



ANNUAL AGENCY PERFORMANCE REPORT FY2023

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AGENCY OVERVIEW

The Iowa Department of Veterans Affairs' history is rooted in the post-Civil War establishment of what's now the Iowa Veterans Home. Iowa Veterans Home has served Iowa veterans since 1887. Iowa Department of Veterans Affairs grew out of IVH into its own, specialized state-level entity assisting veterans in filing for federal and state veteran benefits. To help ease demand on National Cemeteries nation-wide, Iowa Veterans Cemetery was established in 2008 - one of the first federally-funded but state-administered veteran cemeteries in the country - nestled among the iconic, serene rolling hills of south-central Iowa. These three entities re-joined under the Iowa Department of Veterans Affairs in 2023.

OUR MISSION

To fulfill the promise made to Iowa's Veterans who took the oath to defend the constitution of the United States.

OUR VISION

To provide a continuum of services to Iowa's Veterans and their eligible family members to enhance their quality of life.

CORE FUNCTIONS

- ❖ **REGULATION & COMPLIANCE**
- ❖ **HEALTH**
- ❖ **EDUCATION**
- ❖ **VETERANS ASSISTANCE**

OUR VALUES

SERVICE: commitment to listening, understanding and providing the outcomes desired by those we serve.

HONOR: showing universal respect, acknowledging achievements and fulfilling obligations and agreements.

INTEGRITY: adhering to moral and ethical principles by doing the right thing in a reliable way.

RESILIENCE: remains optimistic in the face of adversity while delivering the highest quality work with strength and enthusiasm.



A MESSAGE FROM THE COMMANDANT



It is a privilege to serve as the Commandant of the Iowa Department of Veterans Affairs (IDVA). The Iowa General Assembly approved alignment legislation during the 2023 session consolidating from 37 to 16 the number of State Agencies in Iowa. The impact on Iowa Veterans is that there is one agency director – the IDVA Commandant, which has oversight of the Iowa Veterans Home in Marshalltown, the Benefits Bureau on Camp Dodge in Johnston, and the Iowa Veterans Cemetery in Van Meter.

The path to becoming a Soldier, Marine, Sailor, Airman, Coast Guardsman, or Guardian begins at one of 65 Military Entrance Processing Stations across the United States. During the accessions process, recruits take the Armed Forces Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) examination, complete a medical questionnaire, and undergo a physical evaluation that includes height and weight measurements, hearing and vision exams, urine and blood tests, and drug and alcohol

tests. At the conclusion, those who are eligible to serve in the U.S. Armed Forces, form up in a ceremonial room with the Flag of our Nation proudly displayed and take an oath: “I solemnly swear that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; and that I will obey the orders of the President of the United States and the orders of the officers appointed over me, according to regulations and the Uniformed Code of Military Justice. So help me God.” The American people silently make a promise back to these service members: “We will be here for you when, and if, you need us.” Those of us who work for the IDVA have the opportunity to deliver on that promise the American people made to our Veterans decades before. I can think of no better mission.

The Iowa Veterans Home is constructed on a 158-acre campus on the Northwest side of Marshalltown and is one of 153 State Veteran Homes in the United States. Established by vote of the 21st General Assembly on March 31, 1886 and referred to as the Iowa Soldiers home until 1975, the IVH admitted our first resident, Amos Fox, of Livermore, Humboldt County, on December 1, 1887. In 2023 the IVH received \$70,633,644 in Federal funding (Medicaid, Medicare, Veterans Affairs), and \$7,131,552 in State funding. As we closed out Fiscal Year 2023 on June 30, 2023, the IVH is home to 393 residents, including 4 World War II Veterans, 38 Korean War Veterans, 198 Vietnam Veterans, 15 Veterans of Operation Desert Storm, the Global War on Terror, 79 Peacetime Veterans, and 59 spouses. IVH has been the final home for over 19,000 Veterans and spouses over the last 136 years – 3,171 of whom are buried in the IVH Cemetery.

IVH has an excellent record of meeting federal and state guidelines for long-term care facilities. The Department of Inspection Appeals & Licensing (DIAL) inspected IVH on February 27-March 2, 2023. The 11-member survey team found a 0% medication distribution error rate, great infection control practices, and no issues or concerns with kitchen operations, laundry operations, quality assurance, and human resource management. DIAL investigated 7 complaints that had been sent to them since the last survey in 2021 – all of which were unsubstantiated. The IVH maintains a 5-Star rating with the Center for Medicaid and Medicare Services, which is the very best possible rating. IVH has an incredible volunteer team, including Marshalltown resident Ms. Doris Lemker, who is 90 years old, and who has volunteered almost 40,000 hours over the last three decades.

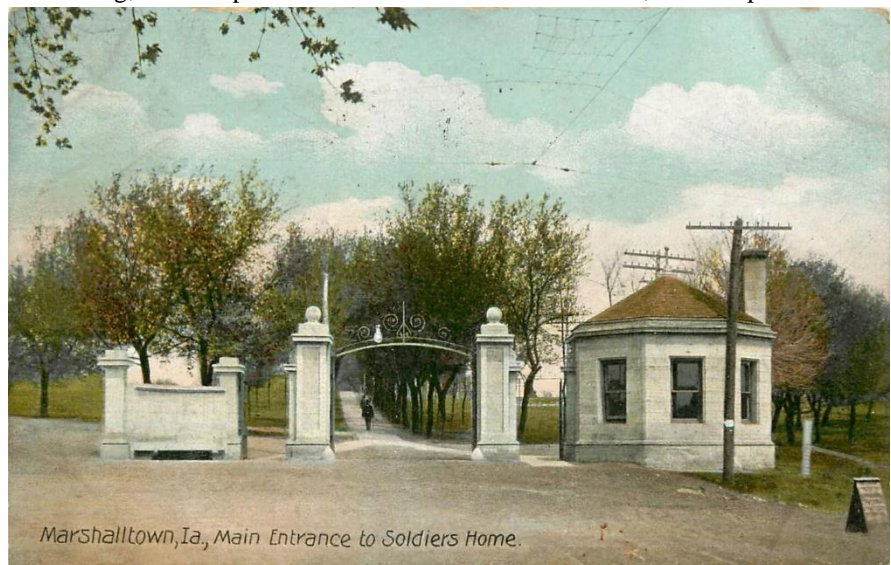
The rolling hills just North of Van Meter is home to the Iowa Veterans Cemetery, which was built to accommodate 59,355 interments. Workers broke ground on November 11, 2006, and a dedication ceremony was held on July 3, 2008. There are 7,535 Veterans and spouses interred at the IVC, including 5,728 Veterans and 1,807 spouses.

Included in this number are 2,909 cremains interred in one of the 12 IVC columbarium walls. We have 30 days from the date of interment to place headstones on the graves of our deceased Veterans, and as of June 30, 2023, we were late in placing 168 grave markers. In addition, the National Cemetery Administration identified several hundred grave markers that need to be adjusted in order to be in compliance with NCA standards; we are working with a contractor, Priority Government Solutions, to address shortfalls. Over the last 12 months the IVC staff has conducted 688 services – in close partnership with the Iowa National Guard Military Funeral Honors team and hundreds of Funeral Directors and Veteran Service Organizations. The IVC operates with five full-time State employees and with outstanding volunteer support from the Knights of Columbus, which does a significant portion of the mowing and grounds maintenance, and the 1,200 volunteers led by Patrick Palmersheim of Wreaths Across America, who decorated 4,266 graves at IVC on December 17, 2022.

The Iowa Veterans Trust Fund (IVTF) remains one of the most significant pieces of legislation of the last 20+ years. On June 30, 2023 there was \$38,884,377.17 in the Trust Fund. Iowa Veterans meeting income guidelines may apply to their County Veteran Service Office to receive job training or college tuition assistance; unemployment assistance; dental, vision, hearing, and prescription drug assistance; assistance in procuring durable equipment to allow them to remain in their home; individual or family counseling and substance abuse program support; ambulance and emergency room services not covered by the Federal VA, emergency housing and emergency vehicle repairs; expenses related to establishing a minor child is a dependent of a deceased Veteran; and transitional housing assistance for a homeless Veteran. After applications are validated by the County Commission of Veterans Affairs, the Iowa Commission of Veterans Affairs reviews and approves applications monthly. Simply put, the IVTF provides resources to Iowa Veterans who are in need of assistance.

The Iowa Commission of Veterans Affairs obligated funding beyond the program’s appropriation, resulting in a backlog of applications and insufficient funds to reimburse Veterans’ expenses. The Commission discontinued awards on November 3, 2022. On January 19, 2022 Governor Reynolds approved more than \$443,713 from the Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF) to cover the backlog of IVTF grants that the Iowa Commission of Veterans Affairs approved between March 3, 2021 and November 3, 2022. As of June 30, 2023 the Iowa Department of Veterans Affairs mailed out checks totaling \$244,795.90 to support Veteran grants and \$38,325 to Veteran Service Organizations who performed Military Funeral Honors between March 3, 2021, and November 3, 2022. IDVA made payments on all FY-2023 approved grant applications.

The IDVA maintains strong connections with our State Agency partners at Iowa Workforce Development; Iowa Department of Inspection, Appeals & Licensing; Iowa Department of Health & Human Services, Iowa Department of Transportation; and, Iowa Department of Education. We are grateful for the outstanding relationships with our Federal partners with the Des Moines VA Regional Office, the Central Iowa Medical Facility and Health Care System in Des Moines, and the VA Iowa City Medical Center and Health Care System, and our Community Based Outpatient Clinics. We have invested great energy in working with the Iowa Association of County Commissioners and Veterans Service Officers (IACCVSO), we



Marshalltown, Ia, Main Entrance to Soldiers Home.

are grateful for the leadership of both IACCVSO President Mike Mortensen of Polk County and Vice President Patricia Hamann of Cedar County, and appreciate the County Veteran Service Officers who attended training at the Airport Holiday Inn in Des Moines on April 11-13, 2023. Iowa Veterans depend on County Veteran Service Officers to ensure that they are compensated for disabilities that are the result of a disease or injury incurred or aggravated during active military service. Our Iowa Veterans are better served when Federal, State, and County level partners communicate and work together.

IDVA is grateful for dedicated staff throughout the IDVA footprint – working hard to ensure quality care at the Iowa Veterans Home, quality education and training through our Benefits Bureau, quality services at the Iowa Veterans Cemetery, and quality facilities and customer service. This does not happen without leadership, and I would like to mention specifically the IDVA Division Administrators, including Penny Cutler-Bermudez, IVH Licensed Nursing Home Administrator; Dr. Joseph Hoagbin, IVH Medical Director; and, Nathan Wilson, IDVA Operations Executive Administrator. Our Bureau Chiefs are an integral part of the IDVA leadership team, including Kim Bratland, Clinical Services Bureau; Sarah Bruner, Director of Nursing; Julie Carbajal, Finance Bureau; David Haines, Facilities Management; Andrea Maher, Quality Management Bureau; Melissa Sienknecht, Food Services & Human Resources Bureaus; Robert Stavnes, Benefits & Cemetery Bureau. Our front line licensed nursing staff are led by four outstanding Nursing Services Directors: Jill Hollander (Malloy Building), Michelle “Chelle” Kelling (Dack Building), Kristy Kelly (Ulery Building), and Amanda Thill (Fox Building). We are also blessed with an outstanding IDVA Public Information Officer in Karl Lettow, and in October 2023 Mike Olson began duties as the IDVA Legislative Liaison.

I am grateful to serve as an ex-officio member of the Iowa Commission of Veterans Affairs. This commission of volunteers meets quarterly with the Veterans Community and stakeholders, meets monthly to review trust fund applications, and serves as the voice to the Commandant for the organizations they represent. Many thanks to all of these Commissioners, who are also Veterans of the U.S. Armed Forces, and thanks for your outstanding work to support Iowa Veterans: Commission Chairperson Sergeant First Class Elizabeth Ledvina, Iowa Army National Guard Retired, representing American Legion; Darlene McMartin, who currently serves as the at-large commissioner; Major General Gary Wattnem, U.S. Army Retired, representing Reserve Organization of America; Master Sergeant Becky Dirks Haugsted, Iowa National Guard Retired, Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW); Scott Miller, Paralyzed Veterans of America (PVA); Lieutenant Colonel George Mosby, representing Iowa National Guard; Greg Paulline, Vietnam Veterans of America; Joella Perry, representing Iowa Association of County Commissioners and Veteran Service Officers (IACCVSO); Robert Suesakul, representing Military Order of the Purple Heart (MOPH); and, Mary VanHorn, representing Amvets. We hope to welcome a Disabled American Veteran Commissioner back onto the ICVA in 2024.

It's an honor to serve!

Todd M. Jacobus
Commandant

A MESSAGE FROM THE LICENSED NURSING HOME ADMINISTRATOR



During 2023 the Iowa Veterans Home has continued to meet its mission of providing a continuum of care for our state's heroes. We focus on commitment to individualize the care for each resident's highest quality of life.

We are proud to share that we have maintained our 5-star rating through CMS throughout the year due to the steadfastness of the IVH team. We are at 88% capacity for resident beds filled, and we are seeing an increase in the number of applications. We are, however, aware that the new admissions are presenting with increased comorbidities and often need specialized care. We continue to evaluate the services required to meet the Long-Term Care needs for our state's veterans. We are currently moving forward in reopening the 28-bed nursing level care unit.

We have implemented innovative scheduling, advanced pay for weekend package positions, sign on bonuses, and on campus housing for employees working condensed schedules and more. The challenges have been arduous at times, but we are proud of never losing sight of our mission as our care delivery is unmatched.

The leadership team remains dedicated to professional growth and cultivating a spirit of pride. The challenges continue to be immense in the long-term care industry but the IVH received deficiency free surveys this year from both the Federal VA survey and the State Department of Inspections and Appeals.

We are seeing a stabilization in our nursing workforce and are reducing the amount of required overtime for our staff. We are pleased that we have not had to utilize agency staffing to serve our residents, as we know that the equality of care that makes IVH a home is because of the personal touch provided by our dedicated care team. We are proud to serve those who have served us.

Penny Cutler-Bermudez, LNHA

A MESSAGE FROM THE OPERATIONS EXECUTIVE ADMINISTRATOR



At the Iowa Department of Veteran Affairs (IDVA), the Operations Division encompasses the following areas IT, Dietary, HR, facilities, security, safety, transportation, Benefit and Cemetery Bureau, legislative duties, communications and financial activities to IDVA.

As of July 1, 2023, IVH and IDVA merged to create a single point of contact for all veterans in the state of Iowa. IVH now sits under the IDVA and the IVH Commandant now leads the IDVA and IVH. January of 2023 to July 2023, IDVA project manager worked to align both agencies.

Over the course of the last year many IT projects have been undertaken. The biggest project that took place at the Iowa Veteran Home (IVH) was the transition to a new electronic medical record system. This project was 2 years of contracting and one and half years of implementation. IVH reviewed IT contracts for effectiveness and ended up limiting some contracts and reorganizing others.

Overall IVH had a very positive productive year. All of the surveys and audits (CMS, VA, State of Iowa Audit) that were conducted throughout the year had no findings. That is due to all of the collaboration and hard work of the IVH staff. In the upcoming year, we have many projects and initiatives underway to continue providing the State of Iowa Veterans and their families the best services and care possible.

Nathan Wilson, Operations Executive Administrator

A MESSAGE FROM THE MEDICAL DIRECTOR



The Iowa Veterans Home is one of the largest state veterans' homes in the Nation. Our facility began serving Iowa Veterans in 1887, and later, spouses of Veterans were also granted access to the services of IVH. Iowa Veterans Home remains strong in the face of closures of other skilled facilities in the State.

The Iowa Veterans Home prides itself in providing excellent care to our Veterans and their spouses. We continue to maintain our solid 5-star rating (the highest rating possible) from CMS which looks at Quality and Safety metrics. Of the approximately 400 plus nursing homes in the State, 81 have a 5-Star rating from CMS. Our entire staff is proud to maintain this hard-earned ranking. In addition, we have had two multi-day surveys by the Iowa Department of Inspections and Appeals (DIA), acting on behalf of CMS, in certifying the excellence of our care with no deficiencies found on the surveys. Importantly, we have maintained our high standard of quality care using our regular nursing staff, not private agency staff like so many other facilities in the State and Nation.

The Iowa Veterans Home collaborates closely with all of the Iowa healthcare organizations in Central Iowa for the benefit of our residents. Of course, our closest collaboration is with the VA Health System, both in Des Moines and Iowa City, where residents go for outpatient and inpatient care. We also maintain an excellent relationship with the UnityPoint Hospital staff here in Marshalltown who see our residents who require emergency evaluations and treatments, for advanced imaging services, infusion services, other medical evaluations and treatments, and occasional admissions. In addition, UnityPoint provides our laboratory services. I want to acknowledge that the entire UnityPoint enterprise, University of Iowa Health, MercyOne, Mary Greeley, and Grinnell have also been great partners in providing care to our residents when necessary.

IVH continues to have a great working relationship with both the Iowa Department of Health and Human Services as well as the Department of Inspections and Appeals to collaborate to assist IVH in adhering to guidelines and regulations from CMS and the CDC. IVH is appreciative of on-going education provided to our staff by the IDHHS which ultimately benefits our residents.

We are experiencing new admissions to our facility whose disease processes are more advanced than we saw previously for new residents. This is part due to families keeping their loved ones at home for a longer period of time. These individuals are very challenging for the medical and behavioral health teams but our talented and dedicated staff are up to the challenge. In addition, with the obesity epidemic not getting any better, IVH has begun stepping up to enhance care to this population of veterans. We have been blessed to find community support from Veterans organizations as well as other community agencies to begin acquisition of special equipment for the bariatric population. Additional equipment will be needed to further develop this program.

Our Quality Department, started just two years ago in the midst of the pandemic, continues great work at assessing current practices and discovering opportunities for improvement. We are also adding an evidence-based program for resident safety. The federal government requires all healthcare organizations to improve their quality programs and we have been told by outside surveyors our program is far ahead of the curve.

Iowa Veterans Home is blessed to have a dedicated staff whose primary goal is to provide the best and most compassionate care and services to our Veterans and their spouses. This care is going on across the entire facility,

24 hours a day, 7 days a week. We are gratified by the continued support of our Mission by the Iowa State Legislature and Executive Branch.

I have now completed my fourth year as IVH Medical Director. This has been challenging but very rewarding work, in fact, some of the most rewarding in my medical career. When I took this position, I was excited to join the great dedicated team of people providing care to our veterans and spouses, either directly such as nursing, physical therapists, dietitians, and others, but also all the dedicated staff behind the scenes keeping the place running. My excitement and dedication to this facility continues to this day.

Dr. Joseph E. Hoagbin, MD



OPERATIONAL PLAN KEY RESULTS

GOAL 1: IMPROVE RESIDENT EXPERIENCE

UTILIZING OUR PROCESS IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM, MEDICAL SERVICES WILL INITIATE IMPROVEMENTS IN THE REFERRAL PROCESS FOR INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL CONSULTATIONS THIS FISCAL YEAR. (10,11)



• Data was collected through the SharePoint medical trips program and reported to QAA June 2023.



• Data was tracked by the IVH Medical Clinic and reported to QAA January 2023 and July 2023.

THE GOVERNOR'S PRIORITIES

1. Building Iowa's Health Care Workforce
2. Confronting Iowa's Child Care Crisis
3. Creating Universal Broadband Access for Iowans
4. Cutting Taxes for All Iowans
5. Expanding Housing Opportunities
6. Ensuring Strong, Safe Communities
7. Expanding Housing Opportunities
8. Growing Fuels of the Future
9. Improving Access to Child Care
10. Improving Access to Quality Health Care
11. Innovating Iowa's Workforce
12. Making Iowa an Employment Destination
13. Preparing Students for the Workforce
14. Providing Educational Choice & Transparency for Iowa Families
15. Putting Students First
16. Reinvigorating the Iowa Agricultural Economy

<https://governor.iowa.gov/vision>

ANNUAL 2023 RESIDENT SATISFACTION SURVEY RESULTS



● Excellent, Very Good, Good ● Average, Poor

NURSING - A new call light system was installed in May, utilizing Vocera badges (wearable technology). Direct care staff receive communicate and receive call light alerts via hands-free communication.

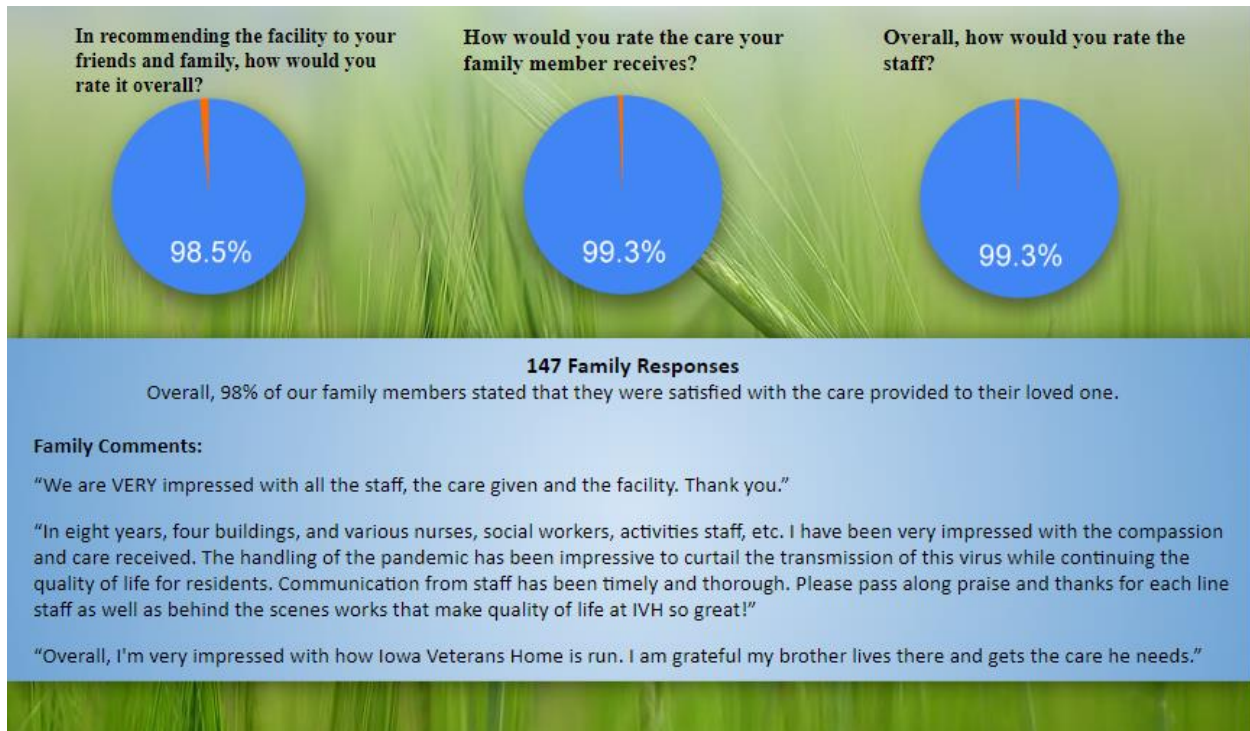
FOOD SERVICE - New menus were introduced beginning in April. These menus included new menu items, meats grilled on our patio, warm-weather sides, more fresh fruits & vegetables and special holiday meals. A resident food committee was formed and meets monthly. Test trays continue to be evaluated and competencies for food service staff were developed in an effort to improve food preparation, food quality, serving and delivery practices.

ACTIVITES – Recreation therapists meet with residents on their nursing units to discuss activities and trips they would like to attend. Each therapist has planned quality activities and offered alternatives if applicable to meet the needs or preferences of each resident. More activities were offered on weekends.

HOUSEKEEPING - Audits are being completed in each building monthly and include resident comments to ensure satisfaction with services provided. Results are presented at QAPI on a quarterly basis.



Annual 2023 Family Satisfaction Survey Results



Care Compare Five-Star Ratings of Nursing Homes Provider Rating Report for July 2023

Ratings for Iowa Veterans Home (16A002) Marshalltown, Iowa			
Overall Quality	Health Inspection	Quality Measures	Staffing
★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★	★★★★★

IVH maintained a Five-Star Rating in FY 2023!

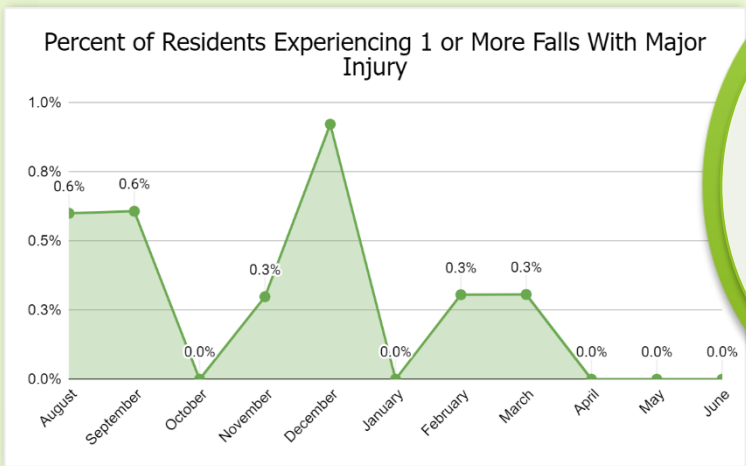
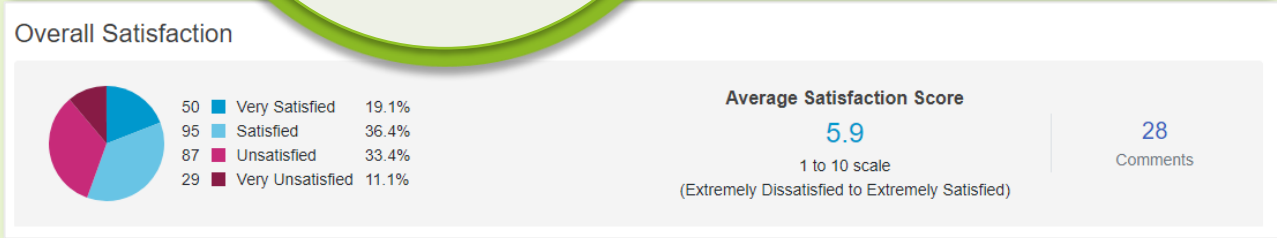
Quality measures that are included in the QM rating of the CMS Five-Star report are developed from the MDS and reflect the quality of nursing homes.

QM measures are reported over the course of a year and calculated quarterly to give us our rating (*we are currently at 4 stars for our QM rating but 5 stars overall*). Each measure is being analyzed for improvement, including ensuring the MDS is accurately reflecting the care our residents receive. We collaborated with our contract medical providers to ensure accurate diagnoses.

GOAL 2: INCREASE EFFICIENCY

NURSE CALL SYSTEM WILL BE UPGRADED SO ALL RESIDENTS ARE ON THE SAME SYSTEM, NURSING CAN RUN SYSTEM QUALITY REPORTS, FOR STABILITY AND SYSTEM-WIDE COMMUNICATION BETWEEN STAFF MEMBERS AND RESIDENT NURSE CALL ESCALATION AND REPORTING BY THE END OF THE FISCAL YEAR. (10,11)

Employee Satisfaction Survey will reflect improved point to point communication satisfaction among staff. *In lieu of low participation in the employee satisfaction survey in August 2022 (263 respondents), it was decided to postpone the next survey until August 2023 and conduct on an annual basis.*



Percent of residents experiencing 1 or more falls with major injuries will be 3.5% or less. *Data reported quarterly at QAA.*

Call light response time will be 15 minutes or less through ongoing audits, reported quarterly at QAPI once new system is implemented. *No data available this year, training on new call lights system occurred in July 2023.*

GOAL 3: EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT & RECRUITMENT

Implement a Leadership Rounding Initiative quarterly utilizing a quality tool to recognize outstanding employees/unit efforts and offer recruiting incentives for new employees. (1,11)

Nursing Turnover Rates	Total Employees	Separations	Turnover Rate
July 2022	391	17	4.35%
August 2022	395	15	3.80%
September 2022	384	27	7.03%
October 2022	384	15	3.91%
November 2022	387	19	4.91%
December 2022	383	10	2.61%
January 2023	386	8	2.07%
February 2023	387	13	3.36%
March 2023	392	15	3.83%
April 2023	384	14	3.65%
May 2023	382	19	4.97%
June 2023	384	16	4.17%
Total Average Annual FY 2022	387	16	4.1%
Turnover Rate (# of Employees at start of the year/# of total separations)	69	24	34.8%

Food Service Turnover Rates	Total Employees	Separations	Turnover Rate
July 2022	69	0	0.00%
August 2022	64	1	1.56%
September 2022	65	1	1.54%
October 2022	66	1	1.52%
November 2022	69	1	1.45%
December 2022	71	4	5.63%
January 2023	70	1	1.43%
February 2023	69	1	1.45%
March 2023	66	1	1.52%
April 2023	67	3	4.48%
May 2023	70	6	8.57%
June 2023	73	4	5.48%
Total Average Annual FY 2022	68	2	2.9%
Turnover Rate (# of Employees at start of the year/# of total separations)	69	24	34.8%

Track turnover rates in nursing and food service to monitor for improvement. Data is tracked by HR. Report data biannually to QAA (Jan 2023 and July 2023)

Malloy, Dack, and Ulery Totals- Occupancy Rates

Position	June 2022 Percentage	December Percentage	June 2023 Percentage
AON	100%	100%	100%
NSD	100%	100%	100%
Nurse Supervisor	91.67%	92.00%	95.83%
Nurse Clinician	100%	76.92%	91.67%
RN	68.75%	81.25%	56.25%
LPN	75.44%	63.79%	66.04%
CMA	71.79%	82.05%	89.33%
RTW	83.25%	76.26%	80.66%
RA	66.67%	89.74%	81.08%
Staffing Coordinator	100%	100%	100%
NUC	100%	100%	100%
Restorative Aide	100%	100%	100%
Secretary 1	100%	100%	100%
Compliance Officer 1	100%	100%	100%
Total	79.68%	79.06%	81.71%

Food Production Staff-Occupancy Rates	Optimal Staffing Numbers	June 2022	December 2022	June 2023
Full-Time Food Service Workers	56	44	44	49
Part-Time Food Service Workers	16	4	3	8
Temporary Food Service Workers	15	9	11	5
Full-Time Cook 2	11	10	10	6
ICIW Full-Time Food Service Workers	Included in Full-Time Food Service Workers	NA	18	8
<i>Numbers effective 1st of the month</i>	98 positions optimal	67 staff	87 staff	76 staff
Total		68.4% Filled	88.78% Filled	77.55% Filled

Track occupancy rates of open positions - improve rate to 80% for Nursing and 85% for Food & Nutrition Services by the end of the fiscal year. Data is tracked by each department. Report results biannually to QAA (Dec 2022 and June 2023)

GOAL 4: RECRUIT EMPLOYEES/VOLUNTEERS

Continue implementation of a ground-breaking 20-hour non-certified CNA program which provides resident-centered on-the-job training to hire new employees or train current employees that are interested in job advancement. **(11,12,15)**

- ❁ Reduce overtime for nursing employees by \$50,000 this fiscal year. Finance will report on overtime status quarterly at QAA (Oct, Jan, April, July).

Nursing Overtime Hours and Pay by Period	Overtime Pay	Overtime Hours
Quarter 1 (07/1/22 - 09/30/22)	\$405,712.34	10,642.44
Quarter 2 (10/1/22 - 12/31/22)	\$301,998.88	7,969.24
Quarter 3 (01/1/23 - 03/31/23)	\$390,533.01	9,827.52
Quarter 4 (04/1/23 - 06/30/23)	\$221,142.02	5,665.67

- ❁ Decrease mandates for nursing employees by 30% by the end of the fiscal year. Data will be tracked by Nursing and reported biannually to QAA (Jan 2023 and July 2023).

Shift	August v/m	September v/m	October v/m	November v/m	December v/m	January v/m	February v/m	March v/m	April v/m	May v/m	June v/m
Days	184	124	126	158	94	56	80	91	87	89	75
Eves	234	202	207	220	144	48	57	47	55	72	49
Nocs	155	121	71	69	77	50	78	85	59	92	96
Totals	573	447	404	447	315	154	215	223	201	253	220

Shift	August f/m	September f/m	October f/m	November f/m	December f/m	January f/m	February f/m	March f/m	April f/m	May f/m	June f/m
Days	12	18	10	24	19	14	4	7	11	10	2
Eves	36	76	37	45	51	45	28	17	19	10	11
Nocs	23	12	14	21	18	8	16	7	12	9	13
Totals	71	106	61	90	88	67	48	31	42	29	26

v/m = volunteer mandates, f/m = forced mandates

- ❁ Employees will become CNA certified within four months after hire as an RTW. Data will be tracked by the Education Dept and reported quarterly at QAPI (Oct 2022, Jan 2023, April 2023, and July 2023).

	Q1/Q2 (Aug-Dec 2022)	Q3 (Jan-March 2023)	Q4 (April-June)
# Non-certified CNAs hired (does not include drivers, etc. needing CNA)	18	20	19
# CNAs that challenged test within 4 mo (or selected to challenge)	15	20	19
# CNAs that took 76hr CNA course	3	0	0
# CNAs that challenged but did not pass initial testing	2	4	0
# CNAs that left IVH (resigned or terminated)	4	9	3
# pending but still within the 4 mo window	6	5	10

HIGHLIGHTS FROM FY 2023

EDUCATION

- ❖ New Employee Orientation (NEO) provided to a total of 294 employees (1:1) and in-person NEO provided to 194 employees
- ❖ Successfully organized and carried out a 20-hour Non-certified CNA program in the education department to aid the nursing shortage following Covid-19 pandemic. This has been extremely successful for our organization.
- ❖ Assure all training is of high quality, in terms of both presentation and content.
- ❖ Completed 69 CPR Certificate Test-Outs for licensed and driving staff
- ❖ Conducted quarterly Interdisciplinary Training Needs meetings to elicit input from staff throughout the facility as to training needs and desires
- ❖ Goal of providing 52 classes between July 1, 2022 and June 30, 2023 was exceeded; 102 classes were provided within this time frame
- ❖ IVH Education provided 24 hours of nursing-related training to licensed nursing staff and 13 hours to Resident Treatment Workers
- ❖ Six hours of Chronic Confusion and Dementing Illness (CCI) training was provided to all staff working in dementia-care units. Part of the training was conducted by the Optimal Research Team from the University of Iowa, along with resident participation in the research study.
- ❖ Conduct quarterly Heimlich Maneuver training for Dietary Department employees
- ❖ Residential Treatment Workers (RTWs) were provided over 13 hours of training
- ❖ Published bi-monthly Education Newsletter for all IVH staff, answering FAQs, informing staff of upcoming trainings and events, and alerting staff of changes in Education department
- ❖ Video services provided this fiscal year:
 - Commandant C4 Response Videos were completed monthly
 - Town Hall Video was completed
 - A Day in the Life video was produced for Food Service, Laundry, Switchboard, and Activities
 - Video of the Employee Fitness Center was created for the Wellness Committee
 - Video of ASCOM call system for Nursing department and Safety department Fire Watch procedure and surge protector use for trainings

Performance Measure

Percentage of IVH employees attending annual education

Performance Target for FY2023

• 95%

Result

• 92.3%

- ❁ Hosted the Mental Health in Long-Term Care conference, managing speakers, and coordinating facility management for the two-day event.
- ❁ The following action plan is in place for performance improvement:
 - All mandatory training will be scheduled prior to May to allow for adequate completion time by the end of the fiscal year.
 - Continuing to try and provide creative and innovative education for all levels, and in a range of formats, not just on the Learning Management System.
 - Conduct quarterly New Employee Orientation review meetings for presenters and supervisory staff.
 - Facilitate team-building training tailored specifically for staff groups throughout the facility.



FACILITIES MANAGEMENT

IOWA VETERANS HOME CEMETERY:



- ❖ Our team has been working diligently making the IVH Cemetery much better. The entire road going through the cemetery has been replaced so that these roads will last another 15+ years. Additional signage has been placed to identify each section of the cemetery, so our visitors will know which section to go to when the location has been provided to them. Our grounds crew have been constantly working on straightening and replacing damaged headstones. This is currently about 75% completed.

NURSE CALL SYSTEM:

- ❖ The nurse call system has been updated. The Vocera hands free devices are continually being used and receive direct communication from our residents. The front-line nursing staff have been trained and are using them daily. Additionally, there was a need for increased communication for our Dietary department. The Vocera badge system is being used by food service staff.



PHARMACEUTICAL DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM:



- ❖ The ARxIUM medical stations to dispense medicine to our residents through a med passer are in place and operational. Continual training is going on and Fox building will be the first ones to go live on September 26th. Additional stations will be implemented in 2-3 week intervals in Dack and Malloy.

PARKING LOT/ROAD REPLACEMENT

- ❖ On the northside of our campus, the north parking lot has been completely replaced. This project was funded by Major Maintenance. The rows were changed to allow diagonal parking for easier access.
- ❖ The road between the Dispatch building and Whitehill has been replaced. This project is to provide better and safer access to our north buildings and parking lots.



MARSHALLTOWN SHUTTLE SERVICE

- ❁ We started a new shuttle service for our residents who need to go to various stores throughout Marshalltown. This service is to improve resident safety because they can be directly taken to the business doors instead of them being dropped off by the city transportation at the curb.

Performance Measure		Performance Measure	
Percentage of resident satisfaction with IVH housekeeping services		Percentage of maintenance work orders that are completed within three days	
Performance Target for FY2023	• 85%	Performance Target for FY2023	• 90%
Result	• 96.4%	Result	• 90.23%



FINANCE & IVH ADMISSIONS

- ❖ Maintain and follow all processes and procedures to ensure there is a clear separation of duties within the department.
- ❖ Ensure that all proper documentation and signatures are obtained for all resident transactions.
- ❖ Accurately report data pertaining to the calculation of the facility per diem reimbursement rates and submit data in a timely manner.
- ❖ Maintain detailed files with the required supporting documentation for all financial data for the facility.

Performance Measure

of Reportable Financial Deficiencies/Regulatory Agencies

Performance Target for FY2023 • 0%

Result • 0%

Performance Measure

Number of beds filled at the nursing level of care (average for the fiscal year)

Performance Target for FY2023 • 355

Result • 335

Performance Measure

Number of beds filled at the domiciliary level of care (average for the fiscal year)

Performance Target for FY2023 • 55

Result • 54

FOOD SERVICE

- ❁ A partnership was started with ICIW (Iowa Correctional Institution for Women) starting in May of 2022 with those women starting in July of 2022 to assist with staffing issues for the Food Service Department. The goal for this program was to reduce mandates and



improve occupancy staffing rates. We went from a 68.4% occupancy rate in June of 2022 to an 88.78% occupancy rate in December of 2022 with currently minimal forced

mandates. We have had 28 ICIW women participate in the program and 3 women who have been permanently hired as full time IVH employees after their parole.

- ❁ Sign on bonuses for food service workers was implemented in June of 2022 as a way to recruit new staff members.
- ❁ The canteen was reopened as a service to residents and staff open Monday-Friday. A plan is being worked on to reopen these services for weekends.
- ❁ A “Foodie” group was started in conjunction with the recreation department. This is a group of residents that are passionate about food and want to learn more about food, production, and the science and art of food.
- ❁ Implementation of the International Dysphagia Diet Standardization Initiative with 95+ trainings completed in-house and the addition of added training to New Employee Orientation as well as new ICIW

Performance Measure

Percentage of resident satisfaction with the food services of IVH

Performance Target for FY2023

• 85%

Result

• 78%

staff. Training and competencies added for cooks.

- ❁ Food Service Disaster plan updated.
- ❁ Started themed meals for residents in the Atha dining room in conjunction with recreation.
- ❁ The Atha dining room was reopened in October 2022 for all residents and staff and has remained open.



HUMAN RESOURCES

Performance Measure

Percentage of employee performance evaluations completed in a timely manner on an annual basis

Performance Target for FY2023 • **95%**

Result • **82.5%**

- ❖ HR has continued to provide leadership trainings. Classes on Evaluations/Coaching and Counseling in September, Investigations in January, Sexual Harassment in January and FMLA training was offered by the Department of Administrative Services (DAS) in May. New leaders continue to receive additional training through PDS courses at DAS.
- ❖ We added additional incentives to assist with recruiting new applicants such as sign on bonuses for part-time RN, LPNs and weekend package staff.
- ❖ The Iowa Veterans Home worked creatively with DAS to add a posting for paramedics to be utilized in the facility due to the shortage of nursing staff in the US. This was another avenue for IVH to request this classification to help support Licensed nurses at the facility.
- ❖ We have continued quarterly CMA payments to assist with retaining those CNAs that have the CMA certification.
- ❖ IVH set up a way to incentivize nursing leaders or those holding an LPN or RN license to work the medication cart or be in
- ❖ Recruitment and Retention participated in 20 career events that included BCL-UW school, West Marshall Career Fair, MHS



the count on the floor to reduce mandating of licensed staff members.

- ❖ We have continued the Employee referral program to assist with recruiting of new Nursing employees as well as Blanket Waivers for new hires to increase the rate of pay for those in positions of Resident Treatment Workers (CNAs), LPNs, RNs, Nurse Supervisors.

Performance Measure

Rate of lost work days due to injury on the job

Performance Target for FY2023 • **3.5**

Result • **2.45**

- ❖ IVH has partnered with iJAG and attended the Career Development Conference in March. This opportunity led IVH to start tours with those local iJAG school chapters and increase their awareness of the Iowa Veterans Home and explain the career opportunities that IVH has to offer.

Career Clusters, MCC Career fair, Ellsworth Career Fair, Spring hiring event x 2, Iowa Works open interviews x 6, Reverse Job Fair

held with Vocational Rehab, Tama Job fair, Camp Dodge, Iowa State Career Fair, MCC Expo, Colo-Nesco, IVH Teacher Externship, I-JAG Career Conference. Recruitment and Retention also joined in the KFJB “Veterans Voice” radio show x 3 during this period of time featuring open positions and recruiting efforts.

- ❁ The HR payroll team started meeting with staff members one on one starting in February to review benefits selections and time-keeping questions with new employees.
- ❁ Shift Differential payment was audited in payroll with over a 99% accuracy rate of employees paid.



INFECTION CONTROL

Performance Measure

Percentage of residents participating in the annual flu vaccination program

Performance Target for FY2023 • 90%

Result • 92%

improve our participation with residents and staff

- ❖ Annual infection Control education provided to all staff on the LMS as well as during New Employee Orientation and the 20-hour CNA course
- ❖ Infection Control policies/procedures reviewed and updated annually and as changes occur
- ❖ Weekly data submission through NHSN for COVID positive residents and staff
- ❖ Weekly data submission through NHSN for resident and staff COVID vaccination status

- ❖ COVID update emails sent to families when there is a positive staff/resident with Unit restrictions and visitor instructions

- ❖ Hand Hygiene audits completed monthly by nursing staff, clinical dietitians during unit meals and by Food Service. Providing just in time education and ongoing education throughout the year within the LMS

- ❖ Antibiotic Stewardship activities are included in monthly Quality Assurance Performance Improvement meetings

- ❖ Annual Risk Assessment completed

- ❖ Annual Flu Shots campaign created to

Performance Measure

Percentage of eligible IVH residents who received the pneumonia vaccine

Performance Target for FY2023 • 90%

Result • 92%



MEDICAL CLINIC

Performance Measure

Percentage of IVH residents whose dental needs are able to be met by IVH

Performance Target for FY2023 • 95%

Result • 98.4%

- ❖ Orthopedic and Chiropractic Care contracts have been completed. We are now working to get clinic dates and services started.
- ❖ Medical Clinic continues to offer contracted services Wound Care, Optometry, Podiatry, Nurses Foot Clinic, Routine dental cleanings by the Hygienist, Dental Clinics, Speech Therapy.
- ❖ Contract for X-ray Partnership was renewed with the VA to provide CBOC patients x-ray services at IVH.

- ❖ Collaboration with VADM Safe Handling Committee was initiated to help identify special equipment needs for discharging Veterans coming to IVH. Hovermatt trial also completed and is now being utilized in the Med Clinic.
- ❖ VA telehealth expansion of Audiology clinic and Tele-retinal visits is on hold pending a server upgrade on part of VADM.
- ❖ Working on a bid for Dermatology, Orthopedics and Chiropractic Care
- ❖ VA Telehealth is working on expanding services to include Audiology and Tele-retinal visits
- ❖ Working on a bid for Dermatology, Orthopedics and Chiropractic Care

Performance Measure

**Percent completion of Primary Care Provider required regulatory visits within the directed timeframe

Performance Target for FY2023 • 95%

Result • 94.2%

DEPARTMENT	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug
CLINIC								
OPTOMETRY	47	52	36	77	60	59	37	75
PODIATRY	48	64	57	58	77	63	44	56
DENTAL	73	74	73	75	42	69	83	64
HYGIENE	74	62	60	60	79	77	58	84
WOUND	19	27	32	16	23	12	20	31
X-RAY/ECGs (IVH resident/ CBOC patients)	85	70	103	75	77	78	64	71
Total # of appts:	346	349	361	361	358	358	306	381

**includes DOM annual visit and Nursing visits: Admits, 30/60/90 day initial visits and q 60 day visits

NURSING

Performance Measure

*Percent of residents experiencing 1 or more falls with major injuries

Performance Target for FY2023

• 3.5%

Result

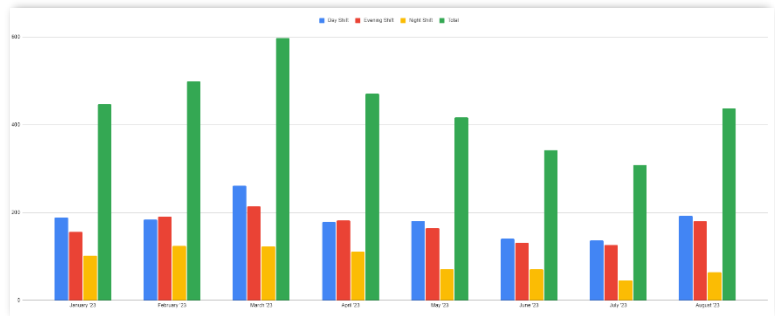
• 3.6%

*14 falls with major injuries/daily average facility census of 388

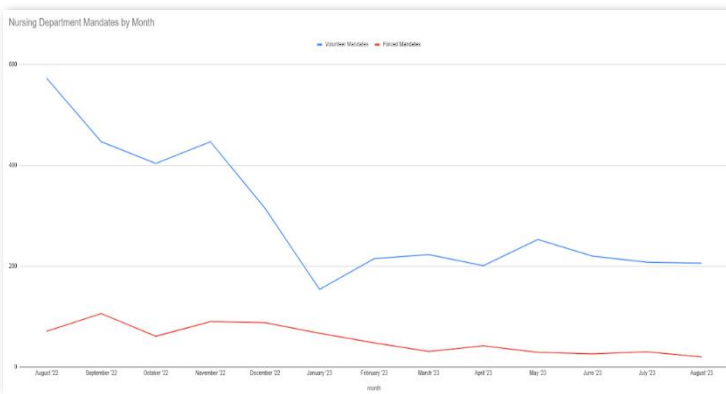
✿ We are collaborating with Facilities and Pharmacy on the implementation of our new ARxIUM/Medselect Medication stations. In preparation for this transition we had a team of 10 staff visit MHI in Independence where they are currently using these same cabinets. The vendor was onsite in August to complete SuperUser training and 55 of our Medication/Licensed staff was trained. The tentative plan is to begin implementation of these cabinets in the Dack building in late October.

✿ We received deficiency free survey results from both the Iowa Department of Inspections and Appeals in March 2023 and the Department of Veterans Affairs in May 2023.

✿ Since June 2022 we have been working to transition and fully implement our electronic medical record to Point Click Care. This includes transitioning our eMAR/eTAR and utilizing the Skin & Wound application for assessing and tracking all skin impairments and wounds. This transition is now complete and PCC fully implemented.



✿ Throughout the year we have tracked and shared our nursing position occupancy rates, missed shifts by nursing staff and nursing staff mandate data. While the missed shifts have been inconsistent, the mandates have trended downward over the year as a result of scheduling, recruitment and retention efforts.



✿ Over the past year the nursing department has worked on many different ways to recruit additional staff while also working on how we grow and create opportunities for advancement for our current staff including:

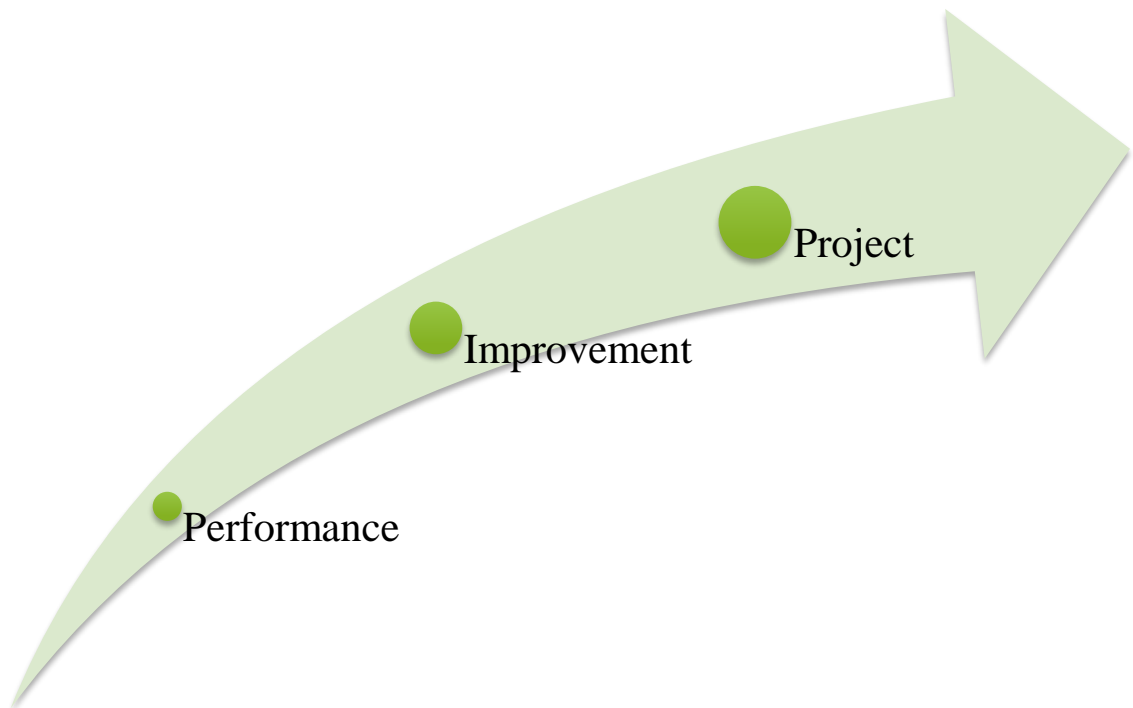


- Writing a PDQ for and creating a Resident Treatment Supervisor position for a Licensed Paramedic to assist in providing licensed care to our residents.
- Posting full time, temporary positions for RTWs, LPNs, and RNs as a short term “contract” position to provide temporary relief as an alternative to using agency staffing
- Creating weekend package and 14-hour shift schedule opportunities for employees to work 3 days a week. This has been highly successful in recruiting staff at all levels
- Developing a 20-hour CNA curriculum and strengthening our training program to be able to bring employees in with no training and train them how to work as a CNA
- Supporting our LPN and RN students while they are in school with temporary positions and flexible scheduling opportunities
- Promoting our RTWs to CMA positions by sending them to Iowa Valley Continuing Education to attend the Medication Aide training

Nursing Department Totals			
<u>Position</u>	<u>Authorized</u>	<u>Current</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
AON	1	1	100.00%
NSD	3	3	100.00%
Nurse Supervisor	25	24	96.00%
Nurse Clinician	12	12	100.00%
RN	17	12	70.59%
LPN	49	33	67.35%
CMA	75	58	77.33%
RTW	181	149	82.32%
RA	35	33	94.29%
Staffing Coordinator	6	6	100.00%
NUC	6	6	100.00%
Restorative Aide	6	6	100.00%
Recreation Assistant	5	5	100.00%
AA 1	1	1	100.00%
Compliance Officer 1	1	1	100.00%
Total	423	350	82.74%

- ❁ We continue to partner with contracted Hospice services to provide the best possible end of life care and experience for our residents and their families.

- ❁ In August, we began a partnership with IMPACT Medical, a DME company, that provides Tracheostomy, Enteral Feeding, Colostomy, Catheter, and Wound Care supplies for residents with Medicare Part B. This is a cost savings opportunity for us with no change in care provided to the residents.
- ❁ Over the past year the Ulery Building has begun transitioning back to a dementia-focused building in order to provide the best possible dementia care to our residents. The goal is to provide a therapeutic living environment for residents with neurocognitive disorders or residents exhibiting behaviors that are unsafe to themselves or others, that require or benefit from trained caregivers, dementia specific programming, or a secure or semi-secure environment to optimize their quality of life.
- ❁ Nursing Department PIPs over the last year have included tracking and trending falls, focusing on medication error reduction in the Ulery building, reviewing and improving our process for maintaining our resident's medical diagnoses, and streamlining the process for tracking, ordering and obtaining resident lab tests. In the upcoming year, in addition to continue PIPs from last year, we plan to focus on the Ulery Recreation program and our Restorative Nursing Program



PHARMACY

Performance Measure

Rate of medication administration errors per every 10,000 doses

Performance Target for FY2023 • 1.1%

Result • 0%

- ❁ Plans in place for new automated dispensing machines to decrease dispensing errors, anticipated EOY 2023
- ❁ Pharmacy staff continue to be above the national average when it comes to errors that reach our residents

Performance Measure

Percentage of medication dispensing errors within the IVH pharmacy

Performance Target for FY2023 • 0.10%

Result • 0.03%

- ❁ Total number of orders processed = 99,156
- ❁ Total number of med errors that got to the unit = 28
- ❁ Overall total error rate = 0.03%



PUBLIC AFFAIRS

On the coat-tails of Commandant Jacobus' assumption of leadership, IDVA Communications strove to support a cross-section of new strategic lines of effort with a particular focus on Objective 3: "Improving Stakeholder Communications", already well-postured in multiple state-wide strategic initiatives. IDVA is a relatively small department with an even smaller communications team, in a heavily 'grass-roots' state. We aim to accomplish as much as possible through inter-agency and inter-organizational partnerships, collaboration, and unity of effort. This year we've taken steps to improve a supporting 'by-through-with' approach in transforming our relationships with County Veteran Service Officers and local organizations as our front-line action arm in assisting our veterans on an individual level. We plan to continue building on these efforts, while also honing our sites on new refinements and undertakings.

I-GOV-Wide Initiatives

❁ *Governor's Transformation Communication*

Alignment: With unique experience in communications strategy, IDVA provided valuable input in the broader Transformation Alignment working group. As IDVA was ahead of most agencies in our transformation process, we were postured to serve as a 'point man' for communications challenges and best practices which could have greater impact on the larger agencies if undetected. Within IDVA, our separate bureaus have continued comparatively effective internal communication programs. We will focus this next year on improving inter-bureau communication - a challenge for any set of merging organizations - to enhance departmental cohesion and unity of effort.

- ❁ *Web Transformation:* As IDVA was 'the first agency in' with its transformation process, we were one of the first two agencies to migrate merged web pages reflecting the new organizational structure into the new software and format. With a significant software shift, and some capabilities still becoming available, there will be on-going refinement. But IDVA is ahead of the curve. While merging our departmental page, we decided to allow our social media platforms to continue operating independently due to different target audiences. However, we try to share everything produced internally on both. IDVA will seek to expand social media

reach to Instagram and YouTube in the coming months.

- ❁ *Digital Equity:* The State of Iowa Digital Equity Initiative is part of the Iowa Department of Management - Office of the Chief Information Officer's effort to create a plan to ensure digital equity for all Iowans. IDVA was asked to represent veterans as a covered population. So far, the group has conducted surveys and more than 50 public meetings to discuss digital equity with



Iowans. IDVA is assembling a representative group of key veteran service leaders for the first veteran-specific strategic planning session Sept. 29th.

- ❁ *Veterans Suicide Prevention Governor's Challenge Lead:* SAMHSA (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration) has partnered with the United States Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to bring the Governor's and Mayor's Challenges to Prevent Suicide Among Service Members, Veterans, and their Families (SMVF) to states, territories, and communities across the Nation. For the Governor's Challenge, 54 states and territories are currently taking part in the challenge and are working to develop and implement state-wide suicide prevention

best practices for SMVF, using a public health approach. IDVA has recently assumed a shared administrative and coordination lead in this fledgling effort, specifically facilitating greater access to the target population and expertise in communicating with the veteran - especially rural veteran - subculture, not previously available in the state or among most of our peers.

- ❁ *IDVA Strategic Planning:* IDVA developed a strategic communications plan, and will provide integral support for IDVA strategic planning efforts and working groups. Besides providing some direction for IDVA, this will also help ensure consistent alignment with multi-agency communications efforts. We aspire to be the communications hub of a combined, unified effort for all agencies with veteran-supporting programs, seeking to reach our veterans.

Keystone Events: Each year, IDVA is the lead on several state-wide high-visibility events, drawing veterans and key leaders from across the state and beyond. Governor Reynolds and members of the Iowa Delegation are among the usual guests. The Memorial Day and Veterans Day events at IVC are considered Iowa's 'Official' events in recognition of these days.

- ❁ *Veterans Day on the Hill:* About 150-200 veterans attended to engage with their leaders and highlight the Iowa Commission on Veterans Affairs Legislative Priorities. This number was consistent with attendance since COVID-19, but also likely impeded by questionable travel conditions in the west-central part of the state, moving eastward throughout the day. In general, legislative efforts were very successful in passing both Veterans Affairs Committees. However, none were reported in Appropriations to make it to the floor for final vote. The hiring of a Legislative Liaison should help this effort in future years.

- ❁ *Memorial Day:* IDVA hosted Memorial Day observances at both IVH and IVC. The IVC event turned out about 1500-1750 visitors. This year's event featured TAG MG Osborn

as the keynote speaker, Gov. Reynolds, Rep. Nunn, and Mayor Adams.

- ❁ *Veterans Day at the Iowa State Fair Parade:* This year's event helped produce the second most attended (100,214) Monday in State Fair history (105,522 in 2017). While our number of entries was consistent with recent years (75-80), participation maxed out our allotted wrist-band supply (1,500) for the first time.

- ❁ *Veterans Day (TBD):* This year we will host the Veterans Day event at IVC on Friday Nov. 10th (vs. 11th), in order to accommodate the weekend schedules. We intend to augment our visibility with outreach at several potential events surrounding the University of Iowa Military Appreciation Game on Veterans Day this year.

Outreach & Key Leader Engagement: Each year IDVA supports a number of veterans-oriented events. Outreach includes events in which IDVA was invited to provide information, education, networking, interactions resulting in referrals, and personal engagement with veterans about any of our, or other stakeholder programs through a number of means. Commonly, this involves events in which we are not the host and act in support of a host organization where we provide one or more outreach persons, usually equipped with consumable information materials and a display. Key Leader Engagement (KLE) is when an IDVA Key Leader or representative intentionally interacts with

external influencers and audiences in any shape or form to educate and communicate IDVA messages and/or collect feedback and insight. This can be achieved by many means ranging from speaking to a large audience, to one-on-one private meetings with external and stakeholder peers. Over the past two years we've increased our efforts in this area. Research recently conducted by UNI MPP Intern Dylan Boles substantiates the validity of this increased effort. This year we multiplied that effort exponentially.

- ❖ Outreach efforts normally vary greatly by season and this one is still wrapping up. Between three regular outreach individuals, IDVA appears to be averaging about 4.5 events per week for the CY so far, keeping in mind the vast majority of these occur in an approximate 7-month window between April-October. In reality this frequency is more like one or two a week in the colder months, to almost 10 in a week June-August. Provided all the planned events to the end of the CY happen, this year looks to be a nearly 800-percent increase in events and Iowans reached from 2022, which also saw a 300-percent increase from 2021. While this much growth simply isn't sustainable without significant temporary staff increases part of the year, we'll use this year to generate a baseline and measure events to analyze the most effective ones for future planning. We will continue to particularly seek opportunities to reach vets in the further four corners of the state.

- ❖ KLEs were not previously tracked, and therefore a method to measure them is still in work. But this is one of our biggest areas of growth this year. By comparison, there were peer agencies two years ago who started independent veteran programs simply because they were unaware IDVA existed or was active. This year we can - by looking through the calendar - easily estimate a 2-3 engagement weekly average on the very conservative end, but like outreach efforts, most of these concentrates seasonally in the warmer months where a daily engagement average is the norm several weeks. Again, while measures of effectiveness are still under development, qualitative atmospherics indicate these efforts are paying off in large ways from past administrations. Our inter-agency and public demand for presence is increasing. IDVA is becoming a very popular presence across the state, and a sought-after partner in many endeavors.

RECREATION

- Activities have returned to what would be considered normal pre-COVID restrictions. We are able to be active in the community with various trips that include sporting events, live entertainment, farmer's markets, parades, tours of historical museums, races, shopping, casino and out to eat.



Performance Measure

Percentage of residents that are satisfied with the current number of organized activities provided

Performance Target for FY2023

• 85%

Result

• 89%

- We have been able to have many visitors, performers, educators, school groups, volunteers, Veterans groups, and businesses all visit, volunteer or perform for our residents. We offer activities throughout the day, weekends and some evenings through small and large groups.

- We continue to have in person Resident Council meetings, unit meetings.
- An American Legion post was established in the facility that many residents are members of which meet monthly.
- We continue to complete risk assessments as needed for group activities. Each month we review resident's activity participation documentation to review any residents who may be at risk for little to no activity involvement based on documentation in 1:1 intervention, contacts/brief visits, participation in small and large group activities and self-directed activities. Recreation, Activities Staff and nursing staff are able to document engagement in activities. The Therapeutic Recreation Specialist all meet with residents quarterly to assess resident's satisfaction, concerns, needs and activity participation.



IOWA VETERANS BENEFITS OFFICE AND IOWA VETERANS CEMETERY

Robert Stavnes accepted the Public Service Manager 1 position on December 9th 2022, with duty as the Bureau Chief for the Iowa Veterans Benefit (IVB) Office at Camp Dodge and the Iowa Veterans Cemetery (IVC) near Van Meter. IVB and IVC are subordinate organizations to the Iowa Department of Veterans Affairs (IDVA). Mr. Stavnes' hire closed a leadership gap of over six months with the departure of Mr. Steve Luken in May 2022. Mr. Todd Jacobus was selected by Governor as the Commandant, IDVA in November 2022. The valued employees of both IVB and IVC deserve great credit for their dedication and professionalism during this challenging transition period.

IVB and IVC were reorganized in May 2022 from separate departments reporting to the Governor of Iowa to bureaus reporting to the Commandant of IDVA. The reorganization including the elimination of salaried employee positions, including the IVC Director, Superintendent and Foreman as well as IVB's Executive Officer, Executive Secretary and one Veterans Benefits Service Officer. With the growing footprint and workload, IVC has established a contract to subsidize the additional workload to meet the National Cemetery Association (NCA) Standards.

IVB Strategic Goals and Outcomes

STRENGTHEN PARTNERSHIPS THROUGHOUT THE NETWORK RESULTING IN MORE EFFICIENT SERVICE TO VETERANS. PROVIDE FUNDING FOR AUTHORIZED SUPPORT OF LOCAL COUNTY PROGRAMS TO INFORM, EDUCATE AND ASSIST VETERANS.

- ❁ Attendance of 85% of County VSO/administrator to at least one of the annual training sessions. We exceeded this goal in April 2023 with 94 of 99 County Veterans Service Officers (CVSO) attending mandatory 16 Continuous Education Unit training. The five counties absent had recently retired/vacated their positions and had not been filled before training was scheduled and completed. IVB reasserted control of these events as prior to the merger the planning and execution of training were delegated to the Iowa Association of County Veterans Service Officers (IACVSO). IVB control reduced expenses for spring training
- ❁ by 50% while maintaining quality training content and improving participation from CVSOs.
- ❁ Provide education to VSO/administrators of the Iowa Veteran Cemetery at annual training. IVC Lead Worker Ms. Jeanna Hampel provided an information brief to all CVSOs during Spring Training. In addition, IVC Representative Ms Melinda McGregor provided a solicited information brief to the Valley Junction Veterans of Foreign Wars Auxiliary. IVC information briefs are now made available to all Iowa National Guard Retiree seminars on Camp Dodge.

IMPROVE QUALITY OF COUNTY VETERANS' AFFAIRS TRAINING PROGRAMS. MAINTAIN BETTER EDUCATED AND PREPARED ASSISTANCE AT COUNTY LEVEL TO ASSIST VETERANS, SPOUSES AND DEPENDENTS.

- ❁ Provide additional training outside of the annual training to keep VSO/Administrators current on procedures of state programs. We are dramatically enhancing the content of our fall training with a graduate level public policy project supported by the
- University of Northern Iowa. Federal data bases reflecting monthly fiscal performance
- ❁ by County and multiple surveys to CVSOs allowed IVB to focus on CVSOs performing well, gain lessons learned and best business practices, and impart that information to CVSOs that are not trending in a positive

direction. This led to much improved content for annual training that uses unemotional data to drive education needs.

- ❁ Establish an electronic monthly communication of program changes and upcoming outreach events. IVB Veterans

Service Officers John Ralls and Ben Dales, in conjunction with IDVA Public Affairs Officer Mr. Karl Lettow have vastly expanded outreach efforts and capture those events in monthly newsletters generated by IDVA. Please note Mr. Lettow's highlights elsewhere in this document.

EDUCATE VETERANS ABOUT THEIR BENEFITS, RESULTING IN INCREASED KNOWLEDGE OF THE SUPPORT NETWORK AND ACTUAL RECEIPT OF BENEFITS. PROVIDE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO ELIGIBLE VETERANS AND FAMILIES.

- ❁ Establish communication with CBOCs, VA hospitals and clinics and various Veteran organizations. IVB VSOs Mr. John Ralls and Mr. Ben Dales have reasserted themselves into dozens of Veterans Outreach Events supporting both local County and Federal VA offices Statewide. We have renewed our office presence in the Des Moines Federal Building to better support Veterans claims and reclaims and better coordinate with National VSO's and the Regional VA offices resident in the building. IVB VSOs are attending Veteran Homeless Stand downs in Cedar Rapids, Davenport, Des Moines, and Mason City and are taking the lead in Veteran Suicide initiatives Statewide. IVB VSOs established screening programs with their Federal VA counterparts as new residents of the Iowa Veterans Home (IVH) are on ramped. They are also contacting over 400 residents of IVH to ensure their VA claims are updated and they are receiving all the benefits they've earned.

IVC STRATEGIC GOALS AND OUTCOMES

100% OF HEADSTONES ARE PLACED WITHIN 60 DAYS OF RECEIPT AT IVC.

OUTCOME = 60%.

Headstones were not installed over the winter due to personnel, equipment, and supply shortages. IVC is diligently increasing quality staff members to include contractors to ensure efficient headstone placing. Headstones are now installed in a timely and proper manner to help loved ones identify Veterans' graves. Systems are now in place to satisfy this metric to NCA Shrine Standards by end of October 2024.

IVB ensures that the Military Homeowners

Grant is discussed at each CVSO training events. We continuously educate veterans about their benefits, resulting in increased knowledge of the support network and actual receipt of benefits. The number of eligible Veterans, spouses, and dependents receiving assistance from Iowa Veterans Trust Fund was 375. The Trust Fund was depleted given 300% poverty threshold, thus no applications processed for five months.

- ❁ Pay invoices from contractors and vendors for Veterans Programs within 30 days of receipt. IVB valued employees Ms. Melissa Miller and Mr. Kevin House

are coordinating directly with Iowa Department of Public Defense (IDPD) Comptroller and Finance authorities as we transition to direct support from IDVA financial enabler currently serving at IVH in Marshalltown. Trial runs from the receipt of invoices to vendors receiving checks remain under 30-day threshold.

IVC Recapitalization Program

Background:

On July 22, 2004, the State of Iowa (Governor Tom Vilsack) and the Executive Director of the Commission on Veterans Affairs (Mr. Pat Palmerschiem) issued assurances to the United States Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) that the title to the Iowa Veterans Cemetery (IVC) is owned by the Iowa Department of Veterans Affairs (IDVA), and assures the VA that the IVC constructed with Federal Grant money will be operated and maintained in accordance with National Cemetery Association (NCA) requirements.

The assurances further state that the administration, operation, and maintenance of a VA-supported state cemetery is solely the responsibility of the state, territory, or tribal government.

Discussion:

Cemeteries must be operated solely for the interment of Veterans (as defined by Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) in 38 CFR part 39.2), and their eligible family members (see 38 CFR part 39.10).

VA provides the gravesite, grave liner, opening and closing of the grave, government headstone or marker, U.S. burial flag, Presidential Memorial Certificate and perpetual care of the gravesite at no cost to the family. VA is authorized to reimburse states "plot allowance" of up to \$893 for expenses incurred in the burial of certain eligible Veteran.

The Iowa Veterans Cemetery (IVC) currently receives \$893 from the Department of the Treasury per qualified Veteran interred. When IVC opened 15 years ago, that amount was \$300. IVC continues to charge eligible family members the same \$300 for interment.

We are working towards national shrine status. CFR 39.2 Operation and Maintenance Project means a project that assists a State or Tribal Organization to achieve VA's national shrine standards of appearance in the key cemetery operational areas of cleanliness, height and alignment of headstones and markers, leveling of gravesites, and turf conditions IVC must keep its assurances and provide National Shrine level service to all our qualified Veterans and Family members.

Application for VA Federal Grant worth ~\$2.3 Million was submitted for new columbarium walls and to repair the irrigation system that is inoperable.



Iowa Veterans Home

Serving Iowa Veterans Since 1887



1301 Summit St
Marshalltown, IA 50158

Tel: (641) 752-1501
Website: dva.iowa.gov

Iowa Benefits Bureau



7105 NW 70th Ave. Camp
Dodge, Bldg. 3465
Johnston, IA 50131

Tel: (515) 252-4698
Website: dva.iowa.gov

Iowa Veterans Cemetery



34024 Veterans Memorial
Drive
Adel, IA 50003

Tel: (515) 996-9048
Website: dva.iowa.gov