



COVID-19 Agency Update **June 17, 2020**

The Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) Healthcare Center (HCC) has no Veteran Patients in the HCC Isolation Recovery Unit and no additional Veteran Patients have tested positive for COVID-19 in nearly five weeks. One Veteran Patient, who previously tested positive for COVID-19, did re-test positive for the virus over the previous weekend after being transferred to a community based hospital for non-COVID acute care, where he currently remains. There are currently no Veteran Residents in the Residential Isolation Recovery Unit and the Residential Facility has not had a new COVID-19 case in one month. One Veteran Resident who recovered from COVID-19 is in a community based physical therapy/rehabilitation program and a second Veteran Resident who recovered from the virus is receiving in-home rehabilitative care.

To date, the DVA has tested two hundred and twenty-one Veteran Residents and Patients (most tested multiple times) for COVID-19 with twenty-four testing positive. Of the twenty-four Veteran Residents and Patients who tested positive, twenty recovered from the virus and one Veteran Patient re-tested positive. One Veteran Resident and two Veteran Patients passed away in late April and early May due to COVID-19. Four DVA staff members had tested positive for COVID-19 and all have recovered and returned to work with no staff members testing positive for the virus in a month.

DVA continues to receive great support from our community partners including Travelers which made a significant donation this week of various personal need items for our Veterans Residents and Girl Scout Troop 64099 of Southington which donated 480 boxes of Girl Scout Cookies to our Veterans with letters of support and thanks to Veterans and Staff.

We are moving forward with a large ADA compliance project to improve access to and safety in our Residential Facility. Although delayed due to the pandemic, we are now implementing plans to expand the Residential Semi-Private Living to offer more Veteran Residents greater personal privacy, increased living space and a safer environment during future pandemics, should they occur. The DVA is also developing plans for a dedicated COVID/infectious disease Isolation Recovery Unit (IRU) to replace the current temporary IRU.

We will continue wing by wing testing in the Residential Facility through the end of June as we lift COVID-19 restrictions across agency core function areas. The DVA encourages eligible staff to take advantage of available COVID-19 offsite testing as we finalize plans for regular onsite testing of staff. We maintain regular screening of staff and Veterans and adherence to the DVA Enhanced Safety and Health COVID-19 Protocols and modifications thereto which are available, along with other important information, at: <https://portal.ct.gov/DVA/Pages/DVA-COVID-19-Updates>.