

Senate Committee on Health and Welfare



V E R M O N T V E T E R A N S ' H O M E

Fulfilling the Promise

An Agency of the State of Vermont

OUR HISTORY



- Incorporated by the VT Legislature by Act. No. 180 in the Acts of 1884
- In 1887 the property, conveyed to the Board of Trustees by deed of the Trenor W. Park; First “inmate” was admitted on May 18, 1887
 - Was a self contained working farm for Veterans
 - Governed by the Vermont Veterans’ Home Board of Trustees
 - Land Owned by The Home’s Board of Trustees

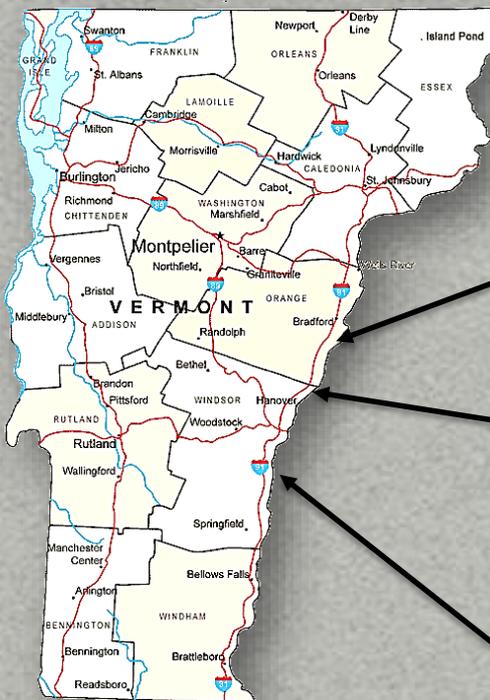


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Vermont received approximately \$6,777,471 from the VA to care for its VVH Veterans in FY-16



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VA Stipend-
\$106.74
per day
★ \$2,509,004

DOM Stipend-
\$46.07
per day
★ \$103,279

Service
Connected -
★ \$4,165,188

This \$6.8 Million dollars **would not** transfer to private nursing homes in Vermont...

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What is a State Veterans' Home



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State Veterans Homes are facilities that provide nursing home, domiciliary or adult day care. *They are owned, operated and managed by state governments.*



To participate in the State Veterans Home program, VA must formally recognize and certify a facility as a State Veterans Home. VA then surveys all facilities each year to make sure they continue to meet VA standards.

VA does not manage State Veterans Homes.



http://www.va.gov/GERIATRICS/Guide/LongTermCare/State_Veterans_Homes.asp



149 State Veterans' Homes

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VA Reimbursement



Provided for Veterans only.

Two types: Basic Per Diem and Full Cost of Care

Basic Per Diem is paid for each Veteran residing at the facility, current rate is \$106.10 for the nursing home and \$45.79 for the Dom

Remainder of the cost of their nursing home stay is covered by Medicare, Medicaid, Private Pay or Long Term Care Insurance.

Remainder of the cost of their Dom stay is paid via private funds.

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Limitations on Use



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- Current building can only be used as a State Veterans Home
 - Reimbursement of VA Construction Grant Money
- There is no “closed” unit or area of the facility.
- Other structures could be built on property for other programs
 - Would require own budget and funding
 - Bennington has numerous commercial properties available for rent.

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VA Reimbursement Cont.



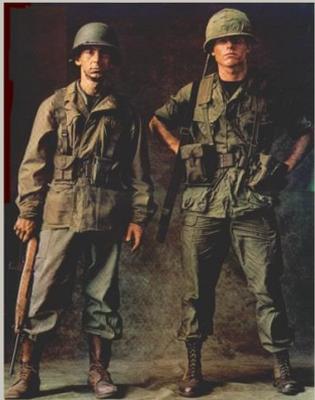
Veterans Affairs

Full Cost of Care is paid for any Veteran who is 70% or More Service Connected Disabled, as determined by the VA.

- This rate includes (Nursing Home Only):
- Room and Board
- Medications
- Medical Supplies
- Physician Visits including community physicians
- Facility Cannot Bill Other Insurances



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While serving in the
military

The disability had to
originate



For Service
Connected
Disabled

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VVH TODAY



A Premier Residential and Healthcare Campus For Veterans, their Spouses/Widows, and Gold Star Parents

130 Bed Skilled Nursing Facility

8 Bed Domiciliary "The Dom"/Assisted Living

196 State Employees

Services Provided

- Short-Term Rehabilitation Physical, Occupational, Speech Therapy
- Long Term Care
- Internationally Recognized Memory Care Program
- Hospice and Palliative Care
- Respite Care
- Outpatient Rehabilitation Services
- Guest Room for family members



VVH Tomorrow

Vermont Warriors-Desert Storm/OIF/OEF



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Burlington **Free Press**
PART OF THE USA TODAY NETWORK



VT Air Guard to deploy 'a few hundred' within 30 days

Our job to serve and care for our Veterans will never be done



Performance Measures

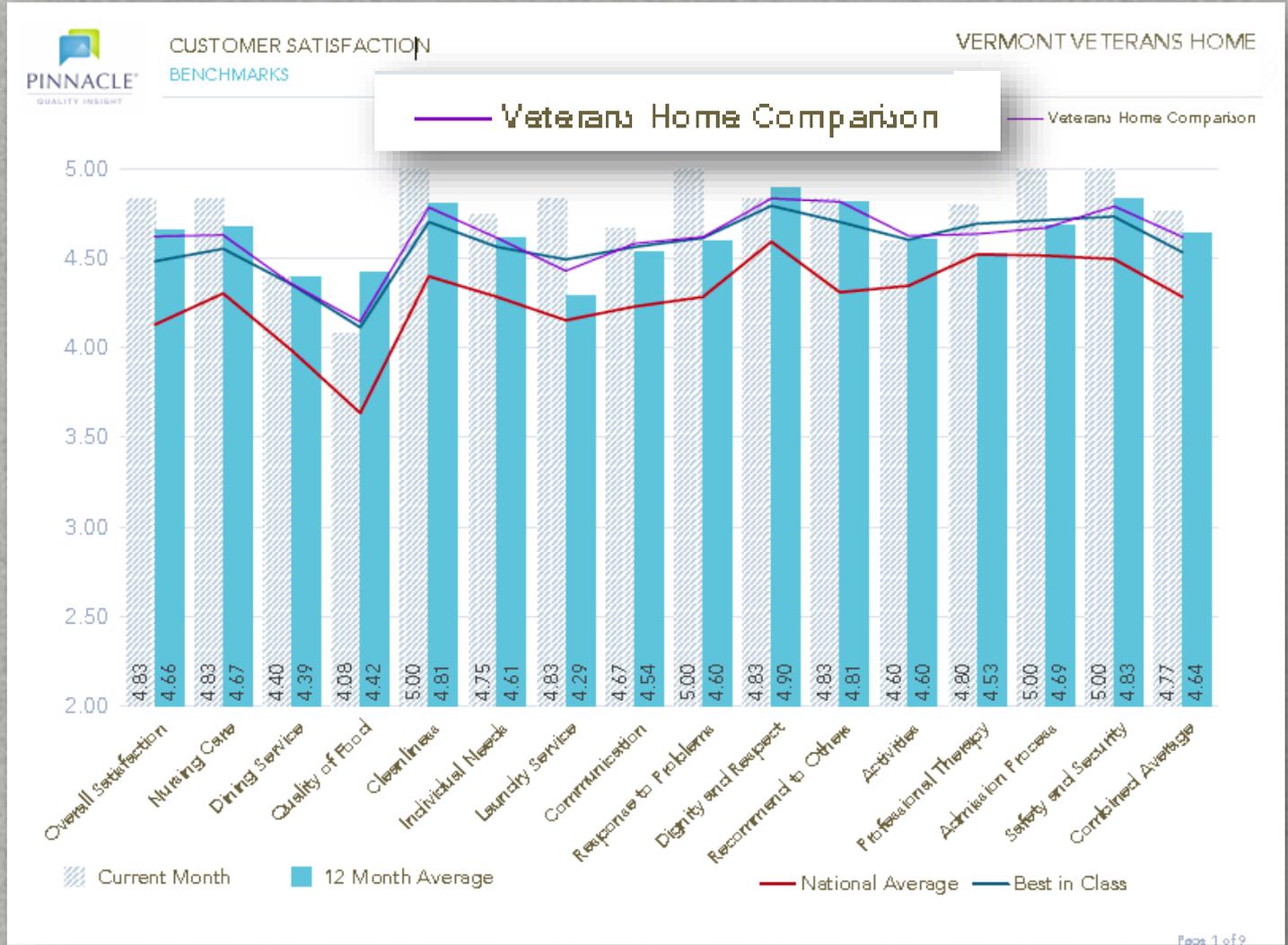
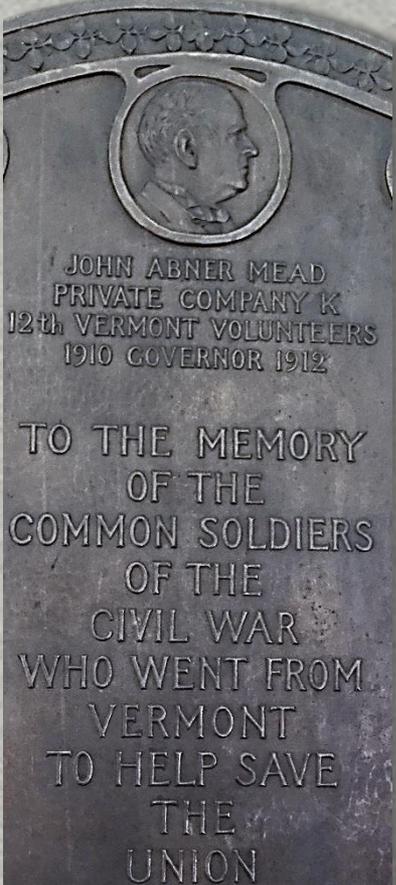


PINNACLE monthly interview with Veterans, Members and/or family regarding care and services our results compared to other homes across the country 9 best in class awards

Nursing Home Compare 5 star rating system of Centers for Medicare and Medicaid which compares VVH's performance to other nursing homes across the state



PINNACLE Performance Measures



Plaque in the State House
Honoring our Veterans

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What Families think of us

Pinnacle Customer Experience Award™

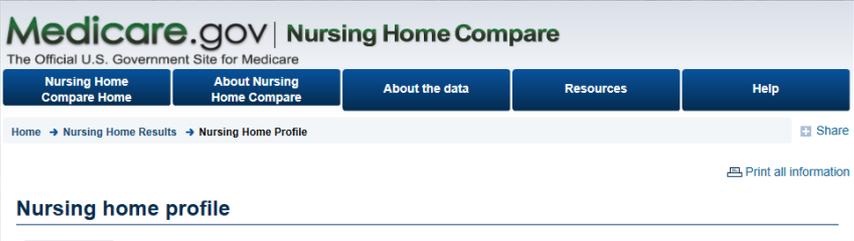
The Customer Experience Award™ is awarded to care providers who have achieved best-in-class customer satisfaction standards within their peer group.

Nursing Care	Dignity and Respect
Quality of Food	Recommend to Others
Cleanliness	Safety and Security
Individual Needs	Combined Average
Response to Problems	Overall Satisfaction

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Nursing Home Compare Performance Measures



Star rating summary

Overall rating ⓘ

★★★★★

Much Above Average

Only 11 with a 5 Star rating in Vermont!

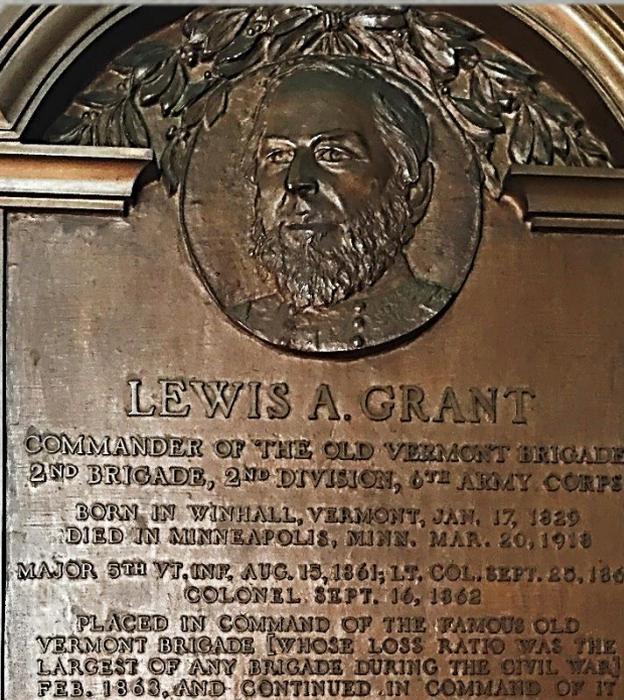
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PINNACLE Comments from the past year!



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- I would tell them that it was one of the best places to put your family member because it's clean, and the people are wonderful.
- They have activities for the people there. I can't say enough about it.
- The laundry service is the best. My mother raves about it.
- They are very accommodating. They have been very quick to implement things I have suggested.
- They go above board and do more than they normally do in a nursing facility.
- I have been in a lot of nursing homes, because I have been a POA for a lot of people and this home is very clean.
- I personally think it's lovely. He was in a small nursing home in White River until he could go down there. The facility is much bigger and brighter. It's gorgeous. I like the way it's arranged, the way it looks, and how the people are treated.
- There are people there being fed by nurses or attendants, but they aren't sitting on top of them the way they are in the nursing home he was in before. It's pleasant eating in there.



Plaque in the State House
Honoring our Veterans

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More PINNACLE Comments



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- She didn't want for anything. If she did want something, they brought it right to her.
- He couldn't communicate because he is 100% disabled because of the hearing He has hearing problems. They use a dry erase board to problem. They go out of their way to make sure they understand.
- I would rate that 100. I have told other people that are going there with their parents that are far away that Vermont Veterans Home is so great.
- They not only treat him with dignity and respect, but they love his sense of humor and they joke with him.
- I would tell them that the staff is great, and they spoil my husband. They take very good care of him. It's a very clean, comforting atmosphere.
- I have told everybody about it. I would tell them it's the greatest place to put your loved ones. You don't have to worry. I actually sleep at night with my father there.
- They are the gold standard in nursing homes. It was at home, not a nursing home, to a lot of patients. There are many visiting spaces, and they are very nice. Privacy is always accommodated. The outdoor areas are very easily accessible and pleasant. There is a deer park for people to visit, but he couldn't because of his restrictions. The activities are marvelous. There is fishing, derbies, and barbeques. The parade even stops by. It's really wonderful.
- He loves the food there and he seems to get more than enough. He gets seconds if he wants. My mother loved it. It has to be a five. She's very fussy. I would rate that a 10. I have been in nursing homes, and I am not just making all this up.

Performance Measures Continued



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Deficiency Free State &
VA TWO YEARS IN A
ROW

CMS 5 STAR RATED for
Staffing one of **four** in the
state of Vermont as of
January 20, 2016.

Medicare/Medicaid
Certified

Presented Best Practices

- National Conferences
- VA
- Conference Calls and Visits



Father's Day Car Show

- **College Internship Site**
 - SVC
 - SVMC
 - SUNY Albany
 - Southern VT Tech
 - Medical Residency
- **Local School to Work Site**

<http://medicare.gov/nursinghomecompare/results.html#state=VT&lat=0&lng=0>

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Vermont Nursing Home Occupancy



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Vermont Nursing Home Occupancy By County

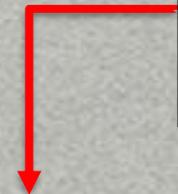
Total and Medicaid

November 2016

(Yellow highlight indicates occupancy below 90%; red font indicates occupancy below 75%)

Nursing Home by County	Licensed Capacity	VT Medicaid (all types of VT Medicaid) Days	VT Medicaid Occupancy	Total Days	Total Occupancy
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Bennington					
Bennington	100	1,372	45.73%	2,483	82.77%
Crescent Manor	90	1,682	62.30%	2,137	79.15%
Veterans Home	130	1,747	44.79%	3,617	92.74%
Centers For Living & Rehab	130	1,221	31.31%	2,586	66.31%
County Average (weighted)*	450		44.61%	10,823	80.17%



Veterans Home	130	1,747	44.79%	3,617	92.74%
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State Occupancy	3,054	48,976	53.46%	77,367	84.44%
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http://dail.vermont.gov/dail-publications/publications-monthly-reports/drs_occup_co

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Counties VVH Vermont Veterans Originate From



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Distribution of Vermont Residents at the Vermont Veterans' Home



(Mid-January numbers)

Challenges Continued

NY-23
MA-3
FL-2
NH-3
CT-2
OH-1



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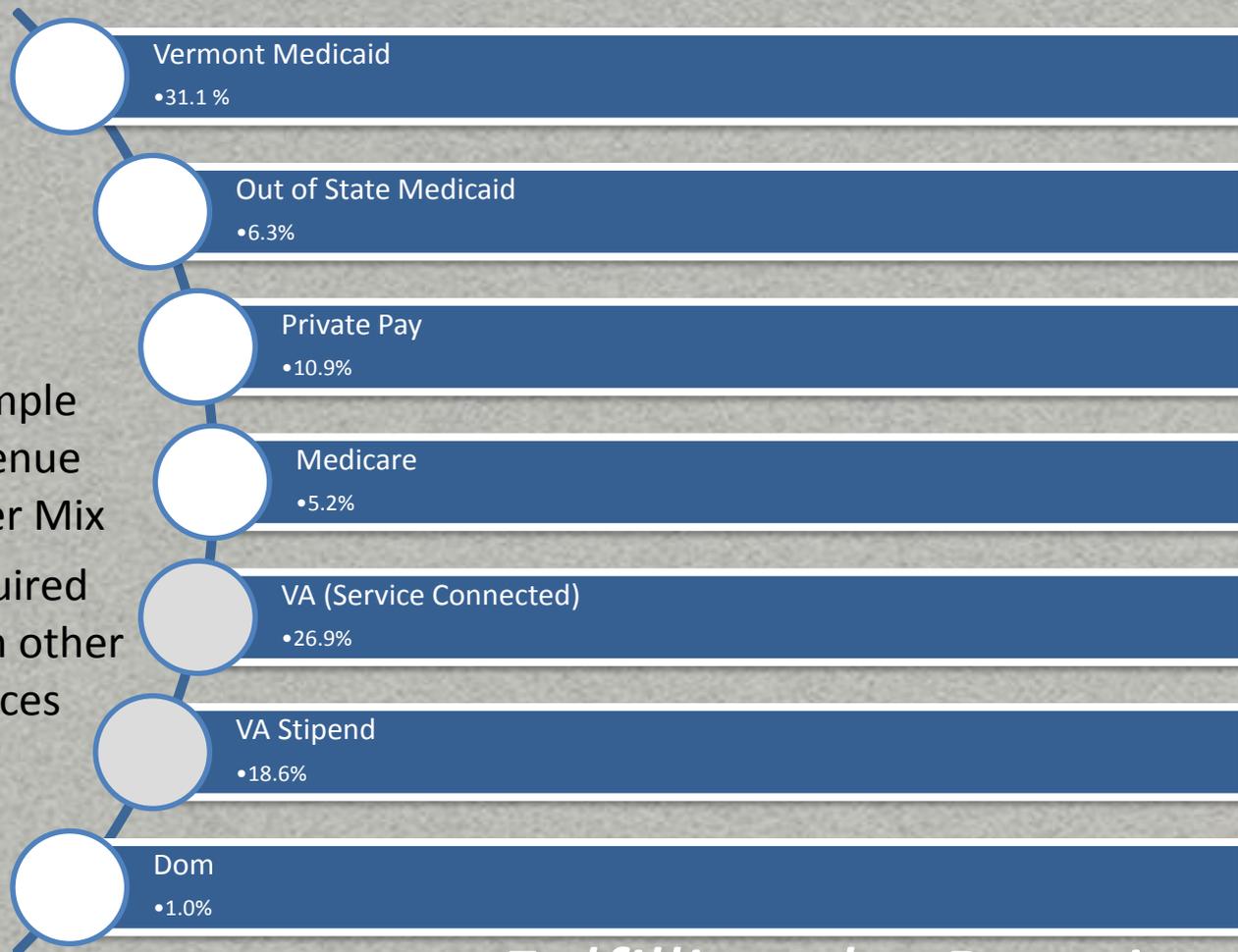
We collect approximately 70 cents out of every Dollar required



Budget



- Example Revenue Payer Mix
- Required from other sources



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Promotion-Getting the Word Out



- Marketing Image & Branding Building relationships with discharge planners
- Speakers at national conferences
- Videos

- Hitting the Trail
- Use of Facilities
- Television ads on Cable TV in VT, NY, & NH
- Radio
- Public Television PSA & Shows
- Press-improved public image
- Open Houses
- Weekly visits to Discharge Planners
- Monthly "Buzz Word" newsletter



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Marketing Focus of Effort



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Target Rutland County

- Utilize all media resources
 - Radio-TV-Paper
- Meet with area leaders
 - Municipal
 - Clubs-Elks-Lions-Eagles etc.
 - Churches

Where do Veterans live in VT?



County	Veteran Population	% Enrolled in VA
Chittenden	9,704	38%
Rutland	5,201	44%
Washington	4,700	37%
Windsor	4,467	58%
Franklin	3,930	9%
Bennington	3,432	45%
Windham	3,303	46%
Caledonia	2,551	46%
Orleans	2,376	50%
Orange	2,367	50%
Addison	2,268	9%
Lamoille	1,938	35%
Essex	753	51%

- Duplicate model in Chittenden County using lessons learned

Community Events



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We continue to expand our community outreach by hosting several Events on our Campus. These events have brought VVH tremendous Press, good will, and support.

VALOR Program- an educational opportunity open to the public and our Veterans. Local colleges & Experts have teamed up to present lessons and programs of interest at VVH. Williams, Southern Vermont, Bennington College, and NASA (Ret) have participated

Summer Concert Series- concerts were held this past summer on our front lawn, many from the local community and surrounding area attended. This is a tremendous gift to the community for their resolute support of VVH

Father's Day Car Show- this annual event continues to grow in popularity as visitor's routinely attend from the four contiguous states

Pow Wow- Locals and vacationers alike thoroughly enjoyed the Native American Pow Wow held our front property. The event was dedicated to the Veterans. Thousands attended and expressed their desire to attend....and vacation in the area again next year!

Veterans Motorcycle Ride- The 1st Annual Veterans Ride concluded on VVH property with a barbeque and music for attendees

Holiday Tree Lighting- A Community event hosted by VVH for the Local community and their children; music, snack, the tree, and Santa

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Why is a Veterans' Home Important?



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[The Vermont Veteran's Home](#)

[A Special Place](#)

My father was recently a resident at the home for 3 months and it changed our lives. Sadly Dad passed away at the end of June, but his last three months were filled with good times greatly outnumbering the difficult ones. The loving care he received helped him deal with the challenges he faced every day.

Dad was 91 years old, suffering from COPD and dementia. He was living at home with my mother. On a rainy day, Dad went out to get the mail. He fell and broke his hip socket in many places and his femur as well. Amazingly he made it through surgery and went to a local rehab facility. Dad was doing well, but in January he tried to walk unassisted and fell. There was a new femur break and 6 weeks of two person assist. Depression set in big time and the dementia ran wild. Dad lost a great deal of his ability to find words and his communication skills were limited. His frustration overwhelmed him. Dad also developed aspiration risk. Things were spinning out of control. We met frequently with the administration and felt his needs were not being met. They viewed him as a long term care patient and gave up on his therapies.

Dad wanted out of the rehab center and felt he was going to die if he stayed there. Spring was coming and we knew a change was needed. Dad, Mom and I had previously visited the Veterans' Home and so off the family went again to see Gary Yelle and discuss Dad's needs. Gary gave us hope; something we were in short supply of. We were impressed with all the services that could be offered, but more importantly had an overwhelming feeling of warmth, friendliness and kindness that flowed throughout the building. We loved the grounds and knew Dad's wish to see the summer had a chance of being fulfilled in this new setting.

Dad was placed in the dementia unit (Brandon), which was scary and upsetting for him, but turned out to be a blessing. The quality of his care by everyone was amazing. He was treated with dignity and respect and felt valued as a person again. The staff took time to talk with him and find out about his life. He had his identity and his dignity back. Constant assessment resulted in many services being started and Dad was able to set his own goals in some instances. The staff that supplied Dad with his therapies knew how to relate to a stubborn, independent person like Dad. They got the best out of him. In time he was talking again, walking with assistance, socializing, and enjoying the activities. He got to have a garden and enjoyed the beautiful spring with the sunshine of his face. Dad had some control over his life again.

During this entire time, Dad was not the only recipient of the Veterans' Home support. His family could not have gotten through everything without the kindness, reassurance, and guidance of Dr. Salizar, the nurses and the home's staff. Everyone made a difficult time less stressful.

Sadly, Dad passed away at the end of June. He had been taken to the hospital on a weekend due to recurring pneumonia. After heart wrenching discussion with doctors and Dad himself, it was decided

that Dad wanted to fight the illness with just his body. His only wish was to go back to his home and "his girls" – the Veteran's Home and his nurses.

Attached you will find some of the specific reasons why we found the Vermont Veterans' Home such a special place for Dad. You enabled us to make many fond new memories with him which we will cherish.

Kathleen Praetorius on behalf of the Praetorius Family

November 9, 2015

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Why is a Veterans' Home Important?



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The Vermont Veterans' Home

- There is a real sense of community in which everyone watches out for and cares about each other and is treated with kindness and respect-residents and staff alike. As you walk the halls you can feel it.
- The professionalism of the staff in handling the difficult situations some residents present.
- The nursing staff treated delicate personal needs in such a way that the residents' dignity was always respected.
- The opportunity to be among peers and share the experience of being a veteran. For Dad, it provided an anchor on bad dementia days.
- The helpfulness of the admission office and the business staff in completing paperwork and taking care of financial details so that the family's time and energies could be focused on their loved one.
- The flexibility of the staff, so that family time was the priority. The unrestricted visiting hours made life more natural.
- The ratio of nursing staff to residents enabled Dad's needs to be met efficiently and quickly. In the previous facility there were times when the floor was understaffed resulting in long wait times.
- The range of services offered and the constant monitoring by the providers to reassess and modify goals. Dad was able to have input and express what he wanted and needed, as was his family.
- The immediate addressing of psychological crisis. When extreme depression hit, Dad was able to see the doctor, psychologist or social worker immediately. In the previous facility he had to wait 2 weeks to see a psychologist.

- The frequent and open communication between the staff and our family. My mother and I were kept apprised of any concerns and our input was sought to better understand Dad.
- The approach of redirection and talking to calm agitation rather than medication was something we greatly appreciated.
- The variety of activities offered encouraged Dad's socialization. They also provided us with many opportunities to join him in the experience. This built wonderful memories and kept him a part of our family life.
- The care that is taken in maintaining the building and grounds make it a pleasant place to spend time. Dad loved feeding the deer and fish and sitting in his wheelchair on the porch or patio/garden.
- The unlimited support of the family through what was a very difficult time. The staff always had time to answer our questions or hear our concerns. Dr. Salazar and the nurses prepared us as best as they could, for Dad's failing health and the decisions which would have to be made.
- The immediate follow through when a priest's visit was requested. Father Holden brought us great comfort.
- The most amazing memory is that the night before Dad died, many nurses came in before they left to say "good night" to him. He never felt alone and uncared for.
- The Veteran's Home remains a part of our family and always will. Visiting and talking with staff helps ease the loss.





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Questions.....