

# Paralyzed Veterans of America Pleased with Results of Joint Commission Surveys Urges VA to Continue to Address Longstanding Problems Such as Understaffing

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## Press Release

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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WASHINGTON, DC—[Paralyzed Veterans of America](http://www.pva.org) (Paralyzed Veterans) is pleased with the results of The Joint Commission's Special Focused Surveys on VA health care facilities, but is urging VA to continue to address longstanding problems such as understaffing and inconsistent practices across medical facilities. The survey results, released yesterday, show that VA has made significant progress since the surveys began two years ago.

"Paralyzed Veterans of America appreciates The Joint Commission's work in assessing quality of care in the Veterans Health Administration. That, along with the annual site visits Paralyzed Veterans conducts at all 24 VA [spinal cord injury](#) and [disease](#) centers across the country, is the key to ensuring accountability and making improvements in the system," said Sherman Gillums, Jr., executive director of Paralyzed Veterans of America.

The Joint Commission conducted unannounced, focused surveys at 139 medical facilities and 47 community-based outpatient clinics across the country to measure progress on VA access to care, quality improvements and diffusion of best practices across the system. They surveys also assessed barriers that may stand in the way of providing timely care to veterans.

The top findings of the survey include: improvements to provide patient appointments at Care-Facilities; and a preference among veterans for their "own" VHA organization, even if it would mean longer wait times.

"Our members tell us that those improvements are indeed happening, and I've seen a number of them for myself during my own VA medical appointments. The report also reinforces the notion that when given an option through the Choice Act, veterans overwhelmingly choose VA, which is why privatizing VA would actually eliminate choice, not expand it," added Gillums.

The Joint Commission is an independent, not-for-profit organization, accredits and certifies 21,000 health care

facilities and programs in the United States. VA's Veterans Health Administration is the largest integrated health care system in the nation, caring for 9 million veterans.

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About Paralyzed Veterans of America:

Paralyzed Veterans of America is the only congressionally chartered veterans service organization dedicated solely for the benefit and representation of veterans with [spinal cord injury](#) or [disease](#). For 70 years, we have ensured that veterans have received the benefits earned through their service to our nation; monitored their care in VA spinal cord injury units; and funded research and education in the search for a cure and improved care for individuals with paralysis.

As a partner for life, Paralyzed Veterans also develops training and career services, works to ensure [accessibility](#) in public buildings and spaces, provides health and rehabilitation opportunities through sports and recreation and advocates for veterans and all people with disabilities. With more than 70 offices and 34 chapters, Paralyzed Veterans serves veterans, their families and their caregivers in all 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. ([www.pva.org](http://www.pva.org))

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