Department of Veterans Affairs
Office of Inspector General

Office of Healthcare Inspections

Report No. 17-01850-38

Comprehensive Healthcare Inspection Program Review of the VA Eastern Kansas Health Care System Topeka, Kansas

December 7, 2017

Washington, DC 20420

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Glossary

CHIP	Comprehensive Healthcare Inspection Program
CNH	community nursing home
EHR	electronic health record
EOC	environment of care
facility	VA Eastern Kansas Health Care System
FY	fiscal year
MH	mental health
Nurse Executive	Associate Director for Patient Care Services
OIG	Office of Inspector General
OPPE	Ongoing Professional Practice Evaluation
PC	primary care
QSV	quality, safety, and value
SAIL	Strategic Analytics for Improvement and Learning
TJC	The Joint Commission
VHA	Veterans Health Administration
VISN	Veterans Integrated Service Network

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Report Overview

This Comprehensive Healthcare Inspection Program (CHIP) review provides a focused evaluation of the quality of care delivered in the inpatient and outpatient settings of the VA Eastern Kansas Health Care System (facility). The review covers key clinical and administrative processes that are associated with promoting quality care.

CHIP reviews are one element of the Office of Inspector General's (OIG) overall efforts to ensure that our nation's veterans receive high-quality and timely VA health care services. The reviews are performed approximately every 3 years for each facility. OIG selects and evaluates specific areas of focus on a rotating basis each year. OIG's current areas of focus are:

1. Leadership and Organizational Risks
2. Quality, Safety, and Value
3. Medication Management
4. Coordination of Care
5. Environment of Care
6. High-Risk Processes
7. Long-Term Care

This review was conducted during an unannounced visit made during the week of May 8, 2017. OIG conducted interviews and reviewed clinical and administrative processes related to areas of focus that affect patient care outcomes. Although OIG reviewed a spectrum of clinical and administrative processes, the sheer complexity of VA medical centers limits the ability to assess all areas of clinical risk. The findings presented in this report are a snapshot of facility performance within the identified focus areas at the time of the OIG visit. Although it is difficult to quantify the risk of patient harm, the findings in this report may help facilities identify areas of vulnerability or conditions that, if properly addressed, will potentially improve patient safety and health care quality.

Results and Review Impact

Leadership and Organizational Risks. At the VA Eastern Kansas Health Care System, the leadership team consists of the Facility Director, Associate Director, Chief of Staff, Associate Director for Patient Care Services (Nurse Executive), and Assistant Director. Organizational communication and accountability are carried out through a committee reporting structure with the Joint Leadership Council having oversight for leadership groups such as the Quality, Medical, Nursing, and Business Operations Executive Boards. The leaders are members of the Joint Leadership Council through which they track, trend, and monitor quality of care and patient outcomes.

Except for the Interim Associate Director who had been acting since approximately October 2016, OIG found that the executive leaders (Facility Director, Chief of Staff, and Nurse Executive) had been working together as a team since approximately

December 2015. In the review of selected employee and patient survey results regarding facility senior leadership, OIG noted high satisfaction scores that reflected active engagement with employees and patients. OIG also noted that facility leaders implemented processes and plans to maintain a committed workforce and positive patient experiences.

Additionally, OIG reviewed accreditation agency findings, sentinel events, disclosures of adverse patient events, Patient Safety Indicator data, and Strategic Analytics for Improvement and Learning (SAIL) data and did not identify any substantial organizational risk factors. OIG recognizes that the SAIL model has limitations for identifying all areas of clinical risk but is "a way to understand the similarities and differences between the top and bottom performers" within the Veterans Health Administration (VHA).[1]

Although the senior leadership team was knowledgeable about selected SAIL metrics, the leaders should continue to take actions to improve poor-performing SAIL metrics, such as Efficiency, Capacity, and Standardized Mortality Ratio [SMR]. In the review of key care processes, OIG issued five recommendations that are attributable to the Chief of Staff, Nurse Executive, and Assistant Director. Of the six areas of clinical operations reviewed, OIG noted findings in four. These are briefly described below.

Quality, Safety, and Value. OIG found that senior managers were engaged with quality, safety, and value activities. When opportunities for improvement were identified, they supported clinical leaders' implementation of corrective actions and monitoring of effectiveness. However, OIG noted deficiencies in credentialing and privileging and utilization management processes.[2]

Medication Management. OIG found safe anticoagulation therapy management practices. However, OIG identified a deficiency in education for patients with newly prescribed anticoagulant medications.

Environment of Care. OIG noted a generally safe and clean environment of care at the parent facility and representative community based outpatient clinic inspected. However, OIG identified an issue with Interdisciplinary Safety Inspection Team member training related to inspecting the locked mental health unit.

[1] VHA Support Service Center (VSSC). The Strategic Analytics for Improvement and Learning (SAIL) Value Model Documentation Manual. Accessed on April 16, 2017: http://vaww.vssc.med.va.gov/VSSCEnhancedProductManagement/DisplayDocument.aspx?DocumentID=2146. VHA's Office of Operational Analytics and Reporting developed a model for understanding a facility's performance in relation to nine quality domains and one efficiency domain. The domains within SAIL are made up of multiple composite measures, and the resulting scores permit comparison of facilities within a Veterans Integrated Service Network or across VHA. The SAIL model uses a "star" ranking system to designate a facility's performance in individual measures, domains, and overall quality.

[2] According to VHA Directive 1117 (July 9, 2014), utilization management involves the forward-looking evaluation of the appropriateness, medical need, and efficiency of health care services according to evidence-based criteria.

Long-Term Care: Community Nursing Home Oversight. OIG found compliance with requirements for the Community Nursing Home Oversight Committee, program integration, and annual reviews. However, OIG identified a deficiency in clinical visits for patients residing in community nursing homes.

Summary

In the review of key care processes, OIG issued five recommendations that are attributable to the Chief of Staff, Associate Director for Patient Care Services, and Assistant Director. The number of recommendations should not be used as a gauge for the overall quality provided at this facility. The intent is for facility leadership to use these recommendations as a "road map" to help improve operations and clinical care. The recommendations address systems issues as well as other less-critical findings that, if left unattended, may eventually interfere with the delivery of quality health care.

Comments

The Veterans Integrated Service Network Director and Facility Director agreed with the CHIP review findings and recommendations and provided acceptable improvement plans. (See Appendixes G and H, pages 40–41, and the responses within the body of the report for the full text of the Directors' comments.) OIG will follow up on the planned actions for the open recommendations until they are completed.

JOHN D. DAIGH, JR., M.D.
Assistant Inspector General for
Healthcare Inspections

Purpose and Scope

Purpose

This Comprehensive Healthcare Inspection Program (CHIP) review was conducted to provide a focused evaluation of the quality of care delivered in the VA Eastern Kansas Health Care System's (facility) inpatient and outpatient settings through a broad overview of key clinical and administrative processes that are associated with quality care and positive patient outcomes. The purpose of the review was to provide oversight of health care services to veterans and to share findings with facility leaders so that informed decisions can be made to improve care.

Scope

The current seven areas of focus for facility reviews are: (1) Leadership and Organizational Risks; (2) Quality, Safety, and Value (QSV); (3) Medication Management; (4) Coordination of Care; (5) Environment of Care (EOC); (6) High-Risk Processes; and (7) Long-Term Care. These were selected because of risks to patients and the organization when care is not performed well. Within four of the fiscal year (FY) 2017 focus areas, the Office of Inspector General (OIG) selected processes for special consideration—Anticoagulation Therapy Management, Inter-Facility Transfers, Moderate Sedation, and Community Nursing Home (CNH) Oversight (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. Fiscal Year 2017 Comprehensive Healthcare Inspection Program Review of Health Care Operations and Services

Source: VA OIG.

Additionally, OIG staff provide crime awareness briefings to increase facility employees' understanding of the potential for VA program fraud and the requirement to report suspected criminal activity to OIG.

Methodology

To determine compliance with Veterans Health Administration (VHA) requirements[3] related to patient care quality, clinical functions, and the EOC, OIG physically inspected selected areas; reviewed clinical records, administrative and performance measure data, and accreditation survey reports;[4] and discussed processes and validated findings with managers and employees. OIG interviewed applicable managers and members of the executive leadership team.

The review covered operations for May 5, 2014[5] through May 8, 2017, the date when an unannounced week-long site visit commenced. OIG also presented crime awareness briefings on May 11 and 12, 2017, to 118 of the facility's 1,972 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.

Recommendations for improvement in this report target problems that can impact the quality of patient care significantly enough to warrant OIG follow-up until the facility completes corrective actions. The Facility Director's comments submitted in response to the recommendations in this report appear within each topic area.

While onsite, OIG did not receive any concerns beyond the scope of a CHIP review. OIG conducted the inspection in accordance with OIG standard operating procedures for CHIP reviews and *Quality Standards for Inspection and Evaluation* published by the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency.

[3] Appendix C lists policies that had expired recertification dates but were considered in effect as they had not been superseded by more recent policy or guidance.
[4] OIG did not review VHA's internal survey results but focused on OIG inspections and external surveys that affect facility accreditation status.
[5] This is the date of the last Combined Assessment Program and/or Community Based Outpatient Clinic and Primary Care Clinic reviews.

Results and Recommendations

Leadership and Organizational Risks

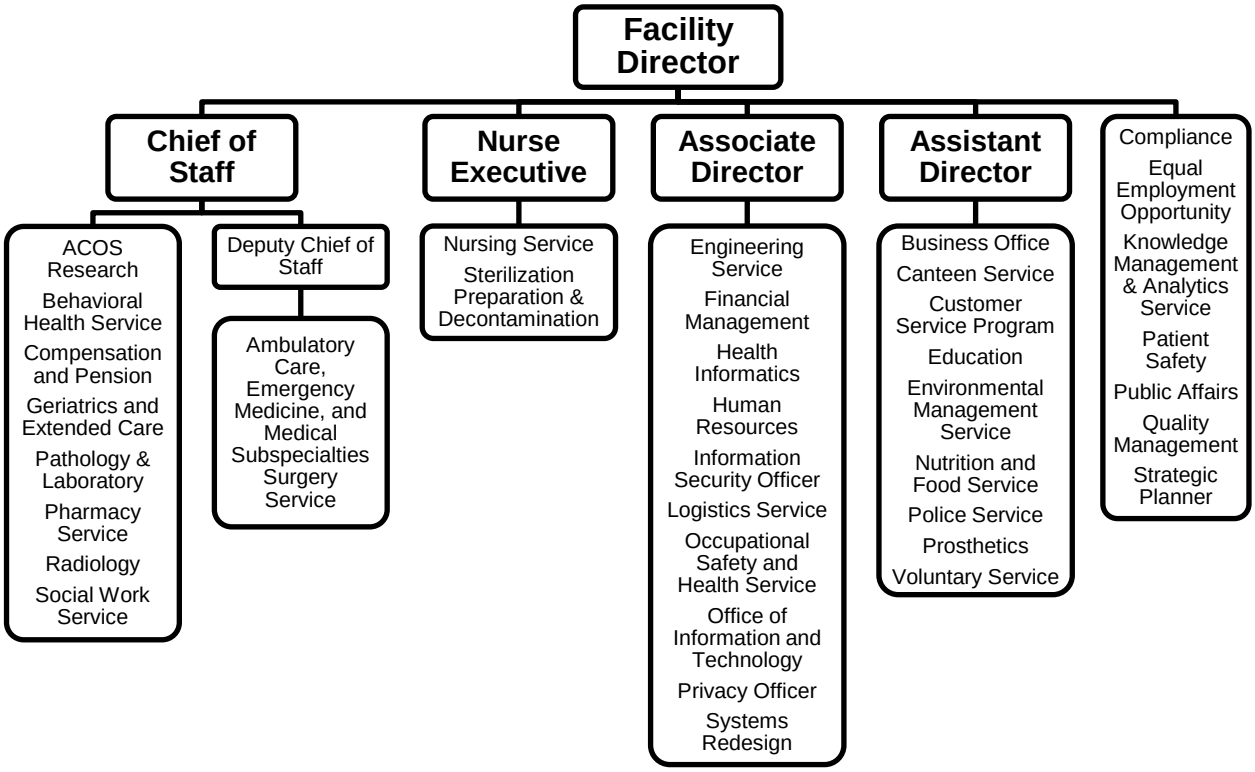
Stable and effective leadership is critical to improving care and sustaining meaningful change. Leadership and organizational risk issues can impact the facility's ability to provide care in all of the selected clinical areas of focus. The factors OIG considered in assessing the facility's risks and strengths were:

1. Executive leadership stability and engagement
2. Employee satisfaction and patient experience
3. Accreditation/for-cause surveys and oversight inspections
4. Indicators for possible lapses in care
5. VHA performance data

Executive Leadership Stability and Engagement. Because each VA facility organizes its leadership to address the needs and expectations of the local veteran population that it serves, organizational charts may differ between facilities. Figure 2 illustrates this facility's reported organizational structure. The facility has a leadership team consisting of the Director, Associate Director, Chief of Staff, Associate Director for Patient Care Services (Nurse Executive), and Assistant Director. The Chief of Staff and Associate Director for Patient Care Services are responsible for overseeing patient care and service directors.

It is important to note that the Associate Director was not permanently assigned to that position and had been acting since approximately October 2016. One employee had served as the Interim Associate Director since the position became vacant, and at the time of our onsite interviews, the Facility Director anticipated selecting a permanently assigned Associate Director within the next few days. With that one exception, the executive leaders had been working together as a team since December 2016.

Figure 2. Facility Organizational Chart



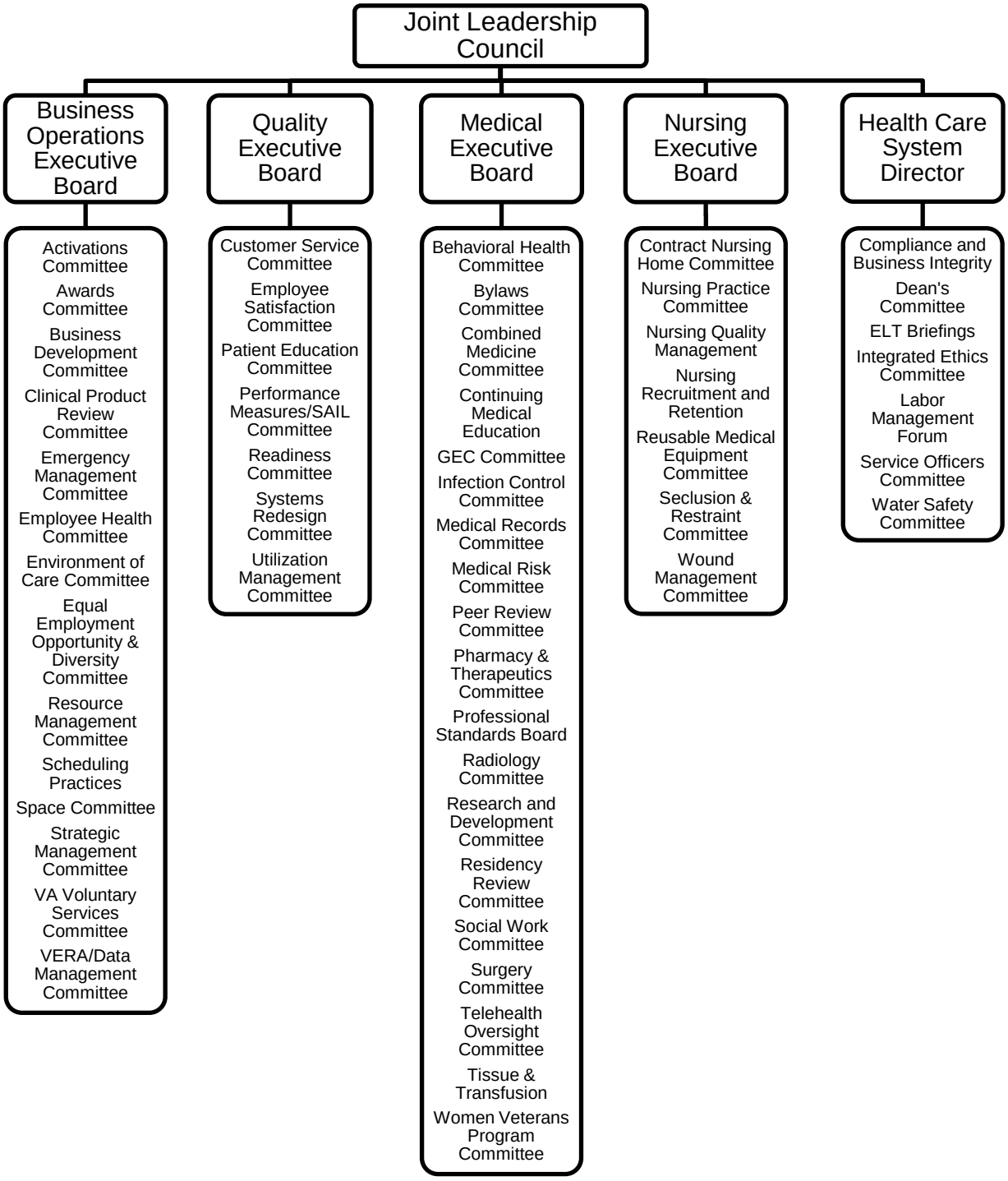
Source: VA Eastern Kansas Health Care System (received July 14, 2017).

To help assess engagement of facility executive leadership, OIG interviewed the Facility Director, Interim Associate Director, Chief of Staff, and Nurse Executive regarding their knowledge of various metrics and their involvement and support of actions to improve or sustain performance.

In individual interviews, the permanently assigned executive leaders generally were able to speak knowledgeably about actions taken during the previous 12 months in order to maintain or improve performance, employee and patient survey results, and selected Strategic Analytics for Improvement and Learning (SAIL) metrics. These are discussed more fully below.

The leaders are also engaged in monitoring patient safety and care through formal mechanisms. They are members of the facility's Joint Leadership Council, which tracks, trends, and monitors quality of care and patient outcomes. The Facility Director serves as the Chairperson with the authority and responsibility to establish policy, maintain quality care standards, and perform organizational management and strategic planning. The Joint Leadership Council also oversees various working committees, such as the Quality, Medical, Nursing, and Business Operations Executive Boards. See Figure 3.

Figure 3. Facility Committee Reporting Structure



Source: VA Eastern Kansas Health Care System (received July 12, 2017).

Employee Satisfaction and Patient Experience. To assess employee and patient attitudes toward facility senior leadership, OIG reviewed employee satisfaction and patient experience survey results that relate to the period of October 1, 2015 through September 30, 2016. Although OIG recognizes that employee satisfaction and patient experience survey data are subjective, they can be a starting point for discussions and indicate areas for further inquiry, which can be considered along with other information on facility leadership. Table 1 provides relevant survey results for VHA and the facility for the 12-month period. The facility leaders' results (Director's office average) were rated markedly above the VHA and facility average.[6] Three of the four patient survey results reflected higher care ratings than the VHA average. In all, both employees and patients appear generally satisfied with the leadership and care provided.

Table 1. Survey Results on Employee and Patient Attitudes toward Facility Leadership (October 1, 2015 through September 30, 2016)

Questions	Scoring	VHA Average	Facility Average	Director's Office Average[7]
All Employee Survey[8] Q59. How satisfied are you with the job being done by the executive leadership where you work?	1 (Very Dissatisfied) – 5 (Very Satisfied)	3.3	3.2	4.5
All Employee Survey Servant Leader Index Composite	0–100 where HIGHER scores are more favorable	66.7	66.4	85.6
Survey of Healthcare Experiences of Patients (inpatient): Would you recommend this hospital to your friends and family?	The response average is the percent of "Definitely Yes" responses.	65.8	68.7	
Survey of Healthcare Experiences of Patients (inpatient): I felt like a valued customer.	The response average is the percent of "Agree" and "Strongly Agree" responses.	82.8	84.0	
Survey of Healthcare Experiences of Patients (outpatient Patient-Centered Medical Home): I felt like a valued customer.		73.2	77.0	
Survey of Healthcare Experiences of Patients (outpatient specialty care): I felt like a valued customer.		73.8	73.7	

Accreditation/For-Cause[9] Surveys and Oversight Inspections. To further assess Leadership and Organizational Risks, OIG reviewed recommendations from previous inspections by oversight and accrediting agencies to gauge how well leaders respond to identified problems. Table 2 summarizes the relevant facility inspections most recently

[6] OIG makes no comment on the adequacy of the VHA average for each selected survey element. The VHA average is used for comparison purposes only.
[7] Rating is based on responses by employees who report to the Director.
[8] The All Employee Survey is an annual, voluntary, census survey of VA workforce experiences. The data are anonymous and confidential. The instrument has been refined at several points since 2001 in response to operational inquiries by VA leadership on organizational health relationships and VA culture.
[9] TJC conducts for-cause unannounced surveys in response to serious incidents relating to the health and/or safety of patients or staff or reported complaints. The outcomes of these types of activities may affect the current accreditation status of an organization.

performed by the VA OIG and The Joint Commission (TJC). Indicative of effective leadership, the facility has closed[10] all recommendations for improvement as listed in Table 2.

OIG also noted the facility's current accreditation status with the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities[11] and College of American Pathologists,[12] which demonstrates the facility leaders' commitment to quality care and services. Additionally, the Long Term Care Institute[13] conducted an inspection of the facility's Community Living Center.

Table 2. Office of Inspector General Inspections/Joint Commission Survey

Accreditation or Inspecting Agency	Date of Visit	Number of Findings	Number of Recommendations Remaining Open
VA OIG (*Healthcare Inspection – Eye Care Concerns, Eastern Kansas Health Care System, Topeka and Leavenworth, Kansas, December 22, 2015)*	November 2014 December 2014	4	0
VA OIG (*Combined Assessment Program Review of the VA Eastern Kansas Health Care System, Topeka, Kansas, October 2, 2014)*	June 2014	18	0
VA OIG (*Community Based Outpatient Clinic and Primary Care Clinic Reviews at VA Eastern Kansas Health Care System, Topeka, Kansas, June 26, 2014)*	May 2014	10	0
TJC[14] • Hospital Accreditation • Nursing Care Center Accreditation • Behavioral Health Care Accreditation • Home Care Accreditation	August 2016	18 3 10 2	0

[10] A closed status indicates that the facility has implemented corrective actions and improvements to address findings and recommendations, not by self-certification, but as determined by accreditation organization or inspecting agency.
[11] The Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities provides an international, independent, peer review system of accreditation that is widely recognized by Federal agencies. VHA's commitment is supported through a system-wide, long-term joint collaboration with the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities to achieve and maintain national accreditation for all appropriate VHA rehabilitation programs.
[12] For 70 years, the College of American Pathologists has fostered excellence in laboratories and advanced the practice of pathology and laboratory science. In accordance with VHA Handbook 1106.01, VHA laboratories must meet the requirements of the College of American Pathologists.
[13] Since 1999, the Long Term Care Institute has been to over 3,500 health care facilities conducting quality reviews and external regulatory surveys. The Long Term Care Institute is a leading organization focused on long-term care quality and performance improvement; compliance program development; and review in long-term care, hospice, and other residential care settings.
[14] TJC is an internationally accepted external validation that an organization has systems and processes in place to provide safe and quality oriented health care. TJC has been accrediting VHA facilities for over 30 years. Compliance with TJC standards facilitates risk reduction and performance improvement.

Indicators for Possible Lapses in Care. Within the health care field, the primary organizational risk is the potential for patient harm. Many factors impact the risk for patient harm within a system, including unsafe environmental conditions, sterile processing deficiencies, and infection control practices. Leaders must be able to understand and implement plans to minimize patient risk through consistent and reliable data and reporting mechanisms. Table 3 summarizes key indicators of risk since OIG's previous June 2014 Combined Assessment Program and May 2014 Community Based Outpatient Clinic and Primary Care (PC) review inspections through the week of May 8, 2017.

Table 3. Summary of Selected Organizational Risk Factors[15] (May 2014 to May 8, 2017)

Factor	Number of Occurrences
Sentinel Events[16]	0
Institutional Disclosures[17]	3
Large-Scale Disclosures[18]	0

[15] It is difficult to quantify an acceptable number of occurrences because one occurrence is one too many. Efforts should focus on prevention. Sentinel events and those that lead to disclosure can occur in either inpatient or outpatient settings and should be viewed within the context of the complexity of the facility. (Note that the VA Eastern Kansas Health Care System is a high-complexity (1c) affiliated facility as described in Appendix B.)
[16] A sentinel event is a patient safety event that involves a patient and results in death, permanent harm, or severe temporary harm and intervention required to sustain life.
[17] Institutional disclosure of adverse events (sometimes referred to as "administrative disclosure") is a formal process by which facility leaders together with clinicians and others, as appropriate, inform the patient or the patient's personal representative that an adverse event has occurred during the patient's care that resulted in, or is reasonably expected to result in, death or serious injury, and provide specific information about the patient's rights and recourse.
[18] Large-scale disclosure of adverse events (sometimes referred to as "notification") is a formal process by which VHA officials assist with coordinating the notification to multiple patients (or their personal representatives) that they may have been affected by an adverse event resulting from a systems issue.

OIG also reviewed Patient Safety Indicators developed by the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. These provide information on potential in-hospital complications and adverse events following surgeries and procedures.[19] The rates presented are specifically applicable for this facility, and lower rates indicate lower risks. Table 4 summarizes Patient Safety Indicator data from October 1, 2015 through September 30, 2016.

Table 4. October 1, 2015 through September 30, 2016, Patient Safety Indicator Data

Measure	Reported Rate per 1,000 Hospital Discharges			
	VHA	VISN 15	Topeka	Leavenworth
Pressure Ulcers	0.55	0.28	0	0
Death among surgical inpatients with serious treatable conditions	103.31	95.24	NA	0
Iatrogenic Pneumothorax	0.20	0.05	0	0
Central Venous Catheter-Related Bloodstream Infection	0.12	0.08	0	0
In Hospital Fall with Hip Fracture	0.08	0.12	0	0
Perioperative Hemorrhage or Hematoma	2.59	1.11	0	0
Postoperative Acute Kidney Injury Requiring Dialysis	1.20	2.48	0	0
Postoperative Respiratory Failure	6.31	8.91	0	27.78
Perioperative Pulmonary Embolism or Deep Vein Thrombosis	3.29	1.03	0	0
Postoperative Sepsis	4.45	7.54	0	0
Postoperative Wound Dehiscence	0.65	0.00	0	0
Unrecognized Abdominopelvic Accidental Puncture/Laceration	0.67	0.44	0	0

Source: VHA Support Service Center.

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

NA = Not applicable

The Patient Safety Indicator measure for postoperative respiratory failure shows an observed rate per 1,000 hospital discharges in excess of the observed rates for Veterans Integrated Service Network (VISN) 15 and VHA. The facility reported the reason for this observation is that there was one incident from October 2015, which in combination with a low number of discharges, resulted in an observed rate above that for VISN 15 and VHA.

[19] Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality website, https://www.qualityindicators.ahrq.gov/, accessed March 8, 2017.

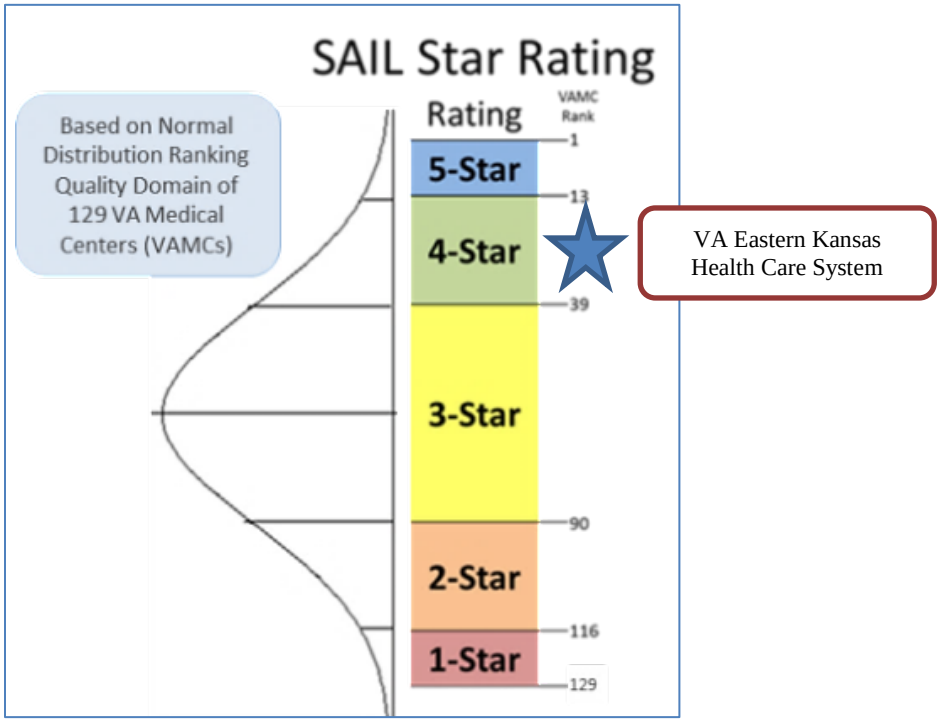
At the time of our review, the facility faced one notable organizational risk given the number of administrative and clinical vacancies. The facility reported more than 350 vacancies throughout the system—85 positions without approval to fill and the remaining positions in various stages of recruitment. Of the 85 positions without approval to fill, approximately 39 have clinical responsibilities (for example, physicians, mid-level providers, nurses, and technologists). Vacancies need to be reviewed and approved positions filled because effective resource management is more likely to result in quality care.

Veterans Health Administration Performance Data. The VA Office of Operational Analytics and Reporting adapted the SAIL Value Model to help define performance expectations within VA.[20] This model includes measures on health care quality, employee satisfaction, access to care, and efficiency but has noted limitations for identifying all areas of clinical risk. The data are presented as one "way to understand the similarities and differences between the top and bottom performers" within VHA.[21]

[20] The model is derived from the Thomson Reuters Top Health Systems Study.
[21] VHA Support Service Center (VSSC). The Strategic Analytics for Improvement and Learning (SAIL) Value Model Documentation Manual. Accessed on April 16, 2017: http://vaww.vssc.med.va.gov/VSSCEnhancedProductManagement/DisplayDocument.aspx?DocumentID=2146

VA also uses a star-rating system that is designed to make model results more accessible for the average user. Facilities with a 5-star rating are performing within the top 10 percent of facilities, whereas 1-star facilities are performing within the bottom 10 percent of facilities. Figure 4 describes the distribution of facilities by star rating. As of September 30, 2016, the VA Eastern Kansas Health Care System received an interim rating of 4 stars for overall quality. This means the facility is in the 2nd quintile (10–30 percent range). Updated data as of June 30, 2017, indicates that the facility has declined to 3 stars for overall quality.

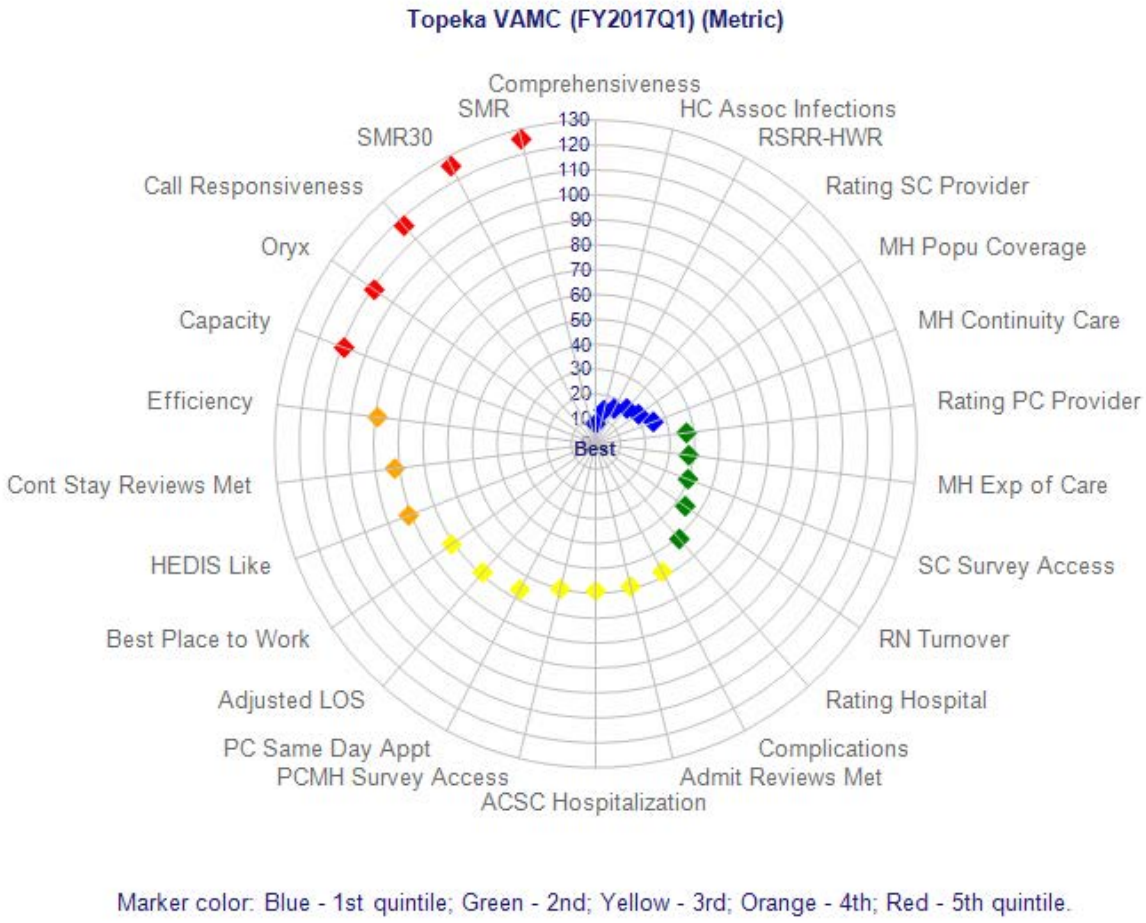
Figure 4. Strategic Analytics for Improvement and Learning Star Rating Distribution (as of September 30, 2016)



Source: VA Office of Informatics and Analytics' Office of Operational Analytics and Reporting.

Figure 5 illustrates the facility's Quality of Care and Efficiency metric rankings and performance compared to other VA facilities as of December 31, 2016. Of note, Figure 5 shows blue and green data points in the top quintiles that show high performance (for example, Healthcare-Associated [HC Assoc] Infections, Mental Health [MH] Continuity [of] Care, and Registered Nurse [RN] Turnover). Metrics in the bottom quintiles reflect areas that need improvement and are denoted in orange and red (for example, Efficiency, Capacity, and Standardized Mortality Ratio [SMR]).

Figure 5. Facility Quality of Care and Efficiency Metric Rankings (as of December 31, 2016)



Source: VHA Support Service Center.

Note: OIG did not assess VA's data for accuracy or completeness. Also see Appendix D for sample outpatient performance measures that feed into these data points (such as wait times, discharge contacts, and where patient care is received). For data definitions, see Appendix E.

Conclusions. The facility has generally stable executive leadership and active engagement with employees and patients as evidenced by high satisfaction scores. Organizational leaders support patient safety, quality care, and other positive outcomes (such as initiating processes and plans to maintain positive perceptions of the facility through active stakeholder engagement). OIG's review of accreditation organization findings, sentinel events, disclosures, Patient Safety Indicator data, and SAIL results did not identify any substantial organizational risk factors.[22] However, during onsite interviews and activities, we found that the facility currently faces one notable organizational risk given a significant number of vacancies throughout the system. Vacancies need to be reviewed and approved positions filled because effective resource management is more likely to result in quality care. Additionally, the senior leadership team was knowledgeable about selected SAIL metrics but should continue to take actions to improve poor-performing SAIL metrics.

[22] OIG recognizes that the SAIL model has limitations for identifying all areas of clinical risk. OIG is using it as "a way to understand the similarities and differences between the top and bottom performers" within the VHA system.

Quality, Safety, and Value

One of VA's strategies is to deliver high-quality, veteran-centered care that compares favorably to the best of the private sector in measured outcomes, value, and efficiency.[23] VHA requires that its facilities operate a QSV program to monitor patient care quality and performance improvement activities.

The purpose of this review was to determine whether the facility complied with key QSV program requirements.[a] To assess this area of focus, OIG evaluated the following:

1. Senior-level involvement in QSV/performance improvement committee
2. Protected peer review[24] of clinical care
3. Credentialing and privileging
4. Utilization management (UM) reviews[25]
5. Patient safety incident reporting and root cause analyses

OIG interviewed senior managers and key QSV employees and evaluated meeting minutes, licensed independent practitioners' profiles, protected peer reviews, root cause analyses, and other relevant documents. The list below shows the performance indicators for each of the following QSV program activities.

- Senior-level committee responsible for key QSV functions
  - Met at least quarterly
  - Chaired or co-chaired by the Facility Director
  - Reviewed aggregated data routinely
- Protected peer reviews
  - Examined important aspects of care (appropriate and timely ordering of diagnostic tests, timely treatment, and appropriate documentation)
  - Resulted in implementation of Peer Review Committee recommended improvement actions

[23] Department of Veterans Affairs, Veterans Health Administration. *Blueprint for Excellence*. September 2014.
[24] According to VHA Directive 2010-025 (June 3, 2010), this is a peer evaluation of the care provided by individual providers within a selected episode of care. This also involves a determination of the necessity of specific actions, and confidential communication is given to the providers who were peer reviewed regarding the results and any recommended actions to improve performance. The process may also result in identification of systems and process issues that require special consideration, investigation, and possibly administrative action by facility staff.
[25] According to VHA Directive 1117 (July 9, 2014), UM reviews evaluate the appropriateness, medical need, and efficiency of health care services according to evidence-based criteria.

- Credentialing and privileging processes
  - Considered frequency for Ongoing Professional Practice Evaluation (OPPE)[26] data review
  - Indicated a Focused Professional Practice Evaluation[27]
- UM personnel
  - Completed at least 75 percent of all required inpatient reviews
  - Documented Physician UM Advisors' decisions in the National UM Integration database
  - Reviewed UM data using an interdisciplinary group
- Patient safety personnel
  - Entered all reported patient incidents into the WEBSPOT database
  - Completed the required minimum of eight root cause analyses
  - Reported root cause analysis findings to reporting employees
  - Submitted an annual patient safety report

Conclusions. Generally, OIG found that senior managers were engaged with QSV activities, and when opportunities for improvement were identified, they supported clinical leaders' implementation of corrective actions and monitoring for effectiveness. OIG found general compliance with requirements for protected peer review and patient safety. However, OIG identified the following deficiencies that warranted recommendations for improvement.

Credentialing and Privileging. Facility policy requires clinical managers to review OPPE data every 6 months. OPPE data is a factor in the facility's decision for maintaining, limiting, or revoking the existing privileges of practitioners. The ongoing monitoring of privileged practitioners is essential to confirm the quality of care delivered and allows the facility to identify professional practice trends that impact patient safety.

We selected 25 practitioners for review; however, one of the practitioners did not have an OPPE profile. Eight of the remaining 24 practitioners' profiles reviewed did not contain evidence that service line managers reviewed OPPE data every 6 months. Service line managers stated that they had conflicting priorities, lack of interest in a process that to them does not add value, breakdown of processes due to staffing shortages, and lack of a tracking mechanism.

[26] OPPE is the ongoing monitoring of privileged practitioners to identify professional practice trends that impact the quality of care and patient safety.

[27] Focused Professional Practice Evaluation is a process whereby the facility evaluates the privilege-specific competence of the practitioner who does not have documented evidence of competently performing the requested privileges of the facility. It typically occurs at the time of initial appointment to the medical staff or the granting of new, additional privileges. The Focused Professional Practice Evaluation may be used when a question arises regarding a currently privileged practitioner's ability to provide safe, high-quality patient care.

Recommendation

1. The Chief of Staff ensures clinical managers consistently review Ongoing Professional Practice Evaluation data every 6 months and monitors the managers' compliance.

Facility Concurred.

Target date for completion: March 1, 2018

Facility response: The Chief of Staff will educate the clinical managers during Medical Executive Board about the importance of consistently reviewing the Ongoing Professional Practice Evaluation. The Professional Standards Board will monitor compliance. The Ongoing Professional Practice Evaluation form will be modified to include a signature from clinical managers. Facility managers will monitor the process until 90% compliance is noted with sustained improvement over 6 consecutive months. Monitoring results will be presented quarterly to the Professional Standards Board.

Utilization Management: Documentation of Decisions. VHA requires that Physician UM Advisors document their decisions regarding appropriateness of patient admission and continued stays in the National UM Integration database. This allows for the availability of UM data across all facilities for review by an interdisciplinary group to set benchmarks; identify trends, actions, and opportunities to improve efficiency; and monitor outcomes. For 4 of 17 cases referred to the Physician UM Advisors from March 1 through April 30, 2017, advisors did not document their decisions in the National Utilization Management Integration database. Utilization management staff believed that Physician UM Advisors did not understand the importance of this function because they lacked UM training.

Recommendation

2. The Chief of Staff ensures Physician Utilization Management Advisors consistently document their decisions in the National Utilization Management Integration database and monitors the advisors' compliance.

Facility Concurred.

Target date for completion: March 1, 2018

Facility response: The Chief of Staff will appoint Physician Utilization Management Advisors to work with Utilization Management to ensure decisions are placed in the National Utilization Management Integration database. Utilization review Committee will monitor compliance. Facility managers will monitor the process until 90% compliance is noted with sustained improvement over 6 consecutive months. Monitoring results will be presented quarterly to the Utilization Management Committee.

Medication Management: Anticoagulation Therapy

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. From October 1, 2015 through September 30, 2016, more than 482,000 veterans received an anticoagulant,[28] or a blood thinner, which is a drug that works to prevent the coagulation or clotting of blood. TJC'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."

Within medication management, OIG selected a special focus on anticoagulation therapy given its risk and common usage among veterans. The purpose of this review was to determine whether facility clinicians appropriately managed and provided education to patients with new orders for anticoagulant medication.[b]

OIG reviewed relevant documents and the competency assessment records of 10 employees actively involved in the anticoagulant program and interviewed key employees. Additionally, OIG reviewed the electronic health records (EHRs) of 30 randomly selected patients who were prescribed new anticoagulant medications from July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2016. The list below shows the performance indicators examined.

- Development and implementation of anticoagulation management policies
- Algorithms, protocols, or standardized care processes
  - Initiation and maintenance of warfarin
  - Management of anticoagulants before, during, and after procedures
  - Use of weight-based, unfractionated heparin
- Provision of a direct telephone number for patient anticoagulation-related calls
- Designation of a physician anticoagulation program champion
- Risk minimization of dosing errors
- Routine review of quality assurance data
- Provision of transition follow-up and education for patients with newly prescribed anticoagulant medications
- Laboratory testing
  - Prior to initiating anticoagulant medications
  - During anticoagulation treatment
- Documentation of justification/rationale for prescribing the anticoagulant when laboratory values did not meet selected criteria
- Competency assessments for employees actively involved in the anticoagulant program

[28] Managerial Cost Accounting Pharmacy Cube, Corporate Data Warehouse data pull on March 23, 2017.

Conclusions. Generally, OIG noted safe anticoagulation therapy management practices for the many indicators listed above. However, OIG identified the following deficiency that warranted a recommendation for improvement.

Patient Education. VHA requires clinicians to provide all patients who are on newly prescribed anticoagulant medications with instructions on the correct use of these drugs, including the importance of complying with provider orders, possible side effects, and interactions with foods or other drugs. Anticoagulant medications carry potential for significant patient harm, such as increased risk for bleeding or thromboembolism,[29] if not used correctly. Patient education is an important component in preventing incorrect use of these medications.

In 4 of the 30 EHRs (13 percent) of patients newly prescribed an anticoagulant, clinicians did not provide education specific to the newly prescribed medication. Clinicians did not enroll the four patients in the facility's anticoagulation clinic. Although facility policy does not require all patients on anticoagulant medications to be enrolled in the anticoagulation clinic, the EHRs of patients enrolled in this clinic contained comprehensive patient education on anticoagulants. Clinicians outside of the anticoagulation clinic lacked awareness of the patient education requirements for the management of patients on these medications, and clinical managers did not provide oversight.

Recommendation

3. The Chief of Staff ensures clinicians consistently provide specific education to all patients with newly prescribed anticoagulant medications and monitors clinicians' compliance.

Facility Concurred.

Target date for completion: March 1, 2018

Facility Response: The Associate Chief of Staff Education will provide education to providers specific to educating patients about anticoagulant medications and enrollment in the facility's anticoagulation clinic. The P&T [Pharmacy and Therapeutics] committee will monitor compliance. Facility managers will monitor the process until 90% compliance is noted with sustained improvement over 6 consecutive months. Monitoring results will be presented quarterly to the P& T Committee.

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

Coordination of Care: Inter-Facility Transfers

Coordination of care is the process of ensuring continuity of care, treatment, or services provided by a facility, which includes referring individuals to appropriate community resources to meet ongoing identified needs. Effective coordination of care also involves implementing a plan of care and avoiding unnecessary duplication of services. OIG selected a special focus on inter-facility transfers because these are frequently necessary to provide patients with access to specific providers or services not available at the facility where the patient is currently receiving care. 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.

The purpose of this review was to evaluate selected aspects of the facility's patient transfer process, specifically transfers out of the facility.[c]

OIG reviewed relevant policies and facility data and interviewed key employees. Additionally, OIG reviewed the EHRs of 34 randomly selected patients who were transferred out of facility inpatient beds or the Emergency Department to another VHA facility or non-VA facility from July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2016. The list below shows the performance indicators OIG examined.

- Development and implementation of patient transfer policy
- Collection and reporting of data about transfers out of the facility
- Completion of VA Form 10-2649A and/or transfer/progress notes prior to or within a few hours after the transfer
  - Date of transfer
  - 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
- Documentation by acceptable designees in the absence of staff/attending physicians
  - Staff/attending physician approval
  - Staff/attending physician countersignature on the transfer note
- Nurse documentation of transfer assessments/notes
- Provider documentation for emergent transfers
  - Patient stability for transfer
  - Provision of all medical care within the facility's capacity
- Communication with the accepting facility
  - Available history
  - Observations, signs, symptoms, and preliminary diagnoses
  - Results of diagnostic studies and tests

Conclusion. Generally, the facility met requirements with the above performance indicators. OIG made no recommendations.

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. OIG also determined whether the facility met requirements in selected areas that are often associated with higher risks of harm to patients, in this case, with a special emphasis on Radiology Service and the locked MH unit.[d]

Fluoroscopic imaging equipment produces x-rays for the diagnosis, localization, and guidance of interventional procedures.[30] Although an integral part of health care, fluoroscopic imaging can deliver large doses of radiation to patients and employees. Large doses of radiation are known to increase the incidence of cancer and can cause fetal abnormalities.

VHA provides various MH services to patients with acute and severe emotional and/or behavioral symptoms. These services are often provided in an inpatient setting.[31] The inpatient locked MH unit must provide a healing, recovery-oriented environment as well as be a safe place for patients and employees. VHA developed the MH EOC Checklist to reduce environmental factors that contribute to inpatient suicides, suicide attempts, and safety issues on MH units.

At the Topeka division, OIG inspected two community living centers; the intensive care, locked MH, medical/surgical, and post-anesthesia care units; Radiology Service; the Emergency Department; a PC clinic; and the women's health clinic. At the Leavenworth division, OIG inspected the surgical holding area and Radiology Service. OIG also inspected the Platte City community based outpatient clinic. Additionally, OIG reviewed relevant documents and 16 employee training records, and interviewed key employees and managers. The list below shows the location-specific performance indicators selected to examine the risk areas specific to particular settings.

<u>Parent Facility</u>

- EOC Deficiency Tracking
- EOC Rounds
- General safety
- Infection prevention
- Environmental cleanliness
- Exam room privacy
- Availability of feminine hygiene products
- Availability of medical equipment and supplies

[30] VHA Handbook 1105.04, *Fluoroscopy Safety*, July 6, 2012.
[31] VHA Handbook 1160.06, *Inpatient Mental Health Services*, September 16, 2013.

Community Based Outpatient Clinic

- General safety
- Infection prevention
- Environmental cleanliness
- Medication safety and security
- Exam room privacy
- General privacy
- Availability of feminine hygiene products
- IT network room security
- Availability of medical equipment and supplies

Radiology

- Safe use of fluoroscopy equipment
- Environmental safety
- Infection prevention
- Medication safety and security
- Radiology equipment inspection
- Availability of medical equipment and supplies
- Maintenance of radiological equipment

Locked Mental Health Unit

- MH EOC inspections
- Environmental suicide hazard identification and abatement
- Environmental safety
- Infection prevention
- Employee training on MH environmental hazards
- Availability of medical equipment and supplies

Conclusions. OIG noted compliance with infection prevention, general safety, cleanliness, and privacy requirements at the parent facility and representative community based outpatient clinic. Radiology and the locked MH unit generally met environmental safety and infection prevention requirements. Additionally, OIG did not note any issues with the availability of medical equipment and supplies. OIG identified the following deficiency that warranted a recommendation for improvement.

Locked Mental Health Unit: Employee Training. VHA requires that locked MH unit employees and Interdisciplinary Safety Inspection Team members receive training on the identification and correction of environmental hazards, including the proper use of the MH EOC Checklist, so they can effectively inspect inpatient MH units to ensure patient, visitor, and staff safety. Three of the 11 Interdisciplinary Safety Inspection Team members' records did not have evidence that the required training was completed within the prior 12 months (May 2016 through April 2017). Managers and staff were aware of the requirements, but managers were not aware that employees' retraining had lapsed.

Recommendation

4. The Assistant Director ensures all Interdisciplinary Safety Inspection Team members receive annual training on how to identify and correct environmental hazards, including the proper use of the Mental Health Environment of Care Checklist, and monitors compliance.

Facility Concurred.

Target date for completion. March 1, 2018

Facility Response: The Safety and Occupational Health Manager will provide annual training to all Interdisciplinary Safety Inspection Team Members. The environment of Care Committee will monitor compliance. Facility managers will monitor the process until 90% compliance is noted with sustained improvement over 6 consecutive months. Monitoring results will be presented quarterly to the Environment of Care Committee.

High Risk Processes: Moderate Sedation

OIG's special focus within high-risk processes for the facility was moderate sedation, which is a drug-induced depression of consciousness during which patients can still respond purposefully to verbal comments.[32] Non-anesthesiologists administer sedatives and analgesics to relieve anxiety and increase patient comfort during invasive procedures and usually do not have to provide interventions to maintain a patient's airway, spontaneous ventilations, or cardiovascular function. The administration of moderate sedation could lead to a range of serious adverse events, including cardiac and respiratory depression, brain damage due to low oxygen levels, cardiac arrest, or death.[33]

Properly credentialed providers and trained clinical staff must provide safe care while sedating patients for invasive procedures. Additionally, facility leaders must monitor moderate sedation adverse events, report and trend the use of reversal agents, and systematically aggregate and analyze the data to enhance patient safety and employee performance.[34] During calendar year 2016, VHA clinicians performed more than 600,000 moderate sedation procedures, of which more than half were gastroenterology-related endoscopies.[35] To minimize risks, VHA and TJC have issued requirements and standards for moderate sedation care.

The purpose of this review was to evaluate selected aspects of care to determine whether the facility complied with applicable policies in the provision of moderate sedation.[e]

OIG reviewed relevant documents, interviewed key employees, and inspected the cardiac catheterization suite, endoscopy suite (includes gastroenterology and pulmonary), radiology suite, intensive care unit, and Emergency Department procedure areas to assess whether required equipment and sedation medications were available. Additionally, OIG reviewed the EHRs of 38 randomly selected patients who underwent an invasive procedure involving moderate sedation from July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2016, and the training records of 15 clinical employees who performed or assisted during these procedures. The list below shows the performance indicators OIG reviewed.

- Reporting and trending the use of reversal agents in moderate sedation cases
- Performance of history and physical examinations and pre-sedation assessment within 30 calendar days prior to the moderate sedation procedure
- Re-evaluation of patients immediately before administration of moderate sedation
- Documentation of informed consent prior to the moderate sedation procedure

[32] American Society of Anesthesiologists (ASA), Practice Guidelines for Sedation and Analgesia by Non-Anesthesiologists, 2002. Anesthesiology 2002; 96:1004-17.
[33] VA National Center for Patient Safety. March 2015. Moderate Sedation Toolkit for Non-Anesthesiologists: Facilitator's Guide, Retrieved March 20, 2017 from: https://www.patientsafety.va.gov/docs/modSedationtoolkit/FacilitatorGuide.pdf.
[34] VHA Directive 1073, *Moderate Sedation by Non-Anesthesiology Providers*, December 30, 2014.
[35] Per VA Corporate Data Warehouse data pull on February 22, 2017.

- Performance of timeout[36] prior to the moderate sedation procedure
- Post-procedure documentation
- Discharge practices
- Clinician training for moderate sedation
- Availability of equipment and medications in moderate sedation procedure areas

Conclusion. Generally, the facility met requirements with the above performance indicators. OIG made no recommendations.

[36] A time out is the process of verifying correct patient, procedure, and procedure site/side. The procedure team (physician, nurses, and other support staff) also verifies that the patient has given consent for the procedure and that any specialty equipment needed is available. This is performed prior to the start of the procedure.

Long-Term Care: Community Nursing Home Oversight

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.[37] Local oversight of CNHs is achieved through annual reviews and monthly visits.

The purpose of this review was to assess whether the facility complied with applicable requirements regarding the monitoring of veterans in contracted CNHs.[f]

OIG interviewed key employees and reviewed relevant documents and the results from CNH annual reviews completed July 5, 2015 through June 30, 2016. Additionally, OIG reviewed the EHRs of 37 randomly selected patients who received CNH care for more than 3 months during the timeframe July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2016. The list below shows the performance indicators OIG reviewed.

- Implementation of a CNH Oversight Committee with representation by required disciplines and meetings at least quarterly
- Integration of CNH program into quality improvement program
- Documentation of hand-off for patients placed in CNHs outside catchment area
- Completion of CNH annual reviews by CNH Review Team
- Completion of exclusion review documentation when CNH annual reviews noted four or more exclusionary criteria
- Documentation of social worker and registered nurse cyclical clinical visits

Conclusions. Generally, OIG noted compliance with requirements for the CNH Oversight Committee, program integration, and annual reviews. OIG identified the following deficiency that warranted a recommendation for improvement.

Clinical Visits. VHA requires that every patient under contract in a nursing home must be visited by a social worker or registered nurse at least every 30 days (unless specific criteria allow an exception). Social workers and registered nurses must alternate monthly visits unless otherwise indicated by the patient's visit plan. This interdisciplinary monitoring ensures vulnerable nursing home patients consistently receive quality care and necessary follow-up services. Twenty-five of the 37 EHRs (68 percent) did not contain documentation of social worker and/or registered nurse cyclical clinical visits with the frequency required by VHA policy. Managers and staff knew about the requirements; however, facility managers stated that staff availability and collateral duties contributed to non-compliance with VHA policy.

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

Recommendation

5. The Chief of Staff and Associate Director for Patient Care Services ensure social workers and registered nurses conduct and document cyclical clinical visits with the frequency required by Veterans Health Administration policy for community nursing home oversight and monitors their compliance.

Facility Concurred.

Target date for completion: March 1, 2018

Facility Response: Chief, Social Work Service in collaboration with the ACNS [Associate Chief, Nursing Service] will document cyclical clinical visits to community nursing homes. Medical Executive Board will monitor compliance quarterly. We concur, that per the directive, the visits are not happening within 30 days of each other. One hundred percent of all veterans were seen monthly; however the visits were scheduled to ensure there was not "routine or predictive pattern of visits". If visits are completed every 30 days, with a window of 1-2 days on either side to complete, the visits become predictable. The Directive, although stating the visits should happen every 30 days, also stresses the importance of the visits not becoming routine. EKHCS [Eastern Kansas Health Care System] will work with the Social Worker and nurse to coordinate a calendar to ensure veterans are seen every 30 days. Facility managers will monitor the process until 90% compliance is noted with sustained improvement over 6 consecutive months. Monitoring results will be presented quarterly to the Medical Executive Board.

Taken from the Directive: "Every VA patient under contract in a nursing home must be visited by a social worker or registered nurse at least every 30 days, except as noted in subparagraph 9c. Social workers and nurses will alternate monthly visits, unless otherwise indicated by the patient's visit plan. Other professional disciplines need to make follow-up visits when indicated by the patient's discharge plan, or upon recommendations from the CNH Review Team. NOTE: It is important to emphasize the individual basis of this plan. When visits become routine, there is a danger that the focus will be lost and that quality will suffer."

Summary Table of Comprehensive Healthcare Inspection Program Review Findings

Healthcare Processes	Performance Indicators	Conclusion	
Leadership and Organizational Risks	• Executive leadership stability and engagement • Employee satisfaction and patient experience • Accreditation/for-cause surveys and oversight inspections • Indicators for possible lapses in care • VHA performance data	Five OIG recommendations, ranging from documentation issues to deficiencies that can lead to patient safety issues or adverse events, are attributable to the Chief of Staff, Associate Director for Patient Care Services, and Assistant Director. See details below.	
Healthcare Processes	**Performance Indicators**	**Critical Recommendations[38] for Improvement**	**Recommendations for Improvement**
Quality, Safety, and Value	• Senior-level involvement in QSV/performance improvement committee • Protected peer review of clinical care • Credentialing and privileging • UM reviews • Patient safety incident reporting and root cause analyses	• Clinical managers consistently review OPPE data twice per year.	• Physician UM Advisors consistently document their decisions in the National UM Integration database.
Medication Management	• Anticoagulation management policies and procedures • Management of patients receiving new orders for anticoagulants o Prior to treatment o During treatment • Ongoing evaluation of the anticoagulation program • Competency assessment	• Clinicians consistently provide specific education to all patients with newly prescribed anticoagulant medications.	None

[38] OIG defines "critical recommendations" as those that rise above others and address vulnerabilities and risks that could cause exceptionally grave health care outcomes and/or significant impact to quality of care.

Healthcare Processes	Performance Indicators	Critical Recommendations for Improvement	Recommendations for Improvement
Coordination of Care	• Transfer policies and procedures • Oversight of transfer process • EHR documentation o Non-emergent transfers o Emergent transfers	None	None
Environment of Care	• Parent facility o EOC deficiency tracking and rounds o General Safety o Infection prevention o Environmental cleanliness o Exam room privacy o Availability of feminine hygiene products and medical equipment and supplies • Community Based Outpatient Clinic o General safety o Infection prevention o Environmental cleanliness o Medication safety and security o Privacy o Availability of feminine hygiene products and medical equipment and supplies o IT network room security • Radiology o Safe use of fluoroscopy equipment o Environmental safety o Infection prevention o Medication safety and security o Radiology equipment inspection o Availability of medical equipment and supplies o Maintenance of radiological equipment • Inpatient MH o MH EOC inspections o Environmental suicide hazard identification o Employee training o Environmental safety o Infection prevention o Availability of medical equipment and supplies	None	• Interdisciplinary Safety Inspection Team members receive annual training on how to identify and correct environmental hazards, including the proper use of the MH EOC Checklist.

Healthcare Processes	Performance Indicators	Critical Recommendations for Improvement	Recommendations for Improvement
High-Risk and Problem-Prone Processes: Moderate Sedation	• Outcomes reporting • Patient safety and documentation o Prior to procedure o After procedure • Staff training and competency • Monitoring equipment and emergency management	None	None
Long-Term Care: Community Nursing Home Oversight	• CNH Oversight Committee and CNH program integration • EHR documentation o Patient hand-off o Clinical visits • CNH annual reviews	• Social workers and registered nurses conduct and document cyclical clinical visits with the frequency required by VHA policy.	None

Facility Profile

The table below provides general background information for this medium-high complexity (1c)[39] affiliated[40] facility reporting to VISN 15.

Table 5. Facility Profile for Topeka (589A5) for October 1, 2013 through September 30, 2016

Profile Element	Facility Data FY 2014[41]	Facility Data FY 2015[42]	Facility Data FY 2016[43]
Total Medical Care Budget in Millions	$296.1	$295.1	$318.5
Number of:			
• **Unique Patients**	34,983	35,845	35,919
• **Outpatient Visits**	429,721	439,731	452,261
• **Unique Employees**[44]	2,158	2,213	2,114
Type and Number of Operating Beds:			
• **Acute**	71	71	71
• **Mental Health**	125	125	125
• **Community Living Center**	138	138	138
• **Domiciliary**	202	202	202
Average Daily Census:			
• **Acute**	30	27	22
• **Mental Health**	45	52	47
• **Community Living Center**	50	46	46
• **Domiciliary**	154	127	114

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

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

NA = Not applicable

[39] VHA medical centers are classified according to a facilities complexity model; 1c designation indicates a facility with medium-high volume, medium-risk patients, some complex clinical programs, and medium sized research and teaching programs. Retrieved September 13, 2017, from http://opes.vssc.med.va.gov/FacilityComplexityLevels/Facility%20Complexity%20Levels%20Document%20Library/Facility%20Complexity%20Level%20Model%20Fact%20Sheet.docx..
[40] Associated with a medical residency program.
[41] October 1, 2013 through September 30, 2014.
[42] October 1, 2014 through September 30, 2015.
[43] October 1, 2015 through September 30, 2016.
[44] Unique employees involved in direct medical care (cost center 8200).

VA Outpatient Clinic Profiles[45]

The VA outpatient clinics in 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 6 provides information relative to each of the clinics.

Table 6. VA Outpatient Clinic Workload/Encounters[46] and Specialty Care, Diagnostic, and Ancillary Services Provided[47] for October 1, 2015 through September 30, 2016

Location	Station No.	PC Workload/ Encounters	MH Workload/ Encounters	Specialty Care Services[48] Provided	Diagnostic Services[49] Provided	Ancillary Services[50] Provided
St. Joseph, MO	589GI	5,092	1,526	Dermatology Nephrology Pulmonary/ Respiratory Disease Eye	EKG	Nutrition Pharmacy Weight Management
Kansas City, KS	589GJ	1,996	1,393	NA	EKG	Nutrition Social Work Weight Management
Chanute, KS	589GM	691	252	NA	NA	NA
Emporia, KS	589GN	615	142	NA	NA	NA
Garnett, KS	589GP	347	89	NA	NA	NA
Junction City, KS	589GR	4,214	1,374	Dermatology Hematology/ Oncology Pulmonary/ Respiratory Disease Eye	EKG	Nutrition Pharmacy Weight Management
Lawrence, KS	589GU	1,319	1,259	NA	EKG	Nutrition Social Work Weight Management

[45] Includes all outpatient clinics in the community that were in operation as of February 15, 2017.
[46] An encounter is a professional contact between a patient and a practitioner vested with responsibility for diagnosing, evaluating, and treating the patient's condition.
[47] The denoted specialty care and ancillary services are limited to primary clinic stops with a count ≥ 100 encounters for October 1, 2015 through September 30, 2016, timeframe at the specified community based outpatient clinic.
[48] Specialty care services refer to non-PC and non-MH services provided by a physician.
[49] Diagnostic services include EKG, EMG, laboratory, nuclear medicine, radiology, and vascular lab services.
[50] 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
Fort Scott, KS	589GV	1,075	574	Hematology/ Oncology	EKG	Nutrition Pharmacy Social Work Weight Management
Platte City, MO	589JE	616	184	Dermatology Blind Rehab	NA	NA

Source: VHA Support Service Center and VA Corporate Data Warehouse

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

NA = Not applicable

VHA Policies Beyond Recertification Dates

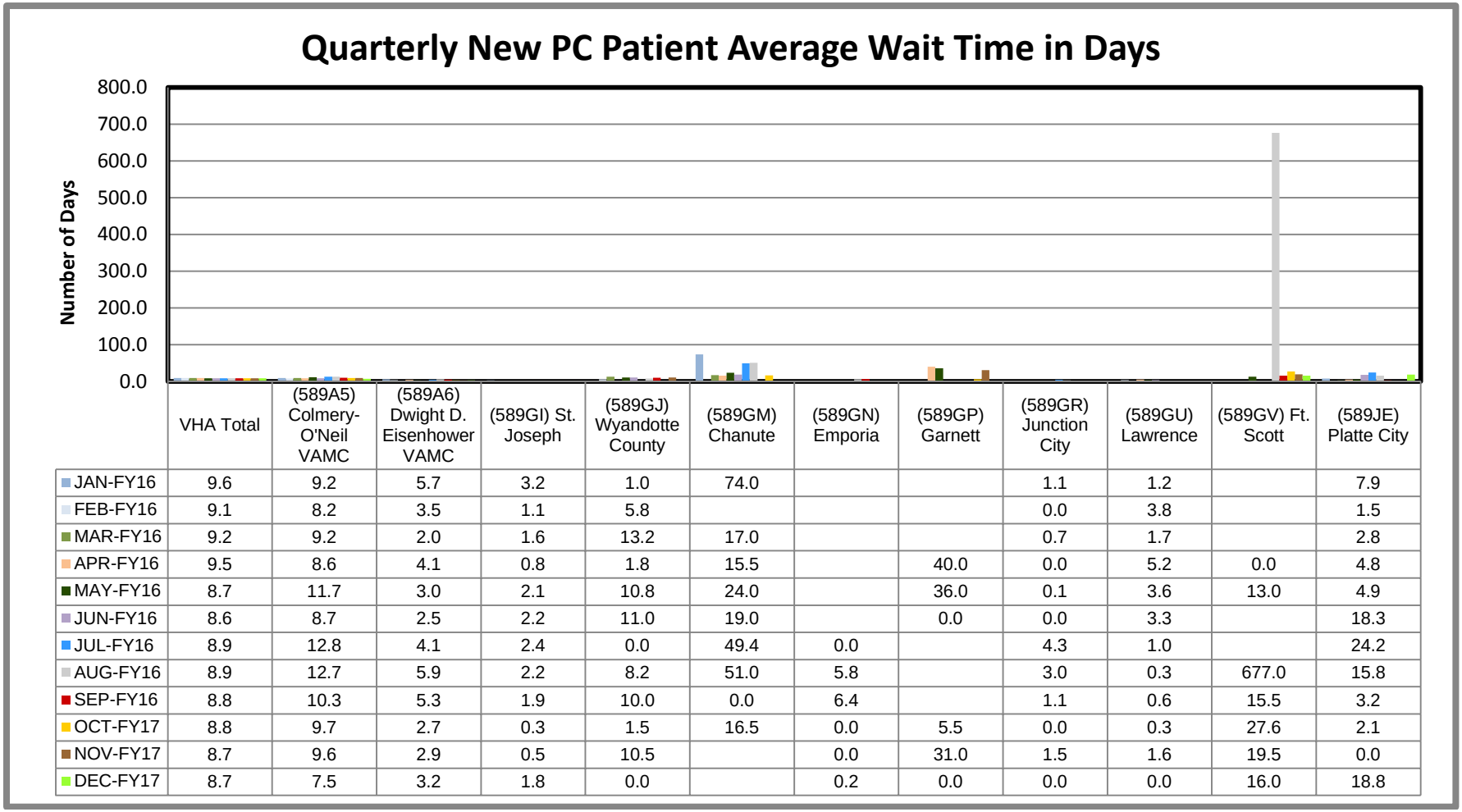
In this report, OIG cited six policies that were beyond the recertification date:

1. VHA Directive 2010-025, *Peer Review for Quality Management*, June 3, 2010 (recertification due date June 30, 2015).
2. VHA Directive 2011-007, Required Hand Hygiene Practices, February 16, 2011 (recertification due date February 29, 2016).
3. VHA Directive 2012-026, Sexual Assaults and Other Defined Public Safety Incidents in Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Facilities, September 27, 2012 (recertification due date September 30, 2017).
4. VHA Handbook 1050.01, *VHA National Patient Safety Improvement Handbook*, March 4, 2011 (recertification due date March 31, 2016).
5. VHA Handbook 1004.01, *Informed Consent for Clinical Treatments and Procedures*, August 14, 2009 (recertification due date August 31, 2014), revised May 22, 2017.
6. VHA Handbook 1143.2, *VHA Community Nursing Home Oversight Procedures*, June 4, 2004 (recertification due date January 31, 2009).

OIG considered these policies to be in effect, as they had not been superseded by more recent policy or guidance. In a June 29, 2016, memorandum to supplement policy provided by VHA Directive 6330(1),[51] the VA Under Secretary for Health mandated the "…continued use of and adherence to VHA policy documents beyond their recertification date until the policy is rescinded, recertified, or superseded by a more recent policy or guidance."[52] The Under Secretary for Health also tasked the Principal Deputy Under Secretary for Health and Deputy Under Secretaries for Health with ensuring "…the timely rescission or recertification of policy documents over which their program offices have primary responsibility."[53]

[51] VHA Directive 6330(1), *Controlled National Policy/Directives Management System*, June 24, 2016, amended January 11, 2017.
[52] VA Under Secretary for Health. "Validity of VHA Policy Document." Memorandum. June 29, 2016.
[53] Ibid.

Patient Aligned Care Team Compass Metrics

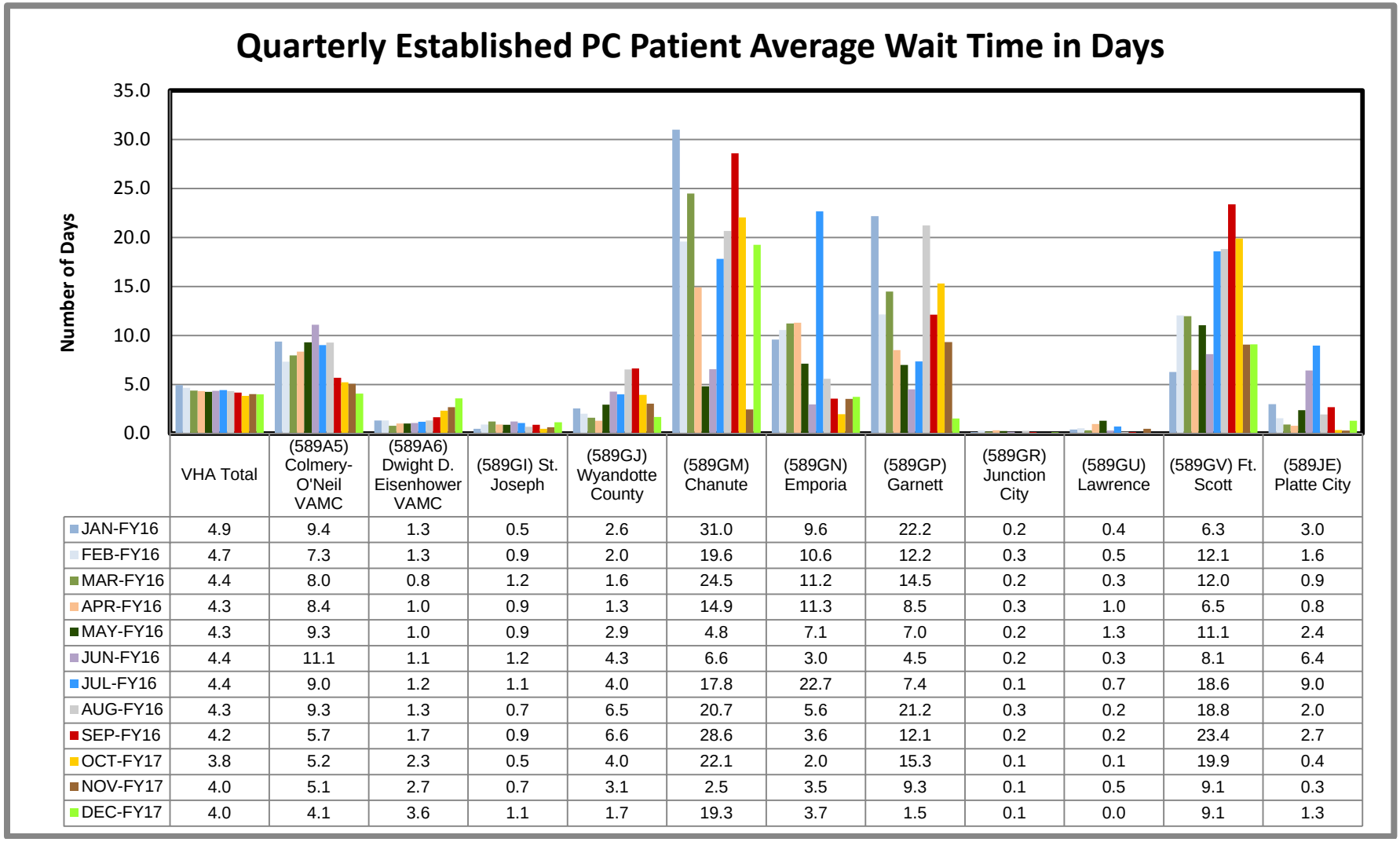


	VHA Total	(589A5) Colmery-O'Neil VAMC	(589A6) Dwight D. Eisenhower VAMC	(589GI) St. Joseph	(589GJ) Wyandotte County	(589GM) Chanute	(589GN) Emporia	(589GP) Garnett	(589GR) Junction City	(589GU) Lawrence	(589GV) Ft. Scott	(589JE) Platte City
JAN-FY16	9.6	9.2	5.7	3.2	1.0	74.0			1.1	1.2		7.9
FEB-FY16	9.1	8.2	3.5	1.1	5.8				0.0	3.8		1.5
MAR-FY16	9.2	9.2	2.0	1.6	13.2	17.0			0.7	1.7		2.8
APR-FY16	9.5	8.6	4.1	0.8	1.8	15.5		40.0	0.0	5.2	0.0	4.8
MAY-FY16	8.7	11.7	3.0	2.1	10.8	24.0		36.0	0.1	3.6	13.0	4.9
JUN-FY16	8.6	8.7	2.5	2.2	11.0	19.0		0.0	0.0	3.3		18.3
JUL-FY16	8.9	12.8	4.1	2.4	0.0	49.4	0.0		4.3	1.0		24.2
AUG-FY16	8.9	12.7	5.9	2.2	8.2	51.0	5.8		3.0	0.3	677.0	15.8
SEP-FY16	8.8	10.3	5.3	1.9	10.0	0.0	6.4		1.1	0.6	15.5	3.2
OCT-FY17	8.8	9.7	2.7	0.3	1.5	16.5	0.0	5.5	0.0	0.3	27.6	2.1
NOV-FY17	8.7	9.6	2.9	0.5	10.5		0.0	31.0	1.5	1.6	19.5	0.0
DEC-FY17	8.7	7.5	3.2	1.8	0.0		0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	16.0	18.8

Source: VHA Support Service Center.

Note: OIG did not assess VA's data for accuracy or completeness. We have on file the facility's explanation for the August 2016 data point for Ft. Scott.

Data Definition[g]: 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.* Blank cells indicate the absence of reported data.

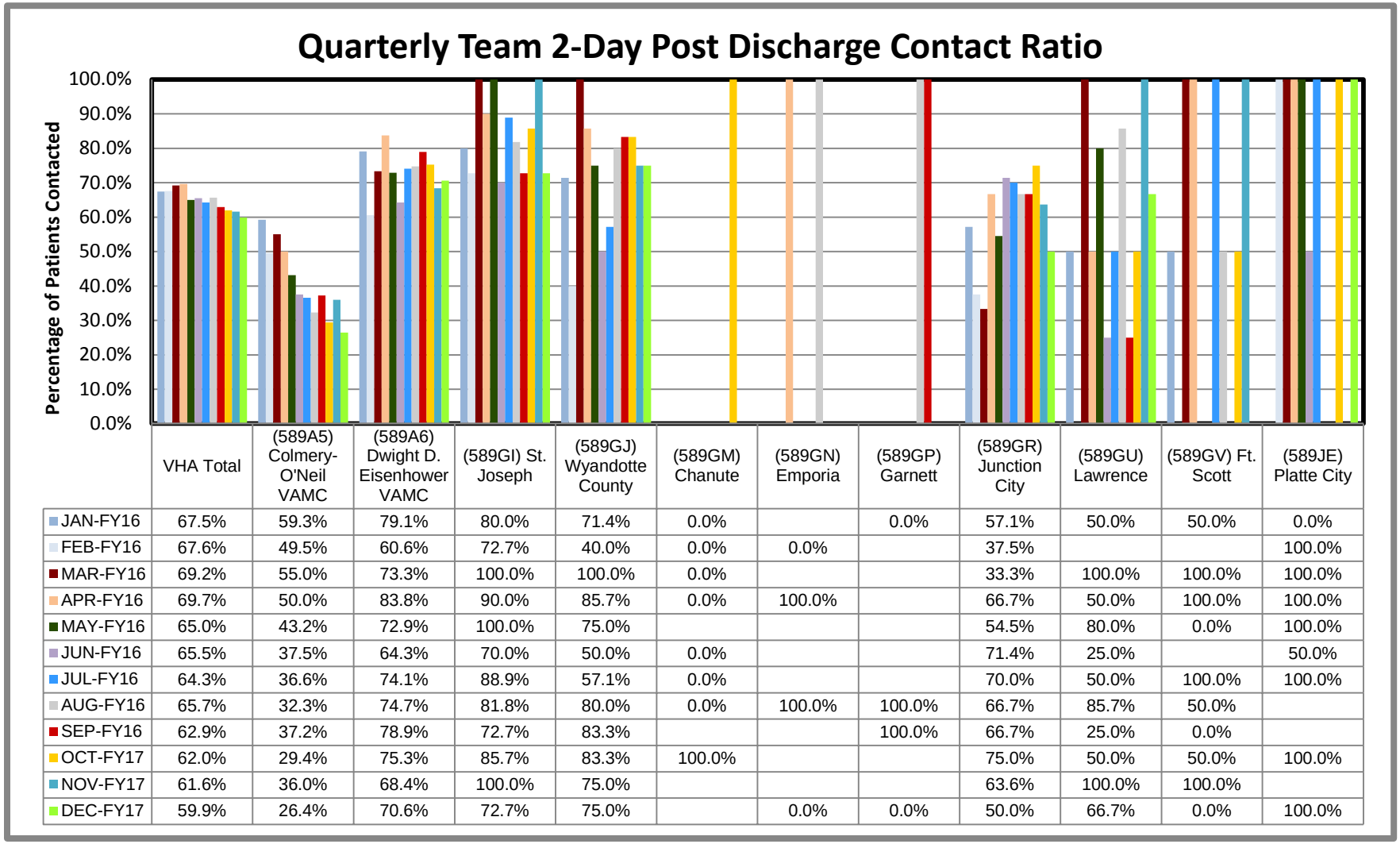


	VHA Total	(589A5) Colmery-O'Neil VAMC	(589A6) Dwight D. Eisenhower VAMC	(589GI) St. Joseph	(589GJ) Wyandotte County	(589GM) Chanute	(589GN) Emporia	(589GP) Garnett	(589GR) Junction City	(589GU) Lawrence	(589GV) Ft. Scott	(589JE) Platte City
JAN-FY16	4.9	9.4	1.3	0.5	2.6	31.0	9.6	22.2	0.2	0.4	6.3	3.0
FEB-FY16	4.7	7.3	1.3	0.9	2.0	19.6	10.6	12.2	0.3	0.5	12.1	1.6
MAR-FY16	4.4	8.0	0.8	1.2	1.6	24.5	11.2	14.5	0.2	0.3	12.0	0.9
APR-FY16	4.3	8.4	1.0	0.9	1.3	14.9	11.3	8.5	0.3	1.0	6.5	0.8
MAY-FY16	4.3	9.3	1.0	0.9	2.9	4.8	7.1	7.0	0.2	1.3	11.1	2.4
JUN-FY16	4.4	11.1	1.1	1.2	4.3	6.6	3.0	4.5	0.2	0.3	8.1	6.4
JUL-FY16	4.4	9.0	1.2	1.1	4.0	17.8	22.7	7.4	0.1	0.7	18.6	9.0
AUG-FY16	4.3	9.3	1.3	0.7	6.5	20.7	5.6	21.2	0.3	0.2	18.8	2.0
SEP-FY16	4.2	5.7	1.7	0.9	6.6	28.6	3.6	12.1	0.2	0.2	23.4	2.7
OCT-FY17	3.8	5.2	2.3	0.5	4.0	22.1	2.0	15.3	0.1	0.1	19.9	0.4
NOV-FY17	4.0	5.1	2.7	0.7	3.1	2.5	3.5	9.3	0.1	0.5	9.1	0.3
DEC-FY17	4.0	4.1	3.6	1.1	1.7	19.3	3.7	1.5	0.1	0.0	9.1	1.3

Source: VHA Support Service Center.

Note: OIG 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.

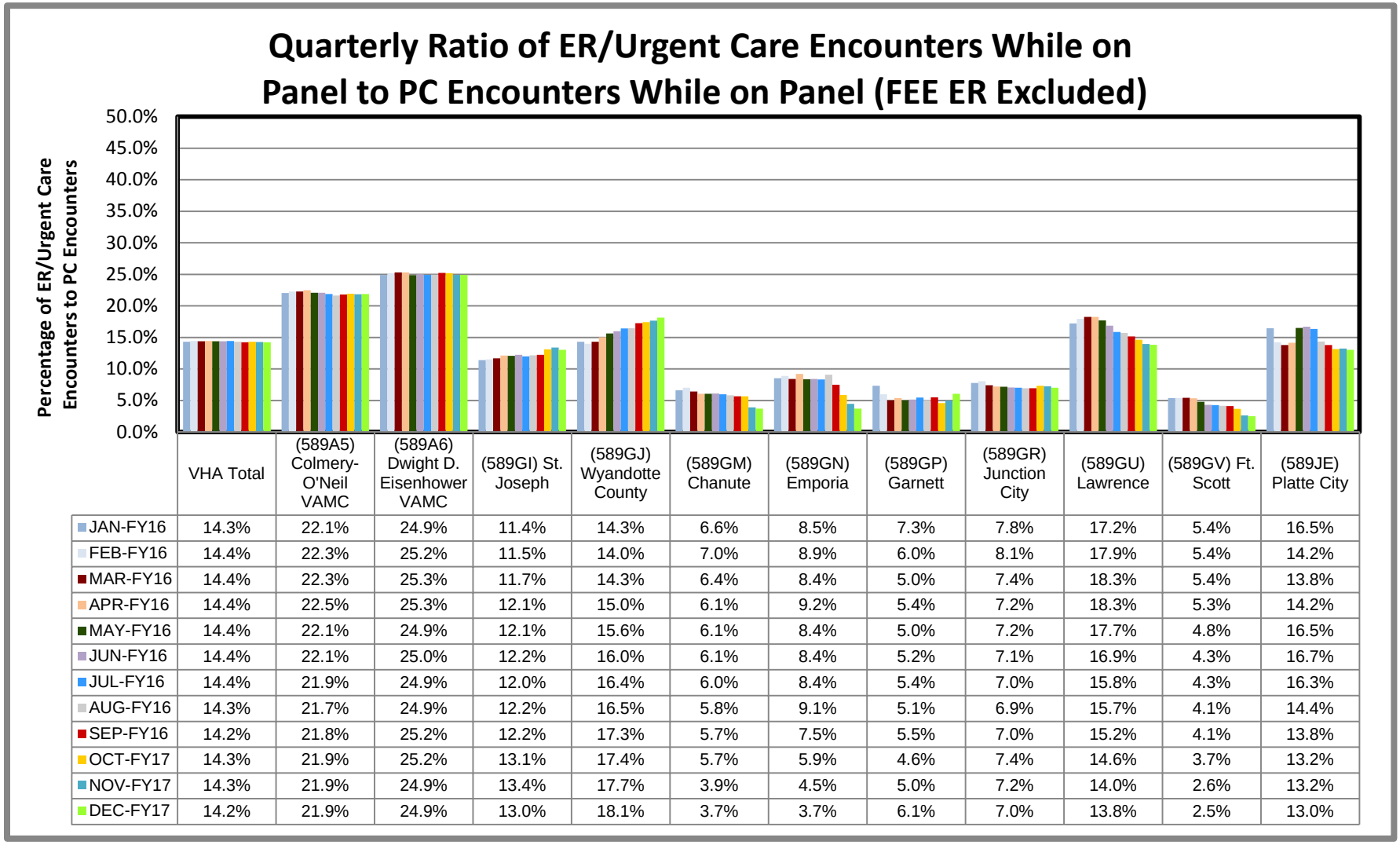


	VHA Total	(589A5) Colmery-O'Neil VAMC	(589A6) Dwight D. Eisenhower VAMC	(589GI) St. Joseph	(589GJ) Wyandotte County	(589GM) Chanute	(589GN) Emporia	(589GP) Garnett	(589GR) Junction City	(589GU) Lawrence	(589GV) Ft. Scott	(589JE) Platte City
JAN-FY16	67.5%	59.3%	79.1%	80.0%	71.4%	0.0%		0.0%	57.1%	50.0%	50.0%	0.0%
FEB-FY16	67.6%	49.5%	60.6%	72.7%	40.0%	0.0%	0.0%		37.5%			100.0%
MAR-FY16	69.2%	55.0%	73.3%	100.0%	100.0%	0.0%			33.3%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
APR-FY16	69.7%	50.0%	83.8%	90.0%	85.7%	0.0%	100.0%		66.7%	50.0%	100.0%	100.0%
MAY-FY16	65.0%	43.2%	72.9%	100.0%	75.0%				54.5%	80.0%	0.0%	100.0%
JUN-FY16	65.5%	37.5%	64.3%	70.0%	50.0%	0.0%			71.4%	25.0%		50.0%
JUL-FY16	64.3%	36.6%	74.1%	88.9%	57.1%	0.0%			70.0%	50.0%	100.0%	100.0%
AUG-FY16	65.7%	32.3%	74.7%	81.8%	80.0%	0.0%	100.0%	100.0%	66.7%	85.7%	50.0%	
SEP-FY16	62.9%	37.2%	78.9%	72.7%	83.3%			100.0%	66.7%	25.0%	0.0%	
OCT-FY17	62.0%	29.4%	75.3%	85.7%	83.3%	100.0%			75.0%	50.0%	50.0%	100.0%
NOV-FY17	61.6%	36.0%	68.4%	100.0%	75.0%				63.6%	100.0%	100.0%	
DEC-FY17	59.9%	26.4%	70.6%	72.7%	75.0%		0.0%	0.0%	50.0%	66.7%	0.0%	100.0%

Source: VHA Support Service Center.

Note: OIG 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. Team member identification is based on the primary provider on the encounter. Performance measure mnemonic "PACT17." Blank cells indicate the absence of reported data.



	VHA Total	(589A5) Colmery-O'Neil VAMC	(589A6) Dwight D. Eisenhower VAMC	(589GI) St. Joseph	(589GJ) Wyandotte County	(589GM) Chanute	(589GN) Emporia	(589GP) Garnett	(589GR) Junction City	(589GU) Lawrence	(589GV) Ft. Scott	(589JE) Platte City
JAN-FY16	14.3%	22.1%	24.9%	11.4%	14.3%	6.6%	8.5%	7.3%	7.8%	17.2%	5.4%	16.5%
FEB-FY16	14.4%	22.3%	25.2%	11.5%	14.0%	7.0%	8.9%	6.0%	8.1%	17.9%	5.4%	14.2%
MAR-FY16	14.4%	22.3%	25.3%	11.7%	14.3%	6.4%	8.4%	5.0%	7.4%	18.3%	5.4%	13.8%
APR-FY16	14.4%	22.5%	25.3%	12.1%	15.0%	6.1%	9.2%	5.4%	7.2%	18.3%	5.3%	14.2%
MAY-FY16	14.4%	22.1%	24.9%	12.1%	15.6%	6.1%	8.4%	5.0%	7.2%	17.7%	4.8%	16.5%
JUN-FY16	14.4%	22.1%	25.0%	12.2%	16.0%	6.1%	8.4%	5.2%	7.1%	16.9%	4.3%	16.7%
JUL-FY16	14.4%	21.9%	24.9%	12.0%	16.4%	6.0%	8.4%	5.4%	7.0%	15.8%	4.3%	16.3%
AUG-FY16	14.3%	21.7%	24.9%	12.2%	16.5%	5.8%	9.1%	5.1%	6.9%	15.7%	4.1%	14.4%
SEP-FY16	14.2%	21.8%	25.2%	12.2%	17.3%	5.7%	7.5%	5.5%	7.0%	15.2%	4.1%	13.8%
OCT-FY17	14.3%	21.9%	25.2%	13.1%	17.4%	5.7%	5.9%	4.6%	7.4%	14.6%	3.7%	13.2%
NOV-FY17	14.3%	21.9%	24.9%	13.4%	17.7%	3.9%	4.5%	5.0%	7.2%	14.0%	2.6%	13.2%
DEC-FY17	14.2%	21.9%	24.9%	13.0%	18.1%	3.7%	3.7%	6.1%	7.0%	13.8%	2.5%	13.0%

Source: VHA Support Service Center.

Note: OIG 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.

Strategic Analytics for Improvement and Learning (SAIL) Metric Definitions[h]

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

Measure	Definition	Desired Direction
RSMR-AMI	30-day risk standardized mortality rate for acute myocardial infarction	A lower value is better than a higher value
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

Relevant OIG Reports

May 5, 2014 through May 8, 2017[54]

Healthcare Inspection – Eye Care Concerns, Eastern Kansas Health Care System, Topeka and Leavenworth, Kansas
12/22/2015 | *15-00268-66* | *Summary* | *Report*

Healthcare Inspection – Emergency Department Concerns, Dwight D. Eisenhower VAMC, Leavenworth, Kansas
10/1/2014 | *14-03212-295* | *Summary* | *Report*

Combined Assessment Program Review of the VA Eastern Kansas Health Care System, Topeka, Kansas
10/1/2014 | *14-02064-252* | *Summary* | *Report*

Community Based Outpatient Clinic and Primary Care Clinic Reviews at VA Eastern Kansas Health Care System, Topeka, Kansas
6/26/2014 | *14-00914-190* | *Summary* | *Report*

[54] These are relevant reports that focused on the facility as well as national-level evaluations of which the facility was a component of the review.

VISN Director Comments

Department of Veterans Affairs

Memorandum

Date: November 8, 2017

From: Director, VA Heartland Network (10N15)

Subject: **CHIP Review of the VA Eastern Kansas Health Care System, Topeka, KS**

To: Director, Atlanta Office of Healthcare Inspections (54AT)
Director, Management Review Service (VHA 10E1D MRS Action)

Attached, please find the initial status response for the Comprehensive Healthcare Inspection Program Review of the VA Eastern Kansas Health Care System, Topeka KS (Conducted the week of March 8, 2017).

I have reviewed and concur with the Medical Center Director's response. Thank you for this opportunity to focus on continuous performance improvement.

WILLIAM P. Patterson, MD, MSS
Network Director
VA Heartland Network (VISN 15)

Facility Director Comments

Department of Veterans Affairs

Memorandum

Date: November 8, 2017

From: Director, VA Eastern Kansas Health Care System (589A5/00)

Subject: **CHIP Review of the VA Eastern Kansas Health Care System, Topeka, KS**

To: Director, VA Heartland Network (10N15)

I appreciate the OIG's comprehensive report and efforts to ensure high quality of care for our Veterans. With the action plans and notes provided Eastern Kansas is in concurrence with the report.

A. RUDY KLOPFER, FACHE, VHA-CM

OIG Contact and Staff Acknowledgments

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Other Contributors	Elizabeth Bullock Limin Clegg, PhD Anita Pendleton, AAS Marilyn Stones, BS Mary Toy, RN, MSN

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Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs
National Veterans Service Organizations
Government Accountability Office
Office of Management and Budget
U.S. Senate: Roy Blunt, Claire McCaskill, Jerry Moran, Pat Roberts
U.S. House of Representatives: Emanuel Cleaver, Ron Estes, Sam Graves, Vicky Hartzler, Lynn Jenkins, Roger Marshall, Kevin Yoder

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 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.

[c] The references used for Coordination of Care: Inter-Facility Transfers included:
- VHA Directive 2007-015, *Inter-Facility Transfer Policy*, May 7, 2007. This directive was in effect during the timeframe of OIG's review but has been rescinded and replaced with VHA Directive 1094, *Inter-Facility Transfer Policy*, January 11, 2017.
- VHA Handbook 1907.01, *Health Information Management and Health Records*, March 19, 2015.
- VHA Handbook 1400.01, *Resident Supervision*, December 19, 2012.

[d] The references used for EOC included:
- VHA Directive 1014, *Safe Medication Injection Practices*, July 1, 2015.
- VHA Handbook 1105.04, *Fluoroscopy Safety*, July 6, 2012.
- VHA Directive 1116(2), *Sterile Processing Services (SPS)*, March 23, 2016.
- VHA Handbook 1160.06, *Inpatient Mental Health Services*, September 16, 2013.
- VHA Directive 1229, *Planning and Operating Outpatient Sites of Care*, July 7, 2017.
- VHA Directive 1330.01(1), Health Care Services for Women Veterans, February 15, 2017 (amended September 8, 2017).
- VHA Directive 1608, *Comprehensive Environment of Care (CEOC) Program*, February 1, 2016.
- VHA Handbook 1907.01, *Health Information Management and Health Records*, March 19, 2015.
- VHA Directive 2011-007, *Required Hand Hygiene Practices*, February 16, 2011.
- VHA Directive 2012-026, *Sexual Assaults and Other Defined Public Safety Incidents in Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Facilities*, September 27, 2012.
- VA Handbook 6500, *Risk Management Framework for VA Information Systems – Tier 3: VA Information Security Program*, March 10, 2015.
- MH EOC Checklist, VA National Center for Patient Safety, http://vaww.ncps.med.va.gov/guidelines.html#mhc, accessed December 8, 2016.
- Various requirements of TJC, Association for the Advancement of Medical Instrumentation/Association for the Advancement of Medical Instrumentation, Occupational Safety and Health Administration, International Association of Healthcare Central Service Materiel Management, National Fire Protection Association.

[e] The references used for Moderate Sedation included:
- VHA Handbook 1004.01, *Informed Consent for Clinical Treatments and Procedures*, August 14, 2009.
- VHA Directive1039, *Ensuring Correct Surgery and Invasive Procedures*, July 26, 2013.
- VHA Directive 1073, *Moderate Sedation by Non-Anesthesia Providers*, December 30, 2014.
- VHA Directive 1177; *Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation, Basic Life Support, and Advanced Cardiac Life Support Training for Staff*; November 6, 2014.
- VA National Center for Patient Safety. *Facilitator's Guide for Moderate Sedation Toolkit for Non-Anesthesiologists*. March 29, 2011.
- American Society of Anesthesiologists. Practice Guidelines for Sedation and Analgesia by Non-Anesthesiologists. *Anesthesiology*. 2002; 96:1004–17.
- TJC. Hospital Standards. January 2016. PC.03.01.01, EP1 and MS.06.01.03 EP6.

[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 reference used for PACT Compass data graphs was:

- Department of Veterans' Affairs, Patient Aligned Care Teams Compass Data Definitions, accessed: February 14, 2017.

[h] 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.