



COVID-19 Agency Update
September 11, 2020

The Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) Healthcare Center (HCC) has no COVID-19 positive Veteran Patients in its Isolation and Recovery Unit and there have been no new Veteran Patients testing positive for COVID-19 in several months. As part of the DVA's rigorous COVID-19 mitigation procedures, over the three Mondays ending last week, all Veteran Patients, including those in the Isolation Unit, were tested for COVID-19 with all testing negative each time. There are four Veteran Patients in the HCC Isolation Unit, all of whom have tested negative for the virus, however as they are new admissions or patients who recently returned from an acute care facility, they will remain in the Isolation Unit until cleared by clinical staff for release after additional COVID-19 tests and monitoring.

The DVA Residential Facility has no COVID-19 positive Veteran Residents in its Isolation Recovery Unit and no new Veteran Residents have tested positive for COVID-19 in more than three months. The DVA Residential Facility completed a second round of COVID-19 testing of all Residential Veterans on September 9th (the previous full spectrum testing took place on July 21st) with all Veterans testing negative for COVID-19 on both occasions. The DVA will continue periodic one day testing of all Veteran Residents as part of our COVID-19 mitigation efforts. Every Thursday since July 9th, the DVA has conducted COVID-19 testing of all direct care and front-line staff with one asymptomatic HCC staff member testing positive three weeks ago. This person has since recovered and tested negative and returned to work. Testing of DVA staff will continue weekly until further notice to mitigate the potential spread of the virus. The DVA Veteran and staff testing results to date and the DVA's response to any positive tests demonstrate that our COVID-19 mitigation protocols, including wearing masks, screening and ongoing testing are keeping our Veterans and staff safe.

To date the DVA has tested over two hundred and thirty Veteran Residents and Patients (most tested multiple times) for COVID-19 with twenty-five testing positive, most of these early in the pandemic. Of the twenty-five Veteran Residents and Patients who tested positive, twenty-two recovered from the virus. One Veteran Resident and two Veteran Patients passed away in late April and early May due to COVID-19 complications. Six staff members have tested positive for COVID-19 since the beginning of the pandemic, with all recovering and returning to work consistent with CDC and DPH return to work guidelines.

We continue adherence to the DVA 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>.

If you have not done so, please take time today to reflect upon the events of September 11, 2001, to memorialize the innocent lives lost that day and to remember the men and women in our Armed Forces who have responded to our Nation's call throughout the nineteen years that have passed since that tragic day.