

VA

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Veterans Health Administration
Eastern Colorado Health Care System**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**
Aug. 2, 2023**Media Advisory****FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:**Terri L. Clinton, Public Affairs Officer
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vhaechpao@va.gov**VA Eastern Colorado earns top federal rating**

AURORA, Colorado—VA Eastern Colorado Health Care System (ECHCS) announced today that Rocky Mountain Regional VA Medical Center in Aurora earned a top five-star rating from [Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services](#) (CMS).

This is the first time CMS, a federal agency within the Department of Health and Human Services, included VA facilities in its annual overall hospital quality star-rating system.

“It is a great honor to be recognized by CMS as a five-star health care facility,” said Michael Kilmer, VA ECHCS director, who hosted on July 21 a five-year anniversary celebration for the VA medical center in Aurora. Kilmer expressed his pride in how well VA staff have continued to distinguish themselves since the facility opened in 2018.

“We are proud to be the only hospital in the Denver metro area to receive five stars for both our overall star rating and our patient survey rating,” said Kilmer. “The CMS star ratings reflect our commitment to being a high reliable organization and our continuous effort to sustain a high standard of care.”

CMS uses five categories—mortality, safety of care, readmission, patient experience, and timely and effective care—to award a quality rating for each hospital. The more stars a hospital earns, the better a hospital performed on the quality measures.

“This recognition not only speaks to the care we provide to our Veterans and their beneficiaries,” said Kilmer, “but also the work ethic and knowledge our team brings to our hospital and clinics.”

Overall, 67% of VA hospitals included in the CMS annual overall hospital quality star ratings received either four or five stars, compared to only 41% of non-VA hospitals. The findings are the latest in a series of recent evaluations showing the effectiveness of VA health care compared to non-VA health care.

VA hospitals outperformed non-VA hospitals on all 10 core patient satisfaction metrics in the [recent Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems Star Ratings](#), and a recent [systematic review of more than 40 peer-reviewed studies](#) found that VA health care is consistently as good as—or better than—non-VA health care.

“Our job at VA is to deliver the best possible care to every Veteran who walks through our doors,” said Dr. Shereef Elnahal, VA Under Secretary for Health.

“While we’re very proud of these findings, there is still work to do,” said Elnahal. “We will study these results, learn from them, and continue to improve until we’re delivering world-class care to every Veteran, every time.”

For more information, contact VA ECHCS public affairs office at VHAECHPAO@va.gov or call 720-335-3242 or visit [VA.gov/Eastern-Colorado-Health-Care](https://va.gov/Eastern-Colorado-Health-Care).

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