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CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

1.01 PURPOSE

The purpose of this manual is to delineate the basic mission, goals, and objectives for the conduct of education and training programs within VHS&RA (Veterans Health Services and Research Administration) as carried out by health care facilities.

1.02 AUTHORITY

a. **Basic.** The basic authority for the conduct of education and training programs and activities in VHS&RA is contained in 38 U.S.C. chs. 73 and 81 (subch. IV) which include the enabling legislation for such activities.

b. **Legislative Highlights.** The major items of legislation authorizing education and training in VHS&RA include: Pub. L. 293, 79th Congress, establishing a Department of Medicine and Surgery in the Veterans Administration; Pub. L. 89-785, "Veterans Hospitalization and Medical Services Modernization Amendments of 1966," including the exchange of medical information; Pub. L. 92-541, "Veterans Administration Medical School Assistance and Health Manpower Training Act of 1972," including Regional Medical Education Centers; Pub. L. 93-82, "Veterans Health Care Expansion Act of 1973," including education and training of health service personnel; Pub. L. 96-151, "Veterans Health Programs Extension and Improvement Act of 1979," including agreements with public and nonprofit private institutions, organizations, corporations, and other entities concerning cooperative health care personnel education programs; Pub. L. 96-330, "Veterans Administration Health Care Amendments of 1980" and Pub. L. 97-251, "Veterans Administration Health Care Programs Improvement and Extension Act of 1982," including the health professional scholarship program. Other education and training activities in VHS&RA are authorized by Pub. L. 85-507, "Government Employees Training Act," as contained in 5 U.S.C. ch. 41.

1.03 MISSION AND GOALS

a. **Mission.** The primary and overriding rationale for health care education and training activities in VHS&RA is improved care of the veteran patient. Further to this goal, VHS&RA is directed by statute to "... assist in providing an adequate supply of health personnel to the Nation" This is accomplished in large measure by VA (Department of Veterans Affairs) participation in the patient care component of clinical training programs of educational institutions affiliated with VA.

b. **Goals.** The benefits for VHS&RA and its patients are derived from participation in health care education and training through the accomplishment of:

(1) Enhanced ability to attract and retain health care personnel qualified to provide the highest quality of health care and services;

(2) Maintenance and continued development of professional competence and skills, and the increased challenge and professional satisfaction afforded by the teacher-student relationship;

(3) Appropriate recognition by the medical and academic communities and the public of the role of VHS&RA in the patient care, health care education and training, and research efforts of the Nation;

(4) Utilization of VHS&RA professional resources and clinical facilities to assist in providing an adequate supply of health care personnel to the Nation.

1.04 ORGANIZATION OF THE OFFICE OF THE ACMD FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

The organization of the office of the ACMD for Academic Affairs to the service level is contained in VA Organization Manual M-00-1.

1.05 ADVISORY BODIES

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a. **Subcommittee on Academic Affairs, SMAG (Special Medical Advisory Group).** SMAG is mandated by statute codified in 38 U.S.C. 4112, and is composed of non-VA health experts who report to the Secretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs, through the Chief Medical Director, and to the Chief Medical Director directly. SMAG assists in the advancement of the functions of the VHS&RA. Its scope includes review and recommendations concerning all matters pertinent to VHS&RA programs of medical care and treatment, education and training of health care personnel, and research.

b. **AAAC (Academic Affairs Advisory Council).** The AAAC is composed of VHS&RA field personnel selected for expertise and experience in education and training. On request, the Council provides advice and guidance to the ACMD for Academic Affairs.

1.06 EVALUATION OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING ACTIVITIES IN VA HEALTH CARE FACILITIES

a. **General.** Systematic program evaluations will be conducted on a continuing basis to assure that the education and training programs in VA health care facilities meet specified objectives and that allocated resources are being effectively utilized.

b. **Application.** In program areas where national accreditation bodies exist, individual programs will be subject to evaluation by duly established and recognized accrediting bodies. Each organizational component of the Office of Academic Affairs responsible for a given program may develop, when the responsible unit deems it appropriate, evaluative mechanisms to complement such nationally promulgated program criteria, and may establish criteria specifically relevant to VHS&RA goals and objectives for participation in education programs. The criteria are used for review and approval of new and renewed educational programs. Where developed, these criteria, reports, and other administrative mechanisms are detailed in appropriate parts and chapters of this manual. The periodic evaluation of education and training activities is not intended to replace or conflict with other established departmental and agency plans and programs relative to the evaluation of medical care (see par. 2.09).

1.07 GIFTS OR DONATIONS FOR EDUCATION PURPOSES

a. Gifts or donations may be received for education purposes in the General Post Fund with the approval of the facility's Education Committee (see par. 3.05) and the facility Director. This includes equipment, supplies, and funds from nonprofit organizations, private donors, and companies.

b. The acceptance and use of all gifts or donations must be in accordance with policies and procedures contained in MP-4, part V and VHS&RA Supplement, MP-4, part VII. The following requirements in VHS&RA Supplement, MP-4 are repeated for emphasis.

(1) Expenditures of the General Post Fund for education activities are limited to funds specifically earmarked by the donor for such purposes (see VHS&RA Supplement, MP-4, pt. VII, ch. 4).

(2) Offers of donations (whether in cash or in kind) to VA or to VA employees for official travel or other expenses of VA employees for education purposes may be accepted in any of the following circumstances:

(a) The donation is earmarked for an education project and is not exclusively for travel or related expenses of VA employees. The donation may then be accepted into the General Post Fund, and part of it may be used to pay for VA employees' travel and expenses which are essential to conduct the education project if the trip is approved by the facility Education Committee (see VHS&RA Supplement MP-4, pt. VII, ch. 4, par. 4.04n(1));

(b) The donation meets the criteria set forth in the General Post Fund manual (VHS&RA Supplement MP-4, pt. VII, ch. 4, par. 4.04n(2)) by which Central Office program officials may accept donations from professional medical organizations;

(c) The employee accepts the donation in accordance with and as approved under paragraph 9.02a, part V, of this manual; or

(d) The Agency accepts the donation or gift to defray the cost of travel associated with the agency mission of providing hospitals, domiciliaries, and outpatient facilities, and to give timely and complete care to eligible veterans. Any funds received should be credited to the account from which the employee's travel expenses were paid. (VA Manual MP-1, Pt II, Ch. 2, par. 3j(2); 38 U.S.C. 5004(f)).

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All VA employees' official travel including travel supported by donations to VA must be performed in accordance with existing VA directives and Federal Travel Regulations.

(3) Directors or their designees will express in writing their appreciation of any gift or donation accepted and will acknowledge "with thanks" offers that cannot be accepted, indicating reasons for nonacceptance (see VHS&RA Supplement MP-4, pt. VII, ch. 4).

(4) Officials and employees of VA will not solicit contributions from the public under 38 U.S.C. 5004(f) or authorize the use of their names, the name of the Secretary, or the name of VA by any individual or organization in any campaign for money or articles to be donated to VA whether under 38 U.S.C. ch. 83 or 38 U.S.C. 5004(f). This restriction does not preclude discussion with the individual offering a gift relative to the appropriateness of the gift, nor does it preclude solicitations which are not designed to augment appropriations, e.g., solicitation of contributions to the General Post Fund for the benefit of hospitalized veterans under 38 U.S.C. 5101.

(5) Employees may not be journalized to the General Post Fund and direct expenditures will not be made from the fund for personal services and benefits. Where personal services are required to accomplish the purposes specified by the donor, the appropriation from which the employee is paid will be reimbursed from the General Post Fund for the actual personal services and benefits expense (see VHS&RA Supplement MP-4, pt. VII, ch. 4).

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