

# HINES VA SPINAL CORD INJURY/DISORDERS CENTER



## **FY 2011 - 2013 Strategic Plan**

Strategic planning is a critical component of the clinical services provided to the persons served at the SCI/D Center. Such planning ensures program continuity and establishes a framework to address a vision for the future

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**VA**  
**HEALTH**  
**CARE**

Defining  
**EXCELLENCE**  
in the 21st Century

## OUR MISSION

**Hines Spinal Cord Injury Service will partner within a continuum of care with each Veteran and his/her family, to optimize the Veteran's health, enhance their quality of life, and promote their independence in order to attain the Veteran's individual goals.**

## **FY 2011 – FY 2014 Strategic Plan**

### The Process

The SCI Strategic Planning Team

Members of the Hines SCI staff met in the Fall of 2010 to formulate a 3 year strategic plan for FY11 through FY14. Staff volunteered to participate on the SCI Strategic Planning Committee with the goal of identifying areas of focus for the next 3 years. The following persons served on this committee:

Joseph Aleyamma	Nursing
Jeff Canar	Psychology
Joan Casseday-Osterman	Outcomes
Lora Coffelt	Nursing
Barbara Cook	Speech Pathology
Phoebe Doruelo	Nursing
Ann Doubek	Nursing / RCF
Paul Ellin	Therapy
Maria Fillippi	Nursing
Sherry Gruber	Nursing/RCF
Barbara Janczy	Nursing/RCF
Reem Keilani	Social Work/RCF
Paul Kronenberger	Business Manager
Roxanne Loew	Nursing
Jason Mask	Social Work
Matthew McGrath	Educational and Vocational Counseling
Rama Parachuri	MD
Michael Richardson	MD, Chief of SCI
Laura Schmitt	Psychology
Tiffany Villamin	Nursing

## Planning Sessions

Four (4) strategic planning sessions took place during the first three months of FY11. Participants were asked to review the following resources prior to first session: (1) the annual SCI performance improvement report, (2) the FY08-FY10 SCI Strategic Plan, (3) the Hines FY10 Annual Report, (4) the Hines FY10-FY14 Strategic Plan and (5) A summary of SCI accomplishments over the prior 3 years. Committee members were also asked to consider the following questions:

- 1) What has happened in the past three years in the external environment that could affect our work as a service?
- 2) What challenges have we failed to meet in the past two to three years and why have we failed to meet them?
- 3) What challenges have we met well in the past two to three years and what helped us to meet them?

The facility director addressed the first planning session, highlighting important areas of emphasis for VHA and Hines in the coming 3 years. Small group breakout discussions then considered the general questions before sharing the individual responses with the larger group. The larger group then participated in a discussion of our Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT). Based on our SWOT analysis, preliminary areas of focus were identified and categorized into the "Pillars of Excellence" as outlined by Studer (2003): (1) Service, (2) Quality, (3) People (Employees and Veterans), (4) Resources and (5) Growth.

The second planning session focused on brainstorming both short and long term goals as well as potential initiatives to meet these goals. Four common themes underlying these initiatives and goals were identified: (1) Staff Development, (2) Marketing and Promotion, (3) Veteran Community, (4) Partnership with Jesse Brown VA. Finally, each initiative was mapped into the most applicable "Pillar(s) of Excellence" to create a strategic planning matrix that summarized areas for improvement, possible initiatives to meet improvement goals, and how these initiatives mapped into the areas of service, quality, people, resources and growth.

Before the third planning session, all SCI staff were requested to vote on the top three initiatives they believed were most important to the Hines SCI service. These results were summarized into a table, and initiatives were ranked from most important to least important. During the third planning session, using feedback from staff, three strategic goals were identified that would form the basis for the SCI FY11-FY14 strategic plan viz:

1. Continue to emphasize and focus on Veteran satisfaction with SCI services through improved flexibility, choices, and timeliness of service
2. Increase the number of SCI Veterans served
3. Improve staff satisfaction

## Strategic Initiatives and Goals

Initiatives identified in the Strategic Plan have been organized into specific domains to reflect the breadth of the needs of the persons served in the Hines Spinal Cord Injury Service: (1) Veteran Satisfaction with Care, (2) Improve outreach to SCI Veterans and Increase Enrollment of SCI Veterans Served and (3) Improve Employee Satisfaction.

### (1) Veteran Satisfaction with Care

VHA continues to emphasize the importance Veteran satisfaction with care. To that end, the Hines Spinal Cord Injury Service has monitored Veteran Satisfaction with several aspects of care using real time satisfaction surveys of inpatient Veterans at the time of discharge. Telephone follow-up within days of discharge was routinely conducted with data analysis and results fed back to the Service. Veterans residing in the long term care facility complete bi-annual satisfaction with care surveys. Veterans receiving care in the SCI outpatient clinic complete satisfaction surveys at the completion of each visit. This monitoring has been ongoing for approximately 18 months. Results are openly shared with staff and SCI Veterans. There have been overall improvements in all categories of response from our Veterans during this time. However selected categories such as food service and facility/environment of care are rated less satisfactory. The Service continues the focus on satisfaction with care and has formulated an emphasis on improved flexibility, choices and timeliness. The SCI Strategic Planning committee identified the following areas for improvement:

- A. Increase food choices
- B. Increase opportunities for outpatient visits through enhanced clinic availability
- C. Improve scheduling of medical procedures with regards to times and dates
- D. Ensure visiting hours meet the needs of Veterans and their family
- E. Improve timeliness of meeting requests from Veterans
- F. Increase recreational activities

### (2) Outreach and Increased Enrollment for Veterans with SCI/D

In FY09, VHA's spinal cord injury system mandated the new position of an SCI management of Information and Outcomes (MIO) coordinator. The coordinator allowed better coordination of care between our Hines Hub and spoke sites and a renewed collaboration in meeting the needs of Veterans with SCI not being followed by the Center. Nationally, evidence exists suggesting many eligible Veterans with SCI are unaware or remain outside the system of care offered at a VA medical Center. Expanded outreach to facilities and communities serving eligible Veterans with SCI is needed. The SCI Strategic Planning Committee identified the following strategies to outreach:

- A. Community Outreach
  - 1. Develop a Hines SCI speaker's bureau, with topics and "at-the-ready" presentations
  - 2. Identify marketing and public relations opportunities
    - i. develop ready press releases
    - ii. explore opportunities for community marketing
- B. Foster relationships with local VA SCI leadership (e.g. spoke sites) non-SCI VA leadership, and Community Based Outpatient Clinics (CBOCs).
- C. Expand, Improve and reinforce relationships with outside service organizations.
- D. Expand outreach and information to returning OEF/OIF Veterans concerning SCI/D services in VHA.

### (3) Improve Employee Satisfaction and Retention

Developing a knowledgeable, skilled and consistent workforce is critical to the care of the SCI Veteran. The VHA SCI/D system of care provides not only the acute rehabilitation but also ongoing primary care for the Veteran throughout their lifespan. Providers develop a deeper understanding of the Veteran and their needs and must therefore maintain skills and dedication in order to provide care often and over a prolonged period, rather than a single patient at a single point in time. The Strategic Planning Committee identified the following areas to address:

- A. Increase staff recognition and staff rewards
- B. Increase mentorship and preceptor opportunities for new hires (e.g. increased emphasis on SCI new employee orientation).
- C. Increase participation in off-unit training and professional development of SCI staff.
- D. Improve communication amongst staff.

Domain	Initiatives	Quality	Service	People	Resources	Growth	Hines
<b>Staff Development</b>	Identifying Pro-active staff training needs						
	Helping staff become better adult educators						
	Improve staff retention						
	Real time employee satisfaction						
	Workforce development						
<b>Marketing and Promotion</b>	Improved community outreach and marketing						
	Increase number of unique Veterans served						
	Development of an SCI speakers bureau						
	Technological improvements in our outreach to Veterans						
<b>Veteran Community</b>	Continued development of the peer counseling program						
	Improve opportunities for building community amongst SCI Veterans						
<b>Partnership with Jesse Brown</b>	Increase outreach to and referrals from JB in the areas of MS, RT, PT/OT/KT, staff/Veteran education, Vocational rehabilitation						
<b>Misc</b>	Improved scheduling practices to reduce burden on Veterans						
	Improve Vocational rehab working relationship with Jesse Brown, PVA and Chicago Regional Office						
	Improve Veteran Satisfaction						
	Improve communication and care coordination amongst providers and Veterans						