

SHERROD BROWN
OHIO

COMMITTEES:
AGRICULTURE, NUTRITION,
AND FORESTRY

BANKING, HOUSING,
AND URBAN AFFAIRS

HEALTH, EDUCATION,
LABOR, AND PENSIONS

VETERANS' AFFAIRS

SELECT COMMITTEE ON ETHICS

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

November 18, 2010

The Honorable Eric K. Shinseki
Secretary
Department of Veterans Affairs
Washington, DC 20501

Dear Mr. Secretary:

The recent developments regarding the Dayton VA Medical Center's (VAMC) Dental Clinic are of great concern to me. Patient safety must be The Department of Veterans' Affairs first priority.

I understand that you have set up a hotline, and are providing medical testing, for veterans and family members to use should they have questions or concerns about their care at the Clinic. As you investigate the circumstances surrounding the Clinic's temporary closure, it is also imperative that you identify preventive actions that would ensure a situation like this never arises again.

Beyond the obvious concerns that arise for the veterans and employees directly affected by this incident, it is very disturbing that veterans and elected officials are hearing from VA more than three months after the Department became aware of the situation. While I respect the need for privacy and confidentiality in conducting investigations into patient care, it is unacceptable that veterans and the elected officials who serve them have to rely on hearsay, rather than on timely and accurate information from the VA, regarding threats to patient safety. The VA must act decisively and quickly in order to restore the faith and trust patients at the Dayton VAMC have come to expect and clearly deserve.

I urge you not only to investigate the situation at VAMC and take action to protect patients and employees going forward, but to revise VA policy as necessary so that veterans and their elected representatives have timely access to critical information. I am committed to working with you to ensure that VA has the resources in place to address the concerns at Dayton and to maintain the world class care at all of our VA medical centers.

Sincerely,



Sherrod Brown
United States Senator