

117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 1319

To direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to make certain information publicly available on one internet website of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

APRIL 22, 2021

Mr. KELLY (for himself and Mrs. BLACKBURN) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

A BILL

To direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to make certain information publicly available on one internet website of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “VA Quality Health
5 Care Accountability and Transparency Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. IMPROVED TRANSPARENCY BY DEPARTMENT OF**
7 **VETERANS AFFAIRS.**

8 (a) PUBLICATION OF STAFFING AND QUALITY OF
9 CARE DATA.—Not later than one year after the date of

1 the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Af-
 2 fairs shall make publicly available on the Access to Care
 3 internet website of the Department of Veterans Affairs (or
 4 a successor website) the information under subsection (b).

5 (b) INFORMATION INCLUDED.—

6 (1) IN GENERAL.—The information published
 7 on the internet website under subsection (a) shall in-
 8 clude—

9 (A) any numeric indicators relating to
 10 timely care, effective care, safety, and veteran-
 11 centered care that the Secretary collects at
 12 medical facilities of the Department pursuant
 13 to section 1703C of title 38, United States
 14 Code;

15 (B) the staffing and vacancy information
 16 required by subparagraphs (A) through (D) of
 17 section 505(a)(1) of the VA MISSION Act of
 18 2018 (Public Law 115–182; 38 U.S.C. 301
 19 note);

20 (C) the patient wait times information re-
 21 quired by subsection (a) of section 206 of the
 22 Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act
 23 of 2014 (Public Law 113–146; 128 Stat.
 24 1780); and

1 (D) the patient safety, quality of care, and
2 outcome measures required by subsection (b) of
3 such section.

4 (2) UPDATES.—The Secretary shall regularly
5 update the internet website under subsection (a) to
6 ensure that the information under paragraph (1) is
7 the most current information required by the provi-
8 sions of law specified in such paragraph.

9 (c) REQUIREMENTS OF INTERNET WEBSITE.—In ad-
10 dition to the requirements of section 206(b)(4) of the Vet-
11 erans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act of 2014
12 (Public Law 113–146; 128 Stat. 1781), the Secretary
13 shall ensure that the internet website under subsection (a)
14 meets the following requirements:

15 (1) The internet website is directly accessible
16 from—

17 (A) the main homepage of the publicly ac-
18 cessible internet website of the Department;
19 and

20 (B) the main homepage of the publicly ac-
21 cessible internet website of each medical center
22 of the Department.

23 (2) Where practicable, the internet website is
24 organized and searchable by each medical center of
25 the Department.

1 (3) The internet website is easily understand-
2 able and usable by the general public.

3 (d) CONSULTATION AND CONTRACT AUTHORITY.—In
4 carrying out subsection (c)(3), the Secretary—

5 (1) shall consult with veterans service organiza-
6 tions; and

7 (2) may enter into a contract to design the
8 internet website under subsection (a) with a com-
9 pany, non-profit entity, or other entity specializing
10 in website design that has substantial experience in
11 presenting health care data and information in a
12 easily understandable and usable manner to patients
13 and consumers.

14 (e) ACCURACY OF DATA.—

15 (1) ANNUAL PROCESS.—Not later than 18
16 months after the date of the enactment of this Act,
17 the Secretary shall develop and implement an annual
18 process to audit a generalizable subset of the data
19 contained in the internet website under subsection
20 (a) to assess the accuracy and completeness of the
21 data.

22 (2) CRITERIA.—The Secretary shall ensure that
23 each audit under paragraph (1)—

24 (A) determines the extent that the medical
25 record information, clinical information, data,

1 and documentation provided by each medical fa-
2 cility of the Department that is used to cal-
3 culate the information under subsection (b) is
4 accurate and complete;

5 (B) identifies any deficiencies in the re-
6 cording of medical record information, clinical
7 information, or data by medical facilities of the
8 Department that affects the accuracy and com-
9 pleteness of the information under subsection
10 (b); and

11 (C) provides recommendations to medical
12 facilities of the Department on how to—

13 (i) improve the accuracy and com-
14 pleteness of the medical record informa-
15 tion, clinical information, data, and docu-
16 mentation that is used to calculate the in-
17 formation under subsection (b); and

18 (ii) ensure that each medical facility
19 of the Department provides such informa-
20 tion in a uniform manner.

21 (3) ANNUAL REPORTS.—Not later than two
22 years after the date of the enactment of this Act,
23 and annually thereafter, the Secretary shall submit

- 1 to Congress a report on the findings of each audit
- 2 under paragraph (1).

