

SCOTT P. BROWN
MASSACHUSETTS

359 DIRKSON SENATE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20510
(202) 224-4543
(202) 228 2646 FAX

2400 JFK FEDERAL BUILDING
BOSTON, MA 02203
(617) 585 3170
(617) 723 7325 FAX

COMMITTEES
HOMELAND SECURITY
AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

ARMED SERVICES
VETERANS' AFFAIRS
SMALL BUSINESS

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

March 6, 2012

Town of Chilmark Board of Selectmen
Post Office Box 119
Chilmark, Massachusetts 02535-0119

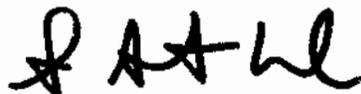
To Whom It May Concern,

The Senator's office has received a response from the Providence VA Medical Center regarding the availability of VA healthcare on Martha's Vineyard. You will find their correspondence enclosed.

For additional information or questions, please contact Sam Jonsson, Senator Brown's Southeastern Massachusetts Regional Representative at (508) 830-0040.

We will continue to monitor this situation and work with the VA to achieve a positive resolution for veterans on the island.

Sincerely,



Austin Lord
Constituent Service Official
Office of United States Senator Scott P. Brown



DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
Medical Center
830 Chalkstone Avenue
Providence RI 02908-4799

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In Reply Refer To: 650/00

The Honorable Scott Brown
United States Senate
2400 JFK Federal Building
Boston, MA 02203

Dear Sen. Brown:

This letter is in response to your inquiry dated February 24, 2012, on behalf of one of your constituents, [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] contacted your office regarding the availability of VA healthcare on Martha's Vineyard. [REDACTED] has stated that the Providence VAMC is not renewing the contract with Martha's Vineyard Hospital to provide outpatient care to eligible Veterans on Martha's Vineyard and that our plan is to make the Veterans travel to the Providence VAMC for all treatment. This statement is inaccurate. We have explained to [REDACTED], Martha's Vineyard Hospital, the Dukes County Commission, as well as local media on the Island that our goal is to secure a long-term solution that will ensure all eligible Veterans on Martha's Vineyard receive care similar to the community standard on the Island. We continue to make progress in this regard.

As you may know, the original contract between the Providence VA Medical Center and Martha's Vineyard Hospital (MVH) lapsed in 2007, due to an oversight by both parties. Both parties, however, continued to work together in good faith to provide needed care and services to eligible Veterans on the Island. The contract lapse was brought to light in 2010 based, in part, upon a recent change in "ownership" of MVH to include MVH's relationship with local physicians. This new arrangement requires a totally new contract and different processes than were in place under the previous contract.

There is apparently some misconception as to exactly what type of care and services were provided under the original contract. The original contract allowed for primary care only. The new contract, once approved, will expand care to include basic lab work and basic diagnostic imaging on the Island without the need for pre-approval. The new contract will also include provisions to ensure better continuity of care as well as assurances that eligible Veterans on the Island are receiving safe, high quality care. Veterans will still have to come to the Providence VA Medical Center (or the Boston Health Care System) for specialty care and services in most cases. However, in the future, we will be expanding our Telehealth capability at the Community-Based Outpatient Clinics (CBOCs), and Veterans on the Island will be able to receive

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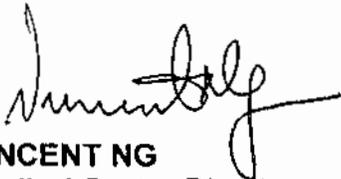
[REDACTED] Martha's Vineyard

additional specialty care at our Hyannis CBOC, consistent with this technology. Dental care will not be authorized on the Island, given the very restrictive eligibility criteria for dental services.

At this point, we are finalizing our proposed contract and will send it to Martha's Vineyard for their review consistent with Federal law. Eligible Veterans are, in the meantime, receiving their basic primary care on the Island through our fee basis program. We will continue to work with eligible Veterans on the Island to facilitate access to care.

Thank you for your interest and support for the Veterans on Martha's Vineyard. Should you have any further questions or concerns, please contact [REDACTED] at [REDACTED].

Sincerely,



VINCENT NG
Medical Center Director