



DVA COVID-19 Update: July 30, 2021

The Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) Healthcare Center (HCC) has no COVID-19 positive Veteran Patients in the HCC Isolation Unit and no Veteran Patients have tested positive for COVID-19 in over four months. All Veteran Patients recently in self-isolation after returning to the HCC from off campus inpatient care have been clinically cleared for release. The HCC continues expanded visitation opportunities for family and friends of our Veteran Patients and we welcome back individual and group volunteers in support of increased Veteran recreation and recognition events. However, we are closely monitoring the increase in Delta variant community transmissions and will adjust our COVID mitigation protocols for the HCC and the DVA Campus as necessary to ensure the safety of our Veterans and staff.

The DVA Residential Facility has not had a COVID-19 positive Veteran Resident in over four months and unvaccinated Veteran Residents and all Veteran Vocational Therapeutic Program participants tested negative for COVID-19 two weeks ago. Based on the excellent test results and vaccination rates, the DVA continues testing unvaccinated Veteran Residents, unless they are a Veteran Vocational Therapeutic Program participant, all of whom are tested monthly. There are no Veteran Residents in the COVID-19 positive section of the Isolation and Recovery Unit nor in the protective monitoring section of the Isolation Unit. The DVA continues to expand on and off Campus recreational and therapeutic activities for Veteran Residents including shopping, baseball games, theater trips, bowling, hiking and attendance at community based Civic and Veteran Service Organization events.

Since the Pandemic began, the DVA has provided direct care for two hundred and fifty-one Veteran Residents and Veteran Patients at our Campus of whom seventy-one tested positive or retested positive for COVID-19 since March 2020. Of those testing positive, sixty-five recovered from the virus. One Veteran Resident and two Veteran Patients passed away in the spring due to COVID-19, and a Veteran Patient passed away in December 2020 and in January 2021 from COVID-19 complications. One Veteran Patient with COVID-19 passed away in December from a non-COVID-19 medical occurrence. Of the sixty-four DVA staff members contracting COVID-19 since the beginning of the pandemic, all have recovered and returned to work after clinical clearance. One DVA staff member is currently in home isolation due to an off Campus potential exposure to COVID-19. This person will return to work after clinical clearance which includes having a negative COVID-19 test.

The DVA has vaccinated all Veteran Residents and Veteran Patients and nearly seventy percent of our DVA staff. Based on testing results, vaccination rates and maintaining of certain COVID-19 mitigation protocols, we are conducting monthly testing of only unvaccinated staff members until further notice. However, the potential increase in COVID mitigation protocols may include more frequent testing of unvaccinated and vaccinated staff and Veterans. Prior notice of any changes will be provided.

As stated, we are monitoring COVID-19 and variant infection, hospitalization and death rates and will implement additional COVID mitigation measures should the need arise. 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>.