



STATE OF WISCONSIN

Legislative Audit Bureau

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Joe Chrisman
State Auditor

DATE: September 19, 2016

TO: Senator Robert Cowles and
Representative Samantha Kerkman, Co-chairpersons
Joint Legislative Audit Committee

FROM: Joe Chrisman
State Auditor 

SUBJECT: Proposed Audit of the Wisconsin Veterans Home at King—Background
Information

At your request, we have gathered some background information the Joint Legislative Audit Committee may find useful in considering an audit of the Wisconsin Veterans Home at King (King), which is overseen by the Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA). Since 1887, resident veterans and some of their relatives have received care at King. 2013 Wisconsin Act 20 modified the criteria to provide eligibility to nonresidents. Spouses, surviving spouses, and the parents of veterans may also qualify for admittance. Approximately 700 residents receive care at King.

The facilities at King provide a range of services in a residential setting, including skilled nursing care, medical services, counseling services, and social activities. The skilled nursing facilities are licensed and regulated by the Department of Health Services and must comply with state and federal rules specifying staffing levels, service standards, and sanitary and physical plant requirements.

King is funded primarily through the Medical Assistance program, resident contributions, and per diem and service-connected disability payments provided by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs. In fiscal year 2014-15, expenditures for the operation of the veterans home at King totaled approximately \$77.0 million.

We last audited King in 2011 as part of our audit of the Wisconsin Veterans Homes (report 11-3). More recently, legislators and others have expressed concerns about the physical conditions and care provided to residents at King and have raised questions about staffing and financial matters.

An audit of the Wisconsin Veterans Home at King could include an analysis of:

- the number and needs of residents over time;
- concerns raised by residents and residents' family members with the care provided, including a review of complaints involving King received by DVA and the Board on Aging and Long Term Care's veterans ombudsman for King;
- compliance with state and federal regulatory requirements for operation of a skilled nursing facility;
- the number and type of staff over time, staff turnover, the use of overtime and contracted staff, the type and amount of training provided to staff, and the level of staff satisfaction with employment and working conditions;
- trends in revenues and expenditures by funding source, including a review of the transfer of excess revenue from King to support other activities; and
- the methods DVA uses to monitor the condition of King and to identify needs for maintenance or replacement of buildings, furnishings, and equipment.

I hope you find this information helpful. If you have any additional questions regarding this request, please contact me.

JC/PS/bm

cc: Senator Mary Lazich
Senator Alberta Darling
Senator Kathleen Vinehout
Senator Janet Bewley

Representative John Macco
Representative John Nygren
Representative Melissa Sargent
Representative Terese Berceau

John Scocos, Secretary
Department of Veterans Affairs

Heather Bruemmer, Executive Director/State Ombudsman
Board on Aging and Long Term Care