Veterans' Health Care Act 1984

Provisions

Title I: Health Programs - Revises the requirements concerning the special policemen who protect Veterans Administration (VA) property. Increases the maximum fines for violations of regulations governing such property. Empowers and directs VA police officers to enforce all Federal laws as well as VA property regulations. Sets forth requirements concerning police uniform design and cost reimbursement. Directs the Administrator to report to the Veterans' Affairs Committees within 180 days after enactment of this Act on the implementation of these provisions and the methodology to be used to determine how the broader Federal law enforcement power will be exercised.

Modifies the due date of the Comptroller General's report on the compliance of the Director of the Office of Management and Budget with certain statutory requirements relating to funded personnel ceilings for the VA's Department of Medicine and Surgery.

Extends from FY 1984 to FY 1985 the authority of the Administrator to contract for hospital care or medical services in Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands without reference to patient loads or incidence of provision of medical services for veterans treated by the VA in the contiguous 48 States.

Expands the amount of authorizations available for the research and education activities of VA geriatric centers.

Authorizes the Administrator to provide States with funds for the acquisition as well as the construction of State home facilities for veterans provided the costs of acquisition do not exceed the costs of constructing a new facility.

Directs the Administrator to coordinate VA health care services and benefits with appropriate public and private entities at the State and local levels.

Includes devices for the hearing-impaired among the medical services the VA will provide to eligible veterans.

Authorizes the Administrator to appoint certified clinical or counseling psychologists as necessary for the medical care of veterans.

Authorizes the Administrator to waive certain mandatory reductions in pensions for physicians needed to meet special or emergency employment needs resulting from a severe shortage of well qualified candidates in certain positions.

Authorizes the Chief Medical Director of the VA to designate special programs within the Department of Medicine and Surgery for the diagnosis and treatment of post-traumatic-stress disorder (PTSD). Requires the Director to promote the training of health personnel to deal with this disorder and to coordinate efforts for the provision of readjustment counseling services offered Vietnam era veterans.

Directs the Chief Medical Director to establish in the Department of Medicine and Surgery a Special Committee on Post-Traumatic-Stress Disorder to develop and assess policies and programs for the treatment of eligible veterans with PTSD. Requires the Chief Medical Director to establish and operate a National Center on PTSD as a research, training, and resource center for information concerning the diagnosis and treatment of PTSD. Directs the Administrator to report to the Veterans' Affairs Committees on the establishment and operation of such Committee and Center. Requires such report to include: (1) the membership of the Special Committee; (2) the Chief Medical Director's assessment of the VA's capacity to meet the needs of eligible veterans with PTSD; and (3) a timetable for the implementation of the work of the Center and Committee.

Directs the Administrator to issue guidelines for the treatment and rehabilitation of veterans for alcohol and drug abuse disabilities in VA facilities. Requires the Administrator to report on such guidelines and their implementation to the Veterans' Affairs Committees.

Title II: Reports - Requires the Administrator to report to the Veterans' Affairs Committees by the end of FY 1985 on VA programs serving the needs of the terminally ill veteran, including family counseling. Requires such report to
include: (1) a review of current policies and services; (2) a comparison of VA hospice and other VA care; (3) an explanation of the future, planned integration of the care and counseling services for older veterans; and (4) a review of any coordination of information exchange between VA and non-VA facilities furnishing similar care.

Directs the Administrator to study the health-care needs and facility usage of eligible veterans living in remote areas. Requires the Administrator to report to the Veterans' Affairs Committees by January 1, 1986, on such study and by July 1, 1986, on an experimental program to carry out projects in five remote areas demonstrating alternative approaches for VA furnished care.

**Title III: Miscellaneous** - Directs the Administrator to execute the necessary legal documents to permit the University of California to use specified lands for educational and cultural as well as research and medical purposes.

Designates the VA Medical Center in Murfreesboro, Tennessee, as the Alvin C. York Veterans Administration Medical Center.

Designates the VA Medical Center in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, as the Clement J. Zablocki Veterans Administration Center.

**Major Legislative Actions**

- **5/8/1984**  Introduced in House
- **5/21/1984**  Passed/agreed to in House: Passed House by Voice Vote.
- **8/7/1984**  Senate Committee on Veterans discharged by Unanimous Consent.
- **8/9/1984**  Passed/agreed to in Senate: Passed Senate in lieu of S. 2514 with an amendment and an amendment to the Title by Voice Vote.
- **10/2/1984**  Resolving differences -- House actions: House Concurred, in Senate Amendments, with Amendments by Voice Vote.
- **10/3/1984**  Cleared for White House.
- **10/11/1984**  Presented to President.
- **10/19/1984**  Signed by President.
- **10/19/1984**  Became Public Law No: 98-528.