From: IP [mailto:] Privacy  
Sent: Sunday, July 09, 2017 5:31 PM  
To: 'jck@who.eop.gov' <jck@who.eop.gov>; 'Berkowitz, Avraham J. EOP/WHO' <avi@who.eop.gov>  
Cc: 'Stephen.Miller@who.eop.gov' <Stephen.Miller@who.eop.gov>  
Subject: FW: VA Transformation Accomplishments  

   Jared,  

   I have forwarded to you, a write-up of some recent accomplishments at the VA that David Shulkin has reported. These achievements result from the initiatives that we identified and worked on with David. Keep in mind that transforming an organization the size of the VA with issues and problems that have been embedded for scores of years is bigger and lengthier than the initial set of priorities. There are many more issues to be dealt with on the road to transformation, but this is a good start.  

   I would like to keep the President advised of the progress and status of these efforts. Please let me know if it is ok for me to send this along to him.  

   Best,  
   Ike  

From: Marc Sherman [mailto: Privacy]  
Sent: Sunday, July 09, 2017 4:42 PM  
To: IP [mailto:] Privacy  
Subject: VA Transformation Accomplishments  

Ike  

Earlier this year, at the request of the White House, we began to evaluate strategies and initiatives to transform the VA. The goal is to lend our expertise and time to fix the organization so that it can deliver the best quality of care to our deserving veterans. Of course, the quantity and depth of the problems were (and remain) enormous--so we focused on a limited set of initial priorities. At the outset we shared our priorities with David Shulkin...and he continues to seek our advice while he works to accomplish the elements of the strategy. David began taking action in the priority areas and today reports some tremendous progress toward achieving these priority initiatives. Today, David reports the following:  

   1) Accountability- we had the new law passed two weeks ago and since then have been making big changes to the culture. We are communicating internally that people will be held accountable and have removed, suspended or demoted close to 800 people. As important I have taken two additional steps. First, we are the first agency ever to commit to publishing our accountability
actions- part of my goal to be the most transparent organization in government. Second, we are now requiring a sign-off on all settlements with employees- as we had a system that was out of control giving millions to employees to make them go away rather than to take appropriate actions.

2) Technology- we are making good progress on the EMR - and are engaging EPIC as well as Cerner in the discussions. We still do not have a CIO- which makes it challenging - but I have now identified a truly remarkable candidate that I am beginning the vetting process on. In addition we will be announcing new programs in national access to telehealth at the end of the month that will be a game-changer for veterans.

3) Choice- we are seeking an immediate re-authorization of the Choice program and are working with Congress to get that done before the summer recess. We are making good progress for a bill in the Fall that would eliminate the 40/30 rules and give much broader access to Choice and add quality parameters to the ensure that veterans get the best quality care.

4) Facilities- I have recently published our list of 1100 vacant or underutilized facilities and plans to immediately move on 142 of these with a commitment to address all within 2 years. We do need some legislative help with this and we are working with leadership to get this done. We are also working much closer with DOD to integrate facility planning and with the private sector about public private partnerships.

5) Strategic Shifting of Priorities- All facilities are now presenting plans to me to shift resources towards "foundational services" for veterans that include programs like PTSD treatment, traumatic brain injury, prosthetics, behavioral health, spinal cord injury, war related Injuries, blind rehabilitation, and away from general services that can be dealt with better in the private sector. This is having a big impact on the way that people are thinking about how we invest in the future.

6) Disability redesign- This turns out to be a fundamental issue for us. This system is so broken that it is actually driving inappropriate demand on the healthcare side. The Commission on Care identified this as a big issue and this is something I am now beginning to address. We are making progress on get our time to deal with claims much lower. We have a new process that will take claims from 125 days down to under a week and we are rolling this out in September.

7) Suicide prevention- our biggest push here will be to work towards auto enrollment for service members that are leaving to enter the VA. Last week I learned that when we went back to look at a large number of young veterans that had committed suicide that the average gap in time for treatment from leaving service to getting VA care was 1.5 years. That is just way too long.

David also says that he is beginning to address other priority initiatives that we identified and discussed with him and hopes to have achievements to report soon.

Marc

Marc Sherman
Thanks much to the two of you and the group. It is great that we all share the same goal...making life better for our vets.
I look forward to us making the difference.
Talk soon.

Bernard J. Tyson
Chairman and CEO
Kaiser Foundation Hospitals and Health Plan, Inc.

On Feb 8, 2017, at 6:44 AM, IP wrote:

Caution: This email came from outside Kaiser Permanente. Do not open attachments or click on links if you do not recognize the sender.

Laurie and I would like to deeply thank the entire group for this week. We have made a significant amount of progress in a short period of time.

As the President asked we can now formally create an official committee and move closer to our goal of improving the treatment, care, and lives of our veterans.

Thank you all again.

All our Best,
Laurie and Ike

From: David Shulkin [mailto:drshulkin@aol.com]
Sent: Tuesday, February 07, 2017 8:58 PM
To: [redacted], [redacted], [redacted], [redacted]

Subject: Re: Group meeting

I would like to echo Bruce’s comments and in particular thank him, Ike, and Laurie. I know how busy all of you are and having you be there in person, and so present, was truly a gift. I found the time that we spent, the focus that came out of our discussions, and the time we had with the President very meaningful. I think we all believe that we can and need to provide better care to our veterans and I am grateful for your involvement.

David

-----Original Message-----
From: Bruce Moskowitz <>< Privacy
To: [redacted], [redacted], [redacted], [redacted], [redacted]; Paul Rothman [redacted]; Noseworthy, John H., M.D., M.D. [redacted]; Gade [redacted]; Bernard J. Tyson [redacted]; Tiffany Smiley [redacted]; [redacted]; IP [redacted]; Perl [redacted]; drshulkin [mailto:drshulkin@aol.com]
Sent: Tue, Feb 7, 2017 1:44 pm
Subject: Group meeting

I would like to thank everyone for their dedication and very important insight so that we can transition from vision to reality. We do not need to meet in person monthly, but meet face to face only when necessary to respect everyone’s valuable time. We will set up phone conference calls at a convenient time. Have a safe trip back.

Sent from my iPad

Bruce Moskowitz M.D.
Jared,

I have forwarded to you, a write-up of some recent accomplishments at the VA that David Shulkin has reported. These achievements result from the initiatives that we identified and worked on with David. Keep in mind that transforming an organization the size of the VA with issues and problems that have been embedded for scores of years is bigger and lengthier than the initial set of priorities. There are many more issues to be dealt with on the road to transformation, but this is a good start.

I would like to keep the President advised of the progress and status of these efforts. Please let me know if it is ok for me to send this along to him.

Best,
ike

Ike

Earlier this year, at the request of the White House, we began to evaluate strategies and initiatives to transform the VA. The goal is to lend our expertise and time to fix the organization so that it can deliver the best quality of care to our deserving veterans. Of course, the quantity and depth of the problems were (and remain) enormous--so we focused on a limited set of initial priorities. At the outset we shared our priorities with David Shulkin...and he continues to seek our advice while he works to accomplish the elements of the strategy. David began taking action in the priority areas and today reports some tremendous progress toward achieving these priority initiatives. Today, David reports the following:

1) **Accountability** - we had the new law passed two weeks ago and since then have been making big changes to the culture. We are communicating internally that people will be held accountable and have removed, suspended or demoted close to 800 people, As important I have taken two additional steps. First, we are the first agency ever to commit to publishing our accountability
Thank you Sir, this is so critically important.
Best,
Reed Cordish
Assistant to the President

Resending to your new email.

Reed,

It was a pleasure speaking to you.

Now I understand why Jared introduced us. It is clear that you care about the veterans as much as we do on the Advisory Committee.

There is so much that we need to do for the veterans, but we should start by providing them with great health care and jobs.

How can we leave these veterans – a lot of them disable, blinded, lost limbs, etc. on their own? They will now have us representing them......they will finally have a voice.

Thank you again for all your help and we very much look forward to working closely with you.

All my Best,
ike
(Moving folks to bcc to spare inboxes and adding reed).
Marc--would love to meet wed afternoon. Reed wants to join too, and asked if 5:15 would work on your end? He said he's happy to host the discussion here at the WH if you'll be in town.
Thanks!
H

On Sunday, January 22, 2017, Marc Sherman wrote:

Haley,

Rather than waiting for the confirmation hearing to conclude so that David can weigh in, I wonder if it makes sense for you and me to talk sometime this week. If you agree, let me know what your schedule permits. I could talk by phone on Monday (tomorrow) between 3-4pm or Tuesday between 8:30am and 10am. I could also meet on Wednesday in DC around 4:30pm or Thursday at 9:30am.

Looking forward to it.

Marc

Marc Sherman

On Sun, Jan 22, 2017 at 11:31 AM, Haley van Dyck wrote:

ike--
Great to speak with you as well! Im incredibly energized by how much focus is being put on VA reform already by this team, and am more than happy to help however I can. I believe this will be a unique moment to create some long-needed, lasting change.
Dr. Shulkin, Mr. Sherman--let me know when is a good time for you to connect further. Im based in DC so can meet in person, or by phone, whatever is easiest.

Best,
Haley

On Fri, Jan 20, 2017 at 9:17 AM, IP wrote:

Haley,

It was a real pleasure speaking to you yesterday. I am very excited about your ideas and efforts to bring government into the modern digital age. I am even more excited about having your counsel, thoughts and skills to help our Advisory Committee improve the VA and make the lives of our deserving veterans better.
Our Advisory Committee members know how to run the most efficient healthcare programs in the world as well as turnaround troubled ones, but including digital transformation as part of that effort will help us create something for the veterans that is far greater than just "fixing" current obstacles. With that in mind, I would ask that you, Dr. Shulkin, the VA Secretary nominee, and Marc Sherman, one of the committee members, compare schedules and arrange to get together when they think the time is right. I am copying the two of them as well.

Jared, thank you for introducing the two of us.

All my best,

Ike

From: Haley van Dijk [mailto:HCORHVAC.com]
Sent: Thursday, January 19, 2017 11:08 AM
To: [Name] Privacy
Subject: Re:

Thanks for the intro, Jared (moving you to bcc).

Ike--pleasure to be connected, and very glad to hear you are targeting the VA, it desperately needs help. There's a lot of work to do.

Happy to talk anytime on the phone or in person. I'm based out of DC, but let me know time/place that works for you and we'll get it on the books.

Haley

On Thursday, January 19, 2017, Jared Kushner <HCO@ijkfamily.com> wrote:

Haley - I want to introduce you to Ike who is going to help us fox the VA. He is someone we trust 100%. Can you please make a time to speak or meet with him and offer suggestions?

Sent from my iPhone
Ike and I had a great conversation and are on the same-page.

Call me anytime

Reed,

Thanks for your email and especially the thoughts on FACA. The good news is that we have been advised that FACA does not apply because we are not a formal group in any way. I have identified, as I mentioned, the brightest medical minds in medical system operations. Each of those people (in their individual capacity) is willing to give of their personal time for the betterment of the VA when requested by the VA. And each of these people has been willing to provide advice to the Secretary when he reaches out to any one of them. I have an understanding of their individual views and could fill you in when we speak since it isn't practical to continue debating any of this on email.

Ike
Ike, you expressed concern in our call the other day that “we were just posing for pictures” in this WH but in the below you seem concerned that we are engaged. You are concerned that we are not communicating but please consider that I do not receive updates from your team.

Please keep in mind that I have nothing but the utmost respect for what you are doing and that I know this is a life-and-death topic. But to do what you outlined below you will need to form a FACA group. One is being formed on Infrastructure. Please have your attorney reach out to WH Counsel Stefan Passantino (copied) to start that process. I have interjected a few thoughts into your email below:

From: IP [mailto:] Privacy
Sent: Sunday, April 2, 2017 10:16 AM
To: Cordish, Reed S. EOP/WHO <Reed.S.Cordish@who.eop.gov>
Cc: Kushner, Jared C. EOP/WHO <jck@who.eop.gov>; Berkowitz, Avram J. EOP/WHO <ayl@who.eop.gov>
Subject: RE: VA And Apple

Reed,

My email to Haley on Thursday expressed my frustration and displeasure in learning about activity and decisions concerning issues at the VA in a separate and invisible parallel effort. Regrettably, your response to my email that “Haley has been working but not communicating” not only fails to recognize or explain the issue, but merely highlights the very fundamental problem that is so troubling. While a lack of communication has certainly exacerbated the problem, the mere fact that there has been any activity or decision without first coordinating that activity with our team before taking any action is the problem. Simply offering to communicate better solves very little. I AGREE, THAT WAS MY POINT, LACK OF COMMUNICATION. I WAS FOCUSED ON CHANGE MOVING FORWARD NOT GOING BACKWARD. In your and Haley’s first meeting in the West Wing with Marc Sherman it was clear and agreed that Haley would be the liaison between our expert team and the White House and provide her IT counsel to our team related to our initiatives (not as an invisible, parallel effort). In addition, the White House was to be available to assist our team with executive and legislative clout when requested (not conduct an invisible, parallel effort), a three-pronged approach, if you recall. This is the program I reported to the President and the go-ahead we received. The essential problem at the VA is that 22 veterans die every day and the system of care and access to care is in need of repair. This is a medical issue and medical delivery problem. In order to fix the VA, these medical problems must first be defined and fixed. All other issues, like IT, are a function of the determined fix to the medical issues and medical delivery problems.

To transform the VA into the best of class, I assembled a team that includes the best and brightest minds in the academic medical community. The restructuring efforts on which we embark are informed by the advice and participation of those great medical minds. Parallel (and invisible to us) IT efforts are not connected to what the medical minds decide are the
Bruce - see below to reach out to the attorney

David

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: "Shulkin, David J., MD" <David.Shulkin@va.gov>
Date: January 25, 2017 at 11:23:24 AM EST
To: "drshulkin@aol.com" <drshulkin@aol.com>
Subject: FW: Proposed Committee to the Secretary

Dr. Shulkin,

I am the OGC attorney assigned to review matters related to the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA). Based on the brief description below, it appears that FACA may be implicated. However, I need a little more information about the purpose and membership of the committee to fully review. Is there a point person for the group that I could contact who could provide additional details?

V/r,

HCOR/HVAC
Staff Attorney
Torts and Administrative Law Group
Office of General Counsel
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
810 Vermont Ave., NW
-----Original Message-----
From: IP [mailto] (Perlmutter)
Sent: Tuesday, April 18, 2017 3:40 PM
To: jared.c.kushner@who.eop.gov
Cc: Avraham.J.Berkowitz@who.eop.gov
Subject: FW: For Mr. Perlmutter

With attachment.

Please be aware we are on top of almost everything and have the solutions.

-----Original Message-----
From: IP [mailto] (Perlmutter)
Sent: Tuesday, April 18, 2017 11:50 AM
To: HCOR/HVAC [mailto] @who.eop.gov
Subject: FW: For Mr. Perlmutter

Dear President Trump:

You have no doubt seen the report in the media about the Washington, DC VA. The good news is the VA was already in the process of evaluating the issues at that hospital and are starting to get their arms around many of the problems. Also, I am pleased to report that the Secretary fired the hospital director within hours of learning about the problems, action that is unheard of in the VA environment historically. We are progressing on evaluating and understanding the vast problems and risks in the VA system and working as quickly as possible to reform them.

Best,
Ike

-----Original Message-----
From: HCOR/HVAC [mailto] EOP/WHO
Sent: Monday, April 17, 2017 6:11 PM
To: HCOR/HVAC
Subject: For Mr. Perlmutter

--- please see attached for Mr. Perlmutter from the President!

Best,
HCOR/HVAC

Executive Assistant to the President of the United States
Office: (202) 456-7639
Cell: (202) 881-8503
Trump’s Promise to Veterans

By Rebecca Burgess

Donald Trump pitched himself as a friend to the American military, and to veterans in particular. His campaign pledged to fix the Department of Veterans Affairs “by firing the corrupt and incompetent VA executives who let our veterans down.” Since taking office, however, President Trump hasn’t defined what, if anything, his administration will do to make good on that promise. Here are a couple of obvious wrongs he can easily fix right.

In 2015, a pair of senior VA officials were accused of defrauding the department to the tune of $400,000. Diana Rubens and Kimberly Graves, the directors of two regional VA offices, had allegedly manipulated the department’s hiring and transfer systems for personal financial gain. Ms. Rubens was accused of pressuring a subordinate to leave the VA’s Philadelphia office so she could take the job herself, move from Washington, and collect a $288,000 relocation payout. Similarly, Ms. Graves received more than $129,000 by engineering a move from Philadelphia to St. Paul, Minn.

Allison Hickey resigned in October 2015 as the VA undersecretary for benefits amid investigations into her role in the scheme. Ms. Rubens and Ms. Graves were called to appear before the House Veterans Affairs Committee that November, but they refused to testify, invoking their Fifth Amendment right against self-incrimination. Instead of being fired, the pair were demoted. Due to a VA “paperwork mistake,” however, the demotion had to be rescinded in December 2015 and reissued.

Then the two got a reprieve from the Merit Systems Protection Board, the quasi-judicial agency whose mission, in part, is to review the disciplining of federal employees.

Corruption at the VA isn’t punished, while the Pentagon claws back signing bonuses.

The MSPB is the successor of the U.S. Civil Service Commission, originally set up to protect federal workers from partisan recrimination. In early 2016 the MSPB fully reversed the punishments of Ms. Rubens and Ms. Graves. Furthermore, the VA did not try to recover the taxpayer funds that the pair had collected for relocating. It seems that since “senior officials” approved the $400,000, it would have been somehow improper to ask for the money back.

Yet the Los Angeles Times revealed in October 2016 that the Defense Department had been forcing National Guard veterans to repay re-enlistment bonuses—sometimes up to $20,000—they had received during the mid-2000s. The Pentagon said the bonuses were improperly awarded. Nearly 10,000 soldiers, the Times reports, have faced everything from retroactive interest to wage garnishment to tax liens. Debt collectors and tanked credit scores, the result of the retroactive action, will haunt many of them for the foreseeable future.

Unlike the senior VA officials, these soldiers weren’t accused of consorting to game the system. Rather, each signed a service contract and happily took the bonus that the military, under pressure to make up enlistment shortfalls, was eagerly offering. Many consequently deployed for multiple tours. What a way to thank them for their service.

Auditors later determined that the incentive program of the California Army National Guard had been operated like a slush fund, with as much as $100 million misspent. The program’s onetime leader, former Master Sgt. Toni Jaffe, was sentenced in May 2012 to 30 months in prison after pleading guilty to filing $15.3 million in false claims. Three other officers were put on probation and forced to pay restitution.

Yet, for some reason, the Pentagon decided to claw back money from the veterans who had received the bonuses. Congress, it turns out, knew about the situation—or at least the California delegation did. When the story hit the press, then-Defense Secretary Ash Carter ordered a halt to the bonus hunting. But the order focused mostly on reviewing and streamlining the program. “This process has dragged on too long for too many service members,” Mr. Carter’s statement said. “Too many cases have languished without action.” Little was said about the underlying injustice of the matter.

Process is certainly important. As Alexander Pope mused: “For Forms of Government let fools contest; Whate’er is best administr’d is best.” But Alexander Hamilton countered the point in Federalist 68. “The true test of a good government,” he wrote, “is its aptitude and tendency to produce a good administration.”

The rules at the Defense Department and the VA must apply to senior officials and enlisted soldiers alike. Without consistency, even the best process fails from the standpoint of justice.

Exhibit A: the VA, where employees are rewarded because they technically followed a process. Exhibit B: the Pentagon, which could not protect even itself with its own processes. If Mr. Trump wants to do right by veterans and the military, he could begin by insisting on consistency.

Ms. Burgess manages the Program on American Citizenship at the American Enterprise Institute.

Kimberley A. Strassel is away.

My Childhood as a Roaming Catholic

HOUSES OF WORSHIP
By Michael Kerrigan

In April 1978 my family traded Boston for the relatively untamed South. We had followed career opportunities for my dad before, but never ventured so far south. My parents put on a brave face during the two-day drive. The road trip was soon over, and in time we would settle into our new community. Burrard’s security knowing how long it would take, especially after our first Sunday in town, which happened to be Easter. It left us even more disoriented than our newfound surroundings. I was 10 years later I remember it well.

My mom and dad really had no idea what made them fall in love in the first place. Immediately my sister and I tried to identify the lucky couple among the parishioners.

During the Our Father, everyone in the pew held hands, even across the aisle. This wasn’t just tolerated. It was expected. Then the closing of the electrical circuit before the rest would throw

For alliance system and close to its borders? to accept its status as a Soviet Union?

Mr. Conradi is chairman of the Joint Subcommittee on the Control of Nuclear Weapons.

Not For Circulation / Committee Members and Staff Only
I do not have any other information when I talk with [HCO]. I will ask him. All the board member knows it is for research in pulmonary disease.
Also I did not want to send email on talking points I and I discussed prior to the call with Steve Cohen but will fill you in anytime verbally prior to next Tuesday call. We are still unsure what can be put in emails and what to discuss verbally. Finally I had dinner with [ICON/IVAC] at PENN, if he can be of any assistance let me know.

Sent from my iPad
Bruce Moskowitz M.D.

> On Feb 16, 2017, at 1:20 PM, David shulkin <Drshulkin@aol.com> wrote:
> How can i get more info on the grant? Is there a contact?
> 
> Sent from my iPhone
> 
> >> On Feb 16, 2017, at 1:03 PM, Bruce Moskowitz <bruce.moskowitz@va.gov> wrote:
> >> Ike's friend and neighbor who I also know personally (HICOR/HVAC on Board) asked me to talk with [ICON/IVAC] who is the CEO of National Jewish Hospital Denver. Apparently there is a grant from the Defense Department for ten million that has not been used but can be applied for a project at the VA. Any idea how you would like to see this utilized?
> >>
> >> Sent from my iPad
> >> Bruce Moskowitz M.D.
Jared,

As you know, Ivanka introduced me to Tim Cook at Apple and Alex Gorsky at Johnson & Johnson. Ours Academic team and experts have worked so well with them and their teams. What Halley has done here is really outrageous. She may be very good in social media, but this an entirely different and very complicated area.

We will fix this.

All my Best,

Ike

Haley,

With all due respect, I am shocked and extremely disappointed with the manner in which you have engaged in individual communications with Apple - and intentionally excluded our broader team of subject matter experts. I understand that these backdoor discussions have apparently been occurring almost daily for weeks, and you have not told anyone and refuse to return phone calls and emails.

When we first met on February 7th, I personally shared with you our vision and goals and explained that it is critical that everything we do must be done as a team.

The very purpose of our Academic team, Dr. Moskowitz, and Marc Sherman is to ensure proper analysis, sharing of best practices, and provide a forum for discussion, debate, and ultimately the strongest collective decisions/recommendations.

You agreed then, but your actions to date regarding Apple prove otherwise.