



## **NEWS RELEASE**

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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For More Information

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## **Syracuse VA Selects New Contractor For Watertown Community Based Outpatient Clinic**

### **Sterling Medical Associates to Replace Humana Relocation Will Enhance Care and Services to Local Veterans**

**Watertown, NY-** Officials at the Syracuse VA Medical Center announced today that Sterling Medical Associates of Cincinnati, Ohio has been selected to take over the operation of the Watertown Community Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC). Sterling was selected to take over operations at the conclusion of the normal Department of Veteran Affairs federal solicitation and award selection process.

The Watertown CBOC, is currently operated by Humana Government Business of Louisville, Kentucky and is located in the CANI Building, 19472 Route 11 in Watertown. The Clinic provides primary health care and specialty referral services to some 4,000 Veterans in Jefferson, St. Lawrence and Lewis Counties and the surrounding North Country. Contracts for operation of CBOC's are competitively bid every five years to ensure that Veteran patients are receiving the best possible care from the most capable providers.

Sterling Medical Associates will relocate the CBOC to 144 Eastern Blvd, in Watertown. This location is approximately 3 miles from the current location and offers more space for patient privacy and enhanced services, providing VA the ability to implement PACT (Patient Aligned Care Teams) and expand services through telemedicine - doing so in an economically responsible way that maximizes taxpayer dollars. Sterling Medical Associates is planning extensive renovations of this location which will be completed prior to an anticipated opening in late April.

It is important to note that this change and the relocation of the Watertown CBOC will, in no way, interfere with Veteran care. Letters have been sent to every Veteran utilizing the Watertown CBOC, informing them of the change in operator and location. Humana will continue to operate the VA clinic during the transition period. Services for the Veteran patients currently seen at the clinic will continue uninterrupted during this period.

"Sterling Medical was selected to operate the CBOC because their proposal was the most responsive to the needs of our Veterans and they are committed to providing the high quality of health care the Veterans of the North Country are accustomed to," said Richard Kazel, External Medical/Surgical Care Line Manager for the Syracuse VA.

Sterling Medical currently operates five other VA CBOC's in New York State; located in Jamestown, Lackawanna, Schenectady, Springville and Troy.

"Sterling Medical looks forward to continuing its long record of service to the Veterans of New York State, where it has performed uninterrupted services on behalf of the VA CBOC program since 1998. Sterling Medical additionally looks forward to bringing performance under its VA CBOC program to the new VA Clinic that will open in Watertown under its leadership this spring. Sterling Medical has for many years performed medical services in support of programs for active duty military and their dependents in the upper New York State region, and looks forward to expand its opportunities to provide high quality medical services, education, and other outreach programs to include veterans of the Watertown area with addition of this new CBOC in the region," said Brandon Blatt, Vice President, of Sterling Medical.

For more information about VA services at the Watertown CBOC call 315-425-4400 ext. 52081. For information regarding eligibility for VA health care visit the VA website at <http://www.va.gov/healthbenefits/apply/>, or call 888-823-9656.

