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VA realigns several program offices to improve efficiency in meeting Veterans' health care needs

WASHINGTON — As part of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs' (VA) modernization efforts to improve efficiency in care coordination for Veterans and meet a presidential executive order for reorganizing the executive branch, VA plans to realign several programs within its Veterans Health Administration (VHA) into four offices.

A requirement of [Executive Order 13781, Comprehensive Plan for Reorganizing the Executive Branch](#), the realignment, which will begin Nov. 25, is designed to enhance quality care for Veterans by improving coordination of services in the areas of population health; education and training of health care professionals; research, academic affiliations; engineering services; and human resources (HR).

"The realignment creates greater accountability and clearer governance for the program offices that perform these critical functions," said VA Secretary Robert Wilkie. "Integrating and consolidating offices will allow VA to reduce bureaucracy and focus on meeting Veterans' needs."

Population Health will consolidate six programs into one new office to reduce administrative burden on the Veterans Integrated Services Networks (VISNs) and hospitals. This consolidation will enable facilities to target issues common to their market area and, based on the populations' health in the region, align with other federal agencies to promote best practices based on public and private institutional standards.

The Office of Academic Affiliations (OAA) and Office of Research and Development (ORD) will realign under the new Discovery, Education and Affiliates Networks (DEAN) office to foster a collaborative environment that will address the most complex health concerns facing Veterans, while improving medical care for all Americans.

On June 22, Dr. Carolyn M. Clancy moved from executive in charge of VHA to oversee the DEAN office.

"It is critical that someone of Dr. Clancy's experience take on this new role to help ensure that the next generation of physicians will thrive in providing cutting-edge medical care and innovations for Veterans," Wilkie said.

Engineering and Environment of Care functions will be integrated into a single office to improve coordination between related environmental and safety initiatives and provide a world-class health care environment. VA Medical Centers will now have a single point of contact for safety issues. The consolidation of functions also will ensure high-quality safety standards, which are essential to Veterans' health.

HR will merge four headquarters-based HR groups with similar functions into one office to create a more efficient HR organization and provide more transparent and consistent service. A more efficiently functioning HR Service in VHA will improve the quality and efficiency of central office functions, which are essential to VA providing high-quality health care to Veterans.

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