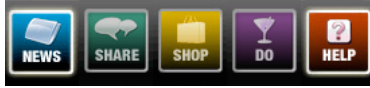


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Hinesville in line for VA clinic

Terry Dickson | Friday, December 1, 2006 at 12:30 am (see enhanced version)



The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs has recommended putting new outpatient clinics for veterans in both [Hinesville](#) - about 30 miles southwest of [Savannah](#) and home to [Fort Stewart](#) - and in [Brunswick](#).

The recommendations were a result of asset realignment to improve medical care for veterans served in a network that covers most of [Georgia](#), [South Carolina](#) and [Alabama](#), said U.S. Rep. [Jack Kingston, R-Ga.](#) The clinics are among seven recommended and must undergo a process of planning, scoring and approval before construction, he said.

"This part of the country has always been considered a great place to retire, especially for military retirees," [Kingston](#) said of southeast [Georgia](#). "Right now, veterans must go to [Dublin](#) or [Lake City](#), which is a long drive."

[Johnny White](#), who is partially disabled because of injuries he suffered while in the [U.S. Air Force](#), said it is a long drive from [Brunswick](#) to the Carl Vinson VA Medical Center in [Dublin](#).

[White](#) has to make the drive every six months for medical tests to renew his prescriptions.

"That would be really nice," he said of the plans for the clinic in [Brunswick](#).

The 175-mile trip requires him to get up early and stay all day to get the results of his tests and then speak with a doctor, [White](#) said.

He said he does not have it nearly as bad as some other disabled veterans who have to visit the hospital more often and who are in worse health.

The addition of an outpatient clinic also will take some strain off the Brunswick-Golden Isles [Disabled American Veterans](#) Chapter 36, said [Charles Wood](#), commander of the organization that provides transportation to the hospital for veterans who need it.

"We're having a hard time getting drivers. We have three to four trips a week to various places," he said. The [Brunswick](#) clinic likely would cut by half the trips to [Dublin](#) and hospitals in [Charleston](#) and [Augusta](#), [Wood](#) said.

Recently, the chapter ran low on funds at a time when a veteran needed to get to the Augusta VA Medical Center.

"We didn't have any money in our account. We were going to have to send him up there by bus," [Wood](#) said.

[Kingston](#) has pledged to stay on top of the process to make sure the clinic is built, unlike one previously proposed for St. Marys. Although it appeared the clinic was clearly needed for the area near [Kings Bay Submarine Base](#), it lost out in the review process, [Kingston's](#) spokesman [Rob Asbell](#) said.

LOCAL VA CLINICS

In Savannah:

325 W. Montgomery Crossroad

In Beaufort, S.C.:

1 Pickney Road

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