

I want to share some news coming out of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). After working with Veterans and Veterans Service Organizations, VA launched a new online tool Wednesday that provides Veterans an easy-to-use, easy-to-understand way of accessing patient wait time and quality of care data.

The [Access and Quality Tool](#) allows Veterans to access the average times patients are waiting to be seen in their local area; how Veterans describe their experiences scheduling primary and specialty care appointments at specific VA facilities; and timeliness of appointments for care needed right away.

Additionally, our facility is one of 19 nationwide where the quality of health care delivered at our VA medical center is compared with local private-sector hospitals. While we welcome this transparency and look forward to improvements to the website and data in the weeks and months ahead, I want to highlight that the hospital compare data currently listed is more than two years old (the local hospital information is pulled from Medicare and is the most current data). While the local VA data listed is favorable and comparable to that our local facilities, much has been done locally and nationally by the VA to assess and improve our performance in many areas since the period reported in this initial posting.

Regardless, this tool is the most transparent and easy to understand patient wait time and quality of care data website available. No other health care system in the country publishes this type of data on wait times. That's unfortunate as the delivery of healthcare is local and I believe that our wait times, coupled with access to Same-Day Services in Primary Care and Mental Health for Veterans with urgent needs at the Medical Center, our primary care clinics and outpatient clinics in Laughlin and Pahrump, set the bar locally for timeliness.

In closing, this is another step in the VA's commitment to be more transparent and solve the challenges we're faced with. We will discuss further during our monthly Congressional Staffer meeting next week, but in the meantime, I urge you to visit the [Access and Quality Tool](#) to see how our VA medical facilities measure up.

Sincerely,



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