

**Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)
Between the
United States Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)
and
National Association of State Veterans Homes (NASVH)**

I. Purpose

This MOU is to foster continuous improvement in the relationship and communication between VA and NASVH to provide improved quality of care and services to Veterans living in State Veterans Homes (SVH).

II. Background

NASVH promotes and enhances the quality of care and life of Veterans and families in SVH through education, networking and advocacy. The SVH program is the largest provider of long-term care for our Nation's Veterans with over 30,000 beds across all 50 states and Puerto Rico. There are currently more than 150 SVHs across the Nation providing skilled nursing care, domiciliary care and adult day health care (ADHC). VA provides states with construction grants to build, renovate and maintain SVHs according to the Federal regulations. SVHs also receive per diem payments for skilled nursing home care, domiciliary care and ADHC from the Federal government which covers about one third of the daily cost of care. For certain service-connected Veterans living in SVHs, VA pays a rate intended to cover the full cost of care. SVHs provide over 50 percent of VA's long-term care workload at less than 20 percent of VA's total expenditures for long-term care, and there is an even greater potential return on investment with expanded ADHC and community-based services in the future.

Each SVH is managed and operated according to state preference. The majority of SVHs are managed by the state, and others are privately managed. All are overseen by the state, as required by VA, and managed by experts in long-term care and health care administration requiring specific professional licensure.

III. Goals

NASVH and VA will seek a meaningful relationship that will deliver improved quality of care and services for America's Veterans. The hallmark of this relationship will be effective communication, exchange of ideas and information, identification of emerging needs, and continuous reevaluation of existing programs. Our shared goal is to constantly work towards more uniform, efficient, and effective programs that ensure a seamless continuum of care and services at the Federal and state levels.

IV. Responsibilities

NASVH will:

- Exchange information on efforts to encourage and assist states to establish new homes and State Home Programs;
- Exchange information on State Home resources that could be shared under current legislative authority governing each State Home;
- Provide an annual report of legislative resolutions and best practices to exemplify VA strategic goals;
- Support VA's strategic goals and core values: Integrity, Commitment, Advocacy, Respect, Excellence; and
- Participate, if requested, in VA's conferences and workshops.

VA will:

- Participate in NASVH winter and summer annual conferences;
- Discuss with NASVH (to the extent authorized by law), new regulations, VA initiatives and/or major enterprises, to the extent VA determines it to be appropriate and practical, so that impacts, resources and outcomes may be better addressed and coordinated;
- Identify emerging and/or unmet needs of Veterans and engage with NASVH in reciprocal discussions and deliberations on potential responses and solutions;
- Consider nominations of NASVH leadership to VA Advisory Committees such as Geriatrics and Gerontology, Advisory Committee on Homeless Veterans, Veterans' Rural Health Advisory Committee and Veterans' Family, Caregiver, and Survivor Advisory Committee; and
- Conduct quarterly meetings or conference calls with NASVH leadership to:
 - Share program relevant information, expertise and knowledge, and discuss issues of mutual concern regarding the programs;
 - Seek methods to ensure the most effective use of existing resources; and
 - Identify and share best practices that could be adopted by states to improve programs, services and the delivery of care for Veterans.

V. Objectives

Jointly, NASVH and VA will:

- Improve collaboration by providing a single liaison from each organization responsible for communicating between our respective organizations;
- Continue to strengthen the relationship and trust between NASVH and VA, and exchange information (when appropriate) to provide a level of transparency;
- Establish a formal means of exchanging information (when appropriate) among VA, State Homes, NASVH, and/or other agencies or individuals involved in long-term care about the results of our research and experiences related to the planning for, and provision of, long-term care of Veterans;
- Improve Veterans' experiences in receiving health care and other services provided by VA and SVH;
- Increase direct involvement of NASVH Leadership with VA in strategic planning;

- Increase communication between NASVH Leadership and VA; and
- Discuss, to the extent authorized by law, new regulations that impact SVH operations prior to the rule making process.

Duration, Amendment, Review and Termination

This MOU will be reviewed annually for compliance and effectiveness. At any time, the parties reserve the right to update, change or terminate this agreement in writing with 30 days' notice sent from the authorized representative of the terminating party to the authorized representative of the other party.

Authorized Representatives and Approvals

In the spirit of this partnership, the undersigned are authorized to act in their respective areas related to this agreement and agree to designate an appropriate representative to establish objectives with strategies to meet the goals of this MOU.

By: Robert L. Wilkie
Robert L. Wilkie
Secretary
Department of Veterans Affairs

By: Kelley J. Kash
Kelley J. Kash, Colonel (Retired)
USAF, MSC
President, National Association of
State Veterans Homes

Date: 6/10/19

Date: 6/11/19