Submitted by
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Veterans for Justice questions

1) Veterans at the Grand Rapids Home do not have an advocate- this would be an individual that members could trust to oversee the important concerns Veterans may have, without the Veteran being labeled as a complainer by any of the administration. Approximately three years ago the board of managers placed Chris Chambers from a Government agency as the Ombudsman for the Nursing units at the Veterans Home, but nobody ever heard from or of this person that should have been representing them with their concerns to important issues. Just recently the question was asked by a member at a members counsel meeting. (who is the Ombudsman for Rankin building floors two & three ?), Gary Davis replied that Leno Pretto is the Ombudsman elected by the board of managers for those domiciliary units! Now how can it be that a board manager, that has the intrust of the Veterans Home foremost, can take care of the concerns of the members also! This would be considered a conflict of intrust. The new Ombudsman that the board of managers replaced Chris Chambers with is Jerry Stevens, he is from the exact same agency Chambers came from. The Veteran members have absolutely no trust in this agency whatsoever. Jerry Stevens was invited to an informal meeting of Veterans for Justice group, Mr. Stevens was asked what would be his availability towards the Veterans at the home? Mr. Stevens replied that he has eighty other facility's he was responsible for in the State of Michigan! Veteran Members demand that their Ombudsman be hired by the VA, answer to the VA, paid by the VA, and is a trusted Veteran. (Revised 7/13/15).

2) Issue ID form's- these forms are not being answered by administration, board of managers, and are suppose to end up at the attorney generals office for review. (Veterans Complaints are often classified as unfounded, pushed aside, or unimportant). Veterans at the home demand that this stops immediately! 2/9/13. Gary Davis resolve to this issue was to place the actual issue identification forms in baskets on all floors and hallways, this action was performed by Mr. Gary Davis and the Administration to make it look like the Veterans fault for not filling them out! When in fact, acquiring these forms has never been the issue here! (Revised 7/13/15.

3) J2S Caregivers Updated- Care provided to the Veterans at the home by J2S is far below average, Examples: 1) several Members of the nursing units are often served meals cold due to the lack of caregiver personnel. 2) Caregivers are constantly required to work back to back mandatory eight hour shifts, rendering them useless to members. (REASON) On Saturday March 29th twenty one caregivers did not show up to work, on Monday March 31st at 3:30 pm. Caregivers on three north of the Mcleish building did not show up for work ether, requiring personnel from other floors to cover those areas. 3) these shifts that are mandated are paid time and a half plus twenty dollars to each eight hour shift worked over a regular eight hour shift. Update- On February 14th 2015, Thirty caregivers did not show up for work for the entire day. A seventy five cent raise was awarded to these caregivers, but has not changed a thing in regards to the care to our Veterans. this nonsense must stop. (Revised 6/3/15). As of today 12/2/15 nothing has changed in regards to the Veterans care at the Veterans home. Update on J2S caregivers at the Veterans home 2/2/16 has become worse than ever, only a couple of caregivers work each wing of each floor on all nursing units, making it difficult to properly service our members.

4) Members Bylaws- The latest set of legally approved bylaws were written and approved for the home by the members counsel, and by the board of managers. In the year of 2010, after this date the administration formed their own bylaws, without approval from any of these two groups, but had members sign for a copy of these made up bylaws to trap the members into agreement. (Revised 7/9/15).

5) Medications- Med's are often given to members without a follow up evaluation on it's side affects along with the danger's of crossing medications with other Md's with their side affects, these issues are realized much to often. Members actions or caricature changes have been witnessed over the past, by over medicating Members, this has been a very serious problem, with a Lack of monitoring, or one on one care to our Veterans, has a devastating end result with all these discrepancy's. (Revised 7/9/15).

6) Alcohol, Drug, & Psychological help- For many years Veterans have been accepted at the Grand Rapids Veterans home, knowing the members deficiencies, but for several years their have been no real programs set up for alcohol & drug problems, AAA meetings are attended buy those Veterans with alcohol deficiencies and that's it. Members with drug problems, if unsubscribed buy the home, are discharged from the home without any counseling. Each of these deficiencies requires a Psychological evaluation then treatment to the Veteran. The Veterans home was allocated funds for a Psychologist a few years ago, but that money disappeared.

7) General fund- money Veterans & the public never see, many of those in the community that donate, fail to specify where their donation should end up, therefore the donation goes into what is called a general fund. (members also demand that this form of acceptance to any donations be discontinued and replaced by a more exceptionable way Veterans receive their gratitude from the community for their service. (No funds for the Veterans should be handled by the State any longer, but only by a trusted advocate or Veteran).

8) Unacknowledged- Lack of accountability replaced by misrepresentation from the Grand Rapids Veterans Home Administration. (This statement applies to all the above).

9) Internet services- Poor and unsecured Internet service that was originally donated for the Veterans use, monitoring and blocking of web sites are a violation of Veterans rights.

10) Independence-Members are constantly denied their independent way of life. The Veterans Home used to be a beautiful place to live, not now, you can't do anything without a camera on you. Actually members have referred to the home as a prison.

11) Clothing Room- An elderly women had been working at the Grand Rapids Home for Veterans clothing room for over 40 years, her son worked along side her since the age of ten, other family members have worked with them throughout those years, and have provided services above and beyond what anyone would expect of them. Just a few years ago this family was locked out of the clothing room, and told not to return, without any explanation why. (this action is unjustified and requires an investigation).

12) Volunteer Work- Often Veterans from the Grand Rapids Home have the opportunity to perform community services outside the home, that sometimes requires that Veteran several days abroad, working to complete those tasks. Military Veterans of the home are given thirty furlo days each year to spend with their families during holidays, weddings, funerals and other similar situations that require the members time away, using up their furlo time and leaving no time for community work, especially when that service requires helping other Veterans.

13) N.C.O. Club- The non commissioned officers club was established in the early 1800's, set up for those Veterans seeking leisure time, and activities, separating them from the everyday routines of the home! Now it is being used for storage, and falling apart. This building is supposed to be a respected land mark and needs to be given back to the men and women members of the home for the purpose it was intended.

14) Pond Bridge- In 2013 of last year, the road across from the home's clothing room leading to the Veterans cemetery was closed due to the deteriorating structure of the bridge that divides the pond, for which has been deemed unsafe for any vehicles. For the past couple of years the home has held three fishing events on this bridge each year, which the members really enjoy. The question is! Why is this bridge safe enough for thirty to forty veterans, when it's unsafe for one automobile.

15) Pond- A member brought up a question at one of the members counsel meeting held on June 2014, mentioning the cleanliness of the pond water and if it had been tested, to ensure the safety to our Veterans for the consumption of the fish caught their. Maintenance supervisor Brian Steadman ensured the members at this meeting, that the pond water was safe and had been tested! Member then asked for the test results to be disclosed to the Veterans that same day, but Mr Steadman never followed up on the request.

16) Constitutional Rights- On June 19th 2014 Members of the Grand Rapids Veterans Home handed out fliers for all members of the home to attend a meeting in the All purpose room, that was approved by the Activity's Dept. for June 20th at 10:00 pm. Just before the meeting began Mr. Gary Davis accompanied by Board of managers Leo Predo & the administrations Lawyer Jim Dunn, came in and told all Veterans that this meeting was not approved and will not happen, and were denied their Constitutional right's to assembly and speech.

17) Food menu- Members diets are saturated with way to many Carbohydrates. The Veterans Home has elected Gordon Foods at it's lowest level of quality to save money. This company has different levels of products according to their cost, delivered to various factories, prisons, stores, & Companies around the country. Much of the food is already cooked then frozen, and ready to eat after thawed out and heated, most of the nutritional value is lost in this process.

Note: Channel 13 news - Reporter filmed footage of Veterans with important concerns, this footage was never aired, nor printed, and continues till this day with all the surrounding news stations.

Note: On March of 2015, a Grand Rapids home member reported at a Veterans for Justice meeting, that the cost for a twenty ounce pop in all the machines, has recently been raised from a dollar fifty to a dollar seventy five! This issue was reported at a members counsel meeting in April 2015, the Veterans homes resolve to this matter, was the raising of the cost from a dollar seventy five, to two dollars. Pop & candy machines are regulated by the State for the blind & elderly.

Note: In the winter of 2013 Jayson Allen was asked by a member of the Rankin unit, who the Ombudsman was for the Domiciliary units Rankin floors two & three, Mr. Allen replied, Earny Myers. Just a few Months ago in February 2014 at a members counsel meeting, Garry Davis was asked by a member the very same question, who the Ombudsman was for the Domiciliary units two & three, his reply was Steve Chambers. In March 2014, board Manager Leno Predo was asked who the Ombudsman was for these units, he replied that he was. Veteran members believe that the VA does not want to hire an Ombudsman because of cost.

Note: On June 18th of 2014, Three Grand Rapids Home for Veterans members and their trusted advocates, attended a Veterans meeting at the VFW post in Hart Mi. The guest speaker at this meeting was Jayson Allen, During this meeting Mr. Allen was asked by one of the advocates speaking for Veterans of the home, with concern about all the questions seen on these pages. Mr. Allen could not answer any of them, which led us to believe that he knew nothing of the issues. Mr. Allen did reply that the home would have seventeen new State hired RN's within one month of this meeting. (State Senator- Jeff Hanson, of Hart Mi., State Representative- John Bumstead, of Newago Mi., Congressmen- Dan Benishek, of Mayson county, Mi. were all present).

Note: Veterans received a flier at the Grand Rapids home regarding a meeting at the Neal Fonger Legion post #179, several Veterans from the home requested a bus to the meeting on April 21st, but were denied by Brian Steadmen, stating he had no bus drivers available. Three days pryer to the meeting, Veterans called a number on the flier to ask about the meeting, and was told an R.S.V. P, is required and their was no seats available. A picture was taken during this meeting reveling many available seats. It was reported that Catherine Buckley had no knowledge of this incident.

Note: A member in a wheelchair was wearing a Veterans for Justice I.D. badge on his floor in the Mcleish building, his charge nurse approached him and asked him what that badge was around his neck? The member explained, (it's my Veterans for Justice I.D. badge!) The nurse replied, we don't acknowledge that group here!

Note: Members Cafeteria at the Veterans home has neglected to produce a license for several years now, causing the inability to serve anyone other than Veteran members at the home. Family's, Vol inters, intrust groups, and so on, will not be able to purchase a meal beginning on June eleventh 2015.

Note: Non income Veterans at the home are billed on a monthly basis, for medical, food, & board, the State pays a portion of that bill & charges the remaining to the Veteran! Many of these Veterans were homeless & without work before entering the home. Housing vouchers were available for several years, but many of Veterans at the home were passed over. The domiciliary units at the home are supposed to be a transitional support to Veterans. Job fairs are infective & have been for a long time, just check the track record of what employers have hired veterans from the home.

Note: During a members counsel meeting on 12/2/15 Mr. Gary Davis answered a question asked by a member, pertaining to Mental Health issues that should have been handled at the Grand Rapids Veterans home. Mr. Gary Davis told everyone at this meeting, that members need to make an appointment at the Veterans Clinic or contact a network 180 group. The following members counsel meeting one of the members asked Mr. Davis why he neglected to mention that the Veterans home has a paid psychologist, when members of the home already knows funds were allocated for one. (revised 1/9/16).

Grand Rapids Veterans Home Members & Veterans for Justice Group