



**Sioux Falls VA Health Care System  
Sioux Falls, SD**

**Report for the South Dakota Veterans Commission  
October 5, 2016**

In 2015, there were 300,000 outpatient visits at the medical center and community based outpatient clinics. Most of the Veterans we currently serve are Vietnam Veterans, and we encourage all Veterans to seek enrollment. Many are not aware that assets are no longer pertinent to the Means Test – just income is counted. It's also important for Veterans who served in Vietnam between January 9, 1962 and May 7, 1975 need to know they are presumed to have been exposed to Agent Orange and other herbicides, and there are several diseases presumed to be service-connected including respiratory cancers, diabetes (Type 2), Parkinson's and ischemic heart disease and more. Vietnam Veterans are also the largest percentage of underserved Veterans, and we need everyone's help in making sure they are informed about their VA benefits.

We're happy to report the Sioux Falls Health Care System now offers enrolled Veterans the opportunity to directly schedule routine ear and eye appointments. ***This means they do not need a Primary Care referral before scheduling routine ear and eye examinations.***

To improve Veterans' access, beginning this month, they are encouraged to call audiology and optometry directly for routine appointments. This

A new Community Based Outpatient Clinic will be built in 2017 in North Sioux City, SD. The current clinic opened at Indian Hills Shopping Mall in Sioux City, IA in July 2000 and has outgrown its space. The new site will expand to nearly 26,000 sq. feet (three times the size of the current location) and will provide increased space for primary care and mental health, optometry, audiology, and radiology services plus additional specialty services. It's scheduled to open in late fall 2017.

We encourage all Veterans to get a flu shot. It's not too early! There are several options for enrolled Veterans, including receiving one during a regularly scheduled appointment, during one of the scheduled flu clinics at the medical center and CBOCs, or at a nearby Walgreens drug store.

Currently, we have projects valued at approximately \$20,000,000 in progress:

- Med/Surg inpatient unit – addition is completed and occupied. The remodel of existing space is expected to be complete this winter.
- New operating suites – This project will be complete in summer 2017.
- Primary care addition (second floor) – will be completed in the next few months.

- Rehab Medicine (PT, OT, Speech & Chiropractic care) remodel and addition is expected to be completed in summer 2017. Currently PT is based in the auditorium while renovations are done.
- Emergency Dept. remodel and oncology move – Oncology will relocate to the new addition on the north end of the medical center near the front entrance. Their existing space will be remodeled for the Emergency Dept.
- Specialty Medicine – Construction began this week with steel being hung after hours to enclose the space.
- Other projects for ventilation and air conditioning, concrete repairs and plumbing were recently completed.

Future projects:

- Site prep work for the Integrative Health building is scheduled to begin late this fall.
- Remodel space on 5<sup>th</sup> floor when Surgery moves to the new addition. Start construction in FY2018.
- Renovate Chapel – Design has started; construction is expected to begin in 2017-2018.
- Design of CLC Hospice – construct a cottage to be used for hospice care. Design is in progress.
- Design Dental/Audiology Bldg.: Construct on grounds. Design started.
- Lab addition – Construct new lab space adjacent to the Primary Care & Spec Med additions. Start design in 2017.
- Mental Health Bldg. – outpatient mental health building on grounds. Expected to start design in 2017.

Hiring – The new medical director for the mental health service line began work this week. We've also recently hired an orthopedic surgeon, a hospitalist, staff for the Emergency Dept., psychologists and psychiatrists for mental health, an oncologist, a gynecologist, and a cardiologist.

We have not seen any negative impact regarding C&P exams in SD vs. contracted. However, we are monitoring the progress to ensure there is no negative effect for Veterans.

Thank you for the opportunity to share this information. Please let us know if you have questions about this information or other items.