

MICHIGAN VETERANS
FACILITY AUTHORITY
STRATEGIC DIRECTION 2023

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February 1, 2019

As the Michigan Veterans Facility Authority (MVFA) prepares to enter an exciting new period, I am pleased to present ***Strategic Direction 2023*** – a five-year roadmap of our planned growth, innovation and provision of superlative care and services for our veterans.

Our vision is ambitious, yet simple: Be the nation's leading provider of care and services for veterans. At the core of this vision is a steadfast commitment to ensuring that veterans and their families are delighted with the high quality of our services and homes and that our staff members and volunteers feel proud and supported to contribute their talents. In addition, we will strive for financial sustainability, organizational capability and a positive public perception – in other words, Michigan residents will be familiar with our mission and enthusiastic about our results.

And how will we get there? Our strategic direction will be guided by four core strategies. First and foremost, we will ensure a high quality of care with a multi-faceted approach that includes aligning our practices with nation-leading long-term care models, providing robust training and competitive wages for our employees, and ultimately building a performance-driven culture for care and services.

Further, we will secure the financial resources necessary to make investments in staff, equipment and facilities for MVFA to build and maintain a high-performing organization and to reduce our reliance on state appropriations. This includes maximizing reimbursement from federal funders, launching a charitable organization and putting in place sound policies and procedures.

We will also engage key stakeholders in a number of ways, including reporting on our performance to elected officials and the public through meetings and reports, holding forums for community feedback and developing a multi-channel communication strategy that raises awareness about the long-term care needs of veterans and how MFVA is meeting that challenge.

Finally, as we look to expand the number of veteran's homes we operate to serve the state's aging veteran population, we will create a clear, rigorous process for evaluating which Michigan communities – and sites within those communities – are the most appropriate places to locate our future homes.

We believe our results will be rewarded with our highest-ever ratings from veterans and their families, unprecedented philanthropic contributions to support our work and external validation of our high level of compliance with the highest standards of care. Ultimately, we are confident MFVA will become known throughout the nation as an organization that never leaves a veteran behind.

Respectfully,



David J. Henry Jr., Chairperson
Michigan Veterans Facility Authority

MICHIGAN VETERANS FACILITY AUTHORITY

OUR MISSION

MVFA provides nation-leading care and services that enhance the well-being of veterans and their families in the place they call home.

OUR VISION

We aspire to be the nation's leading provider of care and services for Veterans. We simply want to be the best. Between now and 2023, we will open several new homes. We will also offer a continuum of care specifically designed for veterans, ranging from hands-on to virtual care and services. The quality of our services will be the direct result of staff and volunteers who love the heroes they serve and the opportunities we provide to serve them. The results we produce will be rewarded with our highest-ever ratings from veterans and their families, unprecedented philanthropic contributions to support our work, as well as external validation that confirms our high level of compliance with the highest standards of care. By 2023, MVFA will be known throughout the nation as an organization that never leaves a veteran behind.

OUR STRATEGIC OUTCOMES

The following are the key results that MVFA seeks to achieve on behalf of those we serve:

1. **Care and Services for Veterans:** *The scope and quality of care and services we provide enhance veterans' wellbeing and independence.*
2. **Veteran and Family Satisfaction:** *The veterans we serve and their families are delighted with the high quality of our services and homes.*
3. **Staff and Volunteer Engagement:** *Those who serve our veterans feel proud to contribute their talents and feel supported by MVFA as they do so.*
4. **Financial Sustainability:** *MVFA consistently meets its ongoing financial obligations and, by diversifying its revenue sources, is able to increase its financial independence.*
5. **Organizational Capability:** *MVFA has the talent, technology, processes, and other systems in place to deliver the results we are expected to produce.*
6. **Public Perception & Awareness:** *The people of Michigan – particularly veterans – know about the work of MVFA and are enthusiastic with the results we are producing.*

OUR INDICATORS OF PROGRESS

For each of our strategic outcomes, we will identify, track, and report on quantifiable measures that indicate how well MVFA is making progress on achieving those results. For some of those measures, MVFA will benchmark its performance against other state veterans homes and long-term care providers. The measures will be organized into the following categories:

1. Care and Services for Veterans indicators:

- a. Level of veterans' access to the care and services they need
- b. Improvement in veterans' wellbeing and independence
- c. Prevention of negative events that jeopardize veterans' wellbeing and independence
- d. Stabilization and improvement of veterans' mental health conditions, including addiction and post-traumatic stress

2. Veteran and Family Satisfaction indicators:

- a. Evaluation of services and facilities by veterans
- b. Evaluation of services and facilities by family members
- c. Objective assessment of facility condition

3. Staff and Volunteer Engagement indicators:

- a. Staff retention
- b. Evaluation by staff of their level of engagement and support
- c. Quantity of volunteer contributions
- d. Evaluation by volunteers of their experience

4. Financial Sustainability indicators:

- a. Maximization of federal and philanthropic funding sources
- b. Effectiveness of MVFA fiscal management
- c. MVFA financial solvency
- d. MVFA's economic impact on Michigan communities

5. Organizational Capability indicators:

- a. Assessment of MVFA leadership capacity
- b. Assessment of "maturity" and performance of key administrative systems and processes (finance, human resources, procurement, technology, and performance management)
- c. Assessment of key external partnerships, including vendors
- d. Compliance with federal and state regulations

6. Public Perception & Awareness indicators:

- a. Awareness of MVFA and its services among Michigan veterans and other state residents
- b. Public perception of MVFA and its performance
- c. Assessment of MVFA performance by veterans' advocacy organizations and other key stakeholders

OUR CORE STRATEGIES

To deliver on our mission, vision, and outcomes, we will focus on a number of core strategies.

These include:

- Ensuring high quality of care to our veterans in the place they call home
- Securing the financial resources necessary to deliver today and innovate tomorrow
- Engaging with key stakeholders in a collaborative, respectful manner
- Selecting communities and sites to locate future homes

Each of these strategies are summarized below.

ENSURING HIGH QUALITY OF CARE

We will pursue a multi-faceted approach for developing and sustaining high quality care for the veterans we serve. First, we will **align the day-to-day care practices at all our homes with nation-leading long-term care models** that we review and adapt to meet or exceed the unique requirements of our residents. In addition, we will **identify and clarify a set of clinical care pathways** best suited to meet the needs of veterans experiencing certain medical conditions. Once those pathways have been outlined, we will **develop partnerships** with a variety of other public, private, and non-profit organizations in our communities to support us in the delivery of more predictable, evidence-based care for the veterans we serve. In this way, we can **expand the continuum of care** provided to our veterans and leverage the talent and resources of other professionals in addition to those working directly in our homes. These partnerships can also be leveraged to **enhance the perception of our homes among local providers** as a place to which they feel comfortable referring their patients.

Second, we will **enhance the knowledge, skills and capabilities of our staff** to deliver the compassionate, high-quality care that our veterans deserve. This will include developing and implementing **robust training and development programs** that position our direct care staff to not only succeed in their current positions but also to put them on a fulfilling, financially sustainable long-term career path in our organization. We will strive to **provide competitive wages and benefits** that make us an employer of choice, particularly among those who already possess strong long-term care experience and skills. In addition, we will **acquire, build, and maintain the modern equipment and facilities** that will make MVFA not only a great place to live and receive care but also to work.

Finally, we will build a **performance-driven culture** that continually asks how we can deliver nation-leading care and services for our veterans and their families. This starts with emphasizing the **timely, accurate recording of patient-centered care data** through a modern, integrated technology solution. Using this information, we will **analyze and benchmark our performance against quantifiable industry standards**. We will also **publish our performance data**, as appropriate, to demonstrate to our veterans, their families, our staff, and our external funders and other stakeholders how well we are advancing our mission. In addition, we will **view the periodic audits of our operations by external organizations as opportunities to reflect on and learn** from our performance. Finally, we will **establish performance-based incentives for our staff and partners** around the achievement of quantifiable care outcomes and adherence to expected care practices.

While our objective is to be known for how we care for veterans in the homes we operate, we foresee serving many veterans in settings outside of our homes. In those cases, we will evaluate how to best deliver those services. In the event that outside partnerships are utilized, we will select providers that meet our high standards, provide rigorous monitoring of care they are delivering, and establish clear performance agreements with them.

SECURING FINANCIAL RESOURCES

The ability to make the necessary investments in staff, equipment, and facilities for MVFA to build and maintain an innovative, high-performing organization hinges on our financial solvency and sustainability. Therefore, we will have a financial strategy that includes a number of components designed to reduce – over time – our reliance on state general fund appropriations. First, we will take the necessary steps to ensure that we **maximize reimbursement from federal funders**; most notably, this means making sure that all the beds in our new homes are eligible for Medicaid and Medicare reimbursement. Second, we will **launch a charitable foundation** that enables us to raise money from the philanthropic community as well as private individuals that can be spent on items and activities outside of veterans direct care but that will make us better at what we do, such as staff training, enrichment opportunities for residents, and direct financial assistance to veterans facing economic challenges. Finally, we will **put sound financial policies and procedures in place** that ensure that we act as good stewards of all the funds that we receive. This includes establishing and following procurement practices that enable MVFA to secure the goods and services it needs quickly and at a good value.

ENGAGING STAKEHOLDERS

As a public body, we recognize the importance of conducting our work in a transparent and ethical manner. The people of Michigan – particularly our veterans – expect to know how we are performing and the direction that we are headed. In addition, many want to be involved in providing input to our work. Therefore, we will have an intentional strategy to engage stakeholders in a number of ways. First, we will regularly **report to state elected officials and the public-at-large on our performance** via in-person meetings and the publication of periodic performance reports. Second, we will **create forums** through which veteran service organizations, long-term care professionals, volunteers, and other community members can participate in providing recommendations to the MVFA staff and board on critical issues. Finally, we will **develop and implement a multi-channel communication strategy** that raises awareness among Michigan residents about the long-term care needs of veterans and informs them about how MVFA is meeting that challenge.

SELECTING COMMUNITIES AND SITES TO LOCATE FUTURE HOMES

There are currently approximately 600,000 veterans living in the state of Michigan, an estimated 250,000 of whom are likely to need long-term care in the next 7 years. While the vast majority of those veterans will receive care from family members or other care providers, we are also planning to expand the number of homes where we directly serve veterans in the future. Therefore, it critical that we have a clear, rigorous process for evaluating and deciding which Michigan communities represent the most appropriate places to locate our future homes and, then, which physical sites in those selected communities are likely to produce the best outcomes for those who live there.

For selecting future communities, we will gather data and information on the following variables and use that to compare and prioritize among the possible locations:

- **Density of veteran population**
 - Total number of veterans living within 90 miles of community
 - Number of those veterans who will likely need residential care
 - **Likelihood of area veterans choosing to live in a veterans' home** (i.e., via a survey) or require care services from our continuum of care
 - **Availability of labor for key care roles** (would include looking at the availability of affordable housing in the community)
 - **Economic vibrancy of community**
 - **Availability of local care facilities and providers** that could ensure an extended continuum of care (ranging from in-home to short-stay, adult day facilities to hospitals)
 - **Availability of community amenities** (libraries, parks, lodging, grocery stores, post-secondary institutions, etc.)
 - **Availability of multimodal transportation options** (public transportation, "walkability" score, proximity to highway interchange)
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Once we narrow down the communities where we would like to locate a new home, we will partner with the state's real estate division as well as local units of government and real estate professional to identify potential sites. When evaluating these sites, we will use the following variables to assess their feasibility and prioritize them accordingly.

- **Size of site** (appropriate size and configuration to permit acceptable and professional site planning with adequate open space, circulation, and parking)
 - **Availability of adjacent vacant parcel for future expansion opportunities**
 - **Cost to acquire site** (purchase price or possibility of donation)
 - **Environmental remediation** (cost and complexity to address environmental issues)
 - **Access to necessary utilities** (served by a municipally-owned water supply, storm and sanitary sewer system that is adequate for the number of units proposed)
 - **Complexity of restrictions** (zoning issues, deed restrictions, post-sale conditions placed by owner, environmental-related land use restrictions)
 - **Neighborhood/residential character** (near existing residential areas; preferably single family and aesthetically pleasing)
 - **Proximity to town center and associated amenities**
 - **Good vehicular access** (safe ingress/egress routes)
 - **Significant frontage on main thoroughfare** (opportunities for adequate signage, lighting, and landscaping to establish a pleasing and noticeable residential presence)
 - **Safety and security of area** (crime rate, etc.)
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As we move forward on building new homes, another part of our future will involve the **transition of the existing Grand Rapids home** from its current role as a state veterans home to a new set of uses. There is currently a Campus Planning Workgroup comprised of staff, board, community members, and other stakeholders developing a set of recommendations for this transition. These are likely to include plans for the future management of the cemetery as well as the repurposing of buildings into supportive housing. One core principle of the transition will be that no current residents of the Grand Rapids home will be forced to move.