

Craig, Sondra

**From:** Marian Gund <mgund6@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, December 28, 2018 12:10 PM  
**To:** Craig, Sondra  
**Subject:** 3120 Farnam Street CUP

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> On Legislative site for 3120 Farnam Street, the Tomah VA referenced in #48 posting under 'safety', a VA, in Hampton, VA is referenced. This article addresses an unannounced inspection at the Hampton Va facility, dated March 2018.

> It was cited for 20 issues of recommendations.

This raises uncertainty with compliance and leadership in the Federal Veterans system. This is concerning. How will the prospective CLA be managed by VA in a local neighborhood?

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> <https://www.13newsnow.com/article/news/local/13news-now-investigates/feds-inspect-hampton-va-medical-center/291-529202097>

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## Feds inspect Hampton VA Medical Center

The Hampton VA Medical Center was under the microscope when federal inspectors recently examined the facility.

HAMPTON, Va. (WVEC) -- The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Office of the Inspector General just released the report from a visit to the Hampton VA Medical Center.

It comes after a surprise examination by the office last summer, which was part of the Comprehensive Healthcare Inspection Program.

The inspections are supposed to evaluate the quality of care for inpatient and outpatient services at VA facilities. Hampton's review was done to ensure the nation's veterans here get high-quality and timely care.

After their surprise visit on July 10, inspectors noted there are opportunities to improve patient satisfaction at the Hampton VA.

The Inspector General's Office reviewed employee and patient surveys to find out how people feel about the facility. The report reads, "In all, employees appear more satisfied than patients with the leadership and care provided."

A chart of ratings compares Hampton to the VA system average. It found three of every four patient surveys show lower ratings for Hampton than the VA average rating.

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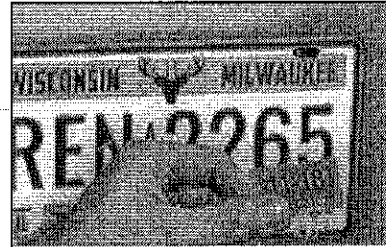
For the question, "Would you recommend this hospital to your friends and family?" 65.8 percent of responses were "Definitely yes" for the VA system. For Hampton, that number goes down to 55 percent of responses of "Definitely yes."

Hampton does better for inpatient responses to "I felt like a valued customer." An average of 83.2 percent of responses here were, "Agree or Strongly Agree." For the Veterans Health Administration as a whole, that number goes down just a bit to 82.8 percent.

One specific area of improvement is in mental health benefits, a service many veterans seek.

At Hampton's Mental Health Residential Rehabilitation Treatment program, inspectors said there are deficiencies with panic alarm testing and security. At the time of the visit, seven of the 32 surveillance cameras on the locked mental health unit were not functioning.

The facility responded it expects to have a new system in place within a year or two. In the meantime, OIG wants staff to perform patient rounds every 15 minutes and better monitor and document response times to alarms.



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The report leaves about 20 recommendations for improvement. Inspectors hope Hampton leadership will use them as a "road map" to address issues. They wrote, "If left unattended, (the issues) may eventually interfere with the delivery of quality healthcare."

The medical center director told 13News Now they take these recommendations "seriously and act immediately."

"We concurred with their recommendations and took action as noted on pages 15 through 37," Ronald Johnson said in a statement. "No recommendations noted any patient safety concerns or harm. All areas focused on improving documentation compliance, security procedures, and training in various areas and services. We have completed all recommendations and are in the sustainability phase of the review. We welcome any reviews, as we see them as opportunities and tools to improve and provide the best care to our Veterans."

These reviews are performed about every three years.

[Healthcare Inspection Program Review of the Hampton VA Medical Center](#) by 13News Now on Scribd



Department of Veterans Affairs  
Office of Inspector General

Office of Healthcare Inspections

Report No. 17-01758-104

## Comprehensive Healthcare Inspection Program Review of the Hampton VA Medical Center Hampton, Virginia

09/09 / 02:00

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Craig, Sondra

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**From:** Marian Gund <mgund6@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, December 28, 2018 1:42 PM  
**To:** Craig, Sondra  
**Subject:** [SPAM]3120 Farnam Legislative site posting #2

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Thank you for posting, Happy new Year!

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> This article is regarding a Tomah VA program located on their campus . This references multiple safety issues and police calls.

> Despite, this not being the CWT program it is alarming that it came to 30 calls before the. VA took action .

> How does this reflect on the management of the proposed CLA in a residential neighborhood? What can be expected of leadership ,their accountability, compliance and safety with regard to this program? I find this article insightful and question the due diligence and oversight of this proposed Federal program.

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>> [https://www.wiscnews.com/juneaucountystartimes/news/local/tomah-va-vet-foundation-clash-over-use-of-building/article\\_1bf0995a-6d94-547d-b7aa-cd37f5d3c3e2.html](https://www.wiscnews.com/juneaucountystartimes/news/local/tomah-va-vet-foundation-clash-over-use-of-building/article_1bf0995a-6d94-547d-b7aa-cd37f5d3c3e2.html)

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## Tomah VA, vet foundation clash over use of building

MIKE TIGHE [mtighe@lacrossetribune.com](mailto:mtighe@lacrossetribune.com) and STEVE RUNDIO [steve.rundio@lee.net](mailto:steve.rundio@lee.net) Nov 1, 2016

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The VA Medical Center in Tomah.

File photo

**TOMAH** — The VA Medical Center in Tomah and the Veterans Assistance Foundation have dueling versions of what led to the VA's 90-day termination notice of the lease for part of a building the foundation uses to house 40 to 50 homeless veterans.

The foundation, headquartered in downtown Tomah, pays the VA \$17,000 a month to lease space in Building 407 as part of its mission to provide transitional housing and other services, said VAF president Chris Hanson.

Safety and other concerns that could endanger other veterans being treated on the center's sprawling campus prompted the termination notice on the sharing agreement, effective Jan. 13, 2007, VA spokesman Matthew Gowan said Thursday.

Acting Tomah VA Medical Center director Victoria Brahm said in a statement issued Thursday, "The request is not to close the program but to move it off of the hospital campus."

"The safety and well-being of our veterans is of the utmost concern," she said. "Unfortunately, the Veterans Assistance Foundation has failed significantly in their responsibility to take care of the veterans in their care."

"The VAF's lack of response to the multiple problems that have occurred in their program and their lack of effort to resolve long-term issues is unacceptable," Brahm added.

Issues included a refusal to provide 24/7 security, the absence of required clinical staff and inappropriate use of the VAF space, she said.

The medical center has halted referrals to the VAF until it deems the program safe, she said.



VA police responded to more than 30 incidents, ranging from suicide attempts to accidental overdoses to other criminal violations of varying degrees, Gowan said.

## Death investigation

The Tomah Police Department is still investigating the death of a 54-year-old woman in the facility.

The police department received a request on Sept. 26 from the Department of Veterans Affairs' Office of Inspector General to help in a death investigation that had begun the previous day, according to a statement from Tomah police chief Mark Nicholson.

"Upon initial investigation, a cause of death could not be determined," Nicholson said. "In an attempt to determine the cause of death, an autopsy was ordered and has been performed by the UW Hospital Pathology Department in Madison."

The autopsy results are pending the return of toxicology reports, according to the statement, which stated that the Monroe County Joint Investigative Task Force and the VA's inspector general's office are assisting in the investigation.

The fact that the VAF program is on federal property imposes restrictions, such as banning of alcohol, Gowan said. But some VAF residents had brought alcohol into their quarters, which also is forbidden because some VA patients are being treated for alcohol and drug addiction, he said.

Hanson, a U.S. Navy Reserve lieutenant and public affairs officer who is serving in Afghanistan, acknowledged during a phone interview that there have been a number of police calls.

Many residents in the VAF program are suffering from mental illness and substance abuse, he said.

"The residents we have out there have the more difficult issues," Hanson said. "That's part of the nature of the program. We don't give up on anybody."

Hanson indicated a fraying relationship with the medical center, noting, "We've always been treated as a nuisance more than anything. The relationship has really chilled the last few months."

"The whole thing is very disheartening," especially that the VA had not notified him, he said. "I've had no contact from the VA."

Gowan said the VAF had been notified repeatedly.

Hanson said if the VAF can't find another location and loses its grant funding, local veterans could be forced out of the Tomah area to find housing.

The termination action will not affect the VAF's project in downtown Tomah, which includes a resale shop, coffee house and housing for several veterans, he said.

Hanson also hinted at possible ulterior motives, saying, "The VA has plans for that space. They've had plans for that space for a long time."

Even when the VAF program moves off the campus, the medical center will continue to provide clinical programs participants need, Gowan said.

"Our staff are assessing each VAF resident's individual situation to ensure that veterans are being offered needed programs and services," Brahm said. "It is our hope that the VAF will work cooperatively with us to ensure our veterans can receive appropriate VA assistance and resources that will help in their transition."

The dispute has attracted the attention of members of Congress.

U.S. Rep. Ron Kind, D-La Crosse, met with Brahm Thursday, issuing a statement later that he urged her to ensure that the affected veterans have access to housing and the care and treatment they need.

U.S. Sen. Ron Johnson, R-Wis., sent Brahm a letter asking for more information, adding, "While it is important to allow for a thorough independent investigation into the recent death, the VA also must ensure that the veterans who currently rely on the VAF program are not adversely affected by this decision."

Veterans would not be shoved out into the cold, Gowan said, adding that the Tomah VA has requested 30 additional housing vouchers in case they are needed and clinical services also will continue.

Despite their conflict, VA and VAF representatives were working under the same roof Thursday during a Homeless Veterans Stand Down at Logistics Health Inc. in La Crosse.

"That's what you do to serve veterans," Gowan said.

The VAF, an independent nonprofit agency, operates with its own fundraising, as well as reimbursement from the Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs for its transitional housing programs in Tomah and several other sites, as well as a variety of other services, including vocational training, PTSD referrals, case management and counseling for sobriety, life skills and anger management, among others.

The VAF has received millions in state and federal money since it was founded in 1994.

It was ranked as the 26th-worst charity in the nation, based on fundraising cost-expenditure ratio in a 2013 investigation by the national Center for Investigative Reporting and the Tampa Bay Times in Florida.

According to that report, the foundation raises about \$2.5 million a year, with about half of that going toward temporary housing and job training programs for struggling veterans.

The VAF gets nearly half its revenue through a federal government grant. It paid for-profit solicitation companies \$11 million during the previous decade, according to the investigation.

“For at least the past 10 years, the foundation has signed contracts with telemarketers allowing the companies to keep 90 cents of every dollar raised,” according to that report.

jcuevas