

Memorandum to the Commissioner

Applicant: The Veterans' Home at Chelsea, and the Veterans' Home at Holyoke
(Commonwealth's Veterans' Homes)

Project Number: N/A

Filing Date: May 23, 2023

Introduction

This memorandum presents, for Commissioner review and action, the Determination of Need (DoN) Program's recommendation regarding a request by the Veterans' Home at Chelsea and the Veterans' Home at Holyoke (Commonwealth's Veterans' Homes or Applicant) for an increase in the number of Long Term Care (LTC) beds, which the applicant submitted on May 23, 2023.

The facilities will be licensed as a LTC facility, as required pursuant to Chapter 144 of the Acts of 2022¹, with 128 beds at Holyoke and 154 beds at Chelsea.

Due to the new requirement that the facilities be licensed by DPH, which in turn subjects the facilities to the DoN process as the licensing of the beds represents an increase in beds, the DoN program required the Applicant to file a project narrative as an application. For similar reasons, the DoN program finds that there is a need for the Proposed Project, without the full DoN process, as it is clear that: 1) the existing facilities' Patient Panel is comprised of resident veterans, and 2) the alternative to filing a DoN for the Proposed Project would remove existing beds, housing, and care for a large number of veterans.

This memorandum incorporates by reference the project description that was provided by the Applicant.

Because the applicant is a government agency, this request is subject to delegated review, pursuant to 105 CMR 100.630.

The Proposed Project

Veterans' Home at Chelsea

The Veterans' Home at Chelsea, originally constructed in 1949 to serve 189 residents, will be moving into a new replacement facility on the same campus in the summer of 2023. The facility

¹ An Act Relative to the Governance, Structure, and Care of Veterans at the Commonwealth's Veterans' Homes.
<https://malegislature.gov/Laws/SessionLaws/Acts/2022/Chapter144>

will be licensed after DoN approval for the number of beds at the replacement facility. The new facility will have a total of 154 licensed beds, organized into 11 units, with 14 single/private resident rooms and 70 double rooms. The resident rooms are arranged around and supported by common spaces including a living room, dining room, kitchen and a den in accordance with the Veterans' Administration's Small House Model Design, which the Applicant states supports autonomy and dignity for resident veterans. Services that will be provided to veteran residents include physician services, nursing services, other professional services and diagnostic services, pharmaceutical services and medication, dietary services, rehabilitation services, social services, and activities and recreation. The capital expenditure for the Proposed Project is \$200,000,000.

The Mission of the Veterans' Homes is to provide the highest quality of personal health care services to Massachusetts Veterans with dignity, honor, and respect. The Applicant affirms that the design of the facility supports the Veterans' Administration's mission for the Community Living Center (Small House Model Design) which includes restoring each resident veteran to their highest practicable level of well-being.

Veterans' Home at Holyoke

The Veterans' Home at Holyoke, originally constructed in 1952, has a total of 128 beds. The facility will be licensed after DoN approval for the current number of beds at the existing facility.

Public Comments on the Application

Any person, and any Ten Taxpayer Group (TTG), may provide written or oral comment at any time during the first 30 days following the Filing Date of an Application, or during the first ten days after a public hearing. The Department did not receive any public comments on this application nor did any TTGs form in connection with this application.

Findings

The Proposed Project is proposed to increase LTC beds at the Veterans' Home at Chelsea and the Veterans' Home at Holyoke. The Proposed Project addresses Patient Panel need for the provision of high quality care to improve resident veterans' health outcomes and well-being. Any alternative to the Proposed Project would fail to meet the needs of the Patient Panel as described, by removing beds that are currently in service which provide housing and care for veterans. Further, the Proposed Project is required pursuant to state law. Based on a review of the materials submitted, staff finds that there is a need for the Proposed Project and recommends that the Commissioner approve this Application for Determination of Need.