

VAU.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs**Fact Sheet**Office of Public Affairs
Media RelationsWashington, DC 20420
(202) 461-7600
www.va.gov**Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act of 2014
Sections 206 & 207: Publicly Available Data**

On August 7, 2014, President Obama signed into law the Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act of 2014 (Public Law 113-146) (“Choice Act”). Technical revisions to the Choice Act were made on September 26, 2014, when the President signed into law the Department of Veterans Affairs Expiring Authorities Act of 2014 (Public Law 113-175). The Department of Veterans Affairs’ (VA) goal continues to be to provide timely, high-quality health care for Veterans. VA’s focus and priority is on timely and effective implementation of this highly complex piece of legislation.

Sections 206 and 207 of the Choice Act require VA to allow Veterans and the public greater access to information and metrics regarding health care provided by VA.

Background

In order to provide greater transparency and restore trust as VA delivers high-quality health care to Veterans, Sections 206 and 207 call for VA to provide greater access to data through the creation, improvement, and maintenance of publicly available databases. Veterans, as well as individuals acting on behalf of Veterans, will gain an enhanced understanding of VA’s health care services and providers from publicly available data.

Legal Requirements

The law requires that:

- VA publish, on a public website of each VA medical center, the wait times for scheduling an appointment at each VA facility.
- VA develop a comprehensive database containing all applicable patient safety, quality of care, and health care outcome measures, to be made available to the public no later than 180 days after the Choice Act was enacted.
- VA will improve the accessibility of the “Our Doctors” health care providers’ database. It will be made publicly available through the VA homepage and will include the name of the facility at which each licensed physician of the Department underwent residency training and indicate if they are a physician in residency.
- The VA will also provide each Veteran undergoing a surgical procedure by or through the Department with the credentials of their surgeon so that the Veteran,

or a person acting on behalf of the Veteran, has the information necessary to evaluate their options.

What VA Currently Publishes

- VA is posting twice-monthly updates of wait-times for new patients and for established patients at each VA Medical Center (<http://www.va.gov/health/access-audit.asp>). These regular data updates show VA's progress on its efforts to accelerate access to quality health care for Veterans who have been waiting for appointments.
- The current Quality of Care website (www.va.gov/qualityofcare) exists to give Veterans, their families and caregivers information they need to evaluate patient safety and health care outcomes at VA facilities. Veterans can use the site to find and compare the performance of different VA medical centers in treating a wide range of common illnesses, such as diabetes or high blood pressure.
- The "Our Doctors" online directory lists all licensed independent health care practitioners at each medical center and within that health care system, including physicians, nurse practitioners, dentists, radiologists, psychologists and other staff who are directly involved in Veterans' care. Current information provided includes medical field (e.g. primary care, geriatrics), education, provider type (e.g. radiologist, nurse practitioner) and the State in which the provider is licensed.