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September 1, 2026

Dr. Ginny Creasman
Executive Director
VA Ann Arbor Health Care System
2214 Fuller Road
Ann Arbor, MI 48105

Dear Dr. Creasman:

Veterans deserve the best medical care possible after serving our country, and you know I spend much time with them. This letter is to inquire about an issue that has been raised with me by a number of veterans seeking podiatry care at the Lieutenant Colonel Charles S. Kettles VA Medical Center in my district.

Podiatrists play important roles in treating foot-related issues and preventing serious complications. Nearly 25 percent of the VA's patient population has diabetes, about 2.5 times the rate of nonpatient populations.¹ For these patients, strong podiatric care is especially critical as up to a third of people with disabilities are affected by foot ulcers, the leading cause of nontraumatic lower-limb amputations.²

I have been told that the podiatry division at the Lieutenant Colonel Charles S. Kettles VA Medical Center in Ann Arbor, employs just two podiatrists and one nurse practitioner, which, to my understanding, is not enough staffing to meet the number of veterans who are seeking care. Due to the reported staffing shortages, workers may be limited in the quality or scope of care they are able to provide. This understaffing risks placing our veterans at higher risk of unnecessary complications, including amputations, as the VA lacks the staffing necessary to complete foot ulcer surgery. Instead of receiving the recommended treatment, overworked staff may feel that they must place patients in a holding pattern of short-term treatment until the VA's appointments algorithm allows for more comprehensive treatment.

¹ "VA Research on Diabetes" U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Office of Research and Development. Retrieved from: <https://www.research.va.gov/topics/diabetes.cfm>.

² Srinivas-Shankar, U. "Diabetic Foot Ulceration and Complications." Retrieved from: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK499887/>.

There are reports of workers in the podiatry division working beyond their regular hours and responsibilities to meet patient care needs. These reports raise questions about whether current staffing levels and resources are sufficient to support both workers and the quality of care provided to our veterans.

It has also been brought to my attention that the VA previously recognized the need for additional staffing in the podiatry division and posted an opening, but that position was subsequently rescinded before an additional podiatrist was hired. I have long been concerned by understaffing across the VA, specifically in Southeast Michigan, and the effects of this understaffing on patient care. Given the previously identified need for additional staffing, I am concerned that current staffing levels may not be sufficient to fully meet the needs of our veterans and support the highest standard of care.

In light of the urgency of this situation, I request answers to the following questions.

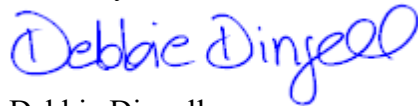
1. As of September 1, 2026, what was the authorized staffing level, actual staffing level, and vacancy rate for the podiatry division of the Lieutenant Colonel Charles S. Kettles VA Medical Center?
2. How many veterans are treated through this VA facility per year?
3. How many veterans receive care through the podiatry division of this VA facility per year?
4. What is the average wait time for veterans seeking podiatry care at this VA facility?
5. What factors are considered in determining the prioritization of podiatry care at this VA facility?
6. How many consults did the podiatry division at this VA facility conduct last year?
7. After podiatry care, how long on average does it take for a veteran to receive follow-up care at this VA facility?
8. How many amputations has the podiatry division of this VA conducted this year?
9. Has the VA determined that the current podiatry staffing level is sufficient to meet patient demand? If so, please provide the analysis or data supporting that determination.

10. Has the VA evaluated whether additional podiatry positions are necessary at this VA facility? If so, what did that evaluation conclude?
11. Why was the previously posted podiatry position rescinded, and who made the decision to rescind the position?
12. What steps is the VA taking to address current podiatry staffing concerns and ensure veterans receive timely and comprehensive care?

I am hopeful that the VA Ann Arbor Health Care System will consider increasing staffing in the podiatry division of the Lieutenant Colonel Charles S. Kettles VA Medical Center.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter. I look forward to working with you to address these concerns and ensure our veterans across Southeast Michigan receive the quality care they deserve.

Sincerely,



Debbie Dingell

Member of Congress