

From: Catherine McNicoll <CatherineMcNicoll@scstatehouse.gov>

To: Danny Varat <DannyVarat@scstatehouse.gov>

Date: 11/29/2017 5:44:39 PM

Subject: Veterans Directed Care Program - Summary for Congressman Sanford

Attachments: 2017-11-28 McNicoll LT Omura re VDHCBS.pdf

2017-11-29 Memo w-Docs to SC Div of VA - VDHCBS.pdf

Good Afternoon Danny, Per our conversation I'm providing a summary of the situation and the most recent updates so that you can loop Congressman Sanford's Office in.

The concern is with the termination of the Self Directed Care program at the Dorn VA Clinic that serves the Midlands and the impact on the program in Charleston.

This program is discretionary to the Dorn VA, but as we oversee the Office on Aging, we are closely involved with the program and its constituents.

- The program allows Veterans to hire someone to help them with daily activities so they can remain at home.
- It is administered through Dorn and we partner to handle administrative duties of program.
- Dorn sent letters to Veterans notifying them that program would cease the end of November. They did not notify us.
- We are receiving calls and emails from Veterans and family members saying they are cutting services and are unresponsive.
- There are some issues with the program. But we should fix those issues and either reinstate program or discuss a "phase out".
- The Lieutenant Governor's Office on Aging (LGOA) has a MOA with the VA that requires the VA to provide written notification to the LGOA when the program is going to be terminated. We have not been provided written notice.
- The LGOA has MOAs with three Area Agencies on Aging (AAA) that administer the program and those also require written notification by the LGOA to the AAAs to terminate the program.
- The LGOA has insufficient/conflicting information to provide notice to the AAAs.
- Further, in a worst case scenario, if the LGOA does not provide notice the AAA and the funds are cut by the VA on November 30th, then the LGOA could be responsible for over 30 days of program funding. That could end up impacting funding for other programs.

Effect on Charleston Program: There is a second arrangement for this program through Charleston, I am still gathering the exact details; however what we do know is that the Charleston program is substantially smaller (3 veterans). As mentioned in my letter, PPL is the fiscal intermediary for the program. We believe it is unlikely that PPL could administer the program in Charleston if Dorn terminates the program because the program in Charleston is too small to support the administrative costs without the Dorn program. This means that by Dorn terminating their program they cause the Charleston program to be terminated.

Update from November 29, 2017:

Yesterday, November 28th, the SC Division of Veteran Affairs reached out to Anne Wolf (LGOA Program Manager) to meet with them and Dorn VA about the program. At that time it was arranged that Anne and myself would attend this meeting on Thursday at 11am at Dorn. We had also asked about possibly inviting Connie Munn, the Central Midlands AAA Director, and were told by the SC Division of VA the more the merrier. Additionally, yesterday I sent a letter to Director Omura (Dorn VA) requesting that they provide written notification of the program terminating and clarifications on the transition for the veterans. (See attached).

Today, November 29th, Anne and myself were uninvited from the meeting Thursday morning. During a conversation with SC Division of VA about being uninvited they requested to see some of the documents mentioned in the November 28th letter. (It is unclear why or who uninvited our office from the meeting). I drafted a short memo and sent them those documents and some other relevant documents (attached), including the initial response from Dorn VA to my letter from November 28th.

Acting Director Soots of Dorn VA indicated in his email that they would respond to my letter on December 1st. As of November 30th the program is supposedly terminated and the transition plan is unclear.

Additional information:

-According to one AAA director, "Unfortunately, we have nursing home eligible seniors that have become dependent on this VD-HCBS program." This has been an ongoing concern. The logical conclusion from this is, that with the lack of transition plan from Dorn VA for comparable other services for the veterans it is likely that many will have to leave their homes and go into nursing homes.

Best Regards,

Catherine McNicoll

Director of Legal & Legislative Affairs

Lieutenant Governor's Office

CatherineMcNicoll@SCStatehouse.gov

803-734-5292 (phone)