

# **VETERANS AFFAIRS AND REHABILITATION**

## **WEEKLY UPDATE**

Week Ending — 09/13/2024

### ***Health Policy Team Operations***

#### **Meetings:**

- September 10: Health Policy Team (HPT) met with the Supply Chain staff from Fort Harrison VA Medical Center (VAMC), Montana. The meeting covered areas of improvement and best practices in preparation for our upcoming System Worth Saving (SWS) site visit.
- September 10: HPT attended the In Vitro Fertilization (IVF) Working Group. The meeting covered current issues including the challenges associated with receiving benefits for active duty servicemembers and veterans.
- September 10: HPT met with Lizzy Donahue and Paige Figi, Founder of Coalition for Access Now. The meeting covered cannabis regulation and its impact of CBD products.
- September 11: HPT met with Sync.MD representatives about the NDAA and including a provision to have an electronic records platform included in TAPS.
- September 12: Health Policy Team (HPT) met with the Human Resources Department of Fort Harrison VAMC, Montana. The meeting covered areas of improvement and best practices in preparation for our upcoming System Worth Saving (SWS) site visit.
- September 12: HPT met with Michael Zeeb, Outreach Coordinator for the National Caregiver Support Program. The meeting provided an overview of the Caregiver Support Program and how proposed legislation could impact the program.
- September 12: HPT attended the Women Veterans Service Organization (VSO) meeting to discuss the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) women veteran reports mandated by the Deborah Sampson Act. Challenges and areas for improvement of healthcare and benefits were identified.

## Legislative Bill Reviews:

- **H.R. 9216 – Study on Use of Distributed Ledger Technology**
  - Would pilot a blockchain based technology to facilitate and keep track of veterans' benefits.

Position: **No Position**

Supporting Resolutions: None.

- **H.R. 8141 – Emergency Community Care Notification Time Adjustment Act of 2024**
  - Would change the reporting requirement to VA when a veteran receives emergency care in the community from 72 hours from start of treatment to 72 hours after time of discharge from said care.
- Position: Support
- Supporting Resolutions: [Resolution No. 377](#) Support for Veteran Quality of Life

## ***Claims & Appeals Team Operations***

### **Accreditations**

- Applications Received from TAL Departments	13
- Certifications Submitted by TAL Washington Office	13
- Certifications Approved by VA's Office of General Counsel	3

### **The American Legion Board of Veterans' Appeals (BVA) Unit**

- AMA Appeals Pending (125+ Days)	0
- Informal Hearing Presentations (IHPs) Prepared	274
- Memos Generated	4
- Phone Inquiries	121
- Internal Quality Reviews	4
- Individual Training	1 hour
- Team Training	1 hour
- Hearings	0
- Board Dispositions	40
o Appeals Granted	10 (25.0%)
o Remanded	18 (45.0%)
o Denied	8 (20.0%)
o Other	4 (10.0%)
- Retroactive Awards Won for Veterans	\$637,401

### **National Veterans Service Office**

- Phone Calls	114
- Emails	28
- Referrals	28
- Discharge Upgrades	1
- Written Correspondence	0
- Claims Submitted	21
- Evidence Submitted	0
- POA Submitted	9
- Training Hours	0

### **Pension & Debt Management**

- New Claims	16
- Supporting Submissions	3
- Sensitive Claims	5
- Rating Reviews/Audits	93
- Contacts	207
- Debt Notices Received	297
- Insurance Questions	0
- Waivers Granted	11
- Pension Notification Letters Processed	14
Debt Waiver Granted	\$211,912

## ***Benefits Policy Team Operations***

### **Meetings:**

- September 10: Benefits Policy Team virtually attended HVAC's Subcommittee on Oversight and Accountability concerning VBA/VHA budgetary and oversight matters.
- September 10: Benefits Policy Team held DSO Symposium Planning session with Bergmann and Moore to review action items needing completion in preparation for the upcoming fall DSO Symposium in October 2024.
- September 11: Benefits Policy Team virtually attended the Subcommittee on Health Legislative Hearing that discussed various pending draft legislative initiatives.
- September 12: Deputy Director for Benefits & Claims (DDBC) along with Benefits Policy Team and Bergmann & Moore conducted the second site visit to National Conference Center in Leesburg, VA, in preparation for the DSO Symposium.

### **Legislative Bill Reviews**

- Benefits Policy Team and DDBC reviewed a quote for National Commander on a change of VA Rating Schedule change of adding a diagnostic code for Constrictive Bronchiolitis (CB) .

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End of VA&R weekly update – 09/13/2024