

## **Soldiers' Home in Holyoke Board of Trustees Operations Committee Meeting**

A meeting of the Board of Trustees Operations Committee of the Soldiers' Home Holyoke (HLY) was held virtually and telephonically on Tuesday, September 27, 2022. The meeting began at 6:03PM.

### **Committee Members Present on WebEx:**

Chairman, Sean Collins, Mark Bigda, and Carmen Ostrander

### **Also Present on WebEx:**

Dr. Diane Dietzen, CMO (HLY); Kelly Jones, DON (HLY); Linda Lariviere, Quality Manager (HLY); Michael Lazo, Interim Superintendent (HLY) Caitlin Menard, Director of Social Work, (HLY); Brett Walker, General Council (HLY); and Kathleen Denner, Recording Secretary (HLY).

### **Roll Call:**

Chairman Collins conducted a Roll Call as follows: Mark Bigda (Yes), Carmen Ostrander (Yes), and Sean Collins (Yes).

**Pledge of Allegiance** - All present recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **Approval of Minutes**

Upon motion by Trustee Ostrander and seconded by Trustee Bigda to accept the minutes as amended of the August 23, 2022, Board of Trustees Operations Committee meeting, it was unanimously VOTED to accept the minutes of the Board of Trustees Operations Committee meeting held on August 23, 2022.

### **Old Business**

#### **ADM-002 Admissions**

Trustee Collins stated that there was a discussion at the last meeting so we will take this off of the agenda. He continued that Mr. Walker gave an update on the admissions policy and where that was because of the pending changes in legislation we should take this off, till it comes back up again. Mr. Walker stated that he sent to Chairman Keefe his annotations, notes and red lines so that people can start thinking about it when the time does come. Trustee Collins asked if it has gone through general counsel at DVS. Mr. Walker stated that DVS has seen all of the edits, some are discussion points for consideration by management leadership.

#### **Update on Contract Listing Review**

Trustee Collins shared that this is a place holder and that this will be done in October as a quarterly update.

### **Standard Agenda Items (Updates) / Dashboards**

#### **KPI Updates**

Trustee Collins reviewed the dashboard KPI indicators and that the staffing hours does come up at the full board meetings and there have been ongoing challenges, especially in the summer months. He continued that there are no major concerns with the staffing hours and that the agency hours are up as well, which may spawn some discussion at the board meeting. Ms. Jones stated that Trustee Collins is spot on. She continued that the summer months if you notice at the tail end of

the same dashboard, the overtime is up too and it is all directly tied together to give staff as much of their requested time off as possible. Ms. Jones shared that a denial of requests is a huge staff dissatisfier and in the effort of retaining staff we want to recruit of course, but we also want to retain, and it is a huge dissatisfier. She continued that we tried really hard and unfortunately you do see it in these numbers that we really push it to the limit with allowing time off which did increase both agency hours and over time.

Trustee Collins stated that the falls were not a large number but he did not see a separate report on that breakdown included with the materials. He asked if there was anything of significance in it, but it is still less than threshold. Ms. Jones replied that she is looking at falls with injuries and we did have one fracture during the month. Trustee Collins stated that it may be helpful if you can supplement the subcommittee with an aggregate if it was a fracture upper or lower or something else. Ms. Jones replied that it was a lower extremity.

Trustee Collins noted that the elopements went up and asked how far did that go. Ms. Jones replied that this one was reported all the way up, we did an RCA on the whole event and the veteran did leave campus. She continued that a CIR went up and we did a good job following policy. She continued that the State Police were phoned and the veteran was located at Holyoke Community College by an employee and recovered safely. Trustee Collins asked if the veteran was on any precautions or wearing a device. Ms. Jones replied no but he had been in and out of a psych facility we have been having a bunch of peripheral meetings about him and his ongoing care and needs. She continued that he was not wearing a wander guard because he had refused. Mr. Lazo added that he was heavy smoker, so he had access to outside. Trustee Collins asked if this happened in the month of August and Ms. Jones replied yes. Trustee Collins stated that the veteran was at Holyoke Community College and if that is a mile or mile and a half away. Ms. Jones replied no it is not that far, it is right around the corner. Ms. Menard added that he had been struggling with a lot of mental health stuff when he came back to us, this is the gentleman that was discharged to his family during COVID and ended up in a VA psych facility because his daughter who is the HCA wanted medication changes and tried to support by working with the VA and tried to make her happy. Ms. Menard continued that he was manic, and when he became manic, he voluntarily went to the VA and when he came back he was at a different baseline and his lithium was not where it was supposed to be. Ms. Menard reported that he wanted to go back to get his Bachelor of Fine Arts so he went to Holyoke Community College and he forgot the piece where if he would have spoken before we could escort him and it would be fine. She continued that he is struggling with feeling contained and with this mental health pieces. Trustee Collins stated that his takeaway question is did you document your lessons learned and if there was anything that could have been done differently. He continued that we have all dealt with this before, you located him, the policy worked great, and he has certain privileges and rights so some things you cannot prevent. Ms. Menard replied that the biggest take away was to call a code earlier rather than searching on your own, everyone did a great job. Trustee Collins said that we got all the way to August with no events in regards to elopement, the outcome is great but it may have been a different story if it was winter months and the whole point is to take some lessons learned and doing checks on folk and obviously if he had smoking privileges he may be outside for quite a bit. Ms. Lariviere added that they will be doing a failure mode analysis tomorrow to look at the whole system for elopement and wandering veterans so we are going to be proactive and look at the whole process. Trustee Collins said he will put that on the next agenda for a follow up.

Trustee Collins stated that restraints are holding steady and asked if there were any observations or comments on the progress with that or we are at the baseline to safely take care of our veterans. Ms. Jones added that Ms. Lariviere has a goal of eliminating one more and that we are actively working on it. She continued that one is a veteran request, so we are going to continue.

Trustee Collins stated that we have made progress on your behavioral events and have gotten those way down, but you are in the green with a goal is less than 2 and asked if it should be yellow. Ms. Jones replied that it should be yellow.

Trustee Collins reported that everything else is in the green and that skin injuries are tending in the right direction and a baseline will be established on that as well.

Trustee Collins asked if these findings are the one that was discussed last month with the quality measure compare and did you alleviate the issue that we saw last month and is that still reflecting in the numbers. Ms. Lariviere replied that is the data get from VA from the assessments that we send and they did not have data available for 6 months and then all of a sudden in August they did a big data dump but this is accurate data with compare of our Home to Chelsea, and the VA's across the Country. Trustee Collins stated that we discussed at our last meeting that some numbers look like they went up so significantly and getting back to the big data sump whether or not that skewed anything or looking at the KPI dashboard some numbers may or may not make sense. Ms. Jones shared with Ms. Lariviere that with the lookback there is a little bit of a lag, so that data that appears in this is a quarter look back and who might actually fall into each of those numerator and denominator based on who MDS was completed in a given quarter. Ms. Lariviere stated that when she looks back at this quarter we had quite a few veterans who had a significant change in their status, by either going on hospice or having a decline so she think that some of this is very valid data but it is a retrospective look at the veterans and we have already improved in some areas so hopefully we will see the numbers change. Trustee Collins asked if this is reported monthly or quarterly and Ms. Lariviere replied monthly. Ms. Lariviere reported that one veteran can change the whole picture and that is primarily when I look back at the other months it is usually just one veteran that was added with the psychotropic medications. She continued that it is the new admissions coming in on the medications and we are not weaning off right away so those numbers may go up before they come down. Trustee Collins replied that this was a great comment when you have discussions within the department it is very helpful. He continued that the denominator show how one patient can impact that and having new patients who are on certain medications that you were further weaning, helps us to interpret that a little better.

Trustee Collins continued with the acquired pressure ulcer prevalence data and I appreciate this scale and this report looks awesome. He asked if these are the same people from month to month and I see it is different floors so it must be a different population. He added that you obviously want it to be zero but you are doing incredible work and hopefully catching things at a very early stage and take care of those and those are probably those malnourished or likely hospice patients, data looking quite reasonable.

Trustee Collins moved onto the PT functional scale and the average change score looks great. He continued that there is a lot of good data and the thing that is more of a concern is the days to

referral to evaluation with this quarter that 42% were seen within the 5 business days, 52% were seen last quarter and I know there are issues related to staffing so the question is how can that be improved, is there another vendor or is it just so hard to recruit physical therapy and OT specialist to get in and to hit your target of 5 business days. He continued that it looks like everyone is getting squared away and people are being prioritized but the numbers tell us a story that numbers may be getting worse and if they do not have a remedy is that going to continue. Ms. Jones shared that she did have a meeting with Genesis/Powerback this past month about that topic and they are putting a lot of effort in recruiting more PT's and they had a couple of per diems coming in, she feels they are working hard on it, it is not an easy position to recruit into. Mr. Lazo said we have had good conversation with Powerback and the higher-level folks and they fully understand the issue and they recommended telehealth visits but from a physical therapy standpoint I don't think telehealth is an effective but we do have that option if it comes to that.

Trustee Collins reported on the Antibiotic Stewardship Program, that he likes that we are tracking the starting of antibiotics in hospital and that this tells a story tracking that we have an interest and putting some thought behind whether to change some folks over and address those concerns. Dr Dietzen shared that the medical staff had a good meeting last week where they spent a lot of time reviewing those reports in detail and talking about how they might be used and how they might be more useful. Trustee Collins said the program is beneficial because you are watching it and a lot of long-term care facilities there are people get discharged from the hospital and kept on things for no good reason. He continued that he likes the effort they are putting forward. He added for the Antibiotic Stewardship report card you have 100% and that is awesome.

Trustee Collins said the SBARS numbers are getting pushed up to 67%. He continued there is a lot of education and a lot of great work so, keep trend going in the right direction. Ms. Jones stated that they have been working with a little bit a different of a definition so IP and the floors are now speaking the same language so that is a combination of that and the IP team making sure they are getting filled out on a regular basis.

Trustee Collins reported Case Mix things are stable and adjusting staff accordingly.

Trustee Collins shared that the report from the foot care nurse was more of a narrative and not a lot of numbers so he was not sure if it was the annual report. He continued that it was a nice document on how many visits they did last year was 274. He continued that the one thing he did pick up was the issue with the use of Dynamic compression socks versus TEDS and asked to the group if that is something that is being considered or is that just a nicety and not a necessity. Ms. Lariviere shared that from a nursing perspective some of the compression stockings are too much for the veterans and they will not wear them. She continued if we can even get the Tubigrip at least we are getting some mild compression and we will double it as needed. Ms. Lariviere stated that they are fearful with the age group of the effort need to put on those compression stockings can cause injury to the skin from the struggle and right now our wound care nurse is happy with lighter compression and she is monitoring the veterans.

## **Medical Staff Update**

Trustee Collins was looking at the August 11 Medical Staff minutes and asked Dr. Dietzen to talk about the review on invocation and the MOLST questions and what your discussion is centered around in your meeting. Dr. Dietzen shared that it was a reminder that we have revised the policy such that when you are considering a veteran can no longer make their own healthcare decisions that you have to write a note that reflects your assessment, you have to write an order and you have to complete the paperwork that goes in the front of the chart and then you have to inform the health care proxy that you have done those things. She continued that it is just making sure that all the steps are being followed. Trustee Collins stated that this came out of the Pearlstein report and finds it refreshing that you are bringing it up at Medical Staff meeting and making sure it is being tracked and documented.

### **Outside Agency Audits / Inspections / Review of Tracker Recent Joint Commission Survey Update**

Trustee Collins asked Mr. Lazo if we are all set with Joint Commission Survey and there is nothing open that we need to address. Mr. Lazo agreed.

### **Supporting Patients / Families / Staff / Community Stakeholders**

Trustee Collins wanted to discuss the Ombudsman Quarterly report and what was discussed in the report was that there was 9 complaints within the quarter, 3 of those were adjudicated and closed. He continued that it was a 42 day average length of closure of the complaints with 75% of the complaints were partially or fully resolved to the satisfaction of the resident. Trustee Collins would like to discuss in her summary she talked about that fact she speaks with Mr. Lazo and provides you that information with open and unresolved complaints. Trustee Collins would like to hear from Mr. Lazo how you are involved with the program with what your observations are addressing those 3 particular areas with autonomy choice and rights, care issues and the financial property which is the lowest that were part of those complaints, he would like to hear about your engagement with the ombudsman program. Mr. Lazo stated that he is a little bit on the periphery with that. He continued that he gets the reports on a monthly basis and he will discuss with Ms. Menard and they talk about what issues we are having. He continued that sometimes there is a disagreement on what is considered closed versus not closed. Mr. Lazo and Ms. Menard will talk about a specific incident or issue and then he will take that to the other department heads that need to look into it be it for example the laundry issued he will go to our contract group, facilities and the EVS group to find out what we can do to make that better. Trustee Collins asked for the autonomy choice and right when Carolyn spoke that it is fairly encompassing but does she get into the details of say if you get 9 complaints with 35% of them having to do with autonomy and choice; is the feedback to you immediate to tell you that this is an active issue or are you hearing things after the fact when it is closed. Ms. Menard stated that she meets with the ombudsman Ms. Spirito weekly and she also meets with Mr. Hevy, Mr. Walker and the ADON; it is not broken up in those categories in the actual meetings. She continued that she is surprised for the 42 days to the resolution because it feels like it is resolved in the moment but there is ongoing issues, for instance, we have a wife that is concerned about insurance billing and she has been informed the whole time but might be a little forgetful on the process. Ms. Menard said she meet with her weekly and we address things as immediately as we can, and then Mr. Lazo gets the monthly report. She continued that anything that is high level gets pushed right up to Ms. Gidakos, Ms. Jones and Mr. Lazo. Trustee Collins wants to make sure there is active engagement with the team and with Ms. Spirito onsite you are not getting something as a report a month later because that does not help. Trustee Collins

appreciates the information and that you are having sit down discussions with Ms. Spirito weekly. He continued that it is the categories and how you are going to address them, they can make certain observations and I know they are disappointed that the Canteen is open because the veterans may be down there eating some unhealthy food choices but that has been going on for a long time and they love their Canteen. Ms. Menard added that at that age they want their freedom of choice and Trustee Collins agreed. Trustee Collins asked regarding one of the questions that he did not see a response to, it was an email from Mr. Engell asking some clarifying questions, he wanted to know a comparison with other regional statewide metrics. Mr. Lazo asked if it is the question regarding metrics comparing us to other Soldiers' Homes. Trustee Collins added that Mr. Engell was copied on the original report, and you replied to Ms. Fenn asking the question as a basis of comparison and context would it be possible to see either regional or statewide metrics from your database. Mr. Lazo stated that if she replied to him that he was not copied. Trustee Collins will email Mr. Engell to see if there was a response.

Ms. Menard reported that the family advocacy meeting was continued updates of COVID restrictions. She continued that the veteran advocacy meeting discussion was about laundry, dietary and question about restrictions. She added that Dr. Dietzen will attend the next months meeting to explain enhanced barriers and droplet precautions. Ms. Menard shared that we were able to get some of the veterans to Walmart and how excited everyone was. Trustee Collins asked if there are any big plans, as we go into the Fall, for getting the veterans on trips outdoors or are we still in a holding pattern due to COVID. Ms. Menard replied that we started with a Walmart trip and now that we have our recreation team up to date with wheelchair access for the vans, we are planning foliage trips. Mr. Lazo shared that the next outing is tour around the Quabbin Reservoir for site seeing and not a get out and walk around trip.

Trustee Collins discussed the Pinnacle report stating that we need to watch the trend and a lot of things dipped down this month as opposed to where we have been so we need to keep that in mind. He continued that he went to trend lines and his observation on the trend lines is that every single thing is heading in upward direction, trending over the year, except for linen. Trustee Collins stated that laundry is in a downward trajectory and asked Mr. Lazo if there is something going because it seems to get negative reviews. Mr. Lazo replied that he has spoken with Mr. Lynch because he oversees the contract group and we have had conversations with the vendor and we are not seeing any results. He continued that he would like to get additional examples of clothing that is discolored or damaged and this has not brought he response we had hoped for. Mr. Lazo said he thinks it is time we show them some additional evidence and then work to break the contract and I think we need to find another vendor at this point. Trustee Collins reported that when he looked at the trend lines for this month just to see where we are at because they are going to the nuances. He continued that he does not know how significantly the blips are with dining services a little bit lower and cleanliness is a little lower and laundry is way low really with the trend heading in the wrong direction. Trustee Collins would like to see if you can cancel the contract and looking at the trend line for quality of food is going up. Trustee Bigda asked Mr. Lazo if they are giving them another chance or are you just going to go ahead and try to find somebody because I know you have given them a couple of chances. Mr. Lazo agrees with Trustee Bigda, it is time to find someone else he just wants to make sure he understands the contract language so we know what our escape ability is.

**Update The Soldiers' Home in Holyoke Transition Plan**

Trustee Collins shared that the plan had lots of green. He continued with stating he knew it was an issue, brought up in the Pearlstein Report, but everybody has gotten their evaluations and you are on a good path and you have this as part of the routine with everybody being evaluated that is employed with the Soldiers' Home is that a true statement. Mr. Lazo replied that it is a true statement and all FY21 EPRS's are complete. He continued that we are still wrapping up the FY22 phase of the EPRS's.

Trustee Collins reported that the Administrator On-Call is all squared and is that working to your satisfaction. Mr. Lazo reported that it still need some tweaks, we have to make sure the on call workload is adequately spread out amongst the staff.

Trustee Collins reported that for the EMR we are still waiting on items for that.

Trustee Collins stated that item 54 the Waitlist Management Policy, which was done a while ago, are we were waiting for the Admission Policy to be squared but do you have a separate policy for Waitlist Management. Mr. Lazo replied that he does not believe we have a policy because we go by time on the list so we just go to the next person and help them to develop paperwork. He continued that once the paperwork completed then they are considered for admission. Trustee Collins recalled it was an issue in the past and what are you memorialize in a memo so that you have a fact-based way to approach the waitlist for the sake of having something in case something comes up because we did have to face this issue when I first joined the board, He suggested if you formalize something you will would be better off.

Trustee Collins discussed the drills and elopement codes he had seen some of the fire drills in the past and maybe we put that on the agenda for November or December just to look at your drills so we can see they are taking place and see the evacuation times.

Trustee Collins remembered there was a push in December on CPR certification with massive due dates does everyone needs CPR at the same time or recertification through training activities through the year. Mr. Lazo replied that right CPR is done on an annual basis and he believes one year form your certification, it clarified that it is a 2 year period, we do have clumps that is when the sessions are offered. Mr. Lazo reported that we have a new Nurse Educator on site started about two weeks ago and is looking at all the process and education will make necessary changes to ease that burden, so it is spread out for her staff.

Trustee Collins reviewed item 101 in regard to volunteers are the volunteers back in the building. Mr. Lazo replied that they have been back in the building since April. He continued that they are very engaged in veteran activities, the walk around America which is a loop in the basement and they walk with veterans to make sure they are doing ok, it is great for veteran exercise and their socialization and we also have volunteers that will sit one on one and talk with veterans in their rooms. Mr. Lazo shared that the Veteran Care Coordinator is Jessica Potito and she has done a really great job in reestablishing that program and I think the program is going very well. Trustee Collins thanked Mr. Lazo for the update and believes we can put the Transition Plan to rest, he stated that the team did a great job addressing all those items.

**Census Update**

Mr. Lazo updated the committee that unfortunately we do have open beds which means we had 3 veterans pass in rapid succession, so now we have 3 available beds. Trustee Collins asked Mr. Lazo to remind him on the waiting list and how does that add up. He continued if you have 3 openings and how do the numbers change in regard you got new applications for the month so if you had 10 to 63 that would be 73. Mr. Lazo believes that is an error and that they will be having an Admission Team Meeting Thursday morning to look at the next set of veterans that are available to join us, there are some whose paperwork is in and they have been vetted by the committee so now that the beds are open, and housekeeping has prepared the rooms we should be able to admit very quickly.

**New building update / Status**

Trustee Collins said we can wait for next Payette unless Mr. Lazo has some changes. Mr. Lazo replied that we are waiting to hear from the VA on approval of our Conditional Grant application.

**New Business / Interest Items****Credential review of Camille Balestri and Gloria Krason**

Trustee Collins these individuals were approved by the medical staff on August 11, 2022 at the Medical Staff meeting. Trustee Collins reviewed with the team the credentialing packages and that everything looked great. He continued that he was glad to see the National Practitioner Database sheet in there as that was picked up during your last audit. Trustee Collins had no issues with the packages. Motion was made to approve the credentialing by Trustee Bigda and seconded by Trustee Ostrander. No Discussion. The vote passes unanimously.

**Policy Review****NSG-126 EKG Completion and Review**

Trustee Collins commented that he does not like to put people's names in a policy and maybe they are the only ones who can interpret an EKG, this is his biased. He suggested saying cardiologist or whoever the medical director appoints.

**NSG-127 Per Diem Policy – Nursing**

Trustee Collins remembered that this was discussed last time and that he did not have any other questions.

**MED-014 Credentialing**

Trustee Collins said he saw there were items revised, number 5 the National Practitioner Database would be surveyed and that is awesome, it was picked up last time from Joint Commission. He continued that the clinical privileges is more clear that those who are working within the scope of their license.

**Wrap up / Adjournment**

Mr. Lazo shared with the committee make sure the committee is aware on September 9 we were accredit by the Joint Commission. He continued with kudos to Ms. Jones, Ms. Lariviere, and their



team. He also gave kudos to Mr. Polwrek and the Facilities team. We had such a small number of findings in this survey that the corrective action plan sort of put itself together. Mr. Lazo reported that one of the things we are working on is a Culture of Safety Survey that we just finished up and we are pulling the details together to find out what exactly that survey will tell us. He continued that he thinks we will learn some good things from the staff and make some positive changes.

Motion by Trustee Ostrander and seconded by Trustee Bigda to adjourn at 7:07 pm.

Next meeting will October 25.

Kathleen Denner

Acting Secretary for the Board of Trustees

Attachments:

