

2019 Legislative Priority Goals

The Nurses Organization of Veterans Affairs (NOVA) is the professional organization for nurses employed by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). Our members are the frontline faces who provide the best care for Veterans. The following legislative priority goals identify several areas we feel need attention to continue providing the best care for our Nation's Veterans.

Implementation of The VA MISSION Act/Community Care Network:

- Require that training, competency and quality standards for Community Care Network (CCN) providers are equal to those of VHA providers.
- Request Third Party Administrator to verify that providers meet those standards before assigning to CCN panel.
- Simplify rules for eligibility and access to Community Care without depleting VA funds.
- Ensure that VA continues to be the first point of access and coordinator of all health care for enrolled Veterans.
- Implement a care coordination system allowing Veterans to return with ease back to the VA when resources are available.
- Employ mandatory training for VHA personnel and all community providers to improve the coordination of care, understanding of military culture and health care needs across networks.

Staffing/Recruitment and Retention:

- Address difficulties of USA Jobs including complexity and excessive time required to complete application, properly respond and provide feedback of completed applications.
- Ensure HR has sufficient trained staff in order to review and streamline policies and procedures to improve the efficiency and speed of the hiring process.
- Support competitive wages for ALL levels of Nursing.
- Undertake a thorough review of downgrades, reclassification of critical positions and implement salary surveys annually with corrective steps for all nursing staff across VA.
- Increase training of HR personnel on use of Locality Pay, and congressional authorizations to improve entire hiring process.
- Revise the cap on Nurse Pay structures and RN pay schedules and reclassification of critical positions so that VA can ensure competitive salaries.

Electronic Health Record/VA Modernization:

- The new Electronic Health Record must support VA's model of health care delivery.
- Implement IT that can successfully consolidate programs used to track and trend patient health care records across the system.
- Allocate funding so proper IT support and training can be provided to the field to improve patient safety, software usability and data standardization.
- Support a Modernization Plan that includes appropriate use of funding, and inclusion of nursing in strategic decision making, access, operational efficiency, and training.