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Clinical Assessment Program Review of the Lebanon VA Medical Center Lebanon, Pennsylvania

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Glossary

CAP	Clinical Assessment Program
CNH	community nursing home
EHR	electronic health record
EOC	environment of care
facility	Lebanon VA Medical Center
FY	fiscal year
MH	mental health
NA	not applicable
NM	not met
OIG	Office of Inspector General
PC	primary care
POCT	point-of-care testing
PTSD	post-traumatic stress disorder
QSV	quality, safety, and value
RME	reusable medical equipment
RRTP	residential rehabilitation treatment program
SPS	Sterile Processing Service
VHA	Veterans Health Administration

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Executive Summary

Purpose and Objectives: The review provided a focused evaluation of the quality of care provided in the inpatient and outpatient settings of the Lebanon VA Medical Center. We reviewed clinical and administrative processes that affect patient care outcomes—Quality, Safety, and Value; Environment of Care; Medication Management; Coordination of Care; Diagnostic Care; Community Nursing Home Oversight; Management of Disruptive/Violent Behavior; Mental Health Residential Rehabilitation Treatment Program; and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder Care. We also followed up on recommendations from the previous Combined Assessment Program and Community Based Outpatient Clinic and Primary Care Clinic reviews and provided crime awareness briefings.

Results: We conducted the review during the week of December 12, 2016, and identified certain system weaknesses in credentialing and privileging, utilization management, peer review, patient safety, information technology network security, anticoagulation processes, Community Nursing Home Oversight Committee representation and clinical visits, training related to the management of disruptive and violent behavior, environmental safety in the Mental Health Residential Rehabilitation Treatment Program, and the provision of care for patients with positive screens for post-traumatic stress disorder.

Review Impact: As a result of the findings, we could not gain reasonable assurance that:

1. The quality, safety, and value program has effective processes.
2. The facility, through the Office of Information Technology, monitors access to the information technology network.
3. The facility minimizes the risk of anticoagulation dosing errors.
4. Clinicians consistently obtain all required laboratory tests prior to initiating anticoagulant medications.
5. The facility provides effective multidisciplinary oversight of the community nursing home program.
6. The facility trains employees to manage disruptive/violent behavior.
7. The facility maintains a safe environment for the Mental Health Residential Rehabilitation Treatment Program's public spaces.
8. Clinicians consistently provide suicide risk assessments and offer further diagnostic evaluations to patients with positive screening results for post-traumatic stress disorder.

Recommendations: We made recommendations in the following seven review areas.

Quality, Safety, and Value – Ensure that:
- Clinical managers review Ongoing Professional Practice Evaluation data twice a year.
- Peer reviewers document their use of at least one of the important aspects of care.
- Physician Utilization Management Advisors document their decisions in the National Utilization Management Integration database.
- The Patient Safety Manager enters all reported patient incidents into the WEBSPOT database.

Environment of Care – Ensure that:
- Information technology network rooms have logs for visitors to document their access.

Medication Management: Anticoagulation Therapy – Ensure that:
- The facility defines ways to minimize the risk of incorrect tablet strength dosing errors.
- Clinicians obtain all required laboratory tests prior to initiating anticoagulant medications.

Community Nursing Home Oversight – Ensure that:
- The Community Nursing Home Oversight Committee includes representation by all required clinical disciplines.
- Social workers and registered nurses conduct and document cyclical clinical visits with the frequency required by Veterans Health Administration policy.

Management of Disruptive/Violent Behavior – Ensure that:
- All employees receive additional training as required for their assigned risk area within 90 days of hire and that the training is documented in employee training records.

Mental Health Residential Rehabilitation Treatment Program – Ensure that:
- Program employees perform and document contraband inspections and rounds of public spaces.

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder Care – Ensure that:
- Providers perform and document suicide risk assessments for all patients with positive post-traumatic stress disorder screens.
- Providers offer further diagnostic evaluations to patients with positive post-traumatic stress disorder screens.

Comments

The Veterans Integrated Service Network Director and Acting Facility Director agreed with the Clinical Assessment Program review findings and recommendations and provided acceptable improvement plans. (See Appendixes E and F, pages 41–46, for the full text of the Directors' comments.) We will follow up on the planned actions until they are completed.

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Purpose and Objectives

Purpose

This CAP review provided a focused evaluation of the quality of care provided in the inpatient and outpatient settings of the facility.

Objectives

CAP reviews are one element of OIG's efforts to ensure that our Nation's veterans receive high quality VA health care services. The reviews include cyclical evaluations of key clinical and administrative processes that affect patient care outcomes. Areas of focus include QSV, EOC, Medication Management, Coordination of Care, and Diagnostic Care.

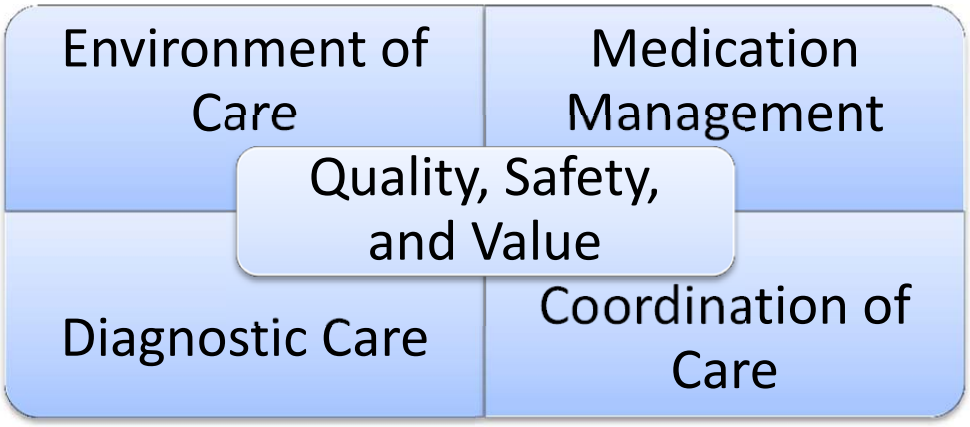
During this cycle, CNH Oversight, Management of Disruptive/Violent Behavior, MH RRTP, and PTSD Care are processes that are high risk and problem-prone. We also followed up on recommendations from the previous Combined Assessment Program and Community Based Outpatient Clinic and PC Clinic reviews.

Additionally, OIG provides crime awareness briefings to increase employee understanding of the potential for program fraud and the requirement to refer suspected criminal activity to OIG.

Background

We evaluate key aspects of clinical care delivery in a variety of primary/specialty care and inpatient/outpatient settings. These aspects include QSV, EOC, Medication Management, Coordination of Care, and Diagnostic Care (see Figure 1 below).

Figure 1. Comprehensive Coverage of Continuum of Care



Source: VA OIG

Quality, Safety, and Value

According to the National Academy of Medicine (formerly the Institute of Medicine), there are six important components of a health care system that provides high quality care to individuals. The system:

1. Is safe (free from accidental injury) for all patients, in all processes, all the time.
2. Provides care that is effective (care that, wherever possible, is based on the use of systematically obtained evidence to make determinations regarding whether a preventive service, diagnostic test, therapy, or no intervention would produce the best outcome).
3. Is patient-centered. This concept includes respect for patients' values and preferences; coordination and integration of care; information, communication, and education; physical comfort; and involvement of family and friends.
4. Delivers care in a timely manner (without long waits that are wasteful and often anxiety-provoking).
5. Is efficient (uses resources to obtain the best value for the money spent).
6. Is equitable (bases care on an individual's needs and not on personal characteristics—such as gender, race, or insurance status—that are unrelated to the patient's condition or to the reason for seeking care).[1]

VA states that one of its strategies is to deliver high quality, veteran-centered care that compares favorably to the best of the private sector in measured outcomes, value, efficiency, and patient experience.[2]

Environment of Care

All facilities face risks in the environment, including those associated with safety and security, fire, hazardous materials and waste, medical equipment, and utility systems. The EOC is made up of three basic elements: (1) the building or space; (2) equipment used to support patient care; and (3) people, patients, and anyone else who enters the environment.[3]

The physical environment shapes every patient experience and all health care delivery, including those episodes of care that result in patient harm. Three patient safety areas are markedly influenced by the environment—health care-associated infections, medication safety, and falls. Because health care-associated infections are transmitted through air, water, and contact with contaminated surfaces, the physical environment plays a key role in preventing the spread of infections in health care settings. Medication safety is markedly influenced by physical environmental conditions, including light levels and workspace organization. Environmental features, such as the

[1] Teleki SS, Damberg, CL, Reville RT. *Quality of Health Care: What Is It, Why Is It Important, and How Can It Be Improved in California's Workers Compensation Programs?* Santa Monica: RAND Corporation; May 2003 Quality and Workers' Compensation Working Draft.
[2] Department of Veterans Affairs, Veterans Health Administration. *Blueprint for Excellence*. September 2014.
[3] The Joint Commission. *Comprehensive Accreditation Manual for Hospitals: E-dition*®: Joint Commission Resources; July 2016: Environment of Care (EC).

placement of doorways, flooring type, and the location of furniture, can contribute to patient falls and associated injuries.[4]

Medication Management

Comprehensive medication management is defined as the standard of care that ensures clinicians individually assess each patient's medications to determine that each is appropriate for the patient, effective for the medical condition, safe given the comorbidities and other medications prescribed, and able to be taken by the patient as intended. Medications are involved in 80 percent of all treatments and impact every aspect of a patient's life. Drug therapy problems occur every day. The National Academy of Medicine (formerly the Institute of Medicine) noted that while medications account for only 10 percent of total health care costs, their ability to control disease and impact overall costs, morbidity, and productivity—when appropriately used—is enormous. The components of the medication management process include procuring, storing, securing, prescribing or ordering, transcribing, preparing, dispensing, and administering.[5,6]

Coordination of Care

Coordination of care is the process of coordinating care, treatment, or services provided by a facility, including referring individuals to appropriate community resources to meet ongoing identified needs, implementing the plan of care, and avoiding unnecessary duplication of services. Coordination of care is recognized as a major challenge in the safe delivery of care. The rise of chronic illness means that a patient's care, treatment, and services likely will involve an array of providers in a variety of health care settings, including the patient's home.[7]

In a 2001 report entitled "Crossing the Quality Chasm: A New Health System for the 21st Century," the Institute of Medicine noted that, "Because of the special vulnerability that accompanies illness or injury, coordination of care takes on special importance. Many patients depend on those who provide care to coordinate services whether tests, consultations, or procedures to ensure that accurate and timely information reaches those who need it at the appropriate time." Health care providers and organizations need to work together to coordinate their efforts to provide safe, quality care.[8]

[4] Joseph A, Malone EB. *The Physical Environment: An Often Unconsidered Patient Safety Tool*. Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality. Patient Safety Network; October 2012.
[5] Patient-Centered Primary Care Collaborative. *The Patient-Centered Medical Home: Integrating Comprehensive Medication Management to Optimize Patient Outcomes, Resource Guide*. 2nd ed; June 2012.
[6] The Joint Commission. *Comprehensive Accreditation Manual for Hospitals: E-dition*®: Joint Commission Resources; July 2016: Medication Management (MM).
[7] The Joint Commission. *Comprehensive Accreditation Manual for Hospitals: E-dition*®: Joint Commission Resources; July 2016: Provision of Care, Treatment, and Services (PC).
[8] Institute of Medicine. *Crossing the Quality Chasm: A New Health System for the 21st Century*. The National Academies Press; March 2001.

Diagnostic Care

The diagnostic process is a complex, patient-centered, collaborative activity that involves information gathering and clinical reasoning with the goal of determining a patient's health problem. Diagnostic testing may occur in successive rounds of information gathering, integration, and interpretation, with each round refining the working diagnosis. In many cases, diagnostic testing can identify a condition before it is clinically apparent; for example, an imaging study indicating the presence of coronary artery blockage can identify coronary artery disease even in the absence of symptoms. PC clinicians order laboratory tests in slightly less than one third of patient visits, and direct-to-patient testing is becoming increasingly prevalent.[9]

Medical imaging also plays a critical role in establishing the diagnoses for many conditions. The advancement of imaging technologies has improved the ability of clinicians to detect, diagnose, and treat conditions while also allowing patients to avoid more invasive procedures. Performed appropriately, diagnostic care facilitates the provision of timely, cost-effective, and high quality medical care.[10]

High-Risk and Problem-Prone Health Care Processes

Health care leaders must give priority to high-volume, high-risk, or problem-prone processes for performance improvement activities.[11] Specifically, they are responsible for identifying high-risk areas that could cause harm to patients, visitors, and employees; implementing programs to avert risks; and managing a robust reporting process for adverse events that do occur. But of all of their responsibilities, one of the most important is focusing on improving patient safety.[12]

As of October 2016, VHA has contracts with more than 1,800 CNHs where more than 9,500 veteran patients reside.[13] These CNHs may be within close proximity to a VA facility or located hundreds of miles away. VHA requires local oversight of CNHs, which includes monitoring and follow-up services for patients who choose to reside in nursing homes in the community. This involves annual reviews and monthly patient visits unless otherwise specified.[14]

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, health care workers are nearly five times more likely to be victims of nonfatal assaults or violent acts in their work places than average workers in all industries combined, and many of these assaults and violent

[9] Committee on Diagnostic Error in Health Care. Balogh EP, Miller BT, Ball JR, eds. *Improving Diagnosis in Health Care*. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press; 2015: Chap. 2.
[10] Department of Veterans Affairs. Patient Care Services. Diagnostic Services. http://www.patientcare.va.gov/diagnosticservices.asp. Accessed September 21, 2016.
[11] The Joint Commission. *Comprehensive Accreditation Manual for Hospitals: E-dition*®: Joint Commission Resources; July 2016: Leadership (LD) Accreditation Requirements, LD.04.04.01, EP2.
[12] Bickmore, AM. Streamlining the Risk Management Process in Healthcare to Improve Workflow and Increase Patient Safety, *HealthCatalyst*, https://www.healthcatalyst.com/streamlining-risk-management-process-healthcare.
[13] VA Corporate Data Warehouse. Accessed October 31, 2016.
[14] VHA Handbook 1143.2, *VHA Community Nursing Home Oversight Procedures*, June 4, 2004.

acts are perpetrated by patients.[15] Management of disruptive/violent behavior is the process of reducing and preventing disruptive behaviors and other defined acts that threaten public safety through the development of policy, programs, and initiatives aimed at patient, visitor, and employee safety.[16] VHA has a directive that addresses the management of all individuals in VHA facilities whose behavior could jeopardize the health or safety of others, undermine a culture of safety in VHA, or otherwise interfere with the delivery of health care at a facility; however, staff training deadlines have been postponed several times.

MH RRTPs provide 24-hour residential rehabilitative and clinical care in a therapeutic setting to eligible veterans who have multiple and severe medical conditions, mental illness, addiction, or psychosocial deficits. They provide the least intensive level of VA inpatient care and differ from acute inpatient and nursing home beds as veterans in MH RRTPs are generally capable of self-care. MH RRTPs address rehabilitation, recovery, health maintenance, improved quality of life, and community integration in addition to specifically treating medical conditions, mental illnesses, and addictive disorders. Facility leaders must provide a safe, well-maintained, and appropriately-furnished residential environment that supports and enhances recovery efforts.[17]

PTSD is a disorder that may occur "…following exposure to an extreme traumatic stressor involving direct personal experience."[18] For FYs 2010 through 2015, more than 1 million patients with a primary or secondary diagnosis of PTSD received MH care at VA medical centers and clinics. During FY 2016, VA MH clinicians diagnosed and treated more than 100,000 additional patients who had not been previously diagnosed with PTSD.[19] Because of the risks involved if this condition is not diagnosed and treated, clinical employees need to screen patients for PTSD, in accordance with requirements, when they present for care.

[15] U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Janocha JA, Smith RT. *Workplace Safety and Health in the Health Care and Social Assistance Industry, 2003–07*. http://www.bls.gov/opub/mlr/cwc/workplace-safety-and-health-in-the-health-care-and-social-assistance-industry-2003-07.pdf. August 30, 2010. Accessed October 28, 2016.
[16] VHA Directive 2012-026, *Sexual Assaults and Other Defined Public Safety Incidents in Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Facilities*, September 27, 2012.
[17] VHA Handbook 1162.02, *Mental Health Residential Rehabilitation Treatment Program (MH RRTP)*, December 22, 2010.
[18] VHA Handbook 1160.03, *Programs for Veterans with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)*, March 12, 2010.
[19] VA Corporate Data Warehouse. Accessed November 1, 2016.

Scope

To evaluate for compliance with requirements related to patient care quality, clinical functions, and the EOC, we physically inspected selected areas, discussed processes and validated findings with managers and employees, and reviewed clinical and administrative records. The review covered the following five aspects of clinical care.

- Quality, Safety, and Value
- Environment of Care
- Medication Management: Anticoagulation Therapy
- Coordination of Care: Inter-Facility Transfers
- Diagnostic Care: Point-of-Care Testing

We also evaluated four additional review areas because of inherent risks and potential vulnerabilities.

- Community Nursing Home Oversight
- Management of Disruptive/Violent Behavior
- Mental Health Residential Rehabilitation Treatment Program
- Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder Care

We list the review criteria for each of the review areas in the topic checklists. Some of the items listed may not have been applicable because of a difference in size, function, or frequency of occurrence.

The review covered operations for FYs 2014–2016 and FY 2017 through December 12, 2016, and inspectors conducted the reviews in accordance with OIG standard operating procedures for CAP reviews. We also asked the facility to provide the status on the recommendations we made in our previous Combined Assessment Program report (*Combined Assessment Program Review of the Lebanon VA Medical Center, Lebanon, Pennsylvania,* Report No. 14-00683-130, April 24, 2014) and community based outpatient clinic report (*Community Based Outpatient Clinic and Primary Care Clinic Reviews at Lebanon VA Medical Center, Lebanon, Pennsylvania,* Report No. 14-00234-125, April 14, 2014).

We presented crime awareness briefings for 149 employees. These briefings covered procedures for reporting suspected criminal activity to OIG and included case-specific examples illustrating procurement fraud, conflicts of interest, and bribery.

Additionally, we surveyed employees regarding patient safety and quality of care at the facility. We distributed an electronic survey to all facility employees and received 327 responses. We shared summarized results with facility managers.

In this report, we make recommendations for improvement. Recommendations pertain to issues that are significant enough for OIG to monitor until the facility implements corrective actions. Issues and concerns outside the scope of the CAP review came to our attention and were referred for further review separate from this report.

Reported Accomplishments

Diffusion of Excellence Initiative

In March 2016, VHA launched the Diffusion of Excellence Initiative to disseminate innovative and promising health care practices. The facility was recognized as a leader among VHA facilities for best practices in four national level initiatives—Virtual Suicide Prevention Clinic, The Joint Commission Psychiatric Measure Set, Telehealth Bidirectional Feedback, and Stat Consult Management.

Group Practice Model

In early 2016, the facility initiated a group practice model that resulted in MH access improvement. Implementing "Leaders Developing Leaders" and employee engagement principles, the Group Practice Manager improved MH 30-day appointment access from 86 percent to 97.2 percent. Facility leaders established same day access by direct scheduling in audiology and optometry clinics and open access in other clinics. This effort also accomplished same day access in PC and MH clinics.

Results and Recommendations

Quality, Safety, and Value

The purpose of this review was to determine whether the facility complied with selected QSV program requirements.[a] VHA requires that its facilities operate a QSV program to monitor patient care quality and performance improvement activities. Many QSV activities are required by VHA directives, accreditation standards, and Federal regulations. Public Law 100-322 mandates VA's OIG to oversee VHA quality improvement programs at every level. This review focuses on the following program areas.

- Senior-level committee or group with responsibility for QSV/performance improvement
- Protected peer review
- Credentialing and privileging
- Utilization management
- Patient safety

We interviewed senior managers and key QSV employees, and we evaluated meeting minutes, 25 licensed independent practitioners' profiles, 10 protected peer reviews, 5 root cause analyses, and other relevant documents. The table below shows the areas reviewed for this topic. The areas marked as NM did not meet applicable requirements and needed improvement.

Checklist 1. QSV Areas Reviewed, Findings, and Recommendations

NM	Areas Reviewed	Findings	Recommendations
	There was a senior-level committee responsible for key QSV functions that met at least quarterly and was chaired or co-chaired by the Facility Director. • The committee routinely reviewed aggregated data.		

NM	Areas Reviewed (continued)	Findings	Recommendations
X	Credentialing and privileging processes met selected requirements: • Facility policy/by-laws specified a frequency for clinical managers to review practitioners' Ongoing Professional Practice Evaluation data. • Facility clinical managers reviewed Ongoing Professional Practice Evaluation data at the frequency specified in the policy/by-laws. • The facility set triggers for when a Focused Professional Practice Evaluation for cause would be indicated.	• Eleven profiles did not contain evidence that clinical managers reviewed Ongoing Professional Practice Evaluation data twice a year.	**1.** We recommended that facility clinical managers consistently review Ongoing Professional Practice Evaluation data twice a year and that facility managers monitor compliance.
X	Protected peer reviews met selected requirements: • Peer reviewers documented their use of important aspects of care in their review, such as appropriate and timely ordering of diagnostic tests, timely treatment, and appropriate documentation. • When the Peer Review Committee recommended individual improvement actions, clinical managers implemented the actions.	• In four cases, peer reviewers did not document their use of at least one of the important aspects of care.	**2.** We recommended that facility clinical managers ensure peer reviewers consistently document their use of at least one of the important aspects of care and that facility managers monitor compliance.
X	Utilization management met selected requirements: • The facility completed at least 75 percent of all required inpatient reviews. • Physician Utilization Management Advisors documented their decisions in the National Utilization Management Integration database. • An interdisciplinary group reviewed utilization management data.	• For 4 of the 302 cases referred to Physician Utilization Management Advisors October 1–November 30, 2016, there was no evidence that advisors documented their decisions in the National Utilization Management Integration database.	**3.** We recommended that Physician Utilization Management Advisors consistently document their decisions in the National Utilization Management Integration database and that facility managers monitor compliance.

NM	Areas Reviewed (continued)	Findings	Recommendations
X	Patient safety met selected requirements: • The Patient Safety Manager entered all reported patient incidents into the WEBSPOT database. • The facility completed the required minimum of eight root cause analyses. • The facility provided feedback about the root cause analysis findings to the individual or department who reported the incident. • At the completion of FY 2016, the Patient Safety Manager submitted an annual patient safety report to facility leaders.	• The Patient Safety Manager inadvertently omitted four patient incidents reported in FY 2016 from the WEBSPOT database; this did not allow for accurate aggregated review, which determines common causes and facilitates coordinated actions to prevent recurrences.	**4.** We recommended that the Patient Safety Manager enter all reported patient incidents into the WEBSPOT database and that facility managers monitor compliance.
	Overall, if QSV reviews identified significant issues, the facility took actions and evaluated them for effectiveness.		
	Overall, senior managers actively participated in QSV activities.		

Environment of Care

The purpose of this review was to determine whether the facility maintained a clean and safe health care environment in accordance with applicable requirements. We also determined whether the facility met selected requirements in SPS.[b]

VHA must manage risks in the environment in order to promote a safe, functional, and supportive environment. Further, VHA must establish systematic infection prevention and control program to reduce the possibility of acquiring and transmitting infections. We selected the hemodialysis unit and SPS as special emphasis areas due to the increased potential for exposure to infectious agents inherent to hemodialysis and procedures using RME. Hemodialysis patients are at higher risk for infections for various reasons, including that hemodialysis requires vascular access for prolonged periods of time and that opportunities exist for transmission of infectious agents when multiple patients receive dialysis concurrently. RME is intended for repeated use on different patients after being reprocessed through cleaning, disinfection, and/or sterilization. Patients undergoing procedures using RME are at higher risk of exposure to infectious agents if RME is not properly reprocessed.

We inspected the Eagle Heights community living center, the Emergency Department, the geriatrics clinic, the intensive care unit, the Lancaster VA Clinic, the medical-surgery inpatient unit, medicine-surgery specialty clinics, two PC clinics, radiology, women's health, and SPS. Additionally, we reviewed relevant documents and nine employee training records, and we interviewed key employees and managers. The table below shows the areas reviewed for this topic. The area marked as NM did not meet applicable requirements and needed improvement. Any items that did not apply to this facility are marked NA.

Checklist 2. EOC Areas Reviewed, Findings, and Recommendations

NM	Areas Reviewed for General EOC	Findings	Recommendations
	EOC Committee minutes reflected sufficient detail regarding identified deficiencies, corrective actions taken, and tracking of corrective actions to closure for the facility and the community based outpatient clinics.		
	The facility conducted an infection prevention risk assessment.		

NM	Areas Reviewed for General EOC (continued)	Findings	Recommendations
	Infection Prevention/Control Committee minutes documented discussion of identified high-risk areas, actions implemented to address those areas, and follow-up on implemented actions and included analysis of surveillance activities and data.		
	The facility had established a procedure for cleaning equipment between patients.		
	The facility conducted required fire drills in buildings designated for health care occupancy and documented drill critiques.		
	The facility had a policy/procedure/guideline for identification of individuals entering the facility, and units/areas complied with requirements.		
X	The facility met general safety requirements.	• In two of nine applicable patient care areas, information technology network rooms did not contain logs to document access.	**5.** We recommended that facility managers ensure information technology network rooms have logs for visitors to document their access and monitor compliance.
	The facility met environmental cleanliness requirements.		
	Areas Reviewed for SPS		
	The facility had a policy for cleaning, disinfecting, and sterilizing RME.		
	The facility's standard operating procedures for selected RME were current and consistent with the manufacturers' instructions for use.		
	The facility performed quality control testing on selected RME with the frequency required by local policy and took appropriate action on positive results.		

NM	Areas Reviewed for SPS (continued)	Findings	Recommendations
	Selected SPS employees had evidence of the following for selected RME: • Training and competencies at orientation if employed less than or equal to 1 year • Competencies within the past 12 months or with the frequency required by local policy if employed more than 1 year.		
	The facility met infection prevention requirements in SPS areas.		
	Standard operating procedures for selected RME were located in the area where reprocessing occurred.		
	SPS employees checked eyewash stations in SPS areas weekly.		
	SPS employees had access to Safety Data Sheets in areas where they used hazardous chemicals.		
	The facility complied with any additional elements required by VHA, local policy, or other regulatory standards.		
	Areas Reviewed for the Hemodialysis Unit		
NA	The facility had a policy or procedure for preventive maintenance of hemodialysis machines and performed maintenance at the frequency required by local policy.		
NA	Selected hemodialysis unit employees had evidence of bloodborne pathogens training within the past 12 months.		
NA	The facility met environmental safety requirements on the hemodialysis unit.		
NA	The facility met infection prevention requirements on the hemodialysis unit.		

NM	Areas Reviewed for the Hemodialysis Unit (continued)	Findings	Recommendations
NA	The facility met medication safety and security requirements on the hemodialysis unit.		
NA	The facility met privacy requirements on the hemodialysis unit.		

Medication Management: Anticoagulation Therapy

The purpose of this review was to determine whether facility clinicians appropriately managed and provided education to patients with new orders for anticoagulant medication.[c] During calendar year 2014, an estimated 445,000 veterans were on anticoagulant therapy. Anticoagulants (commonly called blood thinners) are a class of drugs that work to prevent the coagulation or clotting of blood. For this review, we evaluated warfarin (Coumadin®) and direct-acting oral anticoagulants. Clinicians use anticoagulants for both the treatment and prevention of cardiac disease, cerebrovascular accident (stroke), and thromboembolism[20] in both the inpatient and outpatient setting. Although these medications offer substantial benefits, their use or misuse carries a significant potential for patient harm. A dose less than the required amount for therapeutic effect can increase the risk of thromboembolic complications while a dose administered at levels greater than required for treatment can increase the risk of bleeding complications. The Joint Commission's National Patient Safety Goal 3.05.01 focuses on improving anticoagulation safety to reduce patient harm and states, "…anticoagulation medications are more likely than others to cause harm due to complex dosing, insufficient monitoring, and inconsistent patient compliance."

We reviewed relevant documents and the competency assessment records of 10 employees actively involved in the anticoagulant program, and we interviewed key employees. Additionally, we reviewed the EHRs of 28 randomly selected patients who were prescribed new anticoagulant medications July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2016. The table below shows the areas reviewed for this topic. The areas marked as NM did not meet applicable requirements and needed improvement.

Checklist 3. Medication Management: Anticoagulation Therapy Areas Reviewed, Findings, and Recommendations

NM	Areas Reviewed	Findings	Recommendations
	The facility had policies and processes for anticoagulation management that included required content.		
	The facility used algorithms, protocols or standardized care processes for the: • Initiation and maintenance of warfarin • Management of anticoagulants before, during, and after procedures • Use of weight-based, unfractionated heparin.		

[20] Thromboembolism is the obstruction of a blood vessel by a blood clot that has become dislodged from another site in the circulation.

NM	Areas Reviewed (continued)	Findings	Recommendations
	The facility provided patients with a direct telephone number for anticoagulation-related calls during normal business hours and defined a process for patient anticoagulation-related calls outside normal business hours.		
	The facility designated a physician as the anticoagulation program champion.		
X	The facility defined ways to minimize the risk of incorrect tablet strength dosing errors.	• The facility had not defined ways to minimize the risk of incorrect tablet strength dosing errors.	**6.** We recommended that the facility define ways to minimize the risk of incorrect tablet strength dosing errors.
	The facility routinely reviewed quality assurance data for the anticoagulation management program at the facility's required frequency at an appropriate committee.		
	For inpatients with newly prescribed anticoagulant medications, clinicians provided transition follow-up and education specific to the new anticoagulant.		
X	Clinicians obtained required laboratory tests: • Prior to initiating anticoagulant medications • During anticoagulation treatment at the frequency required by local policy	• In 7 of the 28 EHRs, clinicians did not obtain all required laboratory tests prior to initiating warfarin treatment.	**7.** We recommended that facility managers ensure clinicians consistently obtain all required laboratory tests prior to initiating anticoagulant medications.
	When laboratory values did not meet selected criteria, clinicians documented a justification/rationale for prescribing the anticoagulant.		
	The facility required competency assessments for employees actively involved in the anticoagulant program, and clinical managers completed competency assessments that included required content at the frequency required by local policy.		

Coordination of Care: Inter-Facility Transfers

The purpose of this review was to evaluate selected aspects of the facility's patient transfer process, specifically transfers out of the facility.[d] Inter-facility transfers are frequently necessary to provide patients with access to specific providers or services. The movement of an acutely ill person from one institution to another exposes the patient to risks, while in some cases, failing to transfer a patient may be equally risky. VHA has the responsibility to ensure that transfers into and out of its medical facilities are carried out appropriately under circumstances that provide maximum safety for patients and comply with applicable standards.

We reviewed relevant documents and interviewed key employees. Additionally, we reviewed the EHRs of 40 randomly selected patients who were transferred acutely out of facility inpatient beds or the Emergency Department/urgent care center to another VHA facility or non-VA facility July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2016. The table below shows the areas reviewed for this topic. The facility generally met requirements. We made no recommendations.

Checklist 4. Coordination of Care: Inter-Facility Transfers Areas Reviewed, Findings, and Recommendations

NM	Areas Reviewed	Findings	Recommendations
	The facility had a policy that addressed patient transfers and included required content.		
	The facility collected and reported data about transfers out of the facility.		
	Transferring providers completed VA Form 10-2649A and/or transfer/progress notes prior to or within a few hours after the transfer that included the following elements: • Date of transfer • Documentation of patient or surrogate informed consent • Medical and/or behavioral stability • Identification of transferring and receiving provider or designee • Details of the reason for transfer or proposed level of care needed		

NM	Areas Reviewed (continued)	Findings	Recommendations
	When staff/attending physicians did not write transfer notes, acceptable designees: • Obtained and documented staff/attending physician approval • Obtained staff/attending physician countersignature on the transfer note		
	When the facility transferred patients out, sending nurses documented transfer assessments/notes.		
	In emergent transfers, providers documented: • Patient stability for transfer • Provision of all medical care within the facility's capacity		
	Communication with the accepting facility or documentation sent included: • Available history • Observations, signs, symptoms, and preliminary diagnoses • Results of diagnostic studies and tests		

Diagnostic Care: Point-of-Care Testing

The purpose of this review was to evaluate the facility's glucometer POCT program compliance with applicable laboratory regulatory standards and quality testing practices as required by VHA, the College of American Pathologists, and The Joint Commission.[e] The majority of laboratory testing is performed in the main laboratory. However, with newer technologies, testing has emerged from the laboratory to the patient's bedside, the patient's home, and other non-laboratory sites. This is called POCT (also known as ancillary or waived testing) and can include tests for blood glucose, fecal occult blood, hemoglobin, and prothrombin time.

All laboratory testing performed in VHA facilities must adhere to quality testing practices. These practices include annual competency assessment and quality control testing. Failure to implement and comply with regulatory standards and quality testing practices can jeopardize patient safety and place VHA facilities at risk. Erroneous results can lead to inaccurate diagnoses, inappropriate medical treatment, and poor patient outcomes.[21]

We reviewed relevant documents, the EHRs of 50 randomly selected inpatients and outpatients who underwent POCT for blood glucose July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2016, and the annual competency assessments of 39 clinicians who performed the glucose testing. Additionally, we interviewed key employees and conducted onsite glucometer inspections of a medical-surgical unit, the Emergency Department, the hospice unit, the dental clinic, and the Lancaster VA Clinic to assess compliance with manufacturers' maintenance and solution/reagent storage requirements. The table below shows the areas reviewed for this topic. The facility generally met requirements. We made no recommendations.

Checklist 5. Diagnostic Care: POCT Areas Reviewed, Findings, and Recommendations

NM	Areas Reviewed	Findings	Recommendations
	The facility had a policy delineating requirements for the POCT program and required oversight by the Chief of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine Service.		
	The facility had a designated POCT/Ancillary Testing Coordinator.		
	The Chief of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine Service approved all tests performed outside the main laboratory.		

[21] The Joint Commission. *Comprehensive Accreditation Manual for Laboratories and Point-of-Care Testing*. Update 2. September 2010.

NM	Areas Reviewed (continued)	Findings	Recommendations
	The facility had a process to ensure employee competency for POCT with glucometers and evaluated competencies at least annually.		
	The facility required documentation of POCT results in the EHR.		
	A regulatory agency accredited the facility's POCT program.		
	Clinicians documented test results in the EHR.		
	Clinicians initiated appropriate clinical action and follow up for test results.		
	The facility had POCT procedure manuals readily available to employees.		
	Quality control testing solutions/reagents and glucose test strips were current (not expired).		
	The facility managed and performed quality control in accordance with its policy/standard operating procedure and manufacturer's recommendations.		
	Glucometers were clean.		

Community Nursing Home Oversight

The purpose of this review was to assess whether the facility complied with applicable requirements regarding the monitoring of veterans in contracted CNHs.[f] Since 1965, VHA has provided nursing home care under contracts. VHA facilities must integrate the CNH program into their quality improvement programs. The Facility Director establishes the CNH Oversight Committee, which reports to the chief clinical officer (Chief of Staff, Associate Director for Patient Care Services, or the equivalent) and includes multidisciplinary management-level representatives from social work, nursing, quality management, acquisition, and the medical staff. The CNH Oversight Committee must meet at least quarterly.[22] Local oversight of CNHs is achieved through annual reviews and monthly visits.

We reviewed relevant documents, the EHRs of 50 randomly selected patients who received CNH care for more than 3 months during the timeframe July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2016, and the results from CNH annual reviews completed July 5, 2015 through June 30, 2016. Additionally, we interviewed key employees. The table below shows the areas reviewed for this topic. The areas marked as NM did not meet applicable requirements and needed improvement.

Checklist 6. CNH Oversight Areas Reviewed, Findings, and Recommendations

NM	Areas Reviewed	Findings	Recommendations
X	The facility had a CNH Oversight Committee that met at least quarterly and included representation by the required disciplines.	• The facility's CNH Oversight Committee did not include a representative from acquisition and the medical staff.	**8.** We recommended that facility managers ensure the Community Nursing Home Oversight Committee includes representation by all required clinical disciplines.
	The facility integrated the CNH program into its quality improvement program.		
	The facility documented a hand-off for patients placed in CNHs outside of its catchment area.		
	The CNH Review Team completed CNH annual reviews.		
	When CNH annual reviews noted four or more exclusionary criteria, facility managers completed exclusion review documentation.		

[22] VHA Handbook 1143.2, *VHA Community Nursing Home Oversight Procedures*, June 4, 2004.

NM	Areas Reviewed (continued)	Findings	Recommendations
X	Social workers and registered nurses documented clinical visits that alternated on a cyclical basis.	• Ten of 45 applicable EHRs (22 percent) did not contain documentation of social worker and registered nurse cyclical clinical visits with the frequency required by VHA policy. At least 1 of these 10 patients resided in each of the nine CNHs noted to lack cyclical visits due to inadequate coverage by the required clinical disciplines.	**9.** We recommended that facility managers ensure social workers and registered nurses conduct and document cyclical clinical visits with the frequency required by Veterans Health Administration policy and monitor compliance.

Management of Disruptive/Violent Behavior

The purpose of this review was to determine the extent to which the facility complied with selected requirements in the management of disruptive and violent behavior.[g] VHA policy states a commitment to reducing and preventing disruptive behaviors and other defined acts that threaten public safety through the development of policy, programs, and initiatives aimed at patient, visitor, and employee safety. In addition, Public Law 112-154, section 106 directed VA to develop and implement a comprehensive policy on the reporting and tracking of public safety incidents that occur at each medical facility.

We reviewed relevant documents, the EHRs of 31 patients who exhibited disruptive or violent behavior, and the training records of 15 recently hired employees who worked in areas at low, moderate, or high risk for violence. Additionally, we interviewed key employees. The table below shows the areas reviewed for this topic. The area marked as NM did not meet applicable requirements and needed improvement. Any items that did not apply to this facility are marked NA.

Checklist 7. Management of Disruptive/Violent Behavior Areas Reviewed, Findings, and Recommendations

NM	Areas Reviewed	Findings	Recommendations
	The facility had a policy, procedure, or guideline on preventing and managing disruptive or violent behavior.		
	The facility conducted an annual Workplace Behavioral Risk Assessment.		
	The facility had implemented: • An Employee Threat Assessment Team • A Disruptive Behavior Committee/Board with appropriate membership • A disruptive behavior reporting and tracking system		
	The facility collected and analyzed disruptive or violent behavior incidents data.		
	The facility assessed physical security and included and tested equipment in accordance with the local physical security assessment.		

NM	Areas Reviewed (continued)	Findings	Recommendations
	Clinical managers reviewed patients' disruptive or violent behavior and took appropriate actions, including: • Ensuring discussion by the Disruptive Behavior Committee/Board and entry of a progress note by a clinician committee/board member • Informing patients about Patient Record Flag placement and the right to request to amend/appeal the flag placement • Ensuring Chief of Staff or designee approval of an Order of Behavioral Restriction		
	When a Patient Record Flag was placed for an incident of disruptive behavior in the past, a clinician reviewed the continuing need for the flag within the past 2 years.		
NA	The facility managed selected non-patient related disruptive or violent incidents appropriately according to VHA and local policy.		
X	The facility had a security training plan for employees at all risk levels. • All employees received Level 1 training within 90 days of hire. • All employees received additional training as required for the assigned risk area within 90 days of hire.	• Ten of the applicable 15 employee training records did not contain documentation of the training required for their assigned risk area within 90 days of hire.	**10.** We recommended that facility managers ensure all employees receive additional training as required for their assigned risk area within 90 days of hire and that the training is documented in employee training records.

Mental Health Residential Rehabilitation Treatment Program

The purpose of this review was to determine whether the facility's MH RRTPs (more commonly referred to as domiciliary or residential treatment programs) complied with selected EOC requirements. The Domiciliary Care for Homeless Veterans Program was established through legislation in the late 1860s with the purpose of providing a home for disabled volunteer soldiers of the Civil War. In 1995, VA established the Psychosocial RRTP bed level of care. This distinct level of MH residential care is appropriate for veterans with mental illnesses or addictive disorders who require structure and support to address psychosocial deficits, including homelessness and unemployment. In 2005, the Domiciliary RRTP became fully integrated with other RRTPs of the Office of MH Services.[h]

We reviewed relevant documents; inspected the Residential Recovery Center located in Buildings 34, 35, and 36; and interviewed key employees. The table below shows the areas reviewed for this topic. The area marked as NM did not meet applicable requirements and needed improvement.

Checklist 8. MH RRTP Areas Reviewed, Findings, and Recommendations

NM	Areas Reviewed	Findings	Recommendations
	The residential environment was clean and in good repair.		
	Appropriate fire extinguishers were available near grease producing cooking devices.		
	There were policies/procedures that addressed safe medication management and contraband detection.		
	MH RRTP employees conducted and documented monthly self-inspections that included all required elements, submitted work orders for items needing repair, and ensured correction of any identified deficiencies.		
X	MH RRTP employees conducted and documented contraband inspections, rounds of all public spaces, daily bed checks, and resident room inspections for unsecured medications.	• Residential Recovery Center employees did not perform contraband inspections and rounds of public spaces.	**11.** We recommended that Residential Recovery Center employees perform and document contraband inspections and rounds of public spaces and that managers monitor compliance.

NM	Areas Reviewed (continued)	Findings	Recommendations
	The MH RRTP had written agreements in place acknowledging resident responsibility for medication security.		
	The MH RRTP main point(s) of entry had keyless entry and closed circuit television monitoring, and all other doors were locked to the outside and alarmed.		
	The MH RRTP had closed circuit television monitors with recording capability in public areas but not in treatment areas or private spaces and had signage alerting veterans and visitors of recording.		
	There was a process for responding to behavioral health and medical emergencies, and MH RRTP employees could articulate the process.		
	In mixed gender MH RRTP units, women veterans' rooms had keyless entry or door locks.		
	Residents secured medications in their rooms.		
	The facility complied with any additional elements required by VHA or local policy.		

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder Care

The purpose of this review was to assess whether the facility complied with selected VHA requirements for PTSD follow-up in the outpatient setting.[i] PTSD is a disorder that may occur "…following exposure to an extreme traumatic stressor involving direct personal experience of an event that involves actual or threatened death or serious injury; other threat to one's physical integrity; witnessing an event that involves death, injury or threat to the physical integrity of another person; learning about unexpected or violent death, serious harm, threat of death or injury experienced by a family member or other close associate."[23]

The PTSD screen is performed through a required national clinical reminder and is triggered for completion when the patient has his or her first visit at a VHA medical facility. The reminder typically remains active until it is completed. For veterans, the most common traumatic stressor contributing to a PTSD diagnosis is war-zone related stress. VHA requires that:

- Every new patient receive PTSD screening that is then repeated every year for the first 5 years post-separation and every 5 years thereafter unless there is a clinical need to screen earlier.
- If a patient's PTSD screen is positive, an acceptable provider evaluates treatment needs and assesses for suicide risk.
- If the provider determines a need for treatment, there is evidence of referral and coordination of care.

We reviewed relevant documents and the EHRs of 50 randomly selected outpatients who had a positive PTSD screen July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2016. We also interviewed key employees and managers. The table below shows the areas reviewed for this topic. The areas marked as NM did not meet applicable requirements and needed improvement.

Checklist 9. PTSD Care Areas Reviewed, Findings, and Recommendations

NM	Areas Reviewed	Findings	Recommendations
X	Each patient with a positive PTSD screen received a suicide risk assessment.	• Acceptable providers did not document suicide risk assessments in 7 of the 50 EHRs with positive PTSD screens (14 percent).	**12.** We recommended that acceptable providers perform and document suicide risk assessments for all patients with positive post-traumatic stress disorder screens.
	Suicide risk assessments for patients with positive PTSD screens were completed by acceptable providers.		

[23] VHA Handbook 1160.03, *Programs for Veterans with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)*, March 12, 2010.

NM	Areas Reviewed (continued)	Findings	Recommendations
	Acceptable providers established plans of care and disposition for patients with positive PTSD screens.		
X	Acceptable providers offered further diagnostic evaluations to patients with positive PTSD screens.	• Acceptable providers did not offer patients with positive PTSD screens referrals for further diagnostic evaluations in 6 of the 50 EHRs (12 percent).	**13.** We recommended that acceptable providers offer further diagnostic evaluations to patients with positive post-traumatic stress disorder screens.
	Providers completed diagnostic evaluations for patients with positive PTSD screens.		
	Patients received MH treatment when applicable.		

Facility Profile

Table 1 below provides general background information for this facility.

Table 1. Facility Profile for Lebanon (595) for FY 2016

Profile Element	Facility Data
Veterans Integrated Service Network Number	4
Complexity Level	2-Medium complexity
Affiliated/Non-Affiliated	Affiliated
Total Medical Care Budget in Millions	$281.5
Number of:	
• **Unique Patients**	44,328
• **Outpatient Visits**	509,982
• **Unique Employees**[24]	1,207
Type and Number of Operating Beds:	
• **Acute**	27
• **MH**	22
• **Community Living Center**	76
• **Domiciliary**	43
Average Daily Census:	
• **Acute**	17
• **MH**	16
• **Community Living Center**	58
• **Domiciliary**	37

Source: VA Office of Academic Affiliations, VHA Support Service Center, and VA Corporate Data Warehouse

Note: We did not assess VA's data for accuracy or completeness.

[24] Unique employees involved in direct medical care (cost center 8200).

VA Outpatient Clinic Profiles[25]

The VA outpatient clinics in the communities within the catchment area of the facility provide PC integrated with women's health, MH, and telehealth services. Some also provide specialty care, diagnostic, and ancillary services. Table 2 below provides information relative to each of the clinics.

Table 2. VA Outpatient Clinic Workload/Encounters[26] and Specialty Care, Diagnostic, and Ancillary Services Provided for FY 2016

Location	Station No.	PC Workload/ Encounters	MH Workload/ Encounters	Specialty Care Services[27] Provided	Diagnostic Services[28] Provided	Ancillary Services[29] Provided
Camp Hill, PA	595GA	17,839	8,942	Pulmonary/ Respiratory Disease Dermatology Endocrinology Gastroenterology Nephrology Blind Rehab Eye General Surgery Podiatry	NA	Nutrition Pharmacy Social Work Weight Management
Lancaster, PA	595GC	10,946	2,823	Pulmonary/ Respiratory Disease Dermatology Blind Rehab Eye Anesthesia	NA	Pharmacy Social Work Weight Management
Wyomissing, PA	595GD	8,728	3,401	Pulmonary/ Respiratory Disease Dermatology Gastroenterology Eye General Surgery	NA	Nutrition Pharmacy Social Work Weight Management
York, PA	595GE	13,916	5,116	Pulmonary/ Respiratory Disease Dermatology Endocrinology Gastroenterology Blind Rehab Eye General Surgery Anesthesia Orthopedics	Laboratory & Pathology Radiology	Nutrition Pharmacy Social Work Weight Management

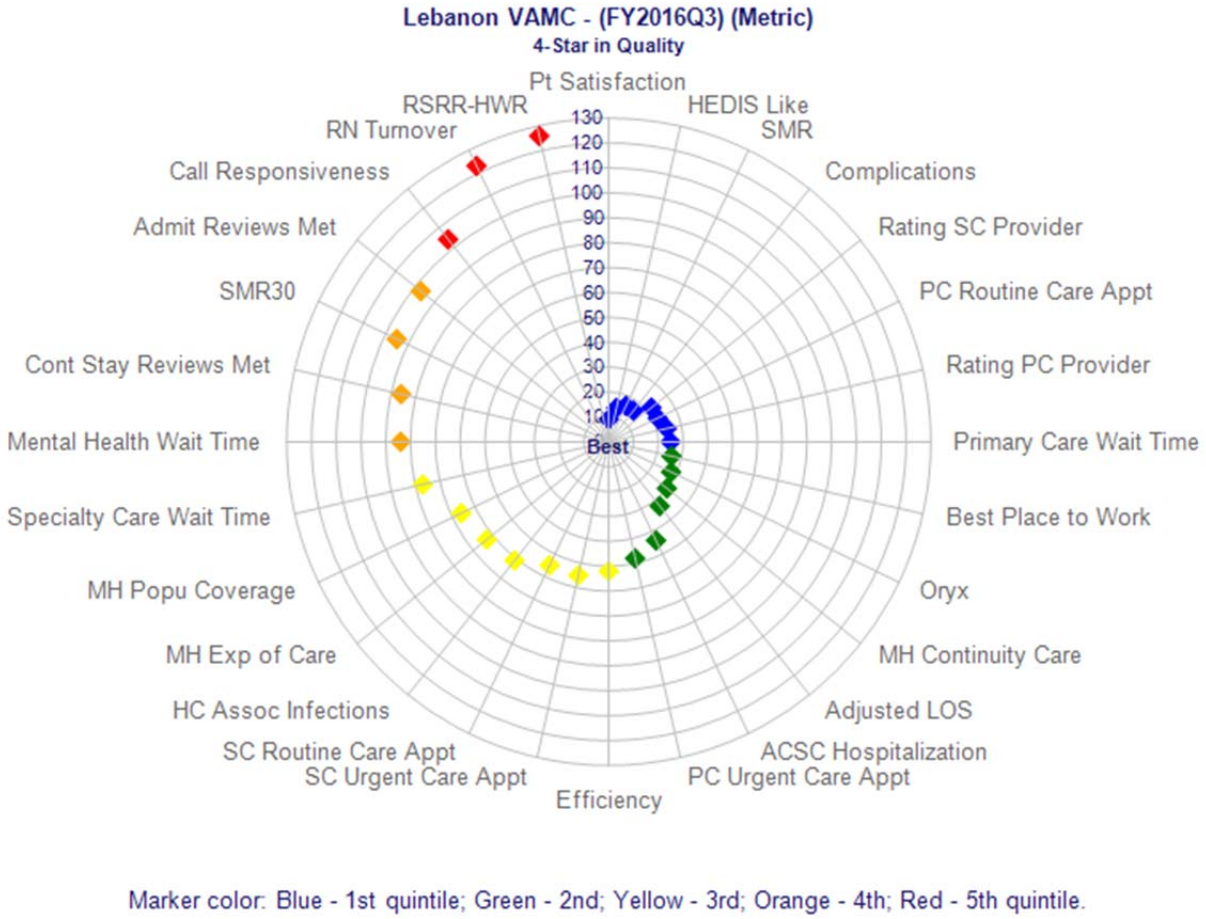
[25] Includes all outpatient clinics in the community that were in operation before February 15, 2016. We have omitted Annville, PA (595QA), as no workload/encounters or services were reported.
[26] An encounter is a professional contact between a patient and a practitioner vested with responsibility for diagnosing, evaluating, and treating the patient's condition.
[27] Specialty care services refer to non-PC and non-MH services provided by a physician.
[28] Diagnostic services include EKG, EMG, laboratory, nuclear medicine, radiology, and vascular lab services.
[29] Ancillary services include chiropractic, dental, nutrition, pharmacy, prosthetic, social work, and weight management services.

Location	Station No.	PC Workload/ Encounters	MH Workload/ Encounters	Specialty Care Services Provided	Diagnostic Services Provided	Ancillary Services Provided
Pottsville, PA	595GF	3,741	1,073	Pulmonary/ Respiratory Disease	NA	NA

Source: VHA Support Service Center and VA Corporate Data Warehouse

Note: We did not assess VA's data for accuracy or completeness.

Strategic Analytics for Improvement and Learning (SAIL)[30]

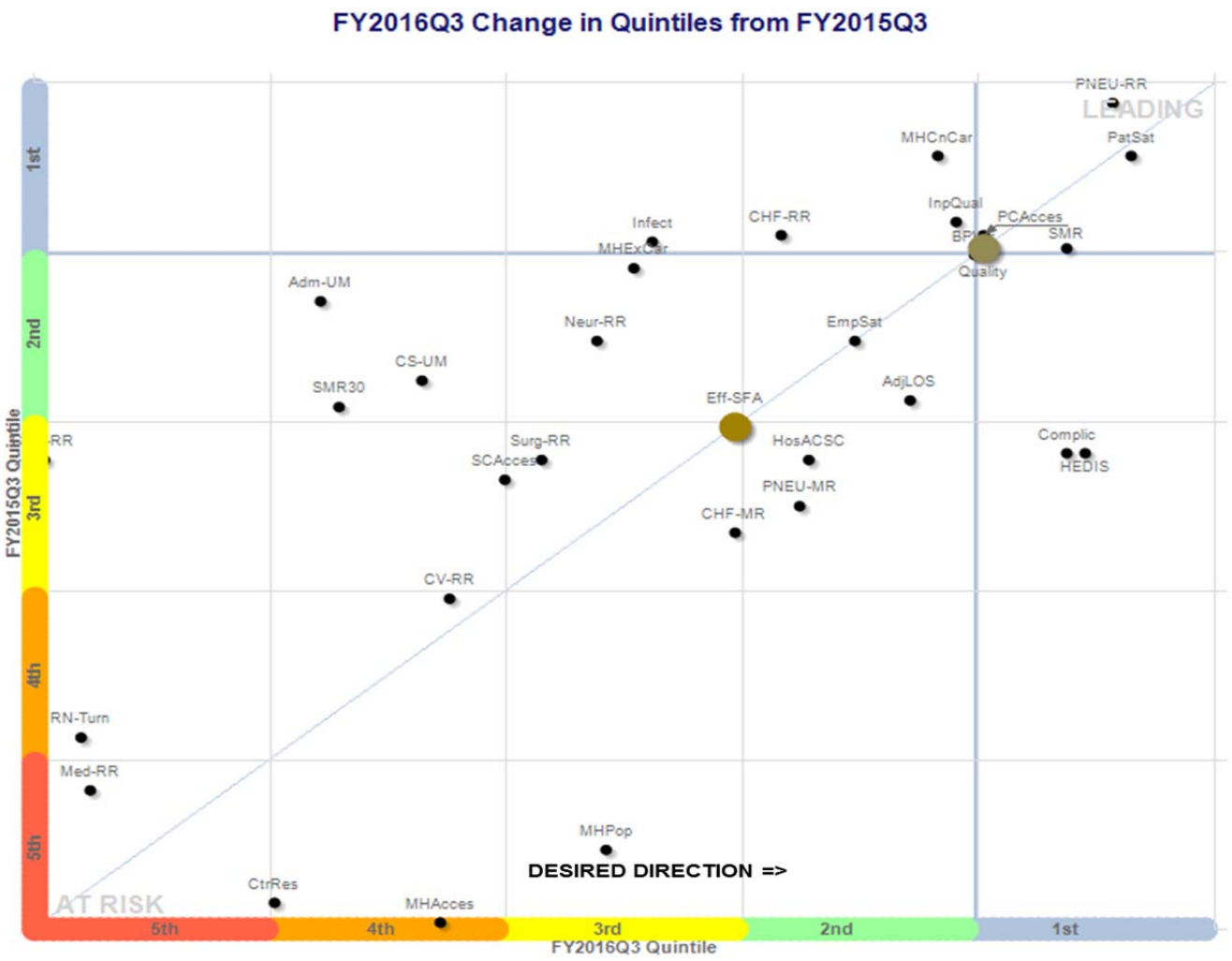


Source: VHA Support Service Center

Note: We did not assess VA's data for accuracy or completeness.

[30] Metric definitions follow the graphs.

Scatter Chart



NOTE

Quintiles are derived from facility ranking on z-score of a metric among 128 facilities. Lower quintile is more favorable.

Source: VHA Support Service Center

Note: We did not assess VA's data for accuracy or completeness.

Metric Definitions[j]

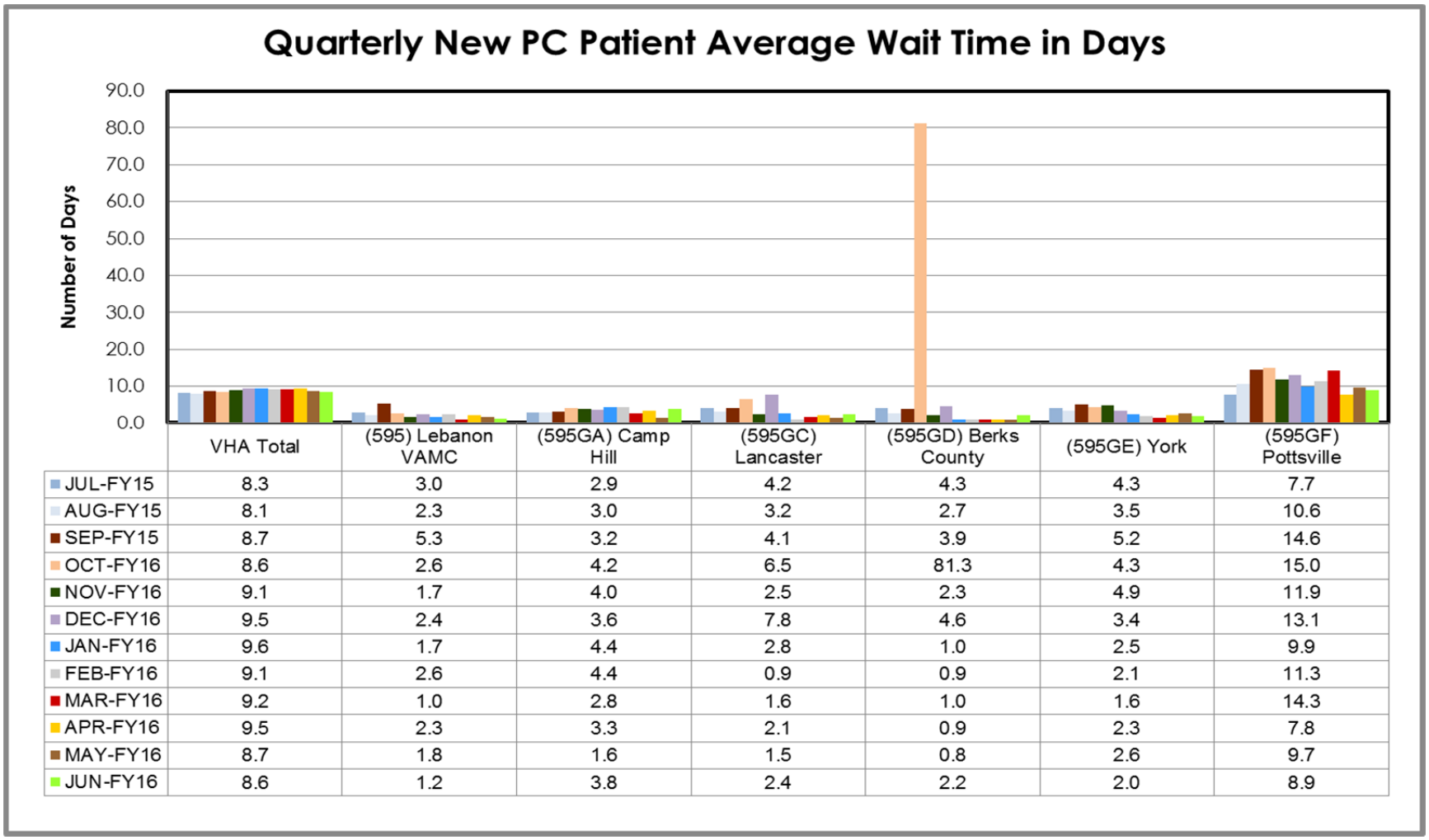
Measure	Definition	Desired Direction
ACSC Hospitalization	Ambulatory care sensitive condition hospitalizations (observed to expected ratio)	A lower value is better than a higher value
Adjusted LOS	Acute care risk adjusted length of stay	A lower value is better than a higher value
Admit Reviews Met	% Acute Admission Reviews that meet InterQual criteria	A higher value is better than a lower value
Best Place to Work	Overall satisfaction with job	A higher value is better than a lower value
Call Center Responsiveness	Average speed of call center responded to calls in seconds	A lower value is better than a higher value
Call Responsiveness	Call center speed in picking up calls and telephone abandonment rate	A lower value is better than a higher value
Complications	Acute care risk adjusted complication ratio	A lower value is better than a higher value
Cont Stay Reviews Met	% Acute Continued Stay reviews that meet InterQual criteria	A higher value is better than a lower value
Efficiency	Overall efficiency measured as 1 divided by SFA (Stochastic Frontier Analysis)	A higher value is better than a lower value
Employee Satisfaction	Overall satisfaction with job	A higher value is better than a lower value
HC Assoc Infections	Health care associated infections	A lower value is better than a higher value
HEDIS Like	Outpatient performance measure (HEDIS)	A higher value is better than a lower value
MH Wait Time	MH care wait time for new patient completed appointments within 30 days of preferred date	A higher value is better than a lower value
MH Continuity Care	MH continuity of care (FY14Q3 and later)	A higher value is better than a lower value
MH Exp of Care	MH experience of care (FY14Q3 and later)	A higher value is better than a lower value
MH Popu Coverage	MH population coverage (FY14Q3 and later)	A higher value is better than a lower value
Oryx	Inpatient performance measure (ORYX)	A higher value is better than a lower value
PC Routine Care Appt	Timeliness in getting a PC routine care appointment (PCMH)	A higher value is better than a lower value
PC Urgent Care Appt	Timeliness in getting a PC urgent care appointment (PCMH)	A higher value is better than a lower value
PC Wait Time	PC wait time for new patient completed appointments within 30 days of preferred date	A higher value is better than a lower value
PSI	Patient safety indicator (observed to expected ratio)	A lower value is better than a higher value
Pt Satisfaction	Overall rating of hospital stay (inpatient only)	A higher value is better than a lower value
Rating PC Provider	Rating of PC providers (PCMH)	A higher value is better than a lower value
Rating SC Provider	Rating of specialty care providers (specialty care module)	A higher value is better than a lower value
RN Turnover	Registered nurse turnover rate	A lower value is better than a higher value
RSMR-AMI	30-day risk standardized mortality rate for acute myocardial infarction	A lower value is better than a higher value

Measure	Definition	Desired Direction
RSMR-CHF	30-day risk standardized mortality rate for congestive heart failure	A lower value is better than a higher value
RSMR-Pneumonia	30-day risk standardized mortality rate for pneumonia	A lower value is better than a higher value
RSRR-AMI	30-day risk standardized readmission rate for acute myocardial infarction	A lower value is better than a higher value
RSRR-Cardio	30-day risk standardized readmission rate for cardiorespiratory patient cohort	A lower value is better than a higher value
RSRR-CHF	30-day risk standardized readmission rate for congestive heart failure	A lower value is better than a higher value
RSRR-CV	30-day risk standardized readmission rate for cardiovascular patient cohort	A lower value is better than a higher value
RSRR-HWR	Hospital wide readmission	A lower value is better than a higher value
RSRR-Med	30-day risk standardized readmission rate for medicine patient cohort	A lower value is better than a higher value
RSRR-Neuro	30-day risk standardized readmission rate for neurology patient cohort	A lower value is better than a higher value
RSRR-Pneumonia	30-day risk standardized readmission rate for pneumonia	A lower value is better than a higher value
RSRR-Surg	30-day risk standardized readmission rate for surgery patient cohort	A lower value is better than a higher value
SC Routine Care Appt	Timeliness in getting a SC routine care appointment (Specialty Care)	A higher value is better than a lower value
SC Urgent Care Appt	Timeliness in getting a SC urgent care appointment (Specialty Care)	A higher value is better than a lower value
SMR	Acute care in-hospital standardized mortality ratio	A lower value is better than a higher value
SMR30	Acute care 30-day standardized mortality ratio	A lower value is better than a higher value
Specialty Care Wait Time	Specialty care wait time for new patient completed appointments within 30 days of preferred date	A higher value is better than a lower value

Source: VHA Support Service Center

Note: We did not assess VA's data for accuracy or completeness.

Patient Aligned Care Team Compass Metrics

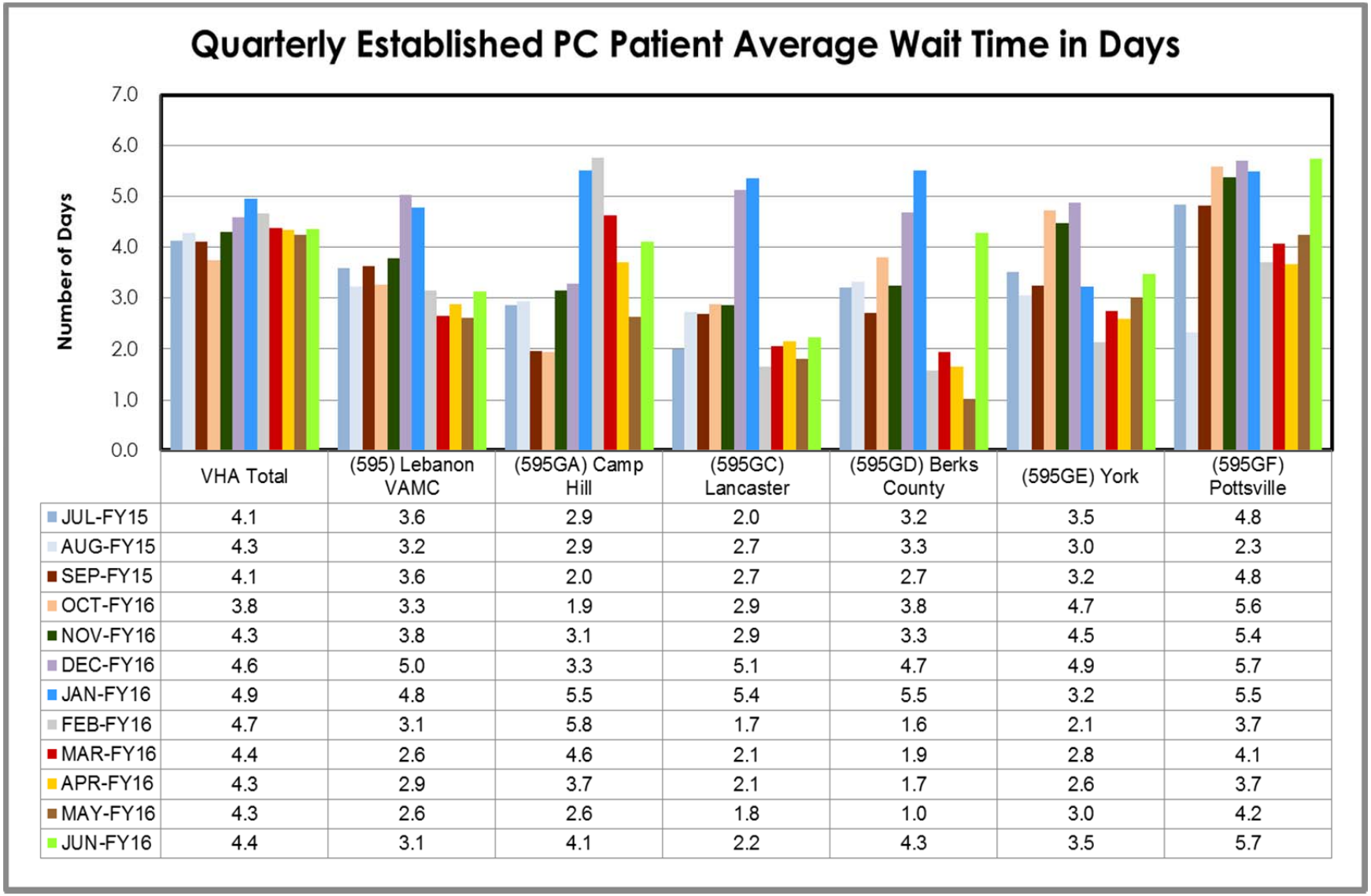


	VHA Total	(595) Lebanon VAMC	(595GA) Camp Hill	(595GC) Lancaster	(595GD) Berks County	(595GE) York	(595GF) Pottsville
JUL-FY15	8.3	3.0	2.9	4.2	4.3	4.3	7.7
AUG-FY15	8.1	2.3	3.0	3.2	2.7	3.5	10.6
SEP-FY15	8.7	5.3	3.2	4.1	3.9	5.2	14.6
OCT-FY16	8.6	2.6	4.2	6.5	81.3	4.3	15.0
NOV-FY16	9.1	1.7	4.0	2.5	2.3	4.9	11.9
DEC-FY16	9.5	2.4	3.6	7.8	4.6	3.4	13.1
JAN-FY16	9.6	1.7	4.4	2.8	1.0	2.5	9.9
FEB-FY16	9.1	2.6	4.4	0.9	0.9	2.1	11.3
MAR-FY16	9.2	1.0	2.8	1.6	1.0	1.6	14.3
APR-FY16	9.5	2.3	3.3	2.1	0.9	2.3	7.8
MAY-FY16	8.7	1.8	1.6	1.5	0.8	2.6	9.7
JUN-FY16	8.6	1.2	3.8	2.4	2.2	2.0	8.9

Source: VHA Support Service Center

Note: We did not assess VA's data for accuracy or completeness. We have on file the facility's explanation for the October 2016 data point for Berks County.

Data Definition[k]: The average number of calendar days between a new patient's PC completed appointment (clinic stops 322, 323, and 350, excluding Compensation and Pension appointments) and the earliest of three possible preferred (desired) dates (Electronic Wait List (EWL), Cancelled by Clinic Appointment, Completed Appointment) from the completed appointment date. *Note that prior to FY 2015, this metric was calculated using the earliest possible create date.*

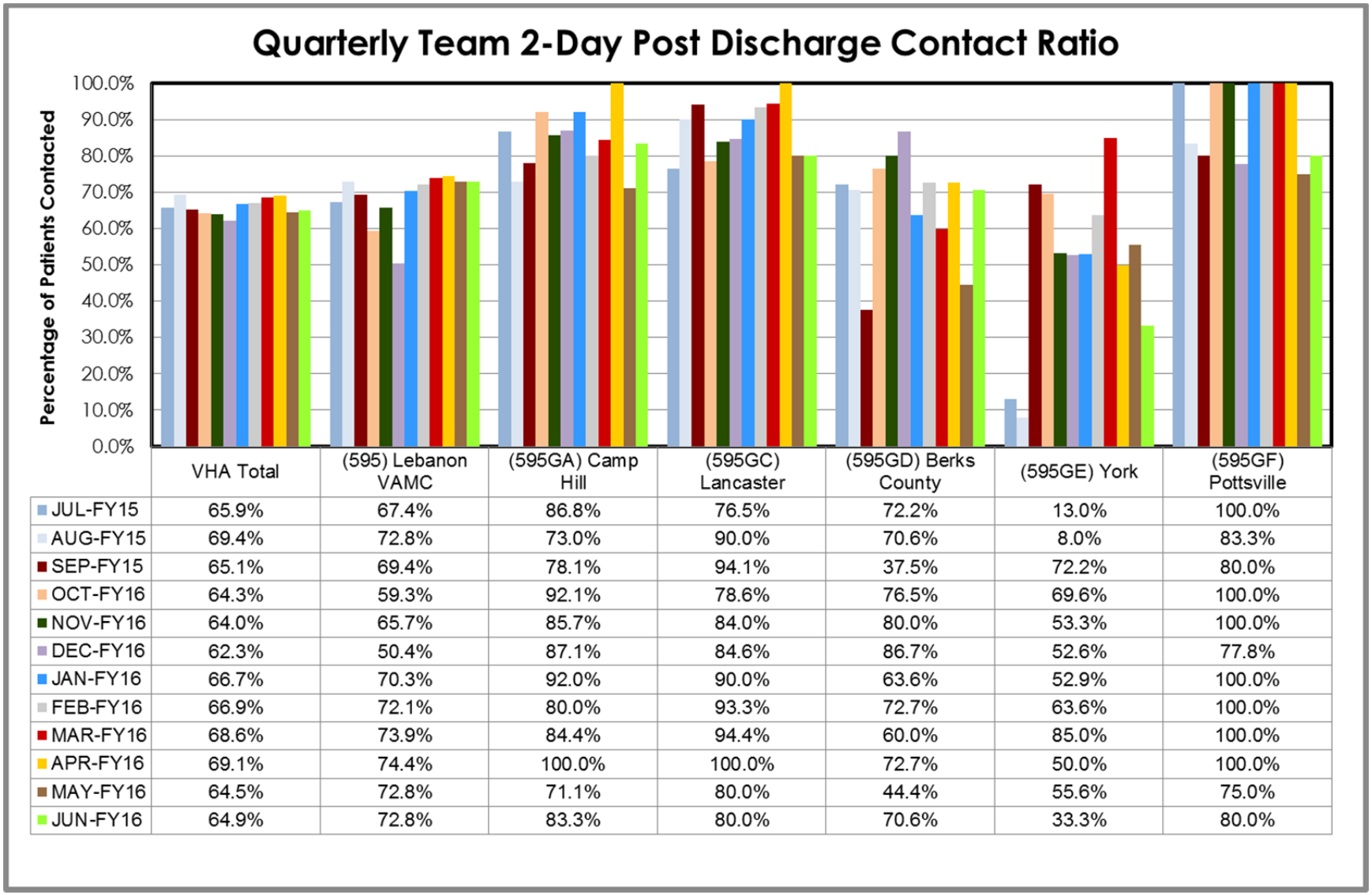


	VHA Total	(595) Lebanon VAMC	(595GA) Camp Hill	(595GC) Lancaster	(595GD) Berks County	(595GE) York	(595GF) Pottsville
JUL-FY15	4.1	3.6	2.9	2.0	3.2	3.5	4.8
AUG-FY15	4.3	3.2	2.9	2.7	3.3	3.0	2.3
SEP-FY15	4.1	3.6	2.0	2.7	2.7	3.2	4.8
OCT-FY16	3.8	3.3	1.9	2.9	3.8	4.7	5.6
NOV-FY16	4.3	3.8	3.1	2.9	3.3	4.5	5.4
DEC-FY16	4.6	5.0	3.3	5.1	4.7	4.9	5.7
JAN-FY16	4.9	4.8	5.5	5.4	5.5	3.2	5.5
FEB-FY16	4.7	3.1	5.8	1.7	1.6	2.1	3.7
MAR-FY16	4.4	2.6	4.6	2.1	1.9	2.8	4.1
APR-FY16	4.3	2.9	3.7	2.1	1.7	2.6	3.7
MAY-FY16	4.3	2.6	2.6	1.8	1.0	3.0	4.2
JUN-FY16	4.4	3.1	4.1	2.2	4.3	3.5	5.7

Source: VHA Support Service Center

Note: We did not assess VA's data for accuracy or completeness.

Data Definition: The average number of calendar days between an established patient's PC completed appointment (clinic stops 322, 323, and 350, excluding Compensation and Pension appointments) and the earliest of three possible preferred (desired) dates (Electronic Wait List (EWL), Cancelled by Clinic Appointment, Completed Appointment) from the completed appointment date.

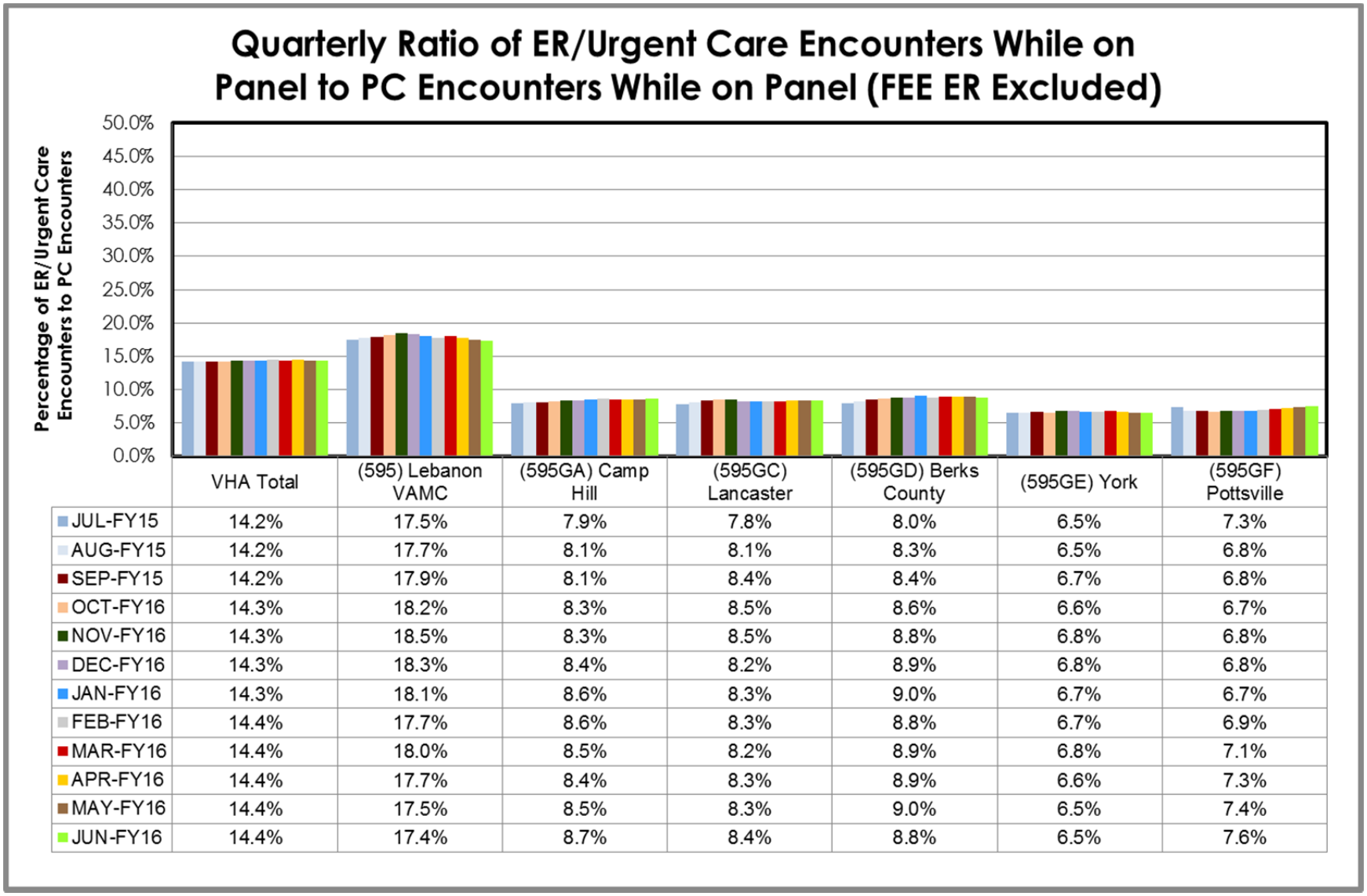


	VHA Total	(595) Lebanon VAMC	(595GA) Camp Hill	(595GC) Lancaster	(595GD) Berks County	(595GE) York	(595GF) Pottsville
JUL-FY15	65.9%	67.4%	86.8%	76.5%	72.2%	13.0%	100.0%
AUG-FY15	69.4%	72.8%	73.0%	90.0%	70.6%	8.0%	83.3%
SEP-FY15	65.1%	69.4%	78.1%	94.1%	37.5%	72.2%	80.0%
OCT-FY16	64.3%	59.3%	92.1%	78.6%	76.5%	69.6%	100.0%
NOV-FY16	64.0%	65.7%	85.7%	84.0%	80.0%	53.3%	100.0%
DEC-FY16	62.3%	50.4%	87.1%	84.6%	86.7%	52.6%	77.8%
JAN-FY16	66.7%	70.3%	92.0%	90.0%	63.6%	52.9%	100.0%
FEB-FY16	66.9%	72.1%	80.0%	93.3%	72.7%	63.6%	100.0%
MAR-FY16	68.6%	73.9%	84.4%	94.4%	60.0%	85.0%	100.0%
APR-FY16	69.1%	74.4%	100.0%	100.0%	72.7%	50.0%	100.0%
MAY-FY16	64.5%	72.8%	71.1%	80.0%	44.4%	55.6%	75.0%
JUN-FY16	64.9%	72.8%	83.3%	80.0%	70.6%	33.3%	80.0%

Source: VHA Support Service Center

Note: We did not assess VA's data for accuracy or completeness.

Data Definition: The percent of assigned PC patients discharged from any VA facility who have been contacted by a PC team member within 2 business days during the reporting period. Patients are excluded if they are discharged from an observation specialty and/or readmitted within 2 business days to any VA facility. Team members must have been assigned to the patient's team at the time of the patient's discharge.



	VHA Total	(595) Lebanon VAMC	(595GA) Camp Hill	(595GC) Lancaster	(595GD) Berks County	(595GE) York	(595GF) Pottsville
JUL-FY15	14.2%	17.5%	7.9%	7.8%	8.0%	6.5%	7.3%
AUG-FY15	14.2%	17.7%	8.1%	8.1%	8.3%	6.5%	6.8%
SEP-FY15	14.2%	17.9%	8.1%	8.4%	8.4%	6.7%	6.8%
OCT-FY16	14.3%	18.2%	8.3%	8.5%	8.6%	6.6%	6.7%
NOV-FY16	14.3%	18.5%	8.3%	8.5%	8.8%	6.8%	6.8%
DEC-FY16	14.3%	18.3%	8.4%	8.2%	8.9%	6.8%	6.8%
JAN-FY16	14.3%	18.1%	8.6%	8.3%	9.0%	6.7%	6.7%
FEB-FY16	14.4%	17.7%	8.6%	8.3%	8.8%	6.7%	6.9%
MAR-FY16	14.4%	18.0%	8.5%	8.2%	8.9%	6.8%	7.1%
APR-FY16	14.4%	17.7%	8.4%	8.3%	8.9%	6.6%	7.3%
MAY-FY16	14.4%	17.5%	8.5%	8.3%	9.0%	6.5%	7.4%
JUN-FY16	14.4%	17.4%	8.7%	8.4%	8.8%	6.5%	7.6%

Source: VHA Support Service Center

Note: We did not assess VA's data for accuracy or completeness.

Data Definition: This is a measure of where the patient receives his PC and by whom. A low percentage is better. The formula is the total VHA ER/Urgent Care Encounters While on Team (WOT) with a Licensed Independent Practitioner (LIP) *divided by* the number of PC Team Encounters WOT with an LIP **plus** the total number of VHA ER/Urgent Care Encounters WOT with an LIP.

Prior OIG Reports
[August 1, 2013 through January 1, 2017]

Facility Reports

Community Based Outpatient Clinics Summary Report – Evaluation of Medication Oversight and Education at Community Based Outpatient Clinics and Other Outpatient Clinics

6/18/2015 | 15-01297-368 | Summary | Report

Healthcare Inspection – Prevention of Legionnaires' Disease in VHA Facilities

8/1/2013 | 13-01189-267 | Summary | Report

Veterans Integrated Service Network Director Comments

Department of Veterans Affairs

Memorandum

Date: March 10, 2017

From: Director, VA Healthcare – VISN 4 (10N4)

Subject: CAP Review of the Lebanon VA Medical Center, Lebanon, PA

To: Director, Baltimore Office of Healthcare Inspections (54BA)

Director, Management Review Service (VHA 10E1D MRS Action)

1. I have reviewed the responses provided by the Lebanon VAMC and I am submitting to your office as requested. I concur with their responses.

X Michael D. Adelman, MD

MICHAEL D. ADELMAN, M.D.

Acting Facility Director Comments

Department of Veterans Affairs

Memorandum

Date: March 10, 2017

From: Acting Director, Lebanon VA Medical Center (595/00)

Subject: CAP Review of the Lebanon VA Medical Center, Lebanon, PA

To: Director, VA Healthcare (10N4)

1. On behalf of the Lebanon VA Medical Center, I want to express my appreciation to the Office of Inspector General (OIG) Office of Healthcare Inspections for the Combined Assessment Program review of the Lebanon campus, conducted December 12–15, 2016.

2. The attached provides comment to the reported findings and outlines the actions taken by the staff of the Lebanon VA Medical Center in response to the OIG recommendations.

Margaret Wilson

Margaret Wilson, MSN, RN

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 facility clinical managers consistently review Ongoing Professional Practice Evaluation data twice a year and that facility managers monitor compliance.

Concur

Target date for completion: November 1, 2017

Facility response: The Chief of Staff has reviewed every provider record for each clinical care line. A Share Point is being established for tracking the last two years of OPPE/FPPE documents and when completed will be reviewed for compliance by the Chief of Staff for 6 consecutive months. Ongoing compliance will be monitored by clinical managers and reported to Medical Staff Executive Board.

Recommendation 2. We recommended that facility clinical managers ensure peer reviewers consistently document their use of at least one of the important aspects of care and that facility managers monitor compliance.

Concur

Target date for completion: September 1, 2017

Facility response: The internal and external peer review form has been modified to include the important aspects of care. The Quality Manager will monitor compliance for 6 consecutive months of 100% utilization of new forms. The Risk Manager will utilize the new forms during communication and will monitor ongoing compliance with all peer review correspondence.

Recommendation 3. We recommended that Physician Utilization Management Advisors consistently document their decisions in the National Utilization Management Integration database and that facility managers monitor compliance.

Concur

Target date for completion: August 1, 2017

Facility response: Each PUMA has been assigned coverage for leave to ensure timely documentation of decisions in the National Utilization Management Integration database. The Quality Manager will monitor compliance for 6 consecutive months. Ongoing compliance will be monitored by the Utilization Manager.

Recommendation 4. We recommended that the Patient Safety Manager enter all reported patient incidents into the WEBSPOT database and that facility managers monitor compliance.

Concur

Target date for completion: August 1, 2017

Facility response: The Patient Safety Manager will enter all reported patient incidents into the WEBSPOT. The Quality Manager will monitor compliance for 6 consecutive months. Ongoing compliance will be monitored by the Patient Safety Manager.

Recommendation 5. We recommended that facility managers ensure information technology network rooms have logs for visitors to document their access and monitor compliance.

Concur

Target date for completion: May 1, 2017

Facility response: Facility Information Technology Manager obtained and placed logs for network rooms to document access during OIG site visit. Compliance will be monitored by facility managers for 3 consecutive months. Ongoing compliance will be monitored during monthly facility EOC rounds.

Recommendation 6. We recommended that the facility define ways to minimize the risk of incorrect tablet strength dosing errors.

Concur

Target date for completion: June 1, 2017

Facility response: Chief of Pharmacy is working on quick orders that will limit the number of available tablet strengths and dosage adjustments to assist with anticoagulation therapy.

Recommendation 7. We recommended that facility managers ensure clinicians consistently obtain all required laboratory tests prior to initiating anticoagulant medications.

Concur

Target date for completion: June 1, 2017

Facility response: Chief of Pharmacy is working on quick orders that will require lab testing at the time of prescription entry. This will ensure that appropriate labs are obtained prior to initiating anticoagulants.

Recommendation 8. We recommended that facility managers ensure the Community Nursing Home Oversight Committee includes representation by all required clinical disciplines.

Concur

Target date for completion: July 1, 2017

Facility response: Community Nursing Home Oversight Committee now includes representation by all required clinical disciplines. Facility managers will monitor compliance for 2 consecutive quarters. Ongoing compliance will be monitored by community nursing home program manager.

Recommendation 9. We recommended that facility managers ensure social workers and registered nurses conduct and document cyclical clinical visits with the frequency required by Veterans Health Administration policy and monitor compliance.

Concur

Target date for completion: June 1, 2017

Facility response: This deficiency occurred due to one discipline covering for the other while on annual leave. A second RN case manager is in the process of being brought on board to allow RN to cover RN. Chief of Social Work will monitor compliance for 3 consecutive months. Ongoing compliance will be monitored by program manager.

Recommendation 10. We recommended that facility managers ensure all employees receive additional training as required for their assigned risk area within 90 days of hire and that the training is documented in employee training records.

Concur

Target date for completion: June 1, 2017

Facility response: The Education Department is offering 8 training classes for calendar year 2017. The Education Department sends email message to supervisors reminding them to schedule their staff to attend training as assigned. The Chief of Education will report outstanding training to the Disturbed Behavior Committee and monitor to ensure training is documented in the employee training records.

Recommendation 11. We recommended that Residential Recovery Center employees perform and document contraband inspections and rounds of public spaces and that managers monitor compliance.

Concur

Target date for completion: July 1, 2017

Facility response: The Residential Recovery Center (RRC) staff was provided education and checklist for contraband inspections. Staff conducts 5 random room searches in each building per week and document in CPRS. Facility manager will monitor for 6 consecutive months for compliance. Ongoing compliance will be monitored by RRC Nurse Manager and reported to the Performance Excellence Council.

Recommendation 12. We recommended that acceptable providers perform and document suicide risk assessments for all patients with positive post-traumatic stress disorder screens.

Concur

Target date for completion: June 1, 2017

Facility response: Providers are notified of a positive PTSD screen by nursing. If the Veteran is positive for suicide/homicide ideations (SI/HI) the Primary Care Provider (PCP) performs a Suicide Risk Assessment (SRA), followed by a warm handoff to a mental health provider. If negative for SI/HI, no SRA is needed. Compliance with performing and documenting SRA for patients with positive post-traumatic stress disorder screens will be monitored by Behavioral Health Leadership and reported monthly to the Performance Excellence Council.

Recommendation 13. We recommended that acceptable providers offer further diagnostic evaluations to patients with positive post-traumatic stress disorder screens.

Concur

Target date for completion: June 1, 2017

Facility response: Providers are notified of a positive PTSD screen by nursing. If the Veteran is positive for suicide/homicide ideations (SI/HI) the PCP performs a Suicide Risk Assessment (SRA), followed by a warm handoff to a mental health provider. The PCP completes further inquiry on PTSD symptoms and consults if necessary. Compliance with offering of further diagnostic evaluations to patients with positive post-traumatic stress disorder screens will be monitored by Behavioral Health Leadership and reported monthly to the Performance Excellence Council.

OIG Contact and Staff Acknowledgments

Contact	For more information about this report, please contact the OIG at (202) 461-4720.
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U.S. House of Representatives: Lou Barletta, Matthew Cartwright, Ryan Costello, Charles W. Dent, Pat Meehan, Scott Perry, Lloyd Smucker

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

Endnotes

[a] The references used for QSV were:
- VHA Directive 1026, *VHA Enterprise Framework for Quality, Safety, and Value*, August 2, 2013.
- VHA Directive 1117, *Utilization Management Program*, July 9, 2014.
- VHA Directive 2010-025, *Peer Review for Quality Management*, June 3, 2010.
- VHA Handbook 1050.01, *VHA National Patient Safety Improvement Handbook*, March 4, 2011.
- VHA Handbook 1100.19, *Credentialing and Privileging*, October 15, 2012.

[b] The references used for EOC included:
- VA Handbook 6500, *Risk Management Framework for VA Information Systems – Tier 3: VA Information Security Program*, March 10, 2015.
- VHA Directive 1116(2), *Sterile Processing Services (SPS)*, March 23, 2016.
- VHA Directive 7704(1); *Location, Selection, Installation, Maintenance, and Testing of Emergency Eyewash and Shower Equipment*; February 16, 2016.
- Various requirements of The Joint Commission, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Occupational Safety and Health Administration, International Association of Healthcare Central Service Materiel Management, Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act, National Fire Protection Association.

[c] The references used for Medication Management: Anticoagulation Therapy included:
- VHA Directive 1026; *VHA Enterprise Framework for Quality, Safety, and Value*; August 2, 2013.
- VHA Directive 1033, *Anticoagulation Therapy Management*, July 29, 2015.
- VHA Directive 1088, *Communicating Test Results to Providers and Patients*, October 7, 2015.

[d] The references used for Coordination of Care: Inter-Facility Transfers included:
- VHA Directive 2007-015, *Inter-Facility Transfer Policy*, May 7, 2007.
- VHA Handbook 1907.01, *Health Information Management and Health Records*, March 19, 2015.
- VHA Handbook 1400.01, *Resident Supervision*, December 19, 2012.

[e] The references used for Diagnostic Care: POCT included:
- VHA Handbook 1106.01, *Pathology and Laboratory Medicine Service Procedures*, October 6, 2008.
- VHA Handbook 1106.01, *Pathology and Laboratory Medicine Service (P&LMS) Procedures*, January 29, 2016.
- VHA Directive 1088, *Communicating Test Results to Providers and Patients*, October 7, 2015.
- The Joint Commission. *Comprehensive Accreditation Manual for Laboratories and Point-of-Care Testing*. Update 2. September 2010.
- Boaz M, Landau Z, Wainstein J. Analysis of Institutional Blood Glucose Surveillance. *Journal of Diabetes Science and Technology*. 2010;4(6):1,514–15. Accessed July 18, 2016.

[f] The references used for CNH Oversight included:
- VHA Handbook 1143.2, *VHA Community Nursing Home Oversight Procedures*, June 4, 2004.
- VA OIG report, *Healthcare Inspection – Evaluation of the Veterans Health Administration's Contact Community Nursing Home Program*, (Report No. 05-00266-39, December 13, 2007).

[g] The references used for Management of Disruptive/Violent Behavior included:
- VHA Directive 2012-026, *Sexual Assaults and Other Defined Public Safety Incidents in Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Facilities*, September 27, 2012.
- Public Law 112-154. Honoring America's Veterans and Caring for Camp Lejeune Families Act of 2012. August 6, 2012. 126 Stat. 1165. Sec. 106.
- Acting Deputy Under Secretary for Health for Operations and Management. "Meeting New Mandatory Safety Training Requirements using Veterans Health Administration's Prevention and Management of Disruptive Behavior (PMDB) Curriculum." memorandum. November 7, 2013.

[h] The references used for MH RRTP were:
- VHA Handbook 1162.02, *Mental Health Residential Rehabilitation Treatment Program (MH RRTP)*, December 22, 2010.
- VHA Handbook 1330.01, *Health Care Services for Women Veterans*, May 21, 2010.
- Requirements of the VHA Center for Engineering and Occupational Safety and Health and the National Fire Protection Association.

[i] The references used for PTSD Care included:

- VHA Handbook 1160.01, *Uniform Mental Health Services in VA Medical Centers and Clinics*, September 11, 2008.
- VHA Handbook 1160.03, *Programs for Veterans with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)*, March 12, 2010.
- VA Memorandum, *Information Bulletin: Clarification of Posttraumatic Stress Disorder Screening Requirements*, August 2015.
- *VA/DoD Clinical Practice Guideline for Management of Post-Traumatic Stress*, Version 2.0, October 2010.
- *VHA Technical Manual – PTSD*, VA Measurement Manual PTSD-51.

[j] The reference used for the Strategic Analytics for Improvement and Learning (SAIL) metric definitions was:

- VHA Support Service Center (VSSC), Strategic Analytics for Improvement and Learning (SAIL), accessed: October 3, 2016.

[k] The reference used for Patient Aligned Care Team Compass data graphs was:

- Department of Veterans' Affairs, Patient Aligned Care Teams Compass Data Definitions, accessed: February 25, 2016.