

GAO Highlights

Highlights of [GAO-25-106781](#), a report to congressional committees

Why GAO Did This Study

VHA's 303 Vet Centers provide counseling services to eligible veterans, servicemembers, and their families who are experiencing challenges from readjusting to civilian life or continuing military service.

The National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2023 includes a provision for GAO to review the physical infrastructure of Vet Centers. This report examines 1) how VHA monitors the physical condition of its facilities; 2) the extent to which VHA's processes align with key characteristics of GAO's asset management framework; and 3) the extent to which VHA's model for assessing future location needs aligns with selected practices and standards, among other topics.

GAO analyzed RCS data on leasing and inspections and its demand model. GAO visited three Vet Centers selected based on factors including location and recent inspection results. GAO reviewed documents and interviewed RCS officials to determine the extent to which RCS's processes align with key asset management characteristics, actuarial practices, and internal control standards. GAO also interviewed a non-generalizable sample of Vet Center directors and regional officials.

What GAO Recommends

GAO is making eight recommendations to VHA to improve its asset management processes, and ensure its modeling processes more fully follow actuarial practices and internal control standards. The Department of Veterans Affairs concurred with GAO's recommendations.

View [GAO-25-106781](#). For more information, contact David Marroni at (202) 512-2834 or marronid@gao.gov.

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VA VET CENTERS

Opportunities Exist to Improve Asset Management and Identification of Future Counseling Locations

What GAO Found

The Veterans Health Administration's (VHA) Readjustment Counseling Service (RCS) leases facilities to provide counseling at over 300 Vet Centers and satellite locations. RCS monitors the physical condition of these facilities through annual inspections. RCS's inspection process identified physical condition issues at 13 percent of Vet Centers in fiscal year 2023, according to GAO's analysis of RCS data. RCS addresses such issues and improves Vet Centers through projects ranging from replacing furniture to expanding space.

RCS's processes fully align with two of the six key characteristics of GAO's asset management framework, and partially align with four (see table). For example, RCS maintains leadership support and a collaborative organizational culture around asset management. However, developing an asset management plan and refining policies could help RCS ensure its assets support its mission, prioritize improvements to Vet Centers, and collect better inspection data. Also, better evaluation of asset management practices could help RCS ensure that these processes help RCS meet its counseling mission.

Alignment of Readjustment Counseling Service's Asset Management Processes with Key Characteristics of GAO's Asset Management Framework

Characteristic	RCS processes	Alignment
Leadership support	RCS leadership supports asset management and provides necessary resources.	Fully aligns
Collaborative organizational culture	RCS promotes a culture of information sharing regarding their assets.	Fully aligns
Establishing policies and plans	RCS has some policies related to asset management but does not have a strategic asset management plan that ties to its mission.	Partially aligns
Maximizing asset value	RCS has some policies that consider mission need when identifying new locations but does not have policies for prioritizing improvements.	Partially aligns
Using quality data	RCS collects some data on leasing and improvements but does not consistently collect quality inspection data.	Partially aligns
Evaluating asset management	RCS evaluates some aspects of its inspection process but does not fully evaluate the performance of its asset management practices.	Partially aligns

Source: GAO analysis of Readjustment Counseling Service (RCS) information and GAO 19-57. | [GAO-25-106781](#)

RCS recently worked with VHA's actuarial contractor to develop a model to project demand for counseling and identify where to locate future Vet Centers to meet veterans' needs. GAO found that RCS's processes for developing the model do not fully align with three of eight actuarial practices and internal control standards in four areas. Specifically, 1) RCS does not document how it validates the data it provides the contractor, and does not require the contractor to provide documentation of 2) all its external data assumptions and 3) model validation, or 4) information on model uncertainty. By better aligning its modeling processes with actuarial practices and internal control standards, RCS could ensure it understands how to best use the model to identify future Vet Center locations.