



## Wisconsin Veterans Home at King

### Background

The Wisconsin Veterans Home at King is administered by the Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA). In 2016, King provided skilled nursing care to an [average of 685](#) veterans and their spouses each day. [Report 17-8](#) included our analyses of King's revenue, expenditures, and capital projects. This report (report 17-14) includes a review of resident care needs, staffing, regulatory requirements, complaints, and the results of our survey of King employees.

### Key Findings

During our audit, we found:

- The [care needs of residents increased from 2007 through 2016](#) based on several measures, such as the extent to which residents [needed assistance with dressing and eating](#).
- Although King was authorized [more than 80 additional nursing positions](#) by 2013 Wisconsin Act 20, it has [not been able to keep many of the positions filled](#). As of June 2016, 46.8 full-time equivalent nursing positions (9.3 percent) were vacant.
- In fiscal year (FY) 2015-16, [King's use of overtime for nursing staff](#) exceeded the amount it used immediately prior to the creation of the additional positions. The number of overtime hours worked by nursing staff increased from 36,800 in FY 2013-14 to 65,100 in FY 2015-16, or by 76.9 percent.
- From 2012 through 2016, the Department of Health Services (DHS) issued, on average, fewer [citations to King for violations of federal nursing home regulations](#) than it issued to other skilled nursing facilities in Wisconsin. Of the 184 citations DHS issued to King, [one was in the highest severity category](#), for which it was assessed a civil penalty of \$76,900 in June 2016.
- King employees who responded to our survey generally indicated that the [overall care provided at King was good](#), but raised concerns with issues such as the [manner in which overtime is assigned](#), [employee morale](#), and [management responsiveness to employee concerns](#).

### Key Recommendations

We recommend DVA report to the Joint Legislative Audit Committee by January 8, 2018, on its [progress in filling vacant nursing positions and reducing the use of overtime](#); [reviewing King's informal processes for addressing resident concerns](#); [reviewing concerns expressed by residents](#); [assessing training needs](#); [ensuring adequate steps are taken](#) to encourage employees at King to routinely report concerns regarding residents, including occurrences of resident abuse, neglect, and misappropriation of resident property; and [reviewing concerns](#) about employee morale and the perception that King's hiring practices are not fair and transparent.