



COVID-19 Agency Update
May 21, 2020

Today, the State Department of Public Health (DPH) and Medics from the CT Army National Guard, as part of the statewide skilled nursing facility inspection regime, inspected the Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) Healthcare Center (HCC). The team inspected, among other things, the HCC COVID-19 Isolation Unit, Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) inventory controls, food service delivery, laundry and housekeeping services, and infection control practices. I am pleased to report that this inspection, as with the two prior DPH visits, was a success.

The DVA HCC currently has three Veteran Patients in the HCC Isolation Unit, all three of whom are no longer COVID-19 positive and will be released from the Isolation Unit at a time consistent with CDC and public health guidelines. Each of these Veteran Patients have serious underlying pre-existing medical conditions therefore, even while their conditions are improving, their medical status remains guarded. No Veteran Patients have tested positive for COVID-19 in the past seventeen days.

One Veteran Resident remains in the Residential Facility Isolation Unit as of today pending a COVID-19 test result, which if negative, will be released from Isolation consistent with CDC guidelines. There are currently four Veteran Residents, who recovered from COVID-19, in physical therapy/rehabilitation programs with one expected to return to the Residential program soon.

To date, the DVA has tested one-hundred and seventy-four Veteran Residents and Patients (many tested multiple times) for COVID-19 with twenty-four testing positive of which, seventeen have recovered and four Veterans who tested COVID-19 positive are currently in the HCC and Residential Isolation Units on our Campus in various stages of recovery. One Veteran Resident and two Veteran Patients with serious pre-existing medical conditions have passed away from COVID-19. Four DVA staff members have tested positive for COVID-19, two of which have recovered and returned to work consistent with CDC guidelines.

Today I issued the second and third modifications to the DVA COVID-19 Mitigation Protocols which allow taxi and ride service providers expanded access to the DVA Campus and also allow "window visits" between Veteran Patients and family members consistent with DPH directives. All other DVA COVID-19 Protocols remain in place until modified.

The DVA will conduct COVID-19 testing of every Veteran Resident over the next few weeks and of every Veteran Patient on a single day next week. Senior DVA leaders are also facilitating the testing of DVA staff. The DVA continues daily screening of all staff and Veterans and the adherence to DVA Enhanced Safety and Health COVID-19 Protocols which are available, along with modifications and other important information, at: <https://portal.ct.gov/DVA/Pages/DVA-COVID-19-Updates>.