

United States Senate

February 25, 2020

The Honorable Robert Wilkie
Secretary
Department of Veterans Affairs
810 Vermont Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20420

Dear Secretary Wilkie,

I write to express my concern regarding the estimated \$134 million of backlogged claims that the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has yet to pay to health care providers throughout New Hampshire. These claims date back to Health Net, the previous contractor who administered the Community Care Network program for Region 1. While these health providers have been assured that the backlog of claims is being addressed, they experienced persistent, widespread delays and errors in payments last year, and the VA has yet to resolve these claims. My office has heard from several constituents who have been faced with those delays and were concerned about the impact such delays would have on their operations.

As you know, providing access to high quality health care to the brave men and women who have served our nation is a top priority. Across the country, the Community Care Network program is critical to providing medical services for veterans no matter their location, especially in New Hampshire which lacks a full service VA Medical Center. Failure to pay the providers who support this critical network of services to our veterans is unacceptable.

At a recent hearing held by the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs, Dr. Richard Stone and his colleagues with the Veterans Health Administration testified that there are 2.5 million claims across the country that are still backlogged, but reaffirmed the VA's goal to clear out that backlog by the end of this fiscal year. While I applaud their willingness to commit to a timeline, I request more details on how the backlog is being handled and how you will ensure that timeline is met.

I appreciate your continued effort to resolve this situation and care for veterans in New Hampshire and across the country, and I look forward to your timely response.

Sincerely,



Margaret Wood Hassan
United States Senator