

Office of Healthcare Inspections

Report No. 14-00922-240

Community Based Outpatient Clinic and Primary Care Clinic Reviews at Providence VA Medical Center Providence, Rhode Island

August 13, 2014

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Glossary

AUD alcohol use disorder

CBOC community based outpatient clinic

DWHP designated women's health provider

EHR electronic health record EOC environment of care

FY fiscal year

MM medication management

NM not met

OIG Office of Inspector General PACT Patient Aligned Care Teams

PCC primary care clinic
PCP primary care provider

RN registered nurse

VHA Veterans Health Administration

VISN Veterans Integrated Service Network

WH women's health

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Executive Summary

Review Purpose: The purpose of the review was to evaluate selected patient care activities to determine whether the community based outpatient clinics (CBOCs) and primary care clinics (PCCs) provide safe, consistent, and high-quality health care for our veterans. We conducted site visits June 11, 2014, at the following CBOCs which are under the oversight of the Providence VA Medical Center and Veterans Integrated Service Network 1:

- · Hyannis CBOC, Hyannis, MA
- Middleton CBOC, Middleton, RI

Review Results: We conducted four focused reviews and had no findings for the Medication Management and Designated Women's Health Providers' Proficiency reviews. However, we made recommendations in the following two review areas:

Environment of Care. Ensure that:

 Personally identifiable information is protected by securing laboratory specimens during transport from the Hyannis and Middletown CBOCs' contract laboratory facilities to the parent facility.

Alcohol Use Disorder. Ensure that CBOC/PCC:

- Staff provide education and counseling for patients with positive alcohol screens and drinking alcohol above National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism limits.
- Registered Nurse Care Managers complete required training within 12 months of appointment to Patient Aligned Care Teams.

Comments

The VISN and Facility Directors agreed with the CBOC and PCC review findings and recommendations and provided acceptable improvement plans. (See Appendixes C and D, pages 15–18, for the full text of the Directors' comments.) We consider Recommendation 1 closed. We will follow up on the planned actions for the open recommendations until they are completed.

John D. Daigh, M. John D. Daligh, JR., M.D. Assistant Inspector General for Healthcare Inspections

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Objectives, Scope, and Methodology

Objectives

The CBOC and PCC reviews are an element of the OIG's efforts to ensure that our Nation's veterans receive high-quality VA health care services. As such, the CBOC and PCC reviews are recurring evaluations of selected primary care operations that focus on patient care quality and the EOC. In general, our objectives are to:

- Determine whether the CBOCs are compliant with EOC requirements.
- Determine whether CBOCs/PCCs are compliant with VHA requirements in the care of patients with AUD.
- Determine compliance with requirements for the clinical oversight and patient education of fluoroquinolones for outpatients.
- Evaluate if processes are in place for DWHPs to maintain proficiency in WH.

Scope

To evaluate for compliance with requirements related to patient care quality and the EOC, we conducted onsite inspections, reviewed clinical and administrative records, and discussed processes and validated findings with managers and employees. The review covered the following four activities:

- EOC
- AUD
- MM
- DWHP Proficiency

The scope of this review is limited to the established objectives. Issues and concerns that come to our attention that are outside the scope of this standardized inspection will be reviewed and referred accordingly.

Methodology

The onsite EOC inspections were only conducted at randomly selected CBOCs that had not been previously inspected.¹ Details of the targeted study populations for the AUD, MM, and DWHP Proficiency focused reviews are noted in Table 1.

¹ Includes 93 CBOCs in operation before March 31, 2013.

Table 1. CBOC/PCC Focused Reviews and Study Populations

Review Topic	Study Population
AUD	All CBOC and PCC patients screened within the study period
	of July 1, 2012, through June 30, 2013, and who had a positive
	AUDIT-C score ² and all providers and RN Care Managers
	assigned to PACT prior to October 1, 2012.
MM	All outpatients with an original prescription ordered for one of
	the three selected fluoroquinolones from July 1, 2012, through
	June 30, 2013.
DWHP Proficiencies	All WH PCPs designated as DWHPs as of October 1, 2012,
	and who remained as DWHPs until September 30, 2013.

In this report, we make recommendations for improvement. Recommendations pertain to issues that are significant enough to be monitored by the OIG until corrective actions are implemented.

The review was done in accordance with OIG standard operating procedures for CBOC and PCC reviews.

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² The AUDIT-C is a brief alcohol screen that reliably identifies patients who are hazardous drinkers or have active alcohol use disorders. Scores range from 0–12.

Results and Recommendations

EOC

The purpose of this review was to evaluate whether CBOC managers have established and maintained a safe and clean EOC as required.^a

We reviewed relevant documents and conducted physical inspections of the Hyannis and Middletown CBOCs. The table below shows the areas reviewed for this topic. The area marked as NM did not meet applicable requirements and needed improvement.

Table 2. EOC

NM	Areas Reviewed	Findings
	The CBOC's location is clearly identifiable	
	from the street as a VA CBOC.	
	The CBOC has interior signage available that	
	clearly identifies the route to and location of	
	the clinic entrance.	
	The CBOC is Americans with Disabilities Act	
	accessible.	
	The furnishings are clean and in good repair.	
	The CBOC is clean.	
	The CBOC maintains a written, current	
	inventory of hazardous materials and waste	
	that it uses, stores, or generates.	
	An alarm system and/or panic buttons are	
	installed and tested in high-risk areas (e.g.,	
	Mental Health clinic).	
	Alcohol hand wash or soap dispenser and	
	sink are available in the examination rooms.	
	Sharps containers are secured. Safety needle devices are available.	
	The CBOC has a separate storage room for	
	storing medical (infectious) waste.	
	The CBOC conducts fire drills at least every	
	12 months.	
	Means of egress from the building are	
	unobstructed.	
	Access to fire alarm pull stations is	
	unobstructed.	
	Access to fire extinguishers is unobstructed.	
	The CBOC has signs identifying the locations	
	of fire extinguishers.	
	Exit signs are visible from any direction.	
	No expired medications were noted during the	
	onsite visit.	
	All medications are secured from	
	unauthorized access.	

NM	Areas Reviewed (continued)	Findings
X	Personally Identifiable information is protected	At the contracted laboratories used by the
	on laboratory specimens during transport so	Hyannis and Middletown CBOCs, personally
	that patient privacy is maintained.	identifiable information was not protected on laboratory specimens during transport.
	Adequate privacy is provided to patients in	laboratory specimens during transport.
	examination rooms.	
	Documents containing patient-identifiable	
	information are not laying around, visible, or	
	unsecured.	
	Window coverings provide privacy.	
	The CBOC has a designated examination	
	room for women veterans.	
	Adequate privacy is provided to women veterans in the examination room.	
	The information technology network	
	room/server closet is locked.	
	All computer screens are locked when not in	
	use.	
	Staff use privacy screens on monitors to	
	prevent unauthorized viewing in high-traffic	
	areas.	
	EOC rounds are conducted semi-annually (at least twice in a 12-month period) and	
	deficiencies are reported to and tracked by the	
	EOC Committee until resolution.	
	The CBOC has an automated external	
	defibrillator.	
	Safety inspections are performed on the	
	CBOC medical equipment in accordance with	
	Joint Commission standards.	
	The parent facility includes the CBOC in	
	required education, training, planning, and participation leading up to the annual disaster	
	exercise.	
	The parent facility's Emergency Management	
	Committee evaluates CBOC emergency	
	preparedness activities, participation in annual	
	disaster exercise, and staff training/education	
	relating to emergency preparedness	
	requirements.	

Recommendation

1. We recommended that managers ensure that personally identifiable information is protected by securing laboratory specimens during transport from the Hyannis and Middletown CBOCs' contract laboratory facilities to the parent facility.

AUD

The purpose of this review was to determine whether the facility's CBOCs and PCCs complied with selected alcohol use screening and treatment requirements.^b

We reviewed relevant documents. We also reviewed 31 EHRs and validated findings with key managers and staff. The table below shows the areas reviewed for this topic. The areas marked as NM did not meet applicable requirements and needed improvement.

Table 3. AUD

NM	Areas Reviewed	Findings
	Alcohol use screenings are completed during	
	new patient encounters, and at least annually.	
	Diagnostic assessments are completed for	
	patients with a positive alcohol screen.	
X	Education and counseling about drinking	Staff did not provide education and counseling
	levels and adverse consequences of heavy	for 3 of 19 patients who had positive alcohol use
	drinking are provided for patients with positive	screens.
	alcohol screens and drinking levels above National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and	
	Alcoholism guidelines.	
	Documentation reflects the care provided and	
	the offer of further treatment for patients	
	diagnosed with alcohol dependence.	
	For patients with AUD who decline referral to	
	specialty care, CBOC/PCC staff monitor them	
	and their alcohol use condition.	
	Counseling, education, and brief treatments	
	for AUD are provided within 2 weeks of	
	positive screening.	W 6 18 40 60 DM 0 18 4
X	CBOC/PCC RN Care Managers have	We found that 2 of 8 RN Care Managers did not
	received motivational interviewing training	receive motivational interviewing training within
Х	within 12 months of appointment to PACT. CBOC/PCC RN Care Managers have	12 months of appointment to PACT. We found that 1 of 8 RN Care Managers did not
_ ^	received National Center for Health Promotion	receive health coaching training within 12
	and Disease Prevention approved health	months of appointment to PACT.
	coaching training (most likely TEACH for	mentio et appointment to i /to i
	Success) within 12 months of appointment to	
	PACT.	
	The facility complied with any additional	
	elements required by VHA or local policy.	

Recommendations

2. We recommended that CBOC/Primary Care Clinic staff provide education and counseling for patients with positive alcohol screens and drinking alcohol above National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism limits.

3. We recommended that CBOC/P complete required training within 12 mg	Primary Care Clinic onths of appointment	Registered Nurse Care t to Patient Aligned Care T	Managers eams.

MM

The purpose of this review was to determine whether appropriate clinical oversight and education were provided to outpatients prescribed oral fluoroquinolone antibiotics.^c

We reviewed relevant documents. We also reviewed 32 EHRs and validated findings with key managers and staff. The table below shows the areas reviewed for this topic. The facility generally met requirements. We made no recommendations.

Table 4. Fluoroquinolones

NM	Areas Reviewed	Findings
	Clinicians documented the medication	
	reconciliation process that included the	
	fluoroquinolone.	
	Written information on the patient's prescribed	
	medications was provided at the end of the	
	outpatient encounter.	
	Medication counseling/education for the	
	fluoroquinolone was documented in the	
	patients' EHRs.	
	Clinicians documented the evaluation of each	
	patient's level of understanding for the	
	education provided.	
	The facility complied with local policy.	

DWHP Proficiency

The purpose of this review was to determine whether the facility's CBOCs and PCCs complied with selected DWHP proficiency requirements.^d

We reviewed the facility self-assessment, VHA and local policies, Primary Care Management Module data, and supporting documentation for DWHPs' proficiencies. The table below shows the areas reviewed for this topic. The facility generally met requirements. We made no recommendations.

Table 5. DWHP Proficiency

NM	Areas Reviewed	Findings
	CBOC and PCC DWHPs maintained	
	proficiency requirements.	
	CBOC and PCC DWHPs were designated	
	with the WH indicator in the Primary Care	
	Management Module.	

CBOC Profiles

This review evaluates the quality of care provided to veterans at all of the CBOCs under the parent facility's oversight.³ The table below provides information relative to each of the CBOCs.

						Uniq	ues ⁴			Encou	nters ⁴	
Location	State	Station #	Locality ⁵	CBOC Size ⁶	MH ⁷	PC ⁸	Other ⁹	All	MH ⁷	PC ⁸	Other ⁹	All
New Bedford	MA	650GA	Urban	Mid-Size	834	2,622	2,482	3,872	4,663	7,849	6,205	18,717
Hyannis	MA	650GB	Urban	Mid-Size	763	3,540	1,529	3,757	5,119	7,191	4,347	16,657
Middletown	RI	650GD	Urban	Mid-Size	595	1,971	1,174	2,155	3,599	5,839	3,621	13,059

³ Includes all CBOCs in operation before March 31, 2013.

⁴ Unique patients and Total Encounters – Source: MedSAS outpatient files; completed outpatient appointments indicated by a valid stop code during the October 1, 2012, through September 30, 2013, timeframe at the specified CBOC.

⁵ http://vaww.pssg.med.va.gov/PSSG/DVDC/FY2013_Q1_VAST.xlsx

⁶ Based on the number of unique patients seen as defined by VHA Handbook 1160.01, *Uniform Mental Health Services in VA Medical Centers and Clinics*, September 11, 2008, the size of the CBOC facility is categorized as very large (> 10,000), large (5,000-10,000), mid-size (1,500-5,000), or small (< 1,500).

⁷ Mental Health includes stop codes in the 500 series, excluding 531 and 563, in the primary position.

⁸ Primary Care includes the stop code list in the primary position: 323 – Primary Care; 322 – Women's Clinic; 348 – Primary Care Group; 350 – Geriatric Primary Care; 531 – MH Primary Care Team-Individual; 563 – MH Primary Care Team-Group; 170 – Home Based Primary Care (HBPC) Physician.

⁹ All other non-Primary Care and non-MH stop codes in the primary position.

CBOC Services Provided

In addition to primary care integrated with WH and MH care, the CBOCs provide various specialty care, ancillary, and tele-health services. The following table lists the services provided at each CBOC. 10

СВОС	Specialty Care Services ¹¹	Ancillary Services ¹²	Tele-Health Services ¹³
New Bedford		Audiology Pharmacy	Tele Primary Care Tele Case
		Nutrition Electrocardiography MOVE! Program ¹⁴	Management
Hyannis		Nutrition MOVE! Program Electrocardiography	Tele Primary Care Tele Case Management
Middletown		Electrocardiography Nutrition MOVE! Program	Tele Case Management Tele Primary Care

¹⁰ Source: MedSAS outpatient files; the denoted Specialty Care and Ancillary Services are limited to Primary Clinic Stops with a count ≥ 100 encounters during the October 1, 2012, through September 30, 2013, timeframe at the steps with a counters during the Setelet 1, 2012, through September 30, 2013, through specified CBOC.

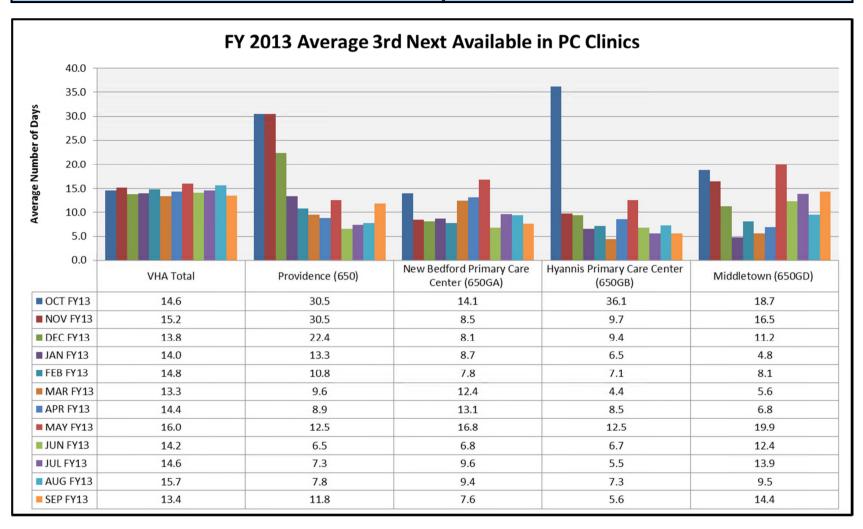
11 Specialty Care Services refer to non-Primary Care and non-MH services provided by a physician.

12 Ancillary Services refer to non-Primary Care and non-MH services that are not provided by a physician.

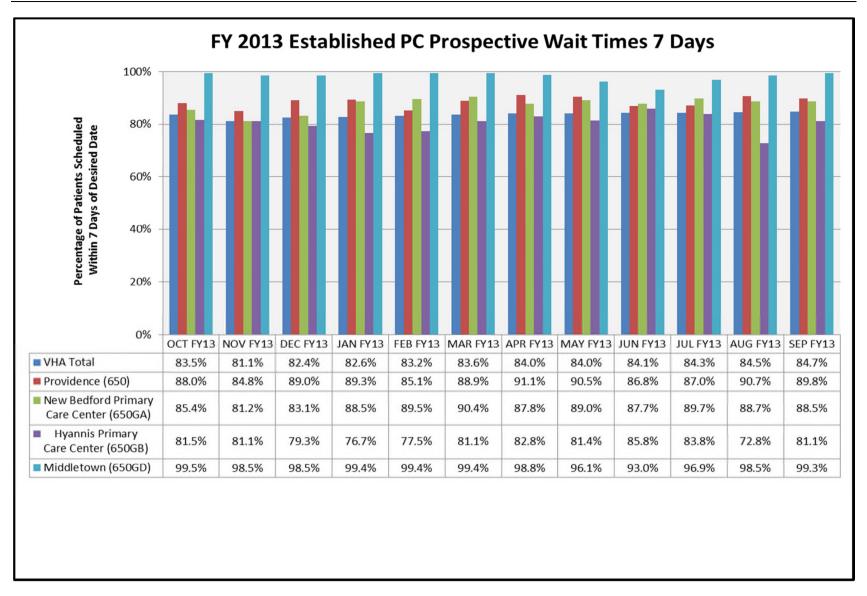
¹³ Tele-Health Services refer to services provided under the VA Telehealth program (http://www.telehealth.va.gov/)

¹⁴VHA Handbook 1120.01, MOVE! Weight Management Program for Veterans, March 31, 2011.

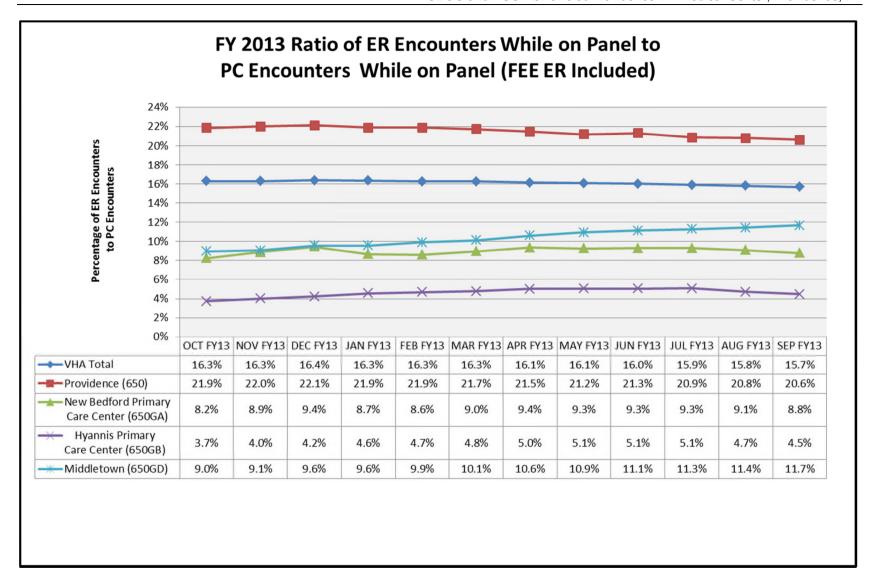
PACT Compass Metrics



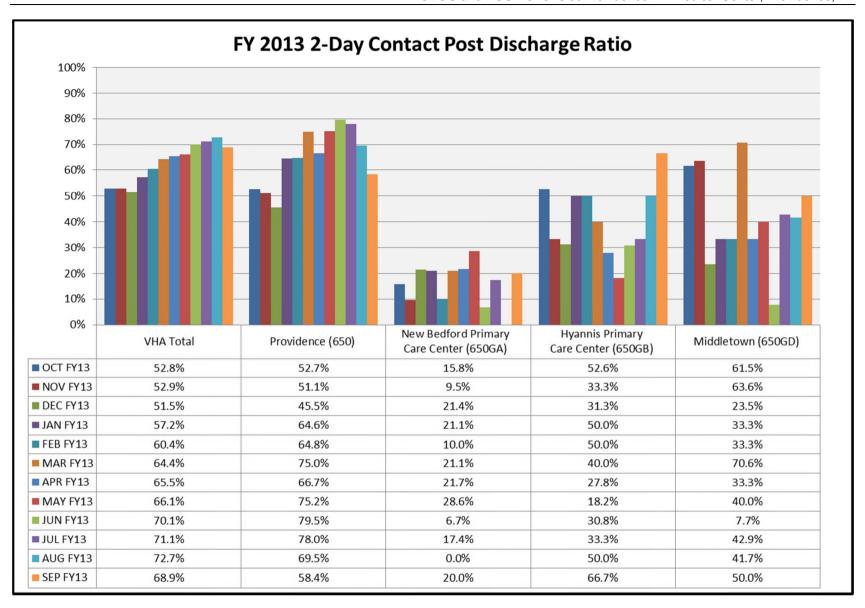
Data Definition. The average waiting time in days until the next third open appointment slot for completed primary care appointments in stop code 350. Completed appointments in stop code 350 for this metric include completed appointments where a 350 stop code is in the primary position on the appointment or one of the telephone stop codes is in the primary position, and 350 stop code is in the secondary position. The data is averaged from the national to the division level.



Data Definition. The percent of patients scheduled within 7 days of the desired date. Data source is the Wait Times Prospective Wait Times measures. The total number of scheduled appointments for primary care-assigned patients in primary care clinics 322, 323 and 350. Data is collected twice a month on the 1st and the 15th. Data reported is for the data pulled on the 15th of the month. There is no FY to date score for this measure.



Data Definition. This is a measure of where the patient receives his or her primary care and by whom. A low percentage is better. The formula is the total VHA ER/Urgent Care/FEE ER Encounters WOP (including FEE ER visits) *divided by* the number of primary care encounters WOP with the patient's assigned primary care (or associate) provider plus the total VHA ER/Urgent Care/FEE ER Encounters (including FEE ER visits) WOP plus the number of primary care encounters WOP with a provider other than the patient's PCP/AP.



Data Definition. Total Discharges Included in 2-day Contact Post Discharge Ratio: The total VHA and FEE Inpatient Discharges for assigned primary care patients for the reporting timeframe. Discharges resulting in death and discharges where a patient is readmitted within 2 days of discharge are excluded from this metric.

VISN Director Comments

Department of Veterans Affairs

Memorandum

Date: July 22, 2014

From: Director, VA New England Healthcare System (10N1)

Subject: CBOC and PCC Reviews of the Providence VA Medical

Center Providence, RI

To: Director, Bedford Office of Healthcare Inspections (54BN)

Director, Management Review Service (VHA 10AR MRS

OIG CAP CBOC)

I have reviewed and concur with the action plans regarding the Draft Report: Community Based Outpatient Clinic and Primary Care Clinic Reviews at Providence VA Medical

Center, Providence, RI.

/es/

Michael F. Mayo-Smith, M.D., MPH

Network Director

Facility Director Comments

Department of Veterans Affairs

Memorandum

Date: July 24, 2014

From: Director, Providence VA Medical Center (650/00)

Subject: CBOC and PCC Reviews of the Providence VA Medical

Center Providence, RI

To: Director, VA New England Healthcare System (10N1)

I have reviewed and concur with the action plans regarding the Draft Report: Community Based Outpatient Clinic and Primary Care Clinic Reviews at Providence VA Medical

Center, Providence, RI.

/es/

Susan A. MacKenzie, PhD Medical Center Director

Comments to OIG's Report

The following Director's comments are submitted in response to the recommendations in the OIG report:

OIG Recommendations

Recommendation 1. We recommended that managers ensure that personally identifiable information is protected by securing laboratory specimens during transport from the Hyannis and Middletown CBOCs' contract laboratory facilities to the parent facility.

Concur

Target date for completion: Implementation on July 3, 2014. Monitoring improvement thru September 30, 2014 to ensure sustaining improvement at 90%.

Facility response: A new process was developed, a standard operating procedure was written, proper equipment was purchased (large capacity insulated, lockable specimen transport tote), training for lab staff, courier and outside contracted labs completed by June 30, 2014 and the process fully implemented on July 3,2014. The transport logs will be tracked and analyzed on a monthly basis and results reported to Quality Management for three months with a target of 90% compliance to ensure improvement is sustained.

Recommendation 2. We recommended that CBOC/Primary Care Clinic staff provide education and counseling for patients with positive alcohol screens and drinking alcohol above National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism limits.

Concur

Target date for completion: September 30, 2014

Facility response: All clinicians were reeducated on the Audit C requirement and Follow up to positive Audit C screening requirement. We will monitor, track and analyze compliance on a monthly basis for three months to ensure 90% compliance and report to Quality Management on a monthly basis.

Recommendation 3. We recommended that CBOC/Primary Care Clinic Registered Nurse Care Managers complete required training within 12 months of appointment to Patient Aligned Care Teams.

Concur

Target date for completion: September 30, 2014

Facility response: The Nurse Managers will send written notification to the person in charge of the training of new RN Care Manager. That person will schedule the training and when completed she will notify the Nurse Managers who are ultimately responsible for tracking this information and ensuring compliance to the directive. This will be reported to Quality Management on a monthly basis.

OIG Contact and Staff Acknowledgments

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U.S. Senate: Edward J. Markey, Jack Reed, Elizabeth Warren, Sheldon Whitehouse U.S. House of Representatives: David N. Cicilline, William Keating, James Langevin

This report is available at www.va.gov/oig.

Endnotes

- ^a References used for the EOC review included:
- US Access Board, Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG), September 2, 2002.
- US Department of Health and Human Services, Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act, *The Privacy Rule*, August 14, 2002.
- US Department of Labor, Occupational Safety and Health Administration, Laws and Regulations.
- US Department of Labor, Occupational Safety and Health Administration, Guidelines for Preventing Workplace Violence, 2004.
- Joint Commission, Joint Commission Comprehensive Accreditation and Certification Manual, July 1, 2013.
- VA Directive 0324, Test, Training, Exercise, and Evaluation Program, April 5, 2012.
- VA Directive 0059, VA Chemicals Management and Pollution Prevention, May 25, 2012.
- VA Handbook 6500, Risk Management Framework for VA Information System, September 20, 2012.
- VHA Center for Engineering, Occupational Safety, and Health, Emergency Management Program Guidebook, March 2011.
- VHA Center for Engineering, Occupational Safety, and Health, *Online National Fire Protection Association Codes, Standards, Handbooks, and Annotated Editions of Select Codes and Standards*, July 9, 2013.
- VHA Deputy Under Secretary for Health for Operations and Management, Memorandum: *Environmental Rounds*, March 5, 2007.
- VHA Directive 2011-007, Required Hand Hygiene Practices, February 16, 2011.
- VHA Directive 2012-026, Sexual Assaults & Other Defined Public Safety Incidents in VHA Facilities, September 27, 2012.
- VHA Handbook 1006.1, Planning and Activating Community-Based Outpatient Clinics, May 19, 2004.
- VHA Handbook 1330.01, Health Care Services for Women Veterans, May 21, 2010.
- VHA Handbook 1850.05, Interior Design Operations and Signage, July 1, 2011.
- ^b References used for the AUD review included:
- National Center for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention (NCP), Veteran Health Education and Information (NVEI) Program, *Patient Education: TEACH for Success.* Retrieved from http://www.prevention.va.gov/Publications/Newsletters/2013/HealthPOWER_Prevention_News_Winter_2012_2
 O13 FY12 TEACH MI Facilitator Training.asp on January 17, 2014.
- VHA Handbook 1120.02, *Health Promotion Disease Prevention (HPDP) Program*, July 5, 2012.
- VHA Handbook 1160.01, *Uniform Mental Health Services in VA Medical Centers and Clinics*, September 11, 2008.
- ^c References used for the Medication Management review included:
- VHA Directive 2011-012, Medication Reconciliation, March 9, 2011.
- VHA Directive 2012-011, Primary Care Standards, April 11, 2012.
- VHA Handbook 1108.05, Outpatient Pharmacy Services, May 30, 2006.
- VHA Handbook 1108.07, Pharmacy General Requirements, April 17, 2008.
- Joint Commission, Joint Commission Comprehensive Accreditation and Certification Manual, July 1, 2013.
- ^d References used for the DWHP review included:
- VHA Deputy Under Secretary for Health for Operations and Management, Memorandum: *Health Care Services for Women Veterans*, Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Handbook 1330.01; Women's Health (WH) Primary Care Provider (PCP) Proficiency, July 8, 2013.
- VHA Handbook 1330.01 Health Care Services for Women Veterans, May 21, 2010.
- VHA Handbook 1100.19, Credentialing and Privileging, November 14, 2008.
- ^e Reference used for PACT Compass data graphs:
- Department of Veterans' Affairs, Patient Aligned Care Teams Compass Data Definitions, August 29, 2013.