

CATHY McMORRIS RODGERS  
5TH DISTRICT, WASHINGTON

REPUBLICAN LEADER,  
ENERGY AND COMMERCE  
COMMITTEE

Congress of the United States  
House of Representatives

February 3, 2022

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The Honorable Denis McDonough  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs  
810 Vermont Avenue, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20420

Dear Secretary McDonough:

In my previous letters about the Cerner electronic health record system, I urged you to keep the experiences of veterans and VA staff in my district in mind. I am writing to you again because they continue to share the challenges they face at the Mann-Grandstaff Medical Center in Spokane, and you are now weeks away from activating the Cerner system at the Jonathan M. Wainwright Medical Center in Walla Walla.

More than a year after Mann-Grandstaff went live on the system, most of the productivity, patient safety, and morale impacts still have not been resolved. While the system outages have somewhat improved, fundamental problems, especially in pharmacy, have not been addressed. Veterans in my district continue to struggle with delayed and erroneous prescriptions, as well as bottlenecks in referrals to specialists or community care.

Bottom line, the Electronic Health Record Modernization (EHRM) transition is still making life harder on veterans and VA providers, not easier, and until these problems are fixed, its continued roll-out should be delayed. Therefore, I am asking you to immediately delay the deployment of the Cerner electronic health record system to Walla Walla until VA leadership can demonstrate its readiness and effectiveness. If the new electronic health record delivers anything short of the gold-standard, timely care our veterans deserve, then it is not ready to serve the Walla Walla community – not until any and all outstanding issues are resolved.

I appreciate your engagement on this issue and Deputy Secretary Remy's willingness to meet with staff virtually, however, I would also like to repeat my request that you or Deputy Secretary Remy visit Eastern Washington as soon as possible. I continue to feel that another in-person visit, rather than reports and briefings, would give you a clearer picture of the ongoing problems veterans and staff continue to face. I would appreciate the opportunity to accompany you or Deputy Secretary Remy on this visit.

Thank you for your consideration of this important matter. If you or your staff have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Matthew Cardenas in my office, at [matthew.cardenas@mail.house.gov](mailto:matthew.cardenas@mail.house.gov) or (202) 695-5226. I look forward to your reply.

Sincerely,



Cathy McMorris Rodgers  
Member of Congress

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