



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

The DVA Healthcare Center (HCC) has one COVID-19 positive Veteran Patient who is recovering in the HCC COVID Isolation Unit and is expected to be clinically cleared to return to his room soon. This very low number of COVID positive Veteran patients is consistent with the drop in the infection rate a few weeks ago and all other Veteran Patients tested negative this week for COVID. There are two Veteran Patients in protective isolation for COVID-19 monitoring purposes as they are new admissions to the HCC. Despite these continued successes in the battle against COVID, the HCC will maintain 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 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 is in the fifth week with no new COVID-19 positive Veteran Residents in the Residential Facility. All Veteran Residents, except those who were excluded from testing as they recently had COVID, tested negative for the virus two weeks ago. There are no Veteran Residents in self-isolation due to contact tracing nor due to clinical risk assessments. The DVA continues with monthly testing for all Veteran Residents with the next such testing scheduled for March 15th. With the absence of COVID cases among DVA Staff and Veteran Residents, regular on and off Campus recreational and therapeutic activities are phased back to regular status including sporting events, shopping trips, movies, community-based events, and group activities.

Since the Pandemic began, the DVA has provided direct care for 273 Veteran Residents and Veteran Patients at our campus of which 126 tested or retested positive for COVID-19. Of those testing positive, 117 recovered from the virus, one is in a community-based hospital or a clinical rehab setting and two are in Isolation on campus. 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 142 DVA staff members contracting or re-contracting COVID-19 since the beginning of the pandemic, 140 have recovered and returned to work, two are recovering at home and are expected to return to work soon. The DVA vaccine rate for staff is 89% having received a first COVID vaccine dose and 80% being fully vaccinated with 65% receiving a booster vaccine (fluctuations in vaccination rates are due to new staff pending vaccinations). On-Campus Vaccine clinics continued providing COVID-19 and Flu vaccines to Veteran Patients and Residents, with 99% vaccinated for COVID and 96% of patients vaccinated for the Flu.

As part of our wholistic approach to overall wellness, we continue weekly health and wellbeing screenings of Veterans and last week we held a CPR certification class on Campus which, for the first time, was expanded to include Veteran Residents. Our next CPR will be later in March or early April.

Pursuant to Department of Administrative Services directives, face masking is no longer required in state buildings on the DVA campus with the exception of the HCC and Residential Facility where masking is required for all staff, Veterans and visitors until further notice.

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>.