered from the virus and one is recovering off Campus. One Veteran Resident and two Veteran Patients passed away in the spring due to COVID-19, and two Veteran Patients passed away in December and January from COVID-19 complications. One Veteran Patient with COVID-19 passed away in December from a non-COVID-19 related medical occurrence.

In addition to the HCC COVID-19 positive staff member another DVA employee tested positive this week however, that employee has been in telework status thus having no contact with the DVA Campus. Of the sixty DVA staff members testing positive for COVID-19 since the beginning of the pandemic, fifty-six staff members have recovered and returned to work and four remain in recovery and will be cleared to return to work consistent with CDC and DPH guidelines. The DVA continues weekly COVID-19 testing of direct care and front-line staff. This testing will continue until further notice. The DVA has vaccinated ninety-three percent of our Veteran Residents and Patients and approximately fifty-three percent of our DVA Healthcare and other direct care providers and front-line staff are vaccinated.

The Federal VA Healthcare System in CT is holding a COVID-19 vaccine walk-in clinic on Sunday April 11th at the DVA Campus in Rocky Hill. No appointment necessary and the VA Connecticut has expanded eligibility to include the following persons: Anyone who served in the U.S. Military whether or not they are enrolled in the VA healthcare system; Spouses of Veterans; and Caregivers of Veterans. Please see the attached flyer for more information and share this information with anyone who may benefit from this opportunity.

The DVA COVID-19 Mitigation Protocols, previous COVID-19 weekly updates and other important information is available at: <https://portal.ct.gov/DVA/Pages/DVA-COVID-19-Updates>.

Truly,

Thomas J. Saadi
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