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VFW DEPARTMENT OF FLORIDA HOSPITAL & VAVS DIRECTOR
JULY 2020 HOSPITAL REPORT

Hello comrades. I will be submitting a report for the website every month during the 2020-2021 year. As expected this report will be about COVID-19.

The primary goal of the VA operations plan is to protect Veterans and staff from acquiring COVID-19 infection by leveraging technology communications as well as using dedicated staff and space to care for COVID-19 patients. The VA will create a safe environment by implementing a system where one VA facility operates as two separate “zones” (Standard and covid-19) for inpatient care. VA will provide most outpatient care for Veterans through telehealth services as appropriate. This approach minimizes the risk of infection, supports expansion to meet an increasing need for COVID-19 services, and provides Veterans in routine VA care consistent access to VA care. The plan includes strategies to address a large number of COVID-19 cases to include alternative sites of care for Veterans with COVID-19.

The complete clinical picture of COVID-19 is not fully known. Reported illnesses range from very mild (including some with no reported symptoms) to severe illness including death.

Risk from COVID-19 can be broken down into risk of exposure versus risk of serious illness and death:

Risk of Exposure is increased for:

- People in places of reported, ongoing community spread of the virus that causes COVID-19, with the level of risk dependent on**

the location

- **Healthcare workers caring for patients with COVID-19**
- **Close contacts of persons with COVID-19**
- **Travelers returning from affected international locations where Community spread is occurring, with level of risk dependent on Where they traveled**

Risk of Severe Illness is increased for:

- **Older adults, with risk increasing by age**
- **People who have serious chronic medical conditions, such as: Heart disease, diabetes, lung disease, and hypertension**

Symptoms may include:

- **Fever**
- **Cough**
- **Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing**
- **Chills or repeated shaking with chills**
- **Muscle pain**
- **Headache**
- **Sore throat**
- **New loss of taste or smell**

Veterans and their families are urged to take everyday precautions to protect against respiratory illness caused by COVID-19. Those exhibiting symptoms of fever, cough and shortness of breath should call their VA Medical Center before going to a clinic to limit risk of exposure.