

MESSAGE FROM THE OFFICE OF THE UNDER SECRETARY FOR HEALTH
March 4, 2022

Asset and Infrastructure Review (AIR) Commission

When Congress passed the MISSION Act in 2018, it required that VA undertake the Asset and Infrastructure Review (AIR). This review was to study the current and future health care needs of Veterans across America, and to evaluate VA's health care infrastructure to ensure we are ready and able to continue to meet those needs. Over the last three years, we have conducted studies – what we refer to as market assessments - of VA's markets across the country to understand the makeup of our Veterans by health care needs, age, race, gender, era they served, and where they live. Thank you to all who have supported these efforts.

The market assessments were the foundation supporting the development of AIR Recommendations that the Secretary will submit to the yet to be established Presidentially Appointed AIR Commission.

Secretary McDonough will publicly release the full report and recommendations on March 14th. However, before publication, you will be briefed on the recommendations in local townhalls. These townhalls will be an opportunity to hear from facility leadership about recommendations that may impact your area before the full report and recommendations are made public. I encourage everyone to attend these sessions if you can. Thank you to those leaders who have and continue to host townhalls.

The release of the AIR recommendations is only the beginning of a conversation about changes that may be implemented in the future. After the Secretary submits the recommendations, the AIR Commission will take a year to review our recommendations, hold public hearings, visit VA facilities, meet with employees and partners—and most importantly, listen to Veterans—to assess those recommendations before submitting their assessment to the President. If the President approves the recommendations, they will be submitted to Congress before any implementation occurs.

The results of the recommendations are indeed a good news story for both Veterans and for you. I recognize that it is not our infrastructure that cares for Veterans or saves their lives—it is each of you, VA's incredible and dedicated employees. The recommendations will support your ability to care for Veterans in the way they need, where they want, in modernized facilities. Additionally, the AIR recommendations will enable our continued delivery on VA's "fourth mission"—the critical role we play as a backstop to the U.S. health care system—by modernizing our infrastructure to ensure we can respond to emergencies at the national, state, and local levels when needed. Those involved in research and training initiatives will find that the recommendations emphasize support for your efforts and helping VA maintain its role as the leading health care research and health care training institution in the country.

In the short run, we do not expect AIR to have any major impact on you. In the long run, AIR recommendations could impact you and your facilities, but it's too early to know exactly what or where those impacts might be. Through this process, we are committed to transparency and investment in the VA Workforce, because each of you is a critical part of VA's future. As part of that commitment, we will provide regular updates on the AIR Commission process, and ensure you have ample opportunity for your voice to be heard as the AIR Commission work continues through the next year.

To stay up to date on the latest, please visit the Market Area Health Systems Optimization (MAHSO) VA Insider page [here](#). Thank you for all you do for Veterans!

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Performing the Delegable Duties of the Under Secretary for Health
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