

## **SUMMARY**

### **Veterans Access, Choice and Accountability Act of 2014**

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) was established to fulfill President Lincoln's promise "To care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow, and his orphan," by serving and honoring the men and women who are America's Veterans. VA's goal continues to be to provide timely, high-quality health care for Veterans. VA

VA will establish and implement a system to process and pay claims for care delivered to Veterans by non-VA providers under the Program and other non-VA care authorities.

### **Project Access Received Closer to Home (ARCH)**

Project ARCH, is an existing pilot program intended to improve access for eligible Veterans by connecting them to health care services closer to home. Eligibility for the pilot program is based on specific criteria, including driving distance from a VHA health care facility for primary care, acute hospital care, or tertiary care. The pilot program is carried out in 5 specific Veterans Integrated Service Networks. The Choice Act extends this pilot for approximately 2 years.

### **Enhancement of Collaboration**

VA will work with the Indian Health Service (IHS) to ensure that certain medical facilities operated by an Indian tribe or tribal organization are aware of the opportunity to negotiate reimbursement agreements with VA. VA will enter into contracts or agreements with certain Native Hawaiian Health Care Systems for reimbursement of direct care services provided to eligible Veterans.

## **Additional Expansion of Access to Care**

### **Extension of Assisted Living Pilots**

Pursuant to the Choice Act, VA will extend the Assisted Living Pilot Program for Veterans with Traumatic Brain Injury for 3 years, through October 6, 2017. This program assesses the effectiveness of providing assisted living services to eligible Veterans with traumatic brain injuries to “enhance the rehabilitation, quality of life, and community integration of such Veterans.”

### **Mobile Vet Centers and Mobile Medical Centers**

VA will improve access to telemedicine and other health care services through standardization and greater use of mobile vet centers and mobile medical centers.

## **Reviewing and Expanding Capacity and Processes**

### **Independent Assessments**

To ensure high-quality care, VA will enter into one or more contracts with an independent third party or parties for assessments of the hospital care, medical services, and other health care processes in VA medical facilities.

task force will propose specific actions VA might take to improve our performance in this area and will submit their recommendations to the Secretary and to Congress. VA will implement the recommendations of the task force that the Secretary considers feasible, advisable, and cost effective.

### **Major Facility Leases**

The Choice Act authorizes 27 major medical facility leases in 18 states and Puerto Rico.

### **Publicly Available Data**

Each VA medical facility will post on a Web site the wait-times for scheduling an appointment at VA facilities for primary care, specialty care, and hospital care and medical services based on the general severity of the condition of the Veteran. Whenever the wait-times for scheduling such appointments change, VA will publish the revised wait times.

VA will develop a comprehensive data set that will be made accessible to the public. This data set will include applicable patient safety, quality of care, and outcome measures for VA health care.

VA will ensure that Veterans have increased access to information about their doctors. The “Our Doctors” web site will be updated and made more accessible on [www.va.gov](http://www.va.gov). Additionally, each Veteran undergoing a surgical procedure through VA will be provided with information on the credentials of the surgeon performing the procedure.

### **Presidential Commission on Care**

An independent Commission on Care (“the Commission”) will be established to undertake a comprehensive eval0 0 1 300-[e-h)6(e)6(n)-3(s)10(iv)12(e)]TJ

provided by February 3, 2015, and an annual report will be provided no later than September 30<sup>th</sup> of each year. The Secretary will have the authority to recruit and directly appoint qualified personnel to serve in these specific occupations.

### **Training and Education**

The law extends the VA's existing Health Professionals Educational Assistance Program from December 31, 2014, to December 31, 2019. The Choice Act also increases the maximum reimbursement ceiling for the Education Debt Reduction Program from \$60,000 to \$120,000. VA is directed to implement a clinic management training program for two years, with continuously updated materials, to provide in-person, standardized education on health care management to appropriate VA employees.

### **Employee Performance Plans**

VA will ensure that scheduling and wait-time metrics or goals

VA will expand the Marine Gunnery Sergeant John David Fry Scholarship to include the spouses of service members who died in the line of duty.  
Programs of