

# VFW Wants Real-Life VA Healthcare Stories

## VA-enrolled vets encouraged to call 1-800-VFW-1899

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**WASHINGTON** — The Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States wants to know if Department of Veterans Affairs medical facilities are properly serving America's veterans.

“Recent allegations about improper care in Arizona, Colorado, Texas and elsewhere have made it difficult to separate truth from conjecture,” said VFW National Commander William A. Thien, who is reintroducing a toll-free number for VA-enrolled veterans to express their own personal accounts. The number is 1-800-VFW-1899.

“Veterans die every day, but veterans dying due to wrong diagnoses, unsterilized equipment or while awaiting treatment is a failure of leadership and management both in Washington and out in the field,” said Thien, a Vietnam veteran from Georgetown, Ind. “Because timely access is key to a quality and responsive healthcare system, we need to hear real life stories, good or bad, not hearsay. Only then can we hold VA officials properly accountable for their actions or inactions.”

The toll-free number, managed by VFW's National Veterans Service, was rolled out in 1996 as the VA was transforming from primarily a hospital-based system into an integrated healthcare system that now includes 820 outpatient clinics that serve veterans closer to where they actually reside.

“The VFW helped to create the VA back in 1930, and over the years we have worked hard with every Administration and Congress to increase the programs and services it provides to America's wounded, ill and injured veterans and their survivors,” said the VFW national commander. “We will not let the VA fail.”

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