

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20510

September 27, 2017

The Honorable David J. Shulkin
Secretary
Department of Veterans Affairs
810 Vermont Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20420

Dear Secretary Shulkin:

We appreciated your visit to the Manchester, NH, Veterans Affairs Medical Center (Manchester VAMC) on August 4, 2017 and our productive discussion about steps that must be taken to ensure that any instances of substandard care or misconduct are immediately addressed and resolved. We were also encouraged that during the visit you stated: "This organization is not a full-service organization, and that's what New Hampshire needs. So I've charged Dr. Mayo-Smith to form a task force that will report back to us .. on how we can deliver full services to our veterans here in New Hampshire."

We have advocated for many years for the VA to return a full-service medical facility to New Hampshire, and we support proposals that have been introduced by members of the New Hampshire delegation since 2008 with the goal of requiring the VA to build a full-service hospital. We sincerely appreciated hearing you express support for exploring this much-needed step. However, we are concerned that the official guidance given to the task force did not include direct reference to "full services."

Dr. Mayo-Smith's testimony at a field hearing held by the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Veterans' Affairs on September 18, 2017 also failed to reassure us that the task force is conducting its review in a manner consistent with your earlier statement that the VA should provide "full services" in New Hampshire.

We firmly support your conclusion that “full services” are “what New Hampshire needs” and encourage you to re-emphasize to the task force that its purpose is to recommend the best ways to ensure that New Hampshire veterans have access to the full scope of VA services, up to and including a full-service medical facility. We will continue to work with you to deliver the quality and accessible health care that New Hampshire’s veterans have earned through their courage, commitment and sacrifice for our country.

Sincerely,



Jeanne Shaheen
United States Senator



Margaret Wood Hassan
United States Senator



Carol Shea-Porter
Member of Congress



Anne McLane Kuster
Member of Congress