

**Perry Point VA Medical Center
Local Advisory Panel Public Meeting
May 3, 2005
Building 314 (Theater)**

Start Time: 9:00 am

➤ **Participants:**

- Local Advisory Panel members present: Sanford Garfunkel, Director, Washington, DC VAMC; Archna Sharma, M.D., Quality Management Officer, VISN 5; Roy Albert, Vice President of Business Development, Office of Aberdeen Proving Ground; James L. Eberhardt, Mayor of Perryville; Anthony F. Lehman, M.D, Professor & Chair, Dept. of Psychiatry, University of Maryland
- Local Advisory Panel member absent: Colonel Kevin Smith, Deputy Commander and Chief of Staff, Ordnance Center and School, Aberdeen Proving Ground
- PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC): Janet Hinchcliff, Chad Eppley, Carolyn Fansler
- Perkins & Will: Brent Hussong
- VA Support Team: Jeff Kam, Health System Specialist, VISN 5 Office; Anthony Dawson, Executive Assistant to Associate Director of Finance, VAMHCS; Nancy Qualey, Executive Assistant to Director, VAMHCS; William England, Facilities Engineer, VAMC Perry Point; Ken Sliker, Network Mkt. Coord., VISN 5 Office; R. David Edwards, Chief, Public & Community Relations, VAMHCS; Jordan Denner, Chief, Medical Media, VAMC Baltimore; Michael McElroy, Capital Asset Consultant, VSSC; Ken Backer, Health Systems Specialist, VISN 5 Office; Abdul Razak, Capital Asset Manager, VISN 5 Office
- Public: (estimated attendance: 20 excluding above)

Opening Remarks and Introductions

- Welcome: Sanford Garfunkel (Chair, Local Advisory Panel)
- Pledge of Allegiance: Led by George W. Mitchell, Senior Vice Commander, Disabled American Veterans, Department of Maryland.
- Brief Introduction: Sanford Garfunkel (Chair, Local Advisory Panel)
 - This phase of the CARES process is designed to incorporate independent analysis and input the Perry Point Enhanced Use Lease Project. For this reason, no individuals who work for the VAMC Perry Point are directly involved on the panel. The local leadership is simply here to observe and listen to stakeholder input.
- Background: Dennis Smith (Director, VA Maryland Health Care System)

- Presented a description/history of the Perry Point Campus.
- Overview of Meeting Agenda: Sanford Garfunkel (Chair, Local Advisory Panel)
 - This is the first of four meetings.
 - The focus of the first meeting is to provide the public with a clear overview of the CARES process and to obtain stakeholder input.
 - Introduced the members of the Local Advisory Panel and provided their backgrounds.
 - All interested parties may submit written testimony. Stakeholder input will be accepted for up to 2 weeks following the meeting.
 - Attendees will also have the opportunity to give input today for a maximum of five minutes each. All questions will be taken at the end of the session after all the presentations have been completed. Questions should be addressed to the Local Advisory Panel Chair.
 - Each Local Advisory Panel member has read the ethics rules and all attest that they will comply with all federal rules of conduct during these proceedings.
 - Concurrence from the Local Advisory Panel members regarding meeting proceedings was acknowledged.
- Business Studies Presentation: Nancy Quailey (Executive Assistant to Director, VA Maryland Health Care System)
 - History and background of CARES
 - The Secretary's Decision
 - Purpose of the business study
 - Introduced the support staff who will be assisting the Local Advisory Panel and Team PwC
 - Played a video on the role of the Local Advisory Panel narrated by Jay Halpern, Special Assistant to the Secretary for CARES
 - Input may be provided by the public through the following methods:
 - By submitting comments at the following website:
<http://www.VA.gov/CARES>
 - By submitting written testimony to the mail address:
Perry Point Study
VA CARES Study
P.O. Box 1427
Washington Grove, MD 20880-1427
 - By calling the Public Affairs Office at the following number:
410-605-7101
 - At the public meetings. Attendees were reminded that those who want to provide verbal input are requested to add their names to the public comment list that is available in the gymnasium.
- Forecasting VA Health Care Demand Presentation: Tony Dawson (Executive Assistant to Associate Director for Finance)

- Definition of a veteran; brief description of priority groups 1 through 8
- Explained the map of the VISN 5 market areas.
- Provided basic concepts of the data and how that data affects the Perry Point VAMC and the Baltimore Market.
- Data used in the analysis is VA data and is passed on to PwC for its use in developing options

10:05 – Break

Call to reconvene at 10:30 am

- CARES Business Plan Presentation: Janet Hinchcliff (Team PwC)
 - Presented the study methodology, outlined study phases, and related timelines.
 - Once an option has been approved, it will have to compete for funding in a given year with other VA projects.
 - Provided a comprehensive explanation of how public input may be submitted for consideration.
 - The on-going series of Local Advisory Panel meetings will provide the public with continuous opportunities for participation in the process.

Brief Description of Testimony/Public Statements facilitated by Bill England (Facility Engineer)

- **Testimony 1:** Representative from Women’s Army Corps:
 - Three questions for Tony Dawson (VAMHCS):
 - How can there be a decrease in workload volume projected with current ongoing conflicts?
 - Reply: All projections were developed by Milliman USA and are updated every year. The model projections will evolve to reflect veteran levels and related workload levels as the models are updated annually.
 - A third of veterans go elsewhere for services. Why is that? This should be looked at before volume projections are made.
 - Reply: Many veterans have other health care options and are free to exercise those options when they seek out health care. Many individuals who live close to our geographic borders may find it easier to go to VAMCs in Wilmington or Philadelphia. It is the convenience of the veteran.
 - The threshold of \$25,000 which is the amount of money a veteran can make and still receive benefits is too high.
 - Reply: Eligibility rules and benefit restrictions are established by Congress and take a Congressional mandate to be changed.
 - Follow up question:
 - There are 40,000 women veterans. There are times where we have poor medical treatment. Those veterans who cannot receive the help

they need will find a way to receive treatment outside the system. I cannot afford to go outside, so I try to obtain my care at the VA hospital. Shouldn't we look in-house to see what is going on?

- Reply: The VA does review veteran access issues. We have a number of performance measures that track wait times and appointment dates. We have ongoing programs that work to improve veteran access to care.

➤ **Testimony 2:** Service Representative Department of Maryland Veterans of Foreign Wars:

- Indicated that his question had been answered and he no longer needed to provide testimony.

➤ **Testimony 3:** Representative from Disabled American Veterans

- Requested clarification about the Perry Point replacement project funding process. He indicated that he has a letter from former Secretary Principi, responding to Senator Mikulski that indicates the nursing home project will be taken out of the CARES program and funded separately.
 - Reply: Multiple local support personnel discussed this issue. It was determined that this would be investigated by the local support team and an answer would be provided.
- Expressed concern that a VSO representative was not a member of the Local Advisory Panel Subcommittee. He indicated that he felt that lack of a VSO representative was a disservice to the veteran community.
 - Reply: Local VA support staff responded to the question, in general, and would look into the situation further.

Closing Comments: Sanford Garfunkel (Chair, Local Advisory Panel)

- The next meeting will be scheduled in July/August. Notices will be sent out in advance of the meeting.
- Solicitation for further public input
- The addresses for receiving public input (both the website address and mailing address) were repeated.

Meeting adjourned at 11:00 am.