

February 13, 1996

MEMORANDUM FOR CAROL RASCO

FROM: Molly Brostrom

RE: Visit to Baltimore VA Hospital

At 10:45 am Wednesday, February 14, we leave for the Baltimore Division of the VA Maryland Health Care System, for your visit as part of Salute to Hospitalized Veterans Day. I have told them you need to leave by 2:00 pm. Below is brief background on the changes being made to VA's Baltimore health care systems (provided by Alex Keenan at OMB). Attached is an agenda of your visit, and some background on the Administration's record for veterans.

Baltimore Medical Center

The Baltimore medical center is a 281-bed tertiary care facility located in downtown Baltimore adjacent to the University of Maryland Medical Center. It is one of the most modern hospitals in the VA system (opened in January 1993), and probably one of the most technologically sophisticated hospitals in the world.

VA Health Care Reinvention

VA has been, where possible, integrating its hospitals (formerly treated like 172 individual fiefdoms). The Baltimore hospital has merged two less showy VA hospitals in Fort Howard, MD (a general medicine hospital) and Perry Point, MD (a psychiatric hospital). Baltimore's Director, Dennis Smith, now runs all three facilities.

The Baltimore medical center is one of three reinvention labs in the VA. Baltimore's "Project to Improve the Efficiency and Effectiveness of Patient Care" (a.k.a. "The Project") is focused on improving patient/customer satisfaction, creating mission driven multidisciplinary teams, and performance based measurement. Management is using The Project to change the hospital's "cultural tradition" by decentralizing authority, responsibility, and decision-making down to a line-staff level.

Patient Focused Care

It will be interesting to try and see how their definition of patient focused care is implemented in a hospital ward. VA's description sounds impressive: "The four components are Case Management, Patient Teaching, Multifunction Worker; and technology advancements. The...patient's Case Management Team includes a Physician, Nurse Case Manager, Social Worker, Nutritionist, and a Patient Care Assistant. The Patient Care Assistant (PCA) is a newly created multifunction worker who performs clinical duties to free up physician and nursing time for more complicated clinical duties... The technology advancements include the implementation of the Pictureless Archiving Communications System (PACS), a

filmless radiology system and the Decentralized Hospital Computer Program (DHCP) Imaging.... Bedside computers have also been piloted..." Baltimore credits the new system with shortened lengths of stay and other efficiency improvements.

Pictureless Archiving Communications System (PACS)

The \$8 million PACS system mentioned above is a marvel, a totally filmless radiology system. Someday, when it isn't quite as expensive, all hospitals will have PACS, or be linked to another hospital that has the system. But for the time being, it is extremely rare (doubtful that another hospital in the mid-Atlantic States has one). PACS has two main benefits:

- Telemedicine -- The hospital with the PACS serves as a hub site for other regional hospitals. With a relatively small investment, nearby hospitals can take x-rays on-site, then send them electronically to the hub site for consultation and storage. In Baltimore's case, this has eliminated the need for independent radiology services at Ft. Howard and Perry Point (contributing to streamlining efforts); and

- Accessibility: providers can pull up x-rays on computer from anywhere in the hospital, on the spur of the moment.

VA Maryland Health Care System Baltimore Division

Lunch Briefing for

Ms. Carol Rasco
Assistant to the President for
Domestic Policy

February 14, 1996

Agenda

Welcome and Introductions	Dennis H. Smith Director, VAMHCS
Veterans Integrated Service Networks (VISNs)	Dennis H. Smith
VA Maryland Health Care System Integration	Dennis H. Smith
Reinventing Government Initiatives	Norman Morse, RN Chief, Patient Care Services
Questions and Answers	Dennis H. Smith

(Visitation with Hospitalized Veterans to Follow Briefing)

Also attending luncheon briefing:

- Colleen Sheppard, Assoc. Dir.*
- Dr. Mohamed Al-Ibrahim, Chief of Staff*
- David Edwards, Public Affairs*

**VA MARYLAND HEALTH CARE SYSTEM
Baltimore VA Medical Center
10 North Greene Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21201**

HOW TO REACH THE BALTIMORE VA MEDICAL CENTER

From Washington, DC: Take the Baltimore Washington Parkway (295) North towards Baltimore. The Baltimore Washington Parkway becomes Russell Street just prior to reaching Baltimore City. Russell Street will take you by the new Oriole Park at Camden Yards stadium. After the stadium, Russell Street will become Paca Street. Follow Paca Street to the fourth traffic light after the stadium at Fayette Street and turn left. Take Fayette Street through the next traffic light at Greene Street. After crossing Greene Street, continue on Fayette Street and the entrance to the medical center's parking garage is a block down on the left-hand side. Take the ramp down into the underground parking garage.

There is a Police booth at the bottom of the ramp in the parking garage where you will need to provide your name so the Police Officer can check you in on their guest parking list. They will have a reserved parking space for you on the first level of the parking garage. The elevators are located in the center of the parking garage toward the entrance to the garage. Take the elevator to the 1st floor and Mr. R. David Edwards, the Chief of Voluntary Service & Public Affairs, will greet you in the lobby and escort you to the Executive Conference Room for your briefing with the Director and his staff.

For additional information or for alternate directions, please contact the office of Voluntary Service & Public Affairs at the Baltimore VA Medical Center at (410) 605-7101.

* Sent to Driver

ATTACHMENT 1

BALTIMORE VA HOSPITAL VISIT ATTENDEES

Gen Tom Moorman	AF/CV
Maj Gen Burt Davitte	SAF/IG
Maj Gen Andy Egeland & Marie Egeland	AF/JA
Maj Gen George Lampe	AF/SC
Maj Gen Dave McIlvoy	AF/DPX
Brig Gen John Bradley & Jan Bradley	AF/RE
Brig Gen Dennis Haines & Ginny Haines	AF/LGS
Brig Gen John Hawley	SAF/AQP
Brig Gen Lanny Trapp & Nancy Trapp	SAF/LL
Brig Gen Joe Wehrle	AF/PE
Col Jim Brechwald & Jeannie Brechwald	AF/TE
Col Bob Hill & Gale Hill	11WG/CV
Col Rob Kuehn	SAF/IAX
Col Kerry May	AF/SEI
Col Marc Neifert	SAF/IA
Col David Semon	SAF/AAO
Col Hal Smarkola & Peggy Smarkola	SAF/PA
Col Jack Williamson	AF/HCX

From the U.S. Air Force, Washington, D.C.

As of 12:01 PM, 2/9/96

Below are the names, titles, and mail stops of the individuals that provided the briefing and tour to Ms. Rasco on February 14, 1996:

- 1 Dennis H. Smith (00)
Director, VA Maryland Health Care System
- 2 Colleen Sheppard (001)
Associate Director
- 3 Mohamed Al-Ibrahim, M.D. (11)
Chief of Staff
- 4 Norman Morse, R.N. (118)
Chief, Patient Care Services
- 5 Eliot Siegel, M.D. (114)
Chief, Radiology Service
- 6 Virginia Dodds, R.N. (118)
Chief, Nursing Service

The address will be the same for each of these individuals.
Correspondence can be mailed to:

(Name of Individual and Mail Stop)
VA Maryland Health Care System
Baltimore Medical Center
10 North Greene Street
Baltimore, MD 21201

Thank you again for your visit. Our patients and staff were very impressed that Ms. Rasco took the time out of her busy schedule to visit our hospitalized veterans and to tour our new facility. I hope she has a chance to relay her impressions of the visit to the President.

Thanks again.

7 R. David Edwards
Chief, Voluntary Service & Public Affairs