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Secretary Wilkie meets with leaders at Washington DC VA Medical Center

Receives update on progress and game plan for facility improvements in Veterans' care

WASHINGTON — Today, U.S. Secretary of Veterans Affairs Robert Wilkie visited the Washington DC VA Medical Center (VAMC), where he met with facility and regional leaders and received updates on recent progress in Veterans' care and plans for further improvements at the facility.

Of the 25 recommendations made to the facility in a recent Inspector General report, the facility announced it has addressed or resolved six, and is working to resolve the remaining 19.

The DC VAMC has now put in place changes/improvements in six broad areas:

- Bringing in skilled leaders in quality improvement, purchasing, a new deputy chief of staff and others;
- Assuring reliable availability and sterilization of instruments for surgical procedures;
- Establishing and maintaining an electronic inventory to identify needed equipment rapidly and in a timely fashion;
- Implementing financial controls for purchasing supplies to maximize use of taxpayer dollars;
- Building and maintaining effective systems that facilitate audit of current and future progress;
- Assuring timely access to Veteran appointments, particularly in prosthetics.

VA has identified a new permanent director for the facility, who will be announced and begin serving there in the near future. In the interim, VA announced that, beginning in two weeks, DC VAMC Chief of Staff Charles Faselis will serve as acting director of the facility. The current acting director, Adam M. Robinson Jr., will return to his previous position as director of the VA Maryland Health Care System.

“We had a good visit today, and I appreciated hearing from facility and regional leadership on the important work that has been done to address the Inspector General’s concerns, as well as plans for resolving all its remaining recommendations,” Secretary Wilkie said. “There have been substantial improvements over the past few months in practice management, logistics and prosthetics in particular, and leaders have a strong plan ahead for even more progress in the coming weeks.”

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