

VFW Survey: Veterans Want VA Fixed, Not Dismantled

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WASHINGTON — President Trump announced Monday the creation of the White House Office of American Innovation to “bring together the best ideas from government, the private sector, and other thought leaders to ensure that America is ready to solve today's most intractable problems, and is positioned to meet tomorrow's challenges and opportunities.” One of the new White House office's targets is to fix an old problem — the Department of Veterans Affairs — and the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States wants to help be part of the solution.

“The VFW prides itself in evaluating what works at the VA and in identifying what needs to be fixed,” said VFW National Commander Brian Duffy. “Veterans turn to VA for the high-quality, individualized care they provide, but there is always room for improvement, especially in the areas of information technology, scheduling, data analysis, and access to quality care out in the communities,” he explained. “I hope the White House recognizes that the VFW's expertise, perspective and relevance would add great value to their new team.”

The VFW this month released the results of its sixth nationwide survey of veterans, a copy of which was delivered to every congressional office earlier this month during the VFW's National Legislative Conference, and the results of which were personally discussed with the president on March 17. The purpose of [OUR CARE 2017: A Report Evaluating Veterans Health Care](#), is to continue to evaluate the impact of the Veterans Choice Program, which was enacted in 2014 in response to the VA's crisis in access to care. The VFW's initial survey, [Hurry Up and Wait](#), was published in September 2014 and based on feedback from 6,000 veterans. All other VFW reports on VA health care can be found vfw.org/VAwatch.

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More than 10,800 veterans responded to the VFW's 2017 [report](#), which is categorized under six major sections:

- Veterans want to fix, not dismantle the VA health care system
- Veterans are starting to notice improvements
- Patient satisfaction has improved
- Veterans are waiting less for their health care appointments
- Quality of care is paramount when choosing a health care provider
- Where veterans prefer to receive care depends on their options and experiences

“The most important takeaway is the overwhelming majority of respondents said they want to fix, not dismantle the VA health care system,” said the VFW national commander, who believes the VA is on the right track, but that much work remains, such as the need to hire more doctors, hold wrongdoers accountable, improve customer service, and to make VA's programs and systems more user-friendly.

“All things are possible with the right information, focus and authority,” said Duffy, “and the VFW is ready to help the new White House Office of American Innovation succeed in ensuring the VA is able to provide high-quality and accessible care to our nation's wounded, ill and injured veterans.”

[Read the VFW 2017 report here.](#)