



Department of Veterans' Services

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Dr. Michael Mayo-Smith
VISN 1 Network Director
VA New England Healthcare System
200 Springs Road, Building 61
Bedford, MA 01730

Dear Dr. Mayo-Smith,

Thank you for the very informative presentation on the proposed administrative integration of the Boston and Bedford VAMC's. I was thrilled to learn that this may finally take place. I am the Veterans Agent in Chelmsford, MA. Chelmsford is located about 10 miles from Bedford and borders Lowell, MA. The Lowell VA Clinic, which is under the Boston VAMC, is literally 5 minutes from my office. The Bedford VAMC is about 15 minutes from my office. My veterans make use of both facilities.

As the Veterans Agent in Chelmsford for the past 15 years, the issue of dealing with 2 different VA health centers has been confusing and frustrating for my veterans. The fact that the Lowell Clinic and the Bedford VA aren't in the same system has been a problem. There are issues of transportation to Boston for care - instead of just going down the street to the Bedford VA. I have helped veterans switch between systems in order to get prescriptions, better appointments, and easier access to specialists etc... It seems silly and so unnecessary if we are truly dealing with 'one VA'. This merger proposal makes sense and will help my veterans. I strongly support this merger recommendation and I hope it is implemented quickly. Thank you for everything you do for our veterans.

Sincerely,
Regina B. Jackson