



## **COVID-19 Agency Update** **June 23, 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 six weeks. One Veteran Patient, who previously tested positive for COVID-19, did re-test positive for the virus last week and is currently in a community based hospital for non-COVID acute care, where he currently remains.

In the DVA Residential Facility, we have been conducting testing of each Residential wing and last week one Veteran Resident tested positive for COVID-19. This Veteran is in the Residential Isolation Recovery Unit and remains asymptomatic. This is our first COVID-19 case in the Residential Facility in over a month. Today we received test results from thirteen Veteran Residents which are all negative for the virus. We continue regular testing and screening of Veteran Residents to mitigate the potential spread of the virus. One of our Veteran Residents who recovered from COVID-19 is in a community based physical therapy/rehabilitation program and a second is receiving in-home rehabilitative care with his family.

To date, the DVA has tested two hundred and twenty-two Veteran Residents and Patients (most tested multiple times) for COVID-19 with twenty-five testing positive. Of the twenty-five Veteran Residents and Patients who tested positive, twenty recovered from the virus, one Veteran Patient re-tested positive and one Veteran Resident recently 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 five weeks.

Throughout the Pandemic, the DVA continues with major projects including the American Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance project which is making ADA improvements to the DVA Residential Facility. This \$2.4 million dollar project is funded by the Federal Department of Veterans Affairs State Home Construction Grant Program and State bonding funds. Improvements include installing and repairing multiple building access ramps, adding automatic doors, improved restroom access and overall upgrades. The project also addresses fire code issues related to building egress in structures which are more than 80 years old.

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>.