



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



Thomas J. Saadi
Commissioner

DVA COVID-19 Update: April 16, 2021

The Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) Healthcare Center (HCC) has no COVID-19 positive Veteran Patients in the HCC Isolation Unit. Two 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 we continue weekly COVID-19 testing of all Veteran Patients with all patients testing negative for the virus.

The DVA Residential Facility had its first case of a COVID-19 positive Veteran Resident three weeks ago after no COVID-19 cases for ten weeks. There have been no further COVID-19 positive Veteran Residents and the single COVID-19 was off Campus when learning of the positive COVID-19 test performed at the Federal VA in West Haven and has remained off Campus staying with a friend. We conducted a full point prevalence testing two weeks ago with all Veteran Residents testing negative for COVID-19. 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 as an extra precaution. To date the DVA has tested two hundred and forty-five 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 medical occurrence.

Of the sixty-one 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 five remain in various stages of recovery and will be cleared to return to work consistent with CDC and DPH guidelines. The DVA will continue weekly COVID-19 testing of direct care and front-line staff until further notice. The DVA has vaccinated ninety-six percent of our Veteran Residents and Patients and approximately fifty-five percent of our DVA Healthcare and other direct care providers and front-line staff are vaccinated.

The Federal VA Healthcare System COVID-19 vaccine walk-in clinic held at the DVA Campus on Sunday April 11th was a great success with over one-hundred and fifty Veterans, spouses and caregivers receiving their first dose of the Moderna vaccine. Lt. Governor Susan Bysiewicz, Senator Richard Blumenthal, State Representative Kerry Wood and Rocky Hill Mayor Lisa Marotta were present to show their support for our Veterans and the clinical team. The success of this vaccination clinic is an example of the great partnership between the DVA and the CT Federal VA Healthcare System and its Director Al Montoya, and we look forward to our continued collaboration in support of Connecticut's Veterans and their Families

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>.