



**DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS**  
**Veterans Health Administration**  
**Washington, DC 20420**

**IL 10-2012-013**

Reply to: 10P4

**September 28, 2012**

**UNDER SECRETARY FOR HEALTH'S INFORMATION LETTER**

**MARK WOLCOTT AWARDS FOR CLINICAL EXCELLENCE**

1. This letter announces the acceptance of nominations for the annual Mark Wolcott Awards for Clinical Excellence. Established in 1996, this awards program recognizes outstanding Veterans Health Administration (VHA) health care practitioners who are deserving of special recognition for their contributions in enhancing clinical care. It was named after Mark Wolcott, MD, who dedicated over 40 years of his life to serve and improve the quality of health care for VHA's Veteran population.
2. Dr. Wolcott's vision, commitment, and dedication were noteworthy during his tenure on two separate assignments in VHA Central Office as the Associate Chief Medical Director for Clinical Affairs and as the Chief of Research in Surgery. His other Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) assignments included Chief of Surgery and Chief of Staff at the VA Medical Center in Salt Lake City, UT; Chief of Thoracic Surgery at the VA Medical Center in Augusta, GA; and Chief of Surgical Service at the VA Medical Center in Miami, FL.
3. Two award categories have been established, Excellence in Clinical Care Delivery and Excellence in Clinical Care Leadership.
  - a. **Excellence in Clinical Care Delivery.** The recipient is to be a practitioner in any health care setting who has demonstrated excellence in "hands on" direct patient care.
  - b. **Excellence in Clinical Care Leadership.** The recipient is to be a health care practitioner in a leadership or management position who has demonstrated excellence through exceptional support for direct patient care providers, including support of innovations enhancing the quality of direct patient care delivery.
4. This award is given annually to honor care given the previous year. The nominees must be VHA employees currently practicing at least 5/8 time in any health care profession. Each winner receives a plaque and a cash award of \$5,000.
5. Each facility Director, VHA Central Office Chief Consultant, or Clinical Program Director may nominate one candidate in each category per year.
6. An evaluation committee, appointed by the Chief Patient Care Services Officer, reviews all nominations.

7. **Nomination Package.** The nomination package needs to include:

- a. A letter from the facility Director, VHA Central Office Chief Consultant, or Clinical Program Director summarizing the basis for the nomination.
- b. Concurrence by the Network Director for field nominees, or the VHA Chief Program Officer for VHA Central Office nominees.
- c. Current curriculum vitae, resume, or other summary of education, training, and work history.
- d. Letters of support outlining the nominee's contributions.
- e. A summary of the nominee's achievements clearly identifying the nomination category. The summary is not to exceed three pages in length and needs to address the items in either following subparagraph 7e(1) or subparagraph 7e(2):

**(1) Award for Excellence in Clinical Care Delivery**

- (a) Evidence that the nominee exemplifies Dr. Wolcott's excellence in the delivery of care and has had an effective role in improving the quality of health care for Veteran patients.
- (b) Evidence that the nominee has been a positive role model for the health care profession and is recognized by management and colleagues for excellence and dedication in the provision of care.
- (c) Evidence that the nominee works effectively with the health care team to promote excellence in the delivery of clinical care.
- (d) Evidence that the nominee is recognized by the patients served as an outstanding health care practitioner.

**(2) Award for Excellence in Clinical Care Leadership**

- (a) Evidence that the nominee's leadership has significantly contributed to improving the quality of patient care, either locally, throughout the Network, or nationally.
- (b) Evidence that the nominee supports originality, creativity, and innovation in the delivery of direct clinical care.
- (c) Evidence that the nominee's outstanding leadership is recognized by management, colleagues, and subordinates.

8. **Submission.**

a. Only an electronic copy of the nomination package needs to be submitted to:  
william.outlaw2@va.gov

b. The nomination package is due no later than October 30, 2012.

9. **Inquiries.** Inquiries regarding this award may be directed to Bill Outlaw at (202) 461-1768  
or william.outlaw2@va.gov.

Robert A. Petzel, M.D.  
Under Secretary for Health

DISTRIBUTION: E-mailed to the VHA Publications Distribution List 9/28/2012