

# Patient Advisory Council

Meeting Minutes

January 10, 2018

Location: Building 88, CLC Conference Room

## Members Present

Donald Engler, Sr. (Conference Call In)

Mariha Gage

Bob Good

Stan Hafferman

Michael Kendall (Conference Call In)

Jim Kirch

Hulett McGaugh

Jeannette D.-Mayer

Harold Nevill (Conference Call In)

David Swickard

Phil Woodford

## VA Staff Present

Susan Klepecki

## Opening

The regular meeting of the PAC was called to order at 6:00 PM by Stan Hafferman. Stan determined a quorum was present.

## Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the previous meeting were unanimously approved as distributed. No changes were noted for the minutes.

## Reports

### Child Care

Mariah has spoken with many of the teams. The Women's clinic is the only one who mentioned appointments have been canceled due to childcare issues. The other teams mentioned it was due to DAV Drivers issues.

### Optical Lab

Jim stated the next meeting will be January 23, 2018. The optical board would like to know about veterans' experiences. Please share your stories with Jim to pass along. Your comments, concerns, and suggestions will be passed along to the board.

## Membership

Jim will continue to work with Michael – offline on cleaning up the membership roster. Jim presented a possible restricting of the board to create an auxiliary membership to pull from when existing members need to leave the board. A membership committee is being put together to work on this project. If you are interested in being a part of the membership committee, please reach out to Jim or Stan.

## **Artwork**

Pieces of artwork have been submitted. They are looking great. Jeannette is working with Randy to make sure all submitted artwork has been compiled into one file to be emailed out to PAC board members ASAP. The chosen hallway is large enough to display all pieces submitted at this point in time.

## **Unfinished Business**

**Approval of Artwork:** Jeannette will email labeled copies of each photo for each member to vote on. Winning artwork selections can then be hung in the hallway. A request was made for signs to be created within the VAMC to let people to know where to go visit the artwork once it is on display. Susan sent an email to Josh Callihan to get this process started. The board would also like a notation placed on FaceBook about the artwork on display.

**Newsletter:** Stan would like to see a newsletter that can go out to all our veteran service organizations. An informative newsletter that helps educate our veterans and their family members about any new happenings as well as help navigate the VAMC and MyHealtheVet websites would help many veterans and their caregivers.

**Evaluation Form:** Stan passed out a sample of an evaluation form during the meeting. Our charter states members of the board will be provided an evaluation form to fill out and review monthly. Don and Jim will head up this committee in creating a final PAC evaluation form as required by our bylaws. They will have something for us to review at our February meeting.

**New Patient Orientation:** Randy – After the first of the year (2018) Mr. Wood and Mr. Steward need the willingness and the involvement of the PAC to promote new patient orientation. More details will keep coming.

**Problem Resolution Chain of Command:** Tabled until Randy is available.

**Childcare:** Mariah and Harold will continue to speak with staff and teams trying to determine the reason for cancellations and no shows. There are mixed signals coming from teams about data collection. A possible data mining might find the missing information. Harold will regroup on some new possible data collection plans.

## **New Business**

**STAR Program:** A STAR program is being introduced at the Boise VAMC. Every team and location will have a person in charge of this area as the main point of contact. All complaints and complements will be directed through this point of contact. The primary purpose of the STAR program is to help veterans transition from their current military position and work into a new civilian, federal, or military employment. The program provides comprehensive rehabilitation and reintegration services with a special emphasis on helping the veteran identify and locate meaningful and satisfying work that can lead to a successful career path. Don and Randy will explain how this process will work. When this new process is released, there will be an announcement throughout the BVAMC system, newsletter, social media, and the PAC.

**EOB and outside insurance company's refusal to pay VA for services:** Stan asked if there was a record of insurance companies that refuse to pay for procedures doctors ordered? Susan assured us that the VA works with these insurance companies to work through settlements. All patients should be made aware of final payments through their EOB's.

**Telephone Call Center in Walla Walla Challenges:** There have been questions and comments coming up about the Walla Walla call center every month for the past few months in the PAC.

This month there were some serious personal concerns/experiences with the call center. It appears messages are not making it or are severely delayed in getting to the veteran's doctor. Veterans and/or caregivers are having to resort to leaving messages through MyHealthVet secure messaging to rely urgent messages to their doctors. As an example, one veteran spoke with a supervisor at Walla Walla call center. He met the criteria to be placed through to his doctor, but the call center still refused to put him through. Another veteran was left a message to return a call from his doctor. The call center would not patch the call through. Another veteran was having a serious medical issue. His wife called in the message but it was never forwarded to his doctor. If this caregiver had not known to send a message through My HealthVet, her husband's doctor would not have known there were serious issues happening. This call center issues are reflecting poorly on the BVAMC's good reputation. There is good care, good hearts, and quality service that occurs at our VAMC but these hiccups with the call center are hurting their good reputation.

**Supply reordering through Sleep Clinic:** There is good understanding on how the process to order supplies work. It appears there needs some support to help the process work more efficiently. Somewhere between ordering supplies and supplies being sent to veterans there is a hiccup. It can take anywhere from 3 weeks to 2 months for supplies to arrive at veteran's home. How can the PAC help be a part of this solution?

**Good of the order:** Please work with VocRehab on BSU tuition benefits. Mariah is going to work on bringing in a guest speaker to talk about this topic with us. She will work with Stan and Michael on when this guest speaker should be added to the agenda.

**Text Messaging:** Many medical providers in the surrounding areas are sending out text messages, to those who opt in, as appointment reminders. It would be nice if the VAMC could do this and include some verbiage along the lines, "If you are unable to make this appointment please call and reschedule immediately." If sent the text message needs to include: Time, Date, Dr. Name, Team, Or Specialty Clinic along with Phone # to call, cancel or reschedule. When a patient has all info at their fingertips – it helps them remember what is happenings and how to effectively respond to it. Human nature. This could help call in center issues.

A request was made if we can start receiving No Show/Cancellation reports?

Meeting was adjourned at 8:00PM by Stan Hafferman. The next general meeting will be at 6:00PM on February 14, 2018, in Building 88 in the CLC Conference Room.

Respectfully submitted protem – Jeannette D.-Mayer

Have Fun! Michael T Kendall; [michael.emptyk51@gmail.com](mailto:michael.emptyk51@gmail.com); 208-941-3811