



VA Recommendations to the

# ASSET AND INFRASTRUCTURE REVIEW COMMISSION

March 2022

**Appendix B**  
Leadership Questionnaire



**VA Market Area Health Systems Optimization  
Site Visit Interview Guide**

*This list of interview questions serves as a guide to gather local context on a broad range of issues, challenges, and opportunities. It is not meant to be an all-encompassing list. Coupled with locally and centrally provided data and facilities tours and other market reconnaissance, local input will inform the direction and potential opportunities that emerge from the market assessment.*

**VISN**

**Key Questions for VISN Leadership Team**

**Target Audience: VISN Director, Deputy Network Director, VISN CMO, VISN Planner, VISN CAM (facilities focus)**

**Core Questions**

**General Questions:**

1. What key market dynamics exist in your VISN/Market (geography/demographics, demand vs. supply trending, commercial capabilities, etc.)?
2. What is the strategic vision of the VISN/Market over the next 5 to 10 years and what are your key clinical priorities?
3. What are your VISN/Market's strengths and weaknesses? What key challenges are you facing?
4. What plans does the VISN/Market have for enhancing Veteran healthcare, through improving operations, active projects, or other initiatives? How does virtual care/telehealth play a role in your market?
5. What is the current landscape of DoD, other Federal, and commercial market providers relative to access, quality and capacity to support partnerships with the VA?
6. What role does teaching and research play within your market and where?
7. What changing VISN/Market operations, facility limitations, and future facility plans should be considered?
8. What future state opportunities do you feel the VISN/Market should consider for improving access, quality, and patient satisfaction?

**Questions Related to COVID-19 Response:**

9. What are the long-term/permanent impacts of COVID-19 on your operations?
10. How are you preparing to respond to future emergencies in support of VA's fourth mission?

**Supplemental Questions (tailor to interviewee, at VISN team/Senior Planner discretion):**

**General**

- What are key strengths of the VISN's current supply of programs, providers, and care locations in meeting future needs of Veterans?
- What critical issues, key challenges, or weaknesses does the VISN see in providing care for Veterans?
- Are there specific VAMCs/facilities or services with which you have concerns?

**Vision/Strategy**

- What market-specific opportunities/issues/factors should be taken into account in deciding whether care should be provided by VA or the community? Has your decision process about services provided to Veterans changed in light of expanding access to community care?
- Is there a population across the market that you feel does not have adequate access today? How should this be addressed? Are you considering additional points of care?

- Are there new services that should be considered or are being planned across the VISN? Are there services or points of care that should be consolidated in the future?
- What key specialties should the VISN be focusing resources on within the next five years? Which specialties should the VISN NOT commit significant resources to and why?

#### Operations

- Are there programs that you have difficulty sustaining? In what services are recruitment and retention issues prevalent?
- How are telehealth, mobile health and/or home-based care changing your operations? Other care models impacting care delivery?
- Other new care models impacting care delivery?

#### Partners

- How do your academic partners support Veteran care, education and research in your market?
- How do your federal partners (DOD/IHS/FQHCs) support care delivery? Other private sector partners?
- Are there other partners in the community that you would like Veterans to have access to? For what services? Are there any partnerships changes being considered?
- What service lines need new additional partners?

#### Quality

- Relative to your federal, academic and private sector partners, what is your sense of the quality provided?

#### Research/Education

- How do you support teaching and research? What specific role do your academic partners play? How do you see teaching and research changing over the next 5 years?

#### Facilities

- Are your health care facilities well located? What are your best assets and why? Are there assets that are impeding the effective provision of care delivery and why?
- What facility-specific issues/factors or challenges should be taken into account in deciding whether care should be provided by VA or the community?
- What key capital improvements are you planning in the next ten years?

#### Wrap-Up

- What are the big opportunities that the VA should step up to, to improve quality and access?
- Are there any other demographic, demand, operations, access, quality or partnership issues or trends that we have not discussed that are critical?

### **Key Questions for VISN Community Care/Business Implementation Manager**

#### **Core Questions**

1. What key market dynamics exist in your VISN/Market (demand vs. supply trending, commercial capabilities, community care contracting, etc.)?
2. What are your VISN/Market's strengths and weaknesses? What challenges are you facing?
3. What is the current landscape for Community Care? What role do DOD, other Federal, and commercial market providers play in serving Veteran healthcare needs? How do you see this changing with new MISSION Act regulations?
4. How do you see virtual care/telehealth supporting Veteran care needs and impacting community care support in the future?
5. What changing VISN/Market operations, facility limitations, and associated facility plans relative to the future VA healthcare system should be considered within this effort?
6. What future state opportunities do you feel the VISN/Market should consider for improving access, quality, and patient satisfaction?

**Supplemental Questions (tailor to interviewee, at VISN team/Senior Planner discretion):**

General

- What are key strengths of the VISN's current supply of programs, providers, and care locations in meeting future needs of Veterans?
- Are there specific VAMCs/facilities or services with which you have concerns?

Vision/Strategy

- What market-specific issues/factors should be taken into account in deciding whether care should be provided by VA or the community? How will decisions be re-evaluated from year to year?
- Are there any pockets or segments of population across the market that you feel do not have adequate access today? How should they be addressed?
- Has your decision process about what services will be provided changed in light of expanding access to quality community care?
- Are your health care facilities well located, compared to your population?

Partners

- How do your academic partners support the care, education and research in your market?
- How do your federal partners (DOD/IHS/FQHCs) support care delivery?
- Are any partnership changes considered?
- What service lines need new additional partners?

Quality

- Relative to your federal, academic and private sector partners, what is your sense of the quality provided? With what partners do you have concerns? Are there other quality partners in the community that you wished you had access to? For what services?
- Are there any discrepancies with SAIL data and your own perspectives on your quality scores? Are there programs that you have difficulty sustaining? Should certain programs be consolidated in the future?

Wrap-Up

- What are the big opportunities that VA should step up to, to improve quality and access?
- Are there key trends relative to demographics, demand, operations, access, quality or partnerships that we have not discussed, and are critical?

## VAMC

### Key Questions for VAMC Leadership Team

**Target Audience: VAMC Director, Associate Director/Assistant Director,  
Chief of Healthcare/Medical Administration Services, VAMC Planners**

#### Core Questions

##### General Questions:

1. What key market dynamics exist in your VAMC market (geography/demographics, demand vs. supply trending, commercial capabilities, etc.)?
2. What is the strategic vision of the VAMC over the next 5 to 10 years and what are your key clinical priorities?
3. What are your VAMC's strengths and weaknesses? What key challenges are you facing?
4. What plans does the VAMC have for enhancing Veteran healthcare, through improving operations, active projects, or other initiatives? How does virtual care/telehealth play a role in your market?
5. What is the current landscape of DOD, other Federal, and commercial market providers relative to access, quality and capacity to support partnerships with the VA?
6. What role does teaching and research play within your VAMC? Who are your key academic partners and how do they support Veteran care?
7. What changing VAMC operations, facility limitations, and associated facility plans relative to the future VA healthcare system should be considered within this effort?
8. What future state, data driven opportunities do you feel the VAMC should consider for improving access, quality, and patient satisfaction?

##### Questions Related to COVID-19 Response:

9. What are the long-term/permanent impacts of COVID-19 on your operations?
10. How are you preparing to respond to future emergencies in support of VA's fourth mission?

#### Supplemental Questions (tailor to interviewee, at VISN team/Senior Planner discretion):

##### General

- What are key strengths of your VAMC's current supply of programs, providers, and care locations in meeting future needs of Veterans?
- What critical issues, key challenges or weaknesses do you see in providing care for Veterans?
- Are there specific facilities or services with which you have concerns?

##### Vision/Strategy

- What market-specific opportunities/issues/factors should be taken into account in deciding whether care should be provided by VA or the community? Has your decision process about services provided to Veterans changed in light of expanding access to community care?
- Is there a population across the market that you feel does not have adequate access today? How should this be addressed? Are you considering additional points of care?
- Are there new services that should be considered or are being planned? Are there services or points of care that should be consolidated in the future?
- What key specialties should resources be focused on over the next five years? Which specialties should you NOT commit significant resources to and why?

##### Operations

- Are there programs that you have difficulty sustaining? In what services are recruitment and retention issues prevalent?
- How are telehealth, mobile health and/or home-based care changing your operations? Other care models impacting care delivery?

##### Partners

- How do your academic partners support Veteran care, education and research within your VAMC/market?

- How do your federal partners (DOD/IHS/FQHCs) support care delivery? Other private sector partners?
- Are there other partners in the community that you would like Veterans to have access to? For what services? Are there any partnerships changes being considered?

#### Quality

- Relative to your federal, academic and private sector partners, what is your sense of the quality provided? What are the barriers to better care delivery for Veterans?

#### Research/Education

- Please describe how you support teaching and research? What role do your academic partners play? How do you see teaching and research changing over the next 5 years?

#### Facilities

- Are your health care facilities well located? What are your best assets and why? Are there assets that are impeding the effective provision of care delivery and why?
- What facility-specific issues/factors or challenges should be taken into account in deciding whether care should be provided by VA or the community?
- What key capital improvements are you planning in the next ten years?

#### Wrap-Up

- What are the big opportunities that the VA should step up to, to improve quality and access?
- Are there any other demographic, demand, operations, access, quality or partnership issues or trends that we have not discussed that are critical?

### **Key Questions for VAMC Clinical Leadership**

**Target Audience: VAMC Chief of Staff, Associate Director for Patient Care Services (Nurse Executive)**

#### **Core Questions (focus primarily on clinical-related questions)**

##### General Questions:

1. What key or unique market dynamics exist in your VAMC market (geography/demographics, demand vs. supply trending, commercial capabilities, etc.)?
2. What is the strategic vision of the VAMC over the next 5 to 10 years and what are your key clinical priorities?
3. What are your VAMC's strengths and weaknesses? What key clinical service challenges are you facing?
4. What plans does the VAMC have for enhancing Veteran healthcare, through improving operations, active projects, or other initiatives?
5. What is the current landscape of DOD, other Federal, and commercial market providers relative to access, quality and capacity to support partnerships with the VA?
6. What role does teaching and research play within your VAMC? Who are your key academic partners and how do they support Veteran care?
7. What changing VISN/Market operations, facility limitations, and future facility plans should be considered?
8. What future state opportunities do you feel the VAMC should consider for improving access, quality, and patient satisfaction?

##### Questions Related to COVID-19 Response:

9. What are the long-term/permanent impacts of COVID-19 on your operations?
10. How are you preparing to respond to future emergencies in support of VA's fourth mission?

#### **Supplemental Questions (tailor to interviewee, at VISN team/Senior Planner discretion):**

##### General

- What are key strengths of your VAMC's current supply of programs, providers, and care locations in meeting future needs of Veterans?

- What critical issues, key challenges or weaknesses do you see in providing care for Veterans?
- Are there specific facilities or services with which you have concerns?

#### Vision/Strategy

- What market-specific opportunities/issues/factors should be taken into account in deciding whether care should be provided by VA or the community? Has your decision process about services provided to Veterans changed in light of expanding access to community care?
- Is there a population across the market that you feel does not have adequate access today? How should this be addressed? Are you considering additional points of care?
- Are there new services that should be considered or are being planned? Are there services or points of care that should be consolidated in the future?
- What key specialties should resources be focused on over the next five years? Which specialties should you NOT commit significant resources to and why?

#### Operations

- How is training/medical education integrated into VAMC clinical operations? Describe clinical appointments, including joint appointments. How about research?
- Are there programs that you have difficulty sustaining? In what services are recruitment and retention issues prevalent?
- How are telehealth, mobile health and/or home-based care changing your operations? Other care models impacting care delivery?

#### Partners

- How do your academic partners support the care, education and research in your market?
- How do your federal partners (DOD/IHS/FQHCs) support care delivery?
- Are any partnership changes being considered? New partners?
- What service lines need new additional partners?

#### Quality

- Relative to your federal, academic and private sector partners, what is your sense of the quality provided? With what partners do you have concerns? Are there other quality partners in the community that you wished you had access to? For what services?
- Are there any critical issues for the medical staff such as vacancies in key specialties or leadership positions? Are there any gaps in the portfolio of physicians/providers? What partner fills these gaps?
- What service lines need new additional partners?

#### Facilities

- Are your health care facilities well located, compared to your population?
- What facility-specific issues/factors or challenges should be taken into account in deciding whether care should be provided by VA or the community?

#### Wrap-Up

- What are the big opportunities that VA should step up to, to improve quality and access?
- Are there key trends relative to demographics, demand, operations, access, quality or partnerships that we have not discussed, and are critical?

**Key Questions for VAMC Leadership Team**  
**Target Audience: Chief of Community Managed Care,  
Purchased Care; Group Practice Manager**

#### **Core Questions (targeted to audience noted)**

1. What key or unique market dynamics exist in your VAMC market (geography/demographics, demand vs. supply trending, commercial capabilities, etc.)?
2. What is the current landscape for Community Care? What role do DOD, other Federal, and commercial market providers to serving Veteran healthcare needs? How do you see this changing with new MISSION Act regulations?

3. How do you see virtual care/telehealth supporting Veteran care needs and impacting community care support in the future?

**Supplemental Questions (tailor to interviewee, at VISN team/Senior Planner discretion):**

General

- What are key strengths of your VAMC's current supply of programs, providers, and care locations in meeting future needs of Veterans?
- How does access, quality and patient satisfaction data track with the Veteran community's perception of VA healthcare services you provide? What critical issues, key challenges or weaknesses do you see in providing care for Veterans?
- Are there specific facilities or services with which you have concerns?

Vision/Strategy

- What market-specific opportunities/issues/factors should be taken into account in deciding whether care should be provided by VA or the community? Has your decision process about services provided to Veterans changed in light of expanding access to community care?
- Is there a population across the market that you feel does not have adequate access today? How should this be addressed? Are you considering additional points of care?
- Are there new services that should be considered or are being planned? Are there services or points of care that should be consolidated in the future?

Partners

- How do your academic partners support the care, education and research in your market?
- How do your federal partners (DOD/IHS/FQHCs) support care delivery?
- Are any partnership changes being considered? New partners?
- What service lines need new additional partners?

Quality

- Relative to your federal, academic and private sector partners, what is your sense of the quality provided? With what partners do you have concerns? Are there other quality partners in the community that you wished you had access to? For what services?
- Are there programs that you have difficulty sustaining? In what services are recruitment and retention issues prevalent? How do you adjust your community care network to supplement your recruitment and retention challenges?

Wrap-Up

- What are the big opportunities that VA should step up to, to improve quality and access?
- Are there any other demographic, demand, operations, access, quality or partnership issues or trends that we have not discussed that are critical?



## **Key Questions for Service Line Leadership**

**Target Audience: VAMC Service Line Leaders, as Applicable**

### **Primary Care**

1. What Primary Care programs do Veterans currently have access to within your Market? Where are they located? Do you leverage any federal, academic or private sector partners for primary care services?
2. What are the strengths of your services?
3. What specific challenges/weaknesses in your services or quality do you feel need to be addressed in the foreseeable future?
4. In terms of distribution of primary care services today, is there a population or area across the market that you feel does not have adequate access today? How should this be addressed?
5. What is the role of teaching and research within your program? How do academic partners support primary care?
6. Relative to federal, academic and private sector partners, what is your sense of the quality provided? With what partners do you have concerns? Are there other quality partners in the community that you wished you had access to? For what services?
7. Any concerns with the VA's own quality and perhaps programs that should be transitioned to other, higher quality programs?
8. Are there programs that you have difficulty sustaining? What recruitment and retention issues do you have?
9. Please explain any new modes of operations you foresee or are implementing that will change patient care delivery.
10. How are telehealth, mobile health, or home-based care changing your operations?
11. Are there any other means or methods the VA should implement to improve care to our Veterans?

### **Mental Health**

1. What OP Mental Health programs do Veterans currently have access to within your Market? Where are they located? Who are your key federal, academic or private sector partners to support Veteran Mental Health services (e.g. acute care, residential, etc.?)
2. What Residential Mental Health programs do Veterans currently have access to within your Market? Where are they located? Any partners in your residential programs?
3. Where are Acute Mental Health services offered within your Market? How does the Acute Care program manage both Mental Health and acute substance abuse admissions? Same Unit? Who are your key federal, academic or private sector partners for Acute Mental Health?
4. What are the strengths of your services?
5. What specific challenges/weaknesses in your services or quality do you feel need to be addressed in the foreseeable future?
6. What is the role of teaching and research within your program? How do academic partners support mental health services?
7. In terms of distribution of mental health services today, is there a population or area across the market that you feel does not have adequate access today? How should this be addressed?
8. Relative to federal, academic and private sector partners, what is your sense of the quality provided? With what partners do you have concerns? Are there other quality partners in the community that you wished you had access to? For what services?
9. Are there any VA programs that should be transitioned to other, higher quality programs?
10. Are there programs that you have difficulty sustaining? What recruitment and retention issues do you have?
11. Please explain any new modes of operations you foresee or are implementing that will change patient care delivery.

12. How are telehealth, mobile health, or home-based care changing your operations?
13. Are there any other means or methods the VA should implement to improve care to our Veterans?

### **Medicine/Surgery/Specialty Care**

1. What Emergency Services do your patients presently have access to within your Market? Where are they located? Who are your key federal, academic or private sector partners for emergency services?
2. What Procedural Medicine Services, such as Endoscopy, do your patients presently have access to within your Market? Where are they located? Who are your key federal, academic or private sector partners for procedural medicine services?
3. What Interventional Cardiology Services do your patients presently have access to within your Market? Where are they located? Who are your key federal, academic or private sector partners for interventional cardiology services?
4. What surgical services do Veterans presently have access to within your Market? Where are they located? How are they broken down between inpatient and outpatient surgery? What key surgical specialties are provided? What are your key federal, academic or private sector partners that provide Veterans surgical services?
5. What are the strengths of your services?
6. In terms of distribution of medical and surgical services today, is there a population or area across the market that you feel does not have adequate access today? How should this be addressed?
7. What specific challenges/weaknesses in your services or quality do you feel need to be addressed in the foreseeable future?
8. How are decisions relative to patient acuity and VA admission, VA transfer or Community Care transfer made today? Is it working? How could it better serve the Veteran? Should VA expand its capability or should it rely more heavily on the community?
9. What is the role of teaching and research within your program? How do academic partners support medical services?
10. Relative to federal, academic and private sector partners, what is your sense of the quality provided? With what partners do you have concerns? Are there other quality partners in the community that you wished you had access to? For what services?
11. Are there any VA programs that should be transitioned to other, higher quality programs?
12. Are there programs that you have difficulty sustaining? What recruitment and retention issues do you have?
13. Please explain any new modes of operations you foresee or are implementing that will change patient care delivery.
14. How are telehealth, mobile health, or home-based care changing your operations?
15. Are there any other means or methods the VA should implement to improve care to our Veterans?

#### Questions Related to COVID-19 Response:

16. What are the long-term/permanent impacts of COVID-19 on your operations?
17. How are you preparing to respond to future emergencies in support of VA's fourth mission?

### **Extended Care & Rehab**

1. What special service, such as Polytrauma, TBI, SCI or Blind Rehab, do Veterans have access to within your Market? Where are they located? Do you have any federal, academic or private sector partners that provide Veterans any of these services?
2. Where are Community Living Center (CLC) care or equivalent Short and Long Stay Care presently offered within your Market? Does that CLC program manage both short and long stay admissions? Do you have any federal, academic or private sector partners for CLC services?
3. What are the strengths of your services?

4. What specific challenges/weaknesses in your services or quality do you feel need to be addressed in the foreseeable future?
5. Has your market experienced challenges in placing Veterans in community nursing home beds? If so, please elaborate on the potential cause(s) of the challenges.
6. What is the role of teaching and research within your program? How do academic partners support primary care?
7. In terms of distribution of Extended Care & Rehab services or other special services today, is there a population or area across the market that you feel does not have adequate access today? How should this be addressed?
8. Relative to federal, academic and private sector partners, what is your sense of the quality provided? With what partners do you have concerns? Are there other quality partners in the community that you wished you had access to? For what services?
9. Are there any VA programs that should be transitioned to other, higher quality programs?
10. Are there programs that you have difficulty sustaining? What recruitment and retention issues do you have?
11. Please explain any new modes of operations you foresee or are implementing that will change patient care delivery.
12. How are telehealth, mobile health, or home-based care changing your operations?
13. Are there any other means or methods the VA should implement to improve care to our Veterans?

Questions Related to COVID-19 Response:

14. What are the long-term/permanent impacts of COVID-19 on your operations?
15. How are you preparing to respond to future emergencies in support of VA's fourth mission?

**Facility Planner/Engineering**

1. What are the five most critical infrastructure issues you are facing today (context is existing NRM)? Can they be reasonably resolved or are they chronic conditions? What are the five most critical functional or capacity issues that you have today?
2. Are there any uncorrectable flaws such that it is not recommended to continue investing in modernizing specific clinical buildings (e.g. too narrow column width, limited interstitial space, asbestos, seismic weakness, etc.)?
3. What parts of the campus work well today?
4. Are there buildings that have been classified as historic property/facilities? How does this impede the provision of contemporary clinical services to Veterans?
5. What buildings on your campus(es) have you identified for demolition or you feel should be demolished?
6. What near-term capital projects are planned (and funded) for the Market? What are the five most important investments presently planned for your facility? What makes them a priority?
7. Describe the end state of your present facility planning efforts on each campus? What projects in SCIP are most important to achieve this end state?
8. Review present state of each off-site lease. What is your future vision for off-site leases and CBOCs?
9. For the future Veteran, what investments are most important, satellite or on campus? Why?
10. When you think across the Market and VISN, what facilities or campuses should the VA step away from to conserve facility maintenance money while maintaining access for Veterans?
11. What are the big or missed opportunities that VA should step up to, to improve quality and access?

Questions Related to COVID-19 Response:

12. What are the long-term/permanent impacts of COVID-19 on your operations?
13. How are you preparing to respond to future emergencies in support of VA's fourth mission?

## **Research**

1. What forms of Research, such as Clinical, Wet Lab, Dry Lab (desktop), or VMU, are presently performed within your Market? Where are they located?
2. Who are your key federal, academic or private sector partners for Research? What are the strengths of your programs?
3. How does research complement the healthcare Continuum of Care? What healthcare services are dependent on research? And what research is dependent on specific healthcare services?
4. How do your research programs directly or indirectly complement Veteran's care?
5. Any concerns with programs that you have difficulty sustaining? What recruitment and retention issues do you have? What are your biggest challenges?
6. How do you see the Mission Act changing research for the VA in the future?
7. What changes, expansions, contractions are you trying to implement for research?
8. Do your present facilities complement or detract from your mission? How?
9. What opportunities does the VA have to improve their health care system through their Research mission?

## **Education**

1. Please provide an overview of your present education program.
2. Who are your key federal, academic or private sector partners for Education? What are the strengths of your programs?
3. How does the education mission complement the healthcare Continuum of Care? What healthcare services are dependent on the education mission?
4. How do your education programs directly or indirectly complement Veteran care?
5. Any concerns with programs that you have difficulty sustaining? What recruitment and retention issues do you have? What are your biggest challenges?
6. How do you see the Mission Act changing the educational mission for VA in the future?
7. What changes, expansions, contractions are you trying to implement for education?
8. Do your present facilities complement or detract from your mission? How?
9. What opportunities does the VA have to improve their health care system through their education mission?