

STRATEGIC PLAN FY2024 - FY2029

VISION

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

MISSION

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

CORE 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.

ASSESSMENT

The IDVA has increased the ability to serve Iowa's Veterans through the collaborative efforts of our community outreach and the awareness of the services afforded Veterans residing in the State of Iowa. We have seen expanded benefits afforded to Veterans who have a service-connected disability through the reorganization of agencies. The Iowa Veterans Home has seen an increase in bed capacity as we close the chapter on the COVID pandemic and rebuild our nursing workforce and reevaluate the needs of our Veterans population throughout our state. We have a strong mission to fulfill the promise made to Iowa's Veterans who took the oath to defend the constitution of the United States. We are committed to the workforce, who provide excellence in long term care, to a challenging population. We do provide a beautiful, homelike environment for our residents where each resident is provided a private room and full bath room. The Iowa Veterans Home is dedicated to identifying and improving the resident experience through an annual Quality of Life Survey sent to residents and families. Responses from the survey lead to identifying key performance indicators to ensure Agency Performance Measure benchmarks are met. We partner

with numerous organizations and volunteers to provide a robust recreation program that includes trips all over the surrounding community as well as dances, comedians, musicians, bingos, special dinners, and much more. We provide a continuum of health care to meet the needs of each Veteran including dental, psychiatric, dermatology, and chiropractic services- all in house. All additional health care services are provided by transporting residents to their needed specialty appointments. The Iowa Veterans Home is currently certified by the VA for 378 nursing level of care beds, recently running about 90% capacity. In evaluating our long-term needs, we are in the process of opening a 28-bed wing of long-term care private rooms on Malloy 2N. We are also seeking approval from the Federal Veteran Association to transition 30 residential care beds in the Fox building to 30 long term care beds through attrition. This will meet the changing needs that are predicted as Veterans receive more care in their homes.

The IDVA is afforded the opportunity to carry out the mission of caring for the Veterans who willingly served our country. Veterans who earned benefits deserve to receive the highest benefit possible. Improving benefits for Veterans living in the State of Iowa helps the Iowa economy grow and provides a better life for Veterans. There are 182,640 known Veterans in the State of Iowa per the Geographic Distribution of VA Expenditures (GDX) report FY2022. Only about a quarter of our Iowa Veterans are receiving benefits. The State of Iowa is ranked 48th for federal dollars coming into Iowa from VA disability compensation with a national average of \$19,871 and Iowa is \$16,612. The State of Iowa is ranked 35th for the number of Iowa Veterans receiving VA disability compensation. The Iowa Veteran's population is largely comprised of National Guard and Reserve Veterans who are not eligible for disability compensation or retirement benefits which does influence this dollar per capita measure. Other challenges include the considerable number of County Veteran Service Officers (CVSOs) who do not have PIV Card access, communication challenges between different levels of the VA system and gaps in training for CVSOs.

The Iowa Veterans Home has maintained a Five-Star rating from CMS since 2016 as a long-term care facility. IVH specializes in dementia care and has in-house mental health services. We are tasked with providing opportunities for professional growth for 750 employees of the State of Iowa while fulfilling the mission.

Healthcare often comes with challenges to maintain staffing levels while offering flexible schedules to maintain a strong satisfied workforce. Although employees verbalize through satisfaction surveys that serving our Veterans plays a significant role in their job satisfaction, the work to ensure individualized resident needs are met for our state's heroes is challenging. Worker training and competency requirements are also challenging and continue to increase as new regulatory requirements are added. Budgeting constraints also pose challenges to the agency.

Admissions to our facility in recent years have become increasingly medically complex. Residents are being admitted with more acute care needs. There is a greater need for inpatient psychiatric placement for residents that are severely affected by mental health diagnosis, including neurocognitive disorders such as dementia. But this level of care has become difficult to access, which imposes a greater burden on healthcare providers at our facility. At the Iowa Veterans Home, we are well above the comparison group national percentile for behavior symptoms affecting others (measured by physical and verbal symptoms directed at others and wandering) on the CASPER report due to our resident population with mental health conditions and dementia. The cost of nursing care has dramatically increased due to the shortages of healthcare providers and the aging population. As the demand increases, the cost of quality services is one of our greatest threats for the future. In addition, the cost of medical supplies, food, maintenance, medical equipment, pharmaceuticals, and information technology are continuing to increase at a greater rate than the appropriations afforded for the delivery of care through the federal government and other resources.

| Objective To Tasks | Desired Strategies | SMART Goal/Due Date | Leads | Measure |
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| #1: Increase Satisfaction with Services | Strategy A: Improve resident experience through an annual Quality of Life survey that reflects the needs of our IVH residents | 1A- Develop and maintain individualized activity programming geared towards resident-specific populations by 2025. 2A- Track resident preferences through targeted unit-specific meetings to address mealtimes and meal/snack selections by FY2024. 3A- Explore options for residents to implement a self-selection program during FY2025. | Clinical Support Director Food Service | 85% of residents verbalize satisfaction with the number of organized activities provided (minimum threshold) (SP) 85% of residents report satisfaction with food service (minimum threshold) (SP) 85% of residents report satisfaction with food service (minimum threshold) (SP) |
| | Strategy B: Demonstrate commitment to assisting IVH residents with meeting needs in a safe and resident-centered environment *GV Government Efficiency *GV Health Care | 1B. Improve safety and efficiency of med administration through a targeted performance improvement initiative through 2025. 2B. Assist residents to maintain optimal quality of life through advance care plans by 2025. 3B. Assist residents to achieve and maintain their highest level of functioning by strengthening through the restorative program at IVH by developing individualized, measurable interventions that meet the residents' individual goals through 2024. 4B- Provide personalized feedback on prescribing practices to providers in regards to antibiotic stewardship and | Administrator of Nursing Pharmacy Supervisor Infection Preventionist Quality Management Director Medical Director Clinical Support Director | Rate of medication administration errors per every 10,000 doses will remain 1.1% or lower (SP) Increase in resident-centered care plans that address advance care planning and palliative-type care Maintain an overall quality rating of 5 out of 5 stars by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) based on our inspections, staffing and quality measures Evidence of consistent reporting shared at QAA meetings Rate of falls with major injury on the iQIES Report will be consistently maintained below the national level Percent of residents experiencing 1 or more falls with |

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| | | drug regimen reviews by FY2026. | | major injuries will be 3.5% or less (SP) |
| | | 5B. Reduce preventable falls with major injuries on the CASPER report by 2025 6B- Residents will verbalize improved satisfaction with timeliness in which their needs are met by 2025. 7B- Medical Services (external medical appointments) will initiate improvements in their referral process (length of time by scheduling collaboration with the VA), reduce unnecessary appointments and operationalize communication with the VA through 2026. | | 85% or greater satisfaction with staff's responsiveness to their needs on annual Resident Satisfaction Survey. Reduce outside referrals by 10% Complete addition of dermatology & cardiology and increase telehealth visits in the Medical Clinic. |
| | Strategy C: Determine level of provision of mental health services *GV Government Efficiency *GV Health Care *GV Workforce | 1C: Prepare for changes in our delivery of mental health services by assessing the availability of nurse practitioners and the DAS pay grade for these positions and/or options for contracting services by 2026. | Medical Director Licensed Nursing Home Administrator HR Director | Partner with the VA for expansion of CPRS access to assist the medical providers. Track the IVH rate of Behavior Symptoms Affecting Others on the CASPER report compared to the national percentile. |
| | Strategy D: Sustain customer satisfaction with cemetery grounds services | 1D: IVC leadership will be certified by the National Cemetery Administration (NCA) no later than FY2025. | Veterans Benefits & Cemetery Bureau Chief | The quality of service received from cemetery staff will be rated excellent or good will be 97% or higher |
| | Strategy E: Improve relationships with Iowa Association of County Commissioners and Veteran | 1E: Focus on training needs for District 1 SW Iowa and Linn County per IVDA analysis of | Veterans Benefits & Cemetery Bureau Chief | Track and trend survey results from biannual VSO meetings to establish a benchmark |

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| | Service Officers to increase eligible benefits to Iowa Veterans *GV Government Efficiency | Federal data by 2025. 2E: Target training for biannual meetings based on results from survey and county Veterans benefits performance trends by 2025. 3E: Increase compensation coming into the state for VA disability compensation- ongoing 4E: Increase the number of Iowa Veterans drawing military retirement- ongoing | | Track and trend survey results from biannual VSO meetings to establish a benchmark Track total number of Veterans contacted monthly by Veterans Benefits Bureau Track total number of outreach events held monthly by Veterans Benefits Bureau Increase the amount of compensation per Veteran in the State of Iowa per the annual GDX report released in the Spring from US Department of Veterans Affairs |
| #2: Modernize technology, processes, equipment & facilities, and posture for future innovation | Strategy A: Develop and maintain an equipment lifecycle program | 1A: Ensure safe mechanical and medical equipment is provided for residents through a robust lifecycle management process to increase efficiency and decrease equipment downtime through 2025. | Facility Bureau Chief Clinical Support Director | Reduce maintenance costs and equipment downtime by 10% or greater through 2025. |
| | Strategy B: Ensure the security, reliability and accuracy of IVH systems and technology *GV Government Efficiency | 1B: Streamline workflows in Central Supply and identify/fully utilize all capabilities of the computerized maintenance management system to avoid waste (cost) by 2025. 2B: Eliminate waste and errors in workflows at IVH through collaboration with the Department of Management through 2025. | Clinical Support Director Operations Division | Review of monthly reports to Bureau Chief to ensure general reduction in medical waste Eliminate expired equipment Par levels will be established and maintained Complete cross training of CS and QM staff for efficiency |
| | Strategy C: | 1C: Review existing camera | Operations Division | Completion of project by 2027 |

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| | Explore and implement emerging and existing technology | system to determine those of older operation and explore camera options by 2027 2C: Improve network backbone systems by 2026. 3C: Implement electronic admission packets by 2025. 4C: Implement an upgraded billing system by 2027. 5C: Explore emergency/daily communication devices, e.g. two-way radios by 2025. 6C: Pursue scheduler application for nursing and food service that can be accessed on a personal phone by 2025. | Operations Executive Administrator Facility Bureau Chief Administrator of Nursing | Ensure servers and software are on the latest versions for a secure environment. Care Feed will be implemented by dept Fully implemented in the next 18 months Completion of project by 2026 Selection of a schedule application by 2026 |
| | Strategy D: Identify and plan for the future by identifying the need for upgrading resources to optimize operations *GV Government Efficiency | 1D: Renovate the IVH kitchen and Atha dining room to enhance the delivery of resident-centered care by 2029. 2D: Improvements to the pharmaceutical program on Loftus 2 will be completed by 2025. 3D: Determine viability of adding beds for mental health by renovating the Sheeler 2nd and 3rd floor by 2026. 4D: Improve the physical structure and signage for visitor wayfinding by 2025. 5D: Determine the viability and future plans for expanding | Operations Division Facility Bureau Chief Pharmacy Director | 85% of residents report satisfaction with food service (minimum threshold) (SP) Percentage of mediation dispensing errors within the IVH pharmacy will remain at 0.05% or lower (SP) Receive approval for increase appropriation to provide MH services Signage in place Establish plans for this footprint |

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| | | long-term care beds utilizing Heinz Hall land by 2025. | | |
| | Strategy E: Require Personal Identification Verification (PIV) card for all CVSOs | 1E: Support legislative action as a new requirement for PIV cards to be utilized by CVSOs by 2025. | Veterans Benefits & Cemetery Bureau Chief | 98% compliance with utilization of PIV cards for CVSOs in 2025. |
| | Strategy F: Develop a new Iowa Veterans Cemetery (IVC) recapitalization program | 1F: Achieve NCA operational excellence standards by 2027. 2F: Update existing federal grant request to repair the cemetery irrigation system and build a new columbarium wall by 2027. | Veterans Benefits & Cemetery Bureau Chief | Meet or exceed in all 8 categories of the National Cemetery Administration's Compliance Review Program (CRP): 1-Customer Satisfaction 2-Equipment Maintenance 3-Facilities Maintenance 4-Gravesite Assessment Review 5-Grounds Maintenance 6-Headstone, Marker, Niche Cover 7-Internment Operations 8-Safety To get the federal government to update the priority from a 3 to a level 2 or 1 |
| #3: Improve communication among stakeholders | Strategy A: Improve employee engagement | 1A: Offer a variety of educational opportunities (CEs)- ongoing 2A: Develop skill competencies for all disciplines and classifications at IVH by 2026. 3A: Strengthen the orientation and mentoring program and expand to all disciplines and classifications by 2026. 4A: All departments will be represented in the QAPI Steering Committee by 2025. 5A: At least 75% of identified departments will share data at | Administrator of Nursing HR Director ALL Senior Leaders Quality Management Director | Measure staff satisfaction with educational opportunities provided with the Annual Satisfaction Survey Determine which disciplines currently have a competency by 2025 Ongoing mentoring education program is scheduled Total of 20 service departments will have at least one designated representative on the QAPI Charter Committee |

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| | | QAPI to strengthen their initiatives by 2025. 6A-New employees will be able to describe their role in identifying opportunities for improvement and engagement during NEO- ongoing | ALL Source Loodons | At least 15 out of the 20 service departments will share data at QAPI Quality Dept. will present at NEO each month on QAPI. Increased employee involvement in quality initiatives. |
| | Strategy B: Simplify and enhance communication | 1B: Refine and evaluate organizational strategies to effectively communicate to IVH employees: departmental staff meetings, Commandant C4 cards & feedback videos, quarterly employee forums & executive rounding, monthly senior team newsletter-ongoing 2B: Continue resident unit meetings and improve sharing of information to the quality department to track & trend by 2025. 3B: Increase residents' involvement in the QAPI process through 2025. | ALL Senior Leaders Quality Management Director Clinical Support Director | Increase in the annual Employee Satisfaction Score Reduction in C4 complaints Track and trend resident feedback documented at unit meetings for QAA meetings every 6 months Document resident involvement in facility Charter Committees and attendance at quarterly resident forums |
| | Strategy C: Develop leaders by recognizing and fostering growth of individuals' skills, strengths and talents | 1C: Offer leadership development opportunities, e.g. LeadingAge Iowa (LAI) Leadership Webinar series, internal educational offerings and leadership forumsongoing 2C: Sustain and strengthen the Intentional Rounding initiative utilizing Studer Principles in | HR Director Administrator of Nursing Licensed NH Administrator Operations Executive Administrator | Track supervisor attendance rates at monthly leadership forums Keep minutes of the Executive Rounding completed in all departments each quarter Track completion rate of PDS courses completed by supervisors |

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| #4: | Strategy A: Establish a vibrant "grow your | healthcare- ongoing 3C: Provide PDS courses for new leaders and leadership forums for all supervisors- ongoing 1A: Advertise the Total Compensation Package benefit | HR Director | All content marketing for LPN, RN, NS and CNA positions will |
| Recruit & Retain Employees/ Volunteers | establish a violant grow your own" nursing workforce strategy that offers a ladder of opportunity for nursing careers, starting with high school-aged students and continuing with employees interested in pursuing advanced nursing opportunities. This includes bonuses, flexible work schedules, and free housing for students on campus *GV Government Efficiency *GV Health Care *GV Workforce | that is available to State of Iowa employees (as listed on the DAS website) by 2024 2A: Continue to offer sign-on bonuses for LPN, RN, NS and active CNA positions- ongoing 3A: Offer 76-hour CNA class at IVH- ongoing 4A- Provide continued growth educational opportunities for LPNs and RNs (educational reimbursement) by 2026. 5A- Offer increased advancement opportunities for nursing through scholarship and scheduling opportunities through 2026 (e.g. nurse to nurse clinician, CNAs to CMAs) 6A: Offer internships for full-time college students enrolled in public policy programs- ongoing 7A: IVC will offer temporary maintenance worker positions to learn skills and teach trades | Administrator of Nursing/ Education Administrator of Nursing Veterans Benefits & Cemetery Bureau Chief | include sign-on bonus information as well as the State's total compensation package benefit Track monthly Nursing Staff Occupancy Rates to monitor for decrease in vacant positions. Track number of nursing employees that promote into an advanced position each month Track number of employees enrolled in a nursing school program that are provided a flexible schedule Secure funding to offer internship for IVDA Benefits Bureau Ensure 100% of the positions on the Iowa Commission of Veterans Affairs are filled. |
| | Strategy B: Develop community partnerships to promote IVH *GV Government Efficiency *GV Workforce | 1B-Partner with Iowa Workforce Development/ Home Base Iowa (HBI) to promote employment opportunities in Iowa for Veterans | Commandant HR Director All Senior Team | Report promotional opportunities in bimonthly Governor's report Track facility and department (nursing/food service) turnover |

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| | Strategy C: Increase volunteer hours at IVH, focusing on community organizations and church organizations Strategy D: Retain current employees at IDVA *GV Government Efficiency *GV Health Care *GV Work Force | by 2025. 2B: Continue partnership with local IJAG programs to promote employment opportunities for students- ongoing 3B: Commandant and Senior Team to increase participation in community networking opportunities, e.g. Rotary Club, Chamber of Commerce, etc. by 2025. 4B: Encourage new Student Learning/Internship opportunities at IDVA to promote future job opportunities through 2026. 1C: Reach out to schools, churches, Veterans organizations and various local organizations in the community through 2026 | Clinical Support Director | rates Track participation rates of Senior Team in community involvement and networking opportunities to promote IVH Identify internship opportunities Continual increase in hours and numbers of volunteers (increase hours by 20%, at least 65 volunteers on average monthly) |
| | Strategy D: Retain current employees at IDVA *GV Government Efficiency *GV Health Care *GV Work Force | 1D: Offer and promote employee recognition programs, e.g. DAISY, Poppy and Champion awards- ongoing 2D: Initiate a 90-day employee check-in for new employee feedback by the end of FY2025. 3D: Reinstate annual live training | HR Director Administrator of Nursing/Education Dept | Recognize 37 employees annually through established recognition programs Set up measures for feedback received and bring data to QAA meetings The percentage of active IVH employees attending annual |

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| | | by 2025. | | mandatory education will be at 100% (SP) Track and trend nursing mandates |
| | Strategy E: Improve partnership with Iowa Workforce Development to promote Iowa as the choice for transitioning Veterans through Home Base Iowa (HBI) incentives, IWD benefits and IDVA benefits | 1E: Audit Veteran Transition training at Fort Leavenworth KS with IWD and IDVA to determine ways to promote Iowa by 2025 2E: Determine effective ways to increase IWD/IDVA representation at Transition events to promote HBI by 2026. | Veterans Benefits & Cemetery Bureau Chief | Increase the number of active duty service veterans returning to Iowa Increase participation in outreach events with IDVA and IWD |
| #5: Improve access to and delivery of benefits to Iowa Veterans | Strategy A: Advocate for mental health capability with a viable funding stream *GV Government Efficiency *GV Health Care | 1A: Advocate for Federal VA buy-in for a higher VA reimbursement for treatment of chronic mental health care in long-term care | Commandant Medical Department | Psychiatrist will collaborate with political leaders, government agencies, professional associations and other stakeholders in the state to advocate for additional resources and options to treat severe mental illness and dementia. |
| | Strategy B: Streamline the admission process to increase the average occupancy rate to 94% of available VA certified beds *GV Government Efficiency *GV Health Care | 1B: Develop and maintain an efficient process for resident room turn-around and move coordination- ongoing 2B:Improve efficiency between the time an application is requested to the admission of the resident by completing all necessary calls and visits timely by 2025 3B: Decrease processing time of packet and paperwork | Operations Division Licensed NH Administrator | Track occupancy rate of available VA certified beds Add a staff resource to review applicants to decrease amount of time from the application to admission process Complete electronic implementation of CareFeed |
| | Strategy C: | 1C: Invite WFD to participate in | Veterans Benefits & Cemetery | Track/trend survey results from |

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| | Improve coordination with Iowa Workforce Development and Iowa Department of Education | County Veteran Service Officer trainings offered in the spring and fall to improve delivery of benefits (e.g. GI Bill) | Bureau Chief | biannual VSO meetings |
| | Strategy D: Inform the surviving spouse of the available benefits, e.g. Aid & Attendance, Caretaker Compensation, Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) | 1D: Provide education at the County Veteran Service Officer trainings- ongoing 2D: Establish measures and sources to track effectiveness- ongoing | Veterans Benefits & Cemetery Bureau Chief | Advocate for legislative changes and financial support |
| | Strategy E: Ensure sustainability of Iowa Veterans Trust Fund (IVTF) and set strategy and legislation for use of interest funds. | 1E: Develop stakeholder consensus plan for IVTF funds once \$50M threshold is met, and propose supporting legislation | Veterans Benefits & Cemetery Bureau Chief | Legislation in place 12 months or more before IVT hits \$50M threshold |
| #6: Financial Viability | Strategy A: Increase admissions to IVH through active and targeted recruitment/marketing effort *GV Government Efficiency | 1A:Leverage community partners and Veterans organizations for advertisement 2A: Reduce residential beds to 30 and increase nursing level of care beds by 30 in the Fox building by FY2026. 3A: Ensure all VSOs within the state know who we are and what we have to offer so we are their first recommendation to Veterans for long term care- ongoing 4A: Organize VSO training regarding veteran payment, | Clinical Services Bureau Licensed NH Administrator Veterans Benefits & Cemetery Bureau Chief Commandant | Improve occupancy rate to 94% or higher of available VA certified beds Increase in reimbursement rates Increase or decrease in Admissions presentations at VSO trainings (correlation with resident applications) IVB VSOs in coordination with Federal VA Public Contact Rep onramp all new residents and continue checking with current residents to ensure they are receiving the maximum Veterans |
| | Strategy B: | expenses and services for IVH residents. 1B: Evaluate all personnel | All Senior Team | Benefits earned. Work with VISN, Veterans |

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| | Ensure all resources are optimized and focused on directly contributing to fulfilling the mission at IDVA *GV Government Efficiency | resources to ensure they are optimized and fully functioning to support the mission. 2B: Advocate for higher reimbursement rates for our pharmaceutical expenses. | Operations Division | Service Organizations, and federal legislators to advocate for federal VA change and coverage of pharmaceuticals for 70-100% service connected Veterans Work with VISN, Veterans Service Organizations, and federal legislators to advocate for federal VA change and coverage of pharmaceuticals for 70-100% service connected Veterans |

*Governor's Vision (GV):

Child Care

Disaster Assistance

Education

Energy

Families First

Government Efficiency

Health Care

Workforce

(SP): Strategic Performance Measures for IDVA