

23810 Airpark Blvd, Suite 130 Calumet, MI 49913 (906) 482-0102

Houghton County Veterans Affairs Board 23810 Airpark 130 Calumet, MI 49913

January 25, 2025

Senator Gary Peters Hart Senate Office Building Suite 724 Washington, D.C. 20510

## Dear Senator Peters,

We are writing to bring to your attention a pressing issue that significantly impacts Veterans residing in Michigan's Upper Peninsula. There is a critical shortage of in-patient hospice facilities approved by the Veterans Health Administration (VHA). This challenge has been exacerbated by the recent determination that Omega House, a hospice facility in Houghton, Michigan, does not meet the Veterans Affairs (VA) requirements for contracted residential hospice care. This decision has further reduced the already limited options available to our Veterans.

Although Long Term Care paid by the Veterans Health Administration is restricted to Veterans who are Service Connected at 70% or more, all Veterans enrolled in VA Healthcare (regardless of Service Connection) are eligible for paid Hospice Care through the VHA. Currently, within the 15 counties of the Upper Peninsula—an area spanning over 16,000 square miles—there are only four VA-approved facilities offering in-patient long-term and hospice care. For the more than 53,000 residents of Houghton, Keweenaw, Ontonagon, and Baraga counties, the situation is particularly dire. The sole VA-approved in-patient hospice facility, Canal View in Hancock, frequently has limited or no availability. This scarcity forces Veterans and their families to forgo care or travel hundreds of miles to access the services they are entitled to, an unacceptable burden—especially during the final days of their lives.

The issue may stem from the absence of an authorized billing code for "room and board" specific to contracted hospice care. While the VA provides a billing code for "room and board" at approved long-term care facilities, most in-patient hospice facilities are unable to meet the complex requirements intended for long-term care settings. This discrepancy is understandable, as hospice care prioritizes comfort and palliative support rather than intensive medical treatment. Additionally, hospice care provided in long-term care facilities typically incurs higher costs for the Veterans Administration compared to care at specialized hospice facilities. Unfortunately, these guidelines may unintentionally limit access to care for Veterans by disqualifying otherwise suitable hospice facilities, or in some cases, result in the VA incurring unnecessary costs for care.



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We respectfully seek your assistance in addressing this matter. Specifically, we request your support to:

- Review the VHA guidelines for approving and billing hospice care facilities to determine if they can be interpreted or applied in a manner that allows more facilities to qualify.
- Consider creating or supporting legislation that establishes distinct and appropriate standards for in-patient hospice care facilities, acknowledging their unique role in providing compassionate care.

The well-being of our aging Veterans is a matter of national importance. Ensuring that they have access to dignified and adequate care is a moral obligation. We deeply appreciate your dedication to serving those who have served our country and trust in your commitment to addressing this critical issue.

We have attached a list of the current VA-approved facilities in the Upper Peninsula, Wisconsin, and Northern Illinois for your reference. Point of Contact for this memorandum is Joseph Battisfore, Director, Houghton County Veteran Service Office at 906-482-0123/ VSO@houghtoncounty.gov. Point of Contact for the Iron Mountain VA Medical Center is Timothy Ellison, Public Affairs Specialist, Iron Mountain VA Hospital, 906-774-3300 ext 32001/ <a href="mailto:timothy.ellison@va.gov">timothy.ellison@va.gov</a>. Point of Contact for the Omega House is Michael Lutz, Executive Director, 906-482-4438 / <a href="mailto:Michael.lutz@omega-house.org">Michael.lutz@omega-house.org</a>.

Thank you for your time and attention to this matter. We look forward to your response and to working together to improve care options for our Veterans.

Respectfully,

Eugene La Rochelle

Chairperson, Veterans Affairs Board

Veterans Affairs Board Member

Robert Jeannotte

oseph Battisfore

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Director, Veteran Service Office

Tom Tikkanen

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January 10, 2025

Congressman Jack Bergman U.S. House of Representatives 566 Cannon House Office Building Washington, DC 20515

## Dear Congressman Bergman,

We are writing to bring to your attention a pressing issue that significantly impacts Veterans residing in Michigan's Upper Peninsula. There is a critical shortage of in-patient hospice facilities approved by the Veterans Health Administration (VHA). This challenge has been exacerbated by the recent determination that Omega House, a hospice facility in Houghton, Michigan, does not meet the Veterans Affairs (VA) requirements for contracted residential hospice care. This decision has further reduced the already limited options available to our Veterans.

Although Long Term Care paid by the Veterans Health Administration is restricted to Veterans who are Service Connected at 70% or more, all Veterans enrolled in VA Healthcare (regardless of Service Connection) are eligible for paid Hospice Care through the VHA. Currently, within the 15 counties of the Upper Peninsula—an area spanning over 16,000 square miles—there are only four VA-approved facilities offering in-patient long-term and hospice care. For the more than 53,000 residents of Houghton, Keweenaw, Ontonagon, and Baraga counties, the situation is particularly dire. The sole VA-approved in-patient hospice facility, Canal View in Hancock, frequently has limited or no availability. This scarcity forces Veterans and their families to forgo care or travel hundreds of miles to access the services they are entitled to, an unacceptable burden—especially during the final days of their lives.

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January 25, 2025

Representative Greg Markkanen Anderson House Building S-1489 House Office Building Lansing, MI 48933

## Dear Representative Markkanen,

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Veterans Affairs Board Member

# **VISN 12 CNH CONTRACT LIST**

## **IRON MOUNTAIN VA CNH LIST -**

Pinecrest Medical Care Facility, Box 603, N15995 Main Street, Powers, MI 49876, 906-497-5244

Iron Co. Medical Care Facility, 1523 US-2 Crystal Falls, MI 49920; 906-875-6671

Mackinaw Straits, 1140 N State St, Saint Ignace, MI 49781, 906-643-8585

Houghton Co. Medical Facility – 1100 Quincy St. Hancock, MI 49930; 906-482-5050

Rennes East (TDR), 701 Willow Road Peshtigo, WI 54157; 715-582-3962

# **MADISON VA CNH LIST -**

Alden Estates of Countryside - 1130 Collins Rd. Jefferson, WI 53549; 920-674-3170

Amberwood Care Centre - 2313 N Rockton Ave, Rockford, IL 61103; 815-964-2200

Bloomfield Manor - 3151 Co Rd CH Dodgeville, WI 53533; 608-935-3321

Columbia Health Care Center - 323 W Monroe St. Wyocena, WI 53969; 608-429-2181

Delavan Health Services - 905 E Geneva St. Delavan, WI 53115; 262-728-6319

Evansville Manor – 470 Garfield Ave. Evansville, WI 53536; 608-882-5700

Good Samaritan Society - Fennimore - 1850 11th St. Fennimore, WI 53809; 608-822-6100

Greenway Manor - 501 S Winstead St, Spring Green, WI, 53588; 608-588-2586

Lafayette Manor – 719 E Catherine St. Darlington, WI 53530; 608-776-4210

Lake Mills Health Services – 901 Mulberry St. Lake Mills, WI 53551; 920-648-8344 – ON DEFERMENT

Lancaster Health Services - 1350 S Madison St, Lancaster, WI 53813, 608-723-4143

Medina Manor – 402 S Center Rd. Durand, IL 61024; 815-248-2151

The New Glarus Home, Inc – 600 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave. New Glarus, WI 53574; 608-527-2126

Pleasant View Nursing Home - N3150 Highway 81, Monroe, WI, 608-739-3186

Prairie Maison - 700 S Fremont St. Prairie Du Chien, WI 53821; 608-326-8471

Ridgeview Terrace Long term Care – 2350 N Dewey Ave, Reedsburg, WI 53959; 608-524-6577

Randolph Health Services – 502 S High St, Randolph, WI 53956, 920-326-3171

# NORTH CHICAGO (LOVELL FHCC) VA CNH LIST

Abbott House – 405 Central Ave, Highland Park, IL 60035; 847-432-6080 \*\*only provide Psych care\*\*

Alden of Long Grove Rehab & Health Care Center – 2308 Old Hicks Rd. Long Grove, IL 60047; 847-438-8275 – ON DEFERMENT

Brentwood North/Elevate Care Riverwoods – 3705 Deerfield Road, Riverwoods, IL 60015 847-947-9000

The Grove of Northbrook – 263 Skokie Blvd. Northbrook, IL 60062; 847-564-0505 – Northbrook skilled nursing

Lake Park Center – 919 Washington Park, Waukegan, IL 60085; 847-623-9100 - \*\*only provide Psych care\*\*

Pavilion of Waukegan - 2217 Washington St. Waukegan, IL 60085; 847-244-4100

## HINES VA CNH LIST

Alden Valley Ridge Rehab, 275 E Army Trail Road, Bloomingdale, IL 60108,630-893-9616

Alden Estates of Naperville, 1525 S Oxford Lane, Naperville, IL 60565, 630-983-0300

Briar Place Nursing Center, 6800 W Joliet Road, Indian Head Park, IL 60525, 708-246-8500 – ON DEFERMENT

Cambridge Nursing and Rehab Center, 9615 N. Knox, Skokie, IL 60076, 847-679-4161

Central Nursing and Rehab Center (Central Nursing Home), 2450 North Central Ave, Chicago, IL, 60639, 773-889-1333

Citadel Care Center - Elgin, 180 South State Street, Elgin, IL 60123, 847-742-3110

Clark Manor Convalescent Center, 7433 N. Clark Street, Chicago, IL 60626, 773-338-8778

Elmbrook Skilled Nursing (The Grove at Elmhurst), 127 W Diversey, Elmhurst, IL 60126, 630-530-5225

Elmwood Care (DBA Generations) ,7733 W. Grand Avenue, Elmwood Park, IL 60707, 708-452-9200

Glen Bridge Nursing/Elevate Care, 8333 W Golf Road, Niles, IL 60714, 847-966-9190

Glen Crest Nursing and Rehab, 2451 W Touhy Ave, Chicago, IL 60645, 773-338-6800

Glen Elston Nursing and Rehab, 4340 N. Keystone, Chicago, IL 60641, 773-545-8700

Glenview Terrace, 1511 Greenwood Road, Glenview, IL 60025, 847-729-9090

Grove of Fox Valley, 1601 North Farnsworth Ave, Aurora, IL 60505; 630-898-1180

Harmony Nursing and Rehab Center, 3919 W Foster Ave, Chicago, IL 60625, 773-588-9500

Heritage Health Mendota,1201 First Ave, Mendota, IL 61342, 815-539-6745

Heritage Health - Streator, 1525 E Main Street, Streator, IL 61364, 815-672-4516

Oakridge Healthcare – 323 Oakridge Ave, Hillside, IL 60162, 708-547-6595

Generations Oakton (Oakton Pavilion), 1660 Oakton Place, Des Plaines, IL 60018, 847-299-5588

Peterson Pk Health Care Center, 6141 N Pulaski Road, Chicago, IL 60646, 773-478-2000

Ridgeview Rehab and Nursing Center, 6450 N Ridge Blvd, Chicago, IL, 60626, 773-743-8700

Skokie Meadows II Nursing Center, 4600 Golf Road, Skokie, IL 60076, 847-679-1157

La Grange Skilled Nursing,702 N La Grange Road, La Grange PK, IL 60526, 708-354-7300

# JESSE BROWN VA CNH LIST -

Alden-Lincoln Park Rehab, 504 W Wellington Ave, Chicago, IL 60657, 773-281-6200 Aperion Care- Demotte, 10352 N 600 E County Line Road, Demotte, IL 46310 (Indiana?) Aperion Care Oak Lawn, 9401 S Ridgeland Ave, Oak Lawn, IL 60453, 708-599-6700 Atrium Health Care Center, 1425 W Estes Avenue, Chicago, IL 60626, 773-973-4780 Symphone of Bronzeville, 3400 S Indiana Ave, Chicago, IL 60616, 312-842-5000 California Gardens Nursing Center, 2829 S California Ave, Chicago, IL 60608, 773-847-8061 - ON DEFERMENT Chicago Ridge Nursing, 10602 SW Hwy, Chicago Ridge, IL 60415, 708-448-1540 -Glenshire Nsg and Rehab, 22660 S Cicero Ave, Richton Park, IL 60471, 708-747-6120 – ON DEFERMENT Glenwood Healthcare, 19330 S Cottage Grove Ave, Glenwood, IL 60425, 708-758-6200 Golden Living Center Merrillville, 8800 Virginia Place, Merrillville, IN 46410, 219-736-1310 – ON DEFERMENT Symphony of Jackson Square – 5130 W Jackson Blvd, Chicago, IL 60644, 773-921-8000 KT Care (formerly Kankakee Terrace) 100 Belle Aire Ave, Bourbonnais, IL 60914, 815-939-0910 – MH facility Lake Shore HRC, 7200 N Sheridan Road, Chicago, IL 60626, 773-743-7711 Lakefront Nsg and Rehab, 7618 N Sheridan Road, Chicago, IL 60626, 773-743-7711 Lydia Healthcare Center, 13901 Lydia Ave, Robbins, IL 60472, 708-385-8700 – MH facility Meadowbrook Manor, 431 Remington Blvd, Bolingbrook, IL 60440, 630-759-1112 Midway Neuro and Rehab, 8540 Harlem Ave, Bridgeview, IL 60455, 708-598-2605 - ON DEFERMENT

Pine Crest Health Care, 3300 W 175<sup>th</sup> St, Hazel Crest, IL 60429, 708-335-2400

Renaissance at Halsted, (Symphony of Morgan Park) 10935 S Halsted St, Chicago, IL, 866-871-1067

SV Care (formerly Southview Manor), 3311 S Michigan Ave, Chicago, IL 60616, 312-326-9101

## TOMAH VA CNH LIST -

Clark County Health Care Center– W4266 State Rd 29, Owen, WI 54460, 715-229-2172

Edgewater Haven – 1351 Wisconsin River Drive, Port Edwards, WI 54469, 715-885-8300

Hillview Health Care - 3501 Park Lane Drive, LaCrosse, WI 54601, 608-789-4800

North Center Health Care/Mount View Care Center– 1100 Lakeview Dr, Wausau, WI 54403, 715-848-4600

Rib Lake Health Services – 650 Pearl Street, Rib Lake, WI 54470, 715-427-5291

Tomahawk Health Services - 720 E Kings Road, Tomahawk, WI 54487, 715-453-2164

# MILWAUKEE VA CNH LIST -

262-612-2800

Anna John Resident Centered Care Community, 2901 South Overland Road, Oneida, WI 54155, 920-869-2797
Aria of Waukesha, 1451 Cleveland Ave, Waukesha, WI 53186, 262-547-2123
Bria of Trinity Village, 7300 Dean Road, Milwaukee, WI 53223, 414-371-7300
Cedarburg Health Services, N27 W5705 Lincoln Blvd, Cedarburg, WI 53012, 262-376-7676
Crossroads Care Center of Fond du Lac, 115 E Arndt Street, Fond du Lac, WI 54935, 920-923-7040
Edenbrook of Green Bay, 2961 St Anthony Drive, Green Bay, WI 54311, 920-468-0861
Evergreen Retirement Community, 1130 N Westfield Street, Oshkosh, WI 54920, 920-233-2340
GranCare Nursing and Rehab, 517 E Division Street, Fond du Lac, WI 54935, 920-921-6800

Green Bay Health Services, 1640 Shawano Ave, Green Bay, WI 54303, 920-499-5177

Harbor Haven/Fond du Lac County, 459 E First Street, Fond du Lac, WI 54935, 920-929-3500

Heritage Health Services, 1119 N Wisconsin Street, Port Washington, WI 53074, 262-284-5892

Jewish Home, 1414 N Prospect, Milwaukee, WI 53202, 414-276-2627

Grande Prairie Health and Rehab, 10330 Prairie Ridge Road, Pleasant Prairie, WI 53158

Kewaunee Health Services, 1308 Lincoln Street, Kewaunee, WI 54216, 920-388-4111 Little Chute Health Services, 1201 Garfield Ave, Little Chute, WI 54140, 920-788-5806 Luther Manor, 4545 N 92<sup>nd</sup> Street, Wauwatosa, WI 53225, 414-464-3880 Lutheran Home, 7500 W North Ave, Wauwatosa, WI 53213, 414-326-3398 Manitowoc Health Care Center, 2021 S Alverno Road, Manitowoc, WI 54220, 920-683-4100 Meadowbrook at Appleton, 1335 S. Oneida Street, Appleton, WI 54915, 920-731-6646 Mercy Health Services, 2727 W Mitchell Street, Milwaukee, WI 53215, 414-383-3699 Park View Health Center, 725 Butler Ave, Oshkosh, WI 54901, 920-237-6300 Ridgewood Care Center, 3205 Wood Road, Racine, WI 53406, 262-554-6440 Rivers Bend Health Services, 960 S. Rapids Road, Manitowoc, WI 54220, 920-684-1144 Rocky Knoll Health Care Center, N7135 Rocky Knoll Parkway, Plymouth, WI 53073, 920-893-6441 St. Francis Health Services, 1915 E. Tripoli Avenue, Saint Francis, WI 53235, 414-483-3611 Shawano Health Services, 1436 S. Lincoln Street, Shawano, WI 54166, 715-526-6111 Sheboygan Progressive Health Services, 1902 Mead Avenue, Sheboygan, WI 53081, 920-458-8333 Southpointe Health Care Center, 4500 W. Loomis Road, Greenfield, WI 53220, 414-325-5300 Sturgeon Bay Health Services, 200 N Seventh Avenue, Sturgeon Bay, WI 54235, 920-743-6274 Villa at Bradley Estates, 6735 W Bradley Road, Milwaukee, WI 53223, 414-354-3300 Village at Manor Park/Methodist Manor, 8615 W Beloit Road, Milwaukee, WI 53227, 414-607-4100 Virginia Highlands, W173 N10915 Bernies Way, Germantown, WI 53022, 262-509-3300