



**VA Healthcare System of Ohio
VISN 10**

CARES BULLETIN No. 3

November 27, 2002

WHAT IS CARES?

Simply stated, CARES (Capital Asset Realignment for Enhanced Services) is a realignment study to objectively evaluate the best ways to provide high-quality health care services to more veterans in more locations during the next 20 years.

VA needed a new way to address projected changes in veteran population—their locations and medical needs—and to continue to bring VA's health care system into the 21st century. CARES will help VA to be a better steward of its assets, make better use of existing space and realign resources to better meet the needs of veterans.

CURRENT STATUS OF CARES

This bulletin is to update you on the current status of the CARES process. Currently, Steps 2 and 3 of the 9-step CARES process have been completed. Step 2 involved data analysis of need or demand for services. The general demand analysis and gap identification data were then utilized for completion of Step 3 of the CARES process – Planning Initiatives Selection.

WHAT DOES THE DEMAND DATA MEAN?

The data indicates:

- ?? Enrollment by county and enrollment trends
- ?? Demand /gaps by outpatient and market
- ?? Demand / gaps by inpatient and market

and highlights those areas that have significant gaps between projections (demand) against available resources (supply).

Enrollment

?? The data is consolidated by VISN, by Market, and by county. Overall, in VISN 10 the projected enrollment and demand for services will increase in all markets. Enrollees in 2001 total **237,170**. By 2012 the projected numbers will increase to **298,586**. While projected demand will increase, the overall veteran population will decline from 1,034,761 to 818,473.

Demand and gaps by Market – Outpatients

?? Projected Primary Care demand is up significantly in **all** markets through 2012 with the Western (Cincinnati/Dayton) and Eastern (Cleveland) markets continuing to see a projected increase over 25% into 2022.

?? Projected Specialty Care demand increases significantly in all markets.

Demand and gaps by Market – Inpatient

?? Acute Medicine capacity is projected to increase in every market.

?? Surgical capacity is projected to remain in all markets, but it does not appear that all increases meet the necessary threshold to result in Planning Initiatives.

HOW WAS THE DEMAND DATA USED FOR THE PLANNING INITIATIVE SELECTION?

At the beginning of November teams consisting of VISN staff and National CARES Program Office staff met in Washington to prioritize gap areas for each VISN. These teams used the enrollment demand and projected gaps. Data on the condition of our facilities, travel distances, and other considerations were also used to prioritize gap areas.

Once this process was completed, Planning Initiatives were identified for each CARES Market area, including the three Markets within the VA Healthcare System of Ohio- **EASTERN** (Cleveland); **WESTERN** (Cincinnati/Dayton); and **CENTRAL** (Chillicothe/COPC). These Planning Initiative identify any gaps or other issues that must be addressed. Note that the Planning Initiatives do not specifically indicate what action needs to be taken to resolve the gap. VISN 10 market teams will be meeting to begin development of specific options to address the identified Planning Initiatives for each of the Market areas. These options will be further developed after consideration of input from stakeholders. Town meetings as well as other forums will be held for all stakeholders during the next two months to discuss the identified Planning Initiatives in more detail. Completion of options to address each identified Planning Initiative will lead to Step 4, the development of Market Plans to address all gaps in services.

WHAT OPPORTUNITY IS THERE FOR STAKEHOLDERS TO HAVE A SAY IN CARES?

Throughout the CARES process, stakeholders will be involved through ongoing briefings. Comments may be provided by mail, e-mail, phone, and in person at town meetings. To provide input or obtain more information about CARES, contact the Public Affairs Officer at your local facility by telephone or mail. You may also send your comments by completing the CARES Comment Form on the Network Internet Web site at: <http://www.va.gov/visn10/cares.htm>. The national CARES Web site is at: <http://www.va.gov/CARES/>.