

VISN 1 CARES Markets

July 2002

Market Designation: VISN 1 CARES is proposing 4 CARES markets, as follows, including the rationale for each:

Market	Includes	Shared Markets	Rationale
The West Market	12 counties in western Massachusetts and all of Connecticut	Berkshire, MA - Patients prefer to use the Albany VAMC in VISN 2 over Northampton due to distance/ travel convenience.	(Western Massachusetts and all of Connecticut) falls together naturally because of the historical referral of western Massachusetts veterans for specialty care at VA Connecticut. Veterans in western Massachusetts have expressed a preference for this referral pattern partly because of convenience, their association with CBOCs near borders and the existence of north-south highway system and the sharing of a major airport (Bradley Field).
The North Market	24 counties making up the states of Vermont and New Hampshire	Bennington, VT – The Bennington CBOC began as a joint CBOC with patients from both VISN 1 and VISN 2 Fairfield, CT – The Danbury CBOC is across the river from Castle Point in VISN 3.	(Vermont and New Hampshire) exists as a natural market because residents and veterans of the two states share many characteristics. Existing VA resources in the North have developed effective relationships resulting in many cooperative planning initiatives to address the unique needs of the area. A cluster of population in southern New Hampshire travels to Boston for business and work. However, surveys conducted by the VA in New Hampshire and Vermont have clearly identified that veterans in that area prefer their healthcare to be available locally.
The East Market	15 counties in eastern Massachusetts and all of Rhode Island		(Eastern Massachusetts and Rhode Island) has not been a single planning entity historically as in the North. Rhode Island and Southeastern Massachusetts have, in recent years, pursued some joint planning activities for veteran populations in adjacent counties. There exists significant patient referrals between Rhode Island and Boston and there is already sharing of staff in at least one CBOC. There is good availability of public transportation between Rhode Island and Boston with hourly bus and hourly commuter trains contributing to the patient and provider preference for healthcare referral to Boston over Connecticut. While there was discussion of considering Rhode Island as a sub-market of the EAST, the healthcare planning for the veteran population in this small geographical area will be enhanced if Rhode Island and eastern Massachusetts are one.
The Far North Market	16 counties making up the state of Maine		(Maine) has vast land area and little concentration of population. The population is centered around the north-south I-95 Interstate in the eastern part of the state. There is a natural boundary (north-south mountain range) that prevents veterans from easy access to the west (New Hampshire facilities). Maine exists as a single market area.