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New study finds rising VA employee engagement key to increased success at nearly 150 medical centers

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs' (VA) received high marks from an independent March 25 study showing a significant relationship between employee engagement and work performance by VA medical center staff.

The rankings reveal engaged employees perform better, resulting in higher patient satisfaction and increased retention of nurses and mission-critical staff.

[The Partnership for Public Service](#) and the [Boston Consulting Group](#) analyzed nearly 150 medical centers along with data from the 2016, 2017 and 2018 "[Best Places to Work in the Federal Government](#)" engagement scores and Veterans Health Administration's [Strategic Analytics for Improvement and Learning](#) (SAIL) scorecards.

"These findings are representative of our commitment to creating positive work environments for employees, which I believe develops a more holistic experience for our Veterans," said VA Secretary Robert Wilkie. "I am extremely pleased with our medical center leadership teams as they are integral to our continued mission of improving and transforming VA health care."

The findings also highlight the successful implementation of employee engagement strategies at the James E. Van Zandt VA Medical Center and the St. Louis Health Care System, which lead to lower staff turnover and higher performance. Examples of employee engagement strategies may include expanding existing training opportunities and recognizing and rewarding staff members.

This continued progress represents another reason Veterans [Choose VA](#) for their health care, following a [recent Dartmouth study](#) that found VA medical centers '[outperform private hospitals in most health care markets](#) throughout the country,' and the Partnership for Public Service ranking VA as one of the top [6 Best Places to Work](#) in the federal government.

These independent analyses further underscore VA's efforts transform the nation's largest integrated health care system into a high reliability organization (HRO). VA recently selected 18 medical centers that will lead the way. Lessons learned from these 18 sites will guide a more impactful rollout across every Veterans Health Administration medical facility in 2020.

To learn more about the March 2019 Partnership for Public Service and the Boston Consulting Group study visit https://ourpublicservice.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/BPTW18_VA-issue-brief.pdf.

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