

MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARY

In Wednesday's House Committee on Veterans Affairs hearing, concerns were raised about the possible use of a book called "How to Lie with Statistics" for VA training purposes. I have not read and am not commenting on the merits of the book. The implication was that some VA employees may be using this book to mislead the public.

Let me be clear—anything that is contrary to our mission of serving Veterans, in perception or practice, or which does not align with our I-CARE core values – Integrity, Commitment, Advocacy, Respect, and Excellence—will not be tolerated in the open and accountable culture we want in this new VA. Therefore, any use of this material in VA facilities for training purposes is prohibited. I recently directed a top to bottom review of all training programs to ensure that they are consistent with the new culture we are working to create. As part of that review, we will ensure that any use of this material is discontinued.

We must put Veterans at the center of everything we do, and strive to see our department as *they* see us. We must avoid both the reality of poor decisions and the creation of misperceptions. Anything that creates a negative perception of VA in the minds of Veterans makes fulfilling our mission more difficult.

The vast majority of VA employees are overwhelmingly dedicated to our mission of serving Veterans. They're enthusiastic to be a part of the solution to our current challenges, and they're excited that we have an opportunity to improve services for Veterans in ways that didn't exist before. We are committed to consistently providing the timely and high-quality care and benefits that Veterans have earned and deserve. That's who we are and how we will rebuild trust with Veterans and the American people.

Thank you for your hard work for our Veterans!

Robert A. McDonald