

March 25, 2019

Mr. Robert Wilkie  
Secretary  
Department of Veterans Affairs  
810 Vermont Avenue, NW  
Room 1063B  
Washington, DC 20420

***RE: Veterans Community Care Program***

Dear Secretary Wilkie:

On behalf of our nearly 5,000 member hospitals, health systems and other health care organizations, our clinician partners – including more than 270,000 affiliated physicians, 2 million nurses and other caregivers – and the 43,000 health care leaders who belong to our professional membership groups, the American Hospital Association (AHA) appreciates the opportunity to comment on the Department of Veterans Affairs' (VA) Veterans Community Care Program proposed rule.

America's hospitals and health systems are strongly committed to providing care to veterans in their communities and honoring their service to our country. We are pleased that VA is taking action to implement the Veterans Community Care Program. These regulations will provide continuity for veterans to access care outside of VA's medical network and decrease confusion about eligibility criteria and covered services.

We believe a strong partnership between America's hospitals and health systems and VA is essential to ensure our nation's veterans receive the health care they need and deserve. Our member hospitals and health systems stand ready to work with VA to implement the forthcoming Veterans Community Care Program to care for veterans who have sacrificed for our country and deserve the best possible timely care in their communities. If you have questions, please feel contact me or Robyn Bash, vice president, government relations and public policy operations, at [rbash@aha.org](mailto:rbash@aha.org) or 202-626-2672.

Sincerely,

/s/

Thomas P. Nickels  
Executive Vice President  
Government Relations and Public Policy

