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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6275

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April 14, 2017

VIA ELECTRONIC TRANSMISSION

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

Dear Secretary Shulkin:

On February 23, 2017, Committee staff emailed U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) officials requesting “Access Summary Grids” and “Clinical and Future Care consult grids” for the Iowa City and Des Moines VA facilities during the months of January and February 2017. After weeks of emails and phone calls, the VA produced the wrong documents and failed to produce the requested information. Finally, on March 22, 2017, the VA provided the requested documentation. On March 23, 2017, Committee staff met with VA officials to discuss the production.

The VA’s Clinical and Future Care consult grids indicated that there were no patients waiting for appointments after 90 days for the months of January and February 2017. However, a whistleblower has provided Clinical and Future Care consult grids to the Committee that show thousands of veterans were waiting for appointments after 90 days during those two months. For example, as of mid-February 2017, the Iowa City VA had 537 veterans waiting for a clinical appointment between 91-180 days, 539 between 181 days to 1 year, and 232 between 1-2 years. As of late-March 2017, those numbers were 462, 524, and 71, respectively. For the Des Moines facility during those same time periods, the documents provided by the whistleblower also show veterans were waiting for appointments more than 90 days, contrary to the claims of VA personnel.

During the March 23 meeting, Committee staff twice asked VA personnel if they were certain that no veterans in Iowa were waiting for an appointment past 90 days. VA representatives said that they knew Committee staff would ask about the issue and that they had therefore double checked the more than 90 day numbers the morning of March 23rd to be sure that no veteran was waiting for an appointment beyond 90 days at either facility. Clearly the Committee has received two irreconcilable claims about the facts, and the contradiction needs to be resolved as soon as possible.

Accordingly, please provide an explanation by April 28, 2017, as to why VA personnel provided information to the Committee that appears to be contradicted by internal VA documents. I have attached the relevant documentation for your review. The VA needs to focus on solving the nation-wide wait time problem. Any attempt to minimize or deny the magnitude of the issue would be a wasteful distraction from that goal.

If you have further questions, please contact Josh Flynn-Brown of my Judiciary Committee staff at (202) 224-5225.

Sincerely,



Charles E. Grassley
Chairman
Committee on the Judiciary

cc:

The Honorable Michael J. Missal, Inspector General
Department of Veterans Affairs

The Honorable Jeff Sessions, Attorney General
Department of Justice

Clinical and Future Care Consults

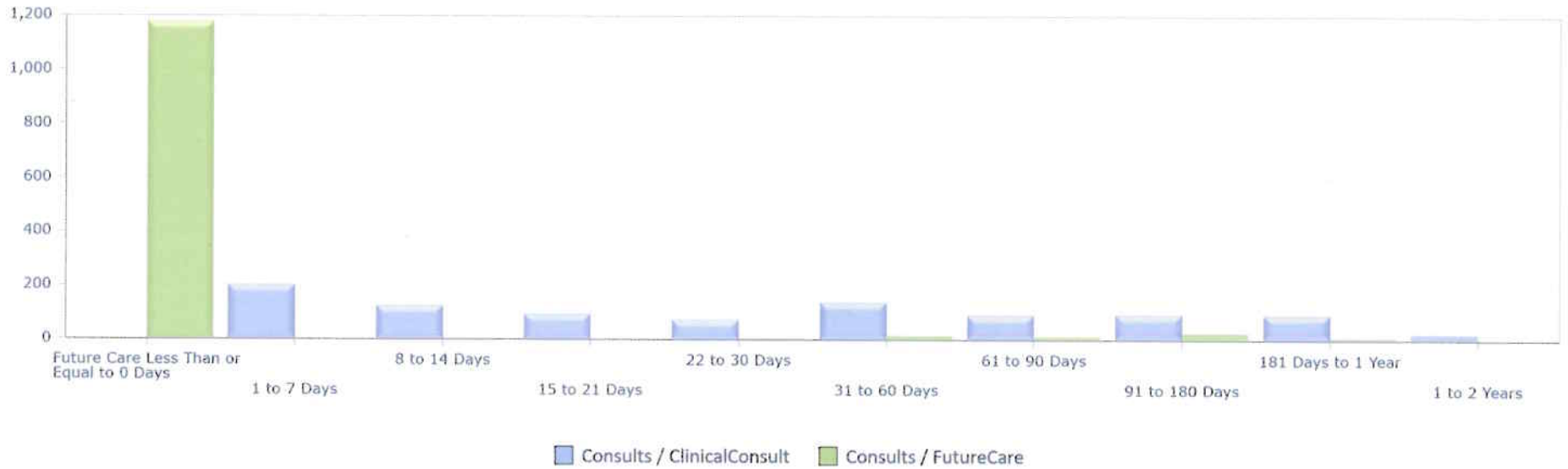
*As of mid-Feb 2017
(provided by ws)*

Choose Location: (3V23) (636) Central Iowa, IA

CPRS Status: ACTIVE

The Consult reporting is available at the ALL VHA, VISN, and Facility levels ONLY.

Clinical and Future Care Consults ((3V23) (636) Central Iowa, IA, ACTIVE)



Clinical and Future Care Consults ((3V23) (636) Central Iowa, IA, ACTIVE)

Measures	Receiving Service Classification	Future Care Less Than or Equal to 0 Days	1 to 7 Days	8 to 14 Days	15 to 21 Days	22 to 30 Days	31 to 60 Days	61 to 90 Days	91 to 180 Days	181 Days to 1 Year	1 to 2 Years
Consults	ClinicalConsult		202	125	94	74	140	92	95	94	23
	FutureCare	1,178	4	5	4	6	16	13	26	10	3

Clinical and Future Care Consults

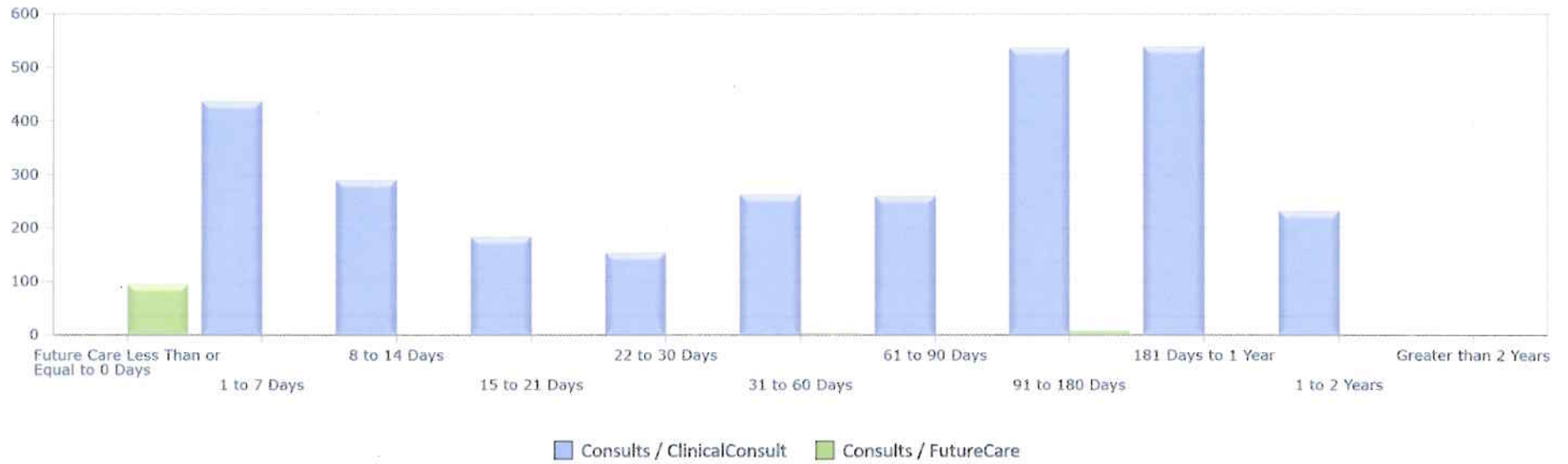
*As of mid-Feb 2017
(provided by us)*

Choose Location: (3V23) (636) Iowa City, IA

CPRS Status: ACTIVE

The Consult reporting is available at the ALL VHA, VISN, and Facility levels ONLY.

Clinical and Future Care Consults ((3V23) (636) Iowa City, IA, ACTIVE)



Clinical and Future Care Consults ((3V23) (636) Iowa City, IA, ACTIVE)

Measures	Receiving Service Classification	Future Care Less Than or Equal to 0 Days	1 to 7 Days	8 to 14 Days	15 to 21 Days	22 to 30 Days	31 to 60 Days	61 to 90 Days	91 to 180 Days	181 Days to 1 Year	1 to 2 Years	Greater than 2 Years
Consults	ClinicalConsult		437	290	184	154	263	260	537	539	232	
	FutureCare	95		2		2	4	2	8		1	

As of ~~the~~ March 15, 2017
 (provided by VA)

VA checked morning of
 March 23, 2017 to
 verify wait times
 after 90 days
 were accurate

Central Iowa Clinical Consults

File Entry Date	Measures	Receiving Service Classification	CPRS Status	All Elapsed Days	Future Care Less Than or Equal to 0 Days	1 to 7 Days	8 to 14 Days	15 to 21 Days	22 to 30 Days	31 to 60 Days	61 to 90 Days	91 to 180 Days	181 Days to 1 Year	1 to 2 Years	Greater than 2 Years		
JAN-FY17	Consults	ClinicalConsult	Closed Consults	6,477		4,114	812	560	417	553	21						
			Open Consults	546						371	175						
		FutureCare	Closed Consults	14	14												
			Open Consults	275	273					1	1						
FEB-FY17	Consults	ClinicalConsult	Closed Consults	5,382		4,025	657	388	256	56							
			Open Consults	1,410			106	485	394	425							
		FutureCare	Closed Consults	8	7	1											
			Open Consults	234	234												

As of March 15, 2017,
(provided by VA)

VA checked morning of
March 23, 2017 to verify
wait times after 90 days
were accurate

Iowa City Clinical Consults

File Entry Date	Measures	Receiving Service Classification	CPRS Status	All Elapsed Days	Future Care Less Than or Equal to 0 Days	1 to 7 Days	8 to 14 Days	15 to 21 Days	22 to 30 Days	31 to 60 Days	61 to 90 Days	91 to 180 Days	181 Days to 1 Year	1 to 2 Years	Greater than 2 Years	
JAN-FY17	Consults	ClinicalConsult	Closed Consults	8,271		4,561	921	854	830	1,080	25					
			Open Consults	1,265							845	420				
		FutureCare	Closed Consults	12	7	1	2			1	1					
			Open Consults	20	17							2	1			
FEB-FY17	Consults	ClinicalConsult	Closed Consults	6,224		4,320	833	531	435	105						
			Open Consults	2,721			192	923	762	844						
		FutureCare	Closed Consults	5	3		2									
			Open Consults	17	13				2	2						

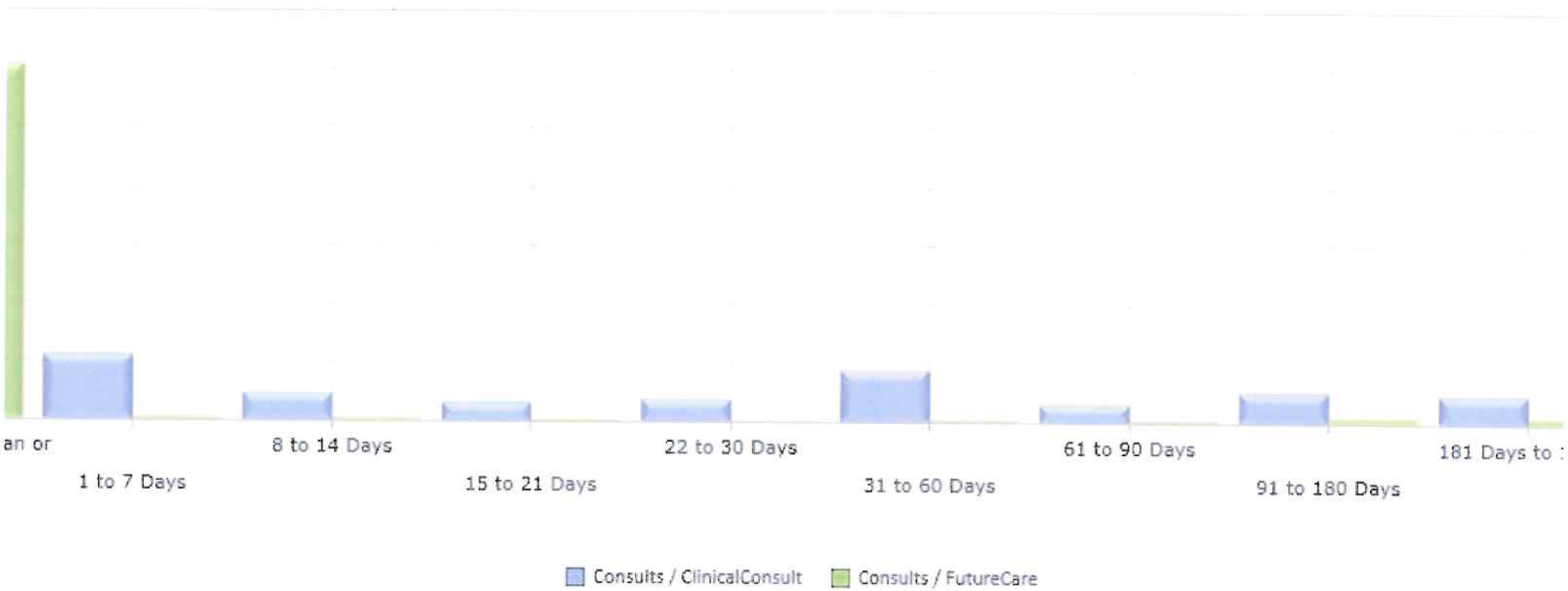
CPRS Status

ACTIVE

*As of late March 2017
(provided by us)*

Consult reporting is available at the ALL VHA, VISN, and Facility levels ONLY.

Consults (3V23) (636) CENTRAL IOWA, IA, ACTIVE



Consults (3V23) (636) CENTRAL IOWA, IA, ACTIVE

Classification	Future Care Less Than or Equal to 0 Days	1 to 7 Days	8 to 14 Days	15 to 21 Days	22 to 30 Days	31 to 60 Days	61 to 90 Days	91 to 180 Days	181 Days to 1 Year	1 to 2 Years
Clinical		225	96	65	79	178	63	106	98	36
Future	1,211	13	13	8	7	12	11	22	21	3

⚡ CPRS Status

ACTIVE

*As of late March 2017
(provided by us)*

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are Consults (3V23) (636) IOWA CITY, IA, ACTIVE



are Consults (3V23) (636) IOWA CITY, IA, ACTIVE

Service Classification	Future Care Less Than or Equal to 0 Days	1 to 7 Days	8 to 14 Days	15 to 21 Days	22 to 30 Days	31 to 60 Days	61 to 90 Days	91 to 180 Days	181 Days to 1 Year	1 to 2 Years
Clinical		469	206	184	124	330	175	462	524	7:
Future	101	2	1			2	5	3	5	