



## **DVA COVID-19 Update: February 4, 2022**

The DVA Healthcare Center (HCC) has two COVID-19 positive Veteran Patients who are recovering in community-based healthcare settings and are expected to be clinically cleared to return to the HCC in the next week. There are 13 COVID-19 positive Veteran Patients in the HCC COVID Isolation Unit and two Veteran Patients in protective isolation for COVID-19 monitoring purposes based on clinical determination or after recently returning from a community-based healthcare provider. While the DVA experienced a significant drop in new COVID-19 cases among staff, we experienced a second wave of COVID-19 cases among Veteran Patients with nearly all being asymptomatic, and the majority scheduled for release from the Isolation Unit within the next week. The HCC maintains regular COVID-19 testing and broad infectious disease control procedures to minimize the risk of COVID to Veteran Patients and staff. All masking, distancing/barriers and heightened hygienic and cleaning procedures remain in place and increased COVID-19 testing will continue until further notice. Pursuant to the Governor's recent Executive Order (14F), no visitors are permitted entry to the HCC unless they are either: (1) fully vaccinated, (2) show proof of a negative COVID test within the previous 48 hours, or (3) submit to rapid COVID testing at the HCC.

The DVA Residential Facility experienced a second wave of COVID-19 positive among Veteran Residents last week after a sharp decline two weeks ago. However, all Veteran Residents in this second wave have been clinically cleared and released from the COVID-19 positive section of the Isolation Unit with one COVID positive Veteran Resident being treated in a community-based healthcare setting. There are no Veteran Residents in self-isolation due to contact tracing after nine such Veteran Residents tested negative for COVID-19 twice and were clinically cleared from self-isolation. The DVA continues with monthly testing for all Veteran Residents with the next such testing scheduled for Tuesday, February 15<sup>th</sup>. With the significant drop in COVID cases among DVA Staff, and the drop this week among Veteran Residents, regular on and off Campus recreational and therapeutic activities are phased back to regular status including shopping trips, movies, community-based events and group activities that present a low risk of COVID-19 exposure.

Since the Pandemic began, the DVA has provided direct care for 271 Veteran Residents and Veteran Patients at our Campus of which 121 tested or retested positive for COVID-19. Of those testing positive, 99 recovered from the virus, 13 are recovering at the DVA and three are in a community-based hospital or a clinical rehab setting. One Veteran Resident and three Veteran Patients passed away in 2020 due to COVID-19, and one Veteran Patient passed away in January 2021 from COVID-19 complications. One Veteran Patient with COVID-19 passed away in December 2020 from a non-COVID-19 medical occurrence.

Of the 129 DVA staff members contracting or re-contracting COVID-19 since the beginning of the pandemic, 125 have recovered and returned to work. Four staff members are recovering at home and will return to work consistent with DVA clinical protocols. The DVA vaccine rate for staff is 89% having received a first COVID vaccine dose and 80% being fully vaccinated with 46% receiving a booster vaccine (fluctuations in vaccination rates are due to new staff pending vaccinations). On-Campus Vaccine clinics continue providing COVID-19 and Flu vaccines to staff, Veteran Patients and Residents, with 93% of Veteran Patients vaccinated for the Flu.

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