



## **DVA COVID-19 Update: Sept. 10, 2021**

The DVA Healthcare Center (HCC) had two Veteran Patients test positive for COVID-19 since last week which are the first COVID-19 cases in nearly five months in the HCC. Both Veterans are recovering in community based COVID Recovery Facilities and we hope they will be clinically cleared to return to the HCC soon. There no COVID-19 positive Veteran Patients currently in the HCC and two Veteran Patients are being treated for various acute, non-COVID, issues in community-based hospitals. Pursuant to DPH directives, the HCC temporary suspension of indoor visitation remains in place due to the two COVID positive Veterans and an additional staff member testing positive for COVID-19 earlier this week. Visits will resume after we complete two weeks of testing of all Veterans and Staff with no COVID-19 cases. We continue to conduct additional rapid testing and PCR COVID-19 testing of all Veteran Patients, daily screening and weekly testing of all HCC Staff to identify persons with the virus as soon as possible. All masking, distancing and heightened personal hygienic and facility cleaning procedures remain in place to mitigate the impact of COVID-19. We are monitoring COVID-19 transmission rates in the community and are in the process of implementing DPH's and the Governor's directives regarding mandatory vaccination of State employees.

The DVA Residential Facility has not had a COVID-19 positive Veteran Resident in nearly five months and unvaccinated Veteran Residents and all Veteran Vocational Therapeutic Program participants tested negative for COVID-19 three weeks ago with another round of testing scheduled for September 14th. The DVA continues monthly testing of unvaccinated Veteran Residents, unless they are a Veteran Vocational Therapeutic Program participant, all of whom are tested notwithstanding vaccine status. There are no Veteran Residents in the COVID-19 positive section or the protective monitoring section of the Isolation Unit. The DVA continues regular on and off Campus recreational and therapeutic activities for Veteran Residents including shopping, baseball games, fishing trips, 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-three Veteran Residents and Veteran Patients at our Campus of whom seventy-three 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 of 2020 due to COVID-19, and a Veteran Patient passed away in December 2020 and one in January 2021 from COVID-19 complications. One Veteran Patient with COVID-19 passed away in December from a non-COVID-19 medical occurrence. Two Veteran Patients remain in community based COVID Recovery Facilities.

Of the seventy-two DVA staff members contracting (or re-contracting) COVID-19 since the beginning of the pandemic, (one contracting the virus twice) sixty-seven recovered and returned to work. Five COVID positive HCC staff members are currently in home isolation after off Campus COVID exposure with four expected to be cleared to return to work in the next several days.

Despite the few COVID-19 cases in DVA staff and Veterans our mitigation protocols and response operations are highly effective and the few vaccinated persons who have become infected have had only mild symptoms.

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>