

**EIGHTIETH NATIONAL CONVENTION
OF
THE AMERICAN LEGION
NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA
SEPTEMBER 8, 9, 10, 1998**

**Resolution No. 311: The American Legion Policy on VA Physicians and Medical Specialists
Staffing Guidelines**

Origin: Convention Committee on Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation

Submitted By: Convention Committee on Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation

WHEREAS, The Veterans Health Administration (VHA) is mandated by the Veterans Health Care Eligibility Act of 1996 (PL 104-262) to provide equitable access to care across the country for veterans based on priority groups; and

WHEREAS, VHA will begin a system of enrollment on October 1, 1998 which guarantees enrolled veterans access to a minimum benefits package; and

WHEREAS, The American Legion is on record as supporting VHA's transformation to a primary care based health care system because it provides better coordination of care across a continuum, higher quality, and adds more efficiency to the system; and

WHEREAS, The American Legion believes that access to basic health care services by a qualified primary care provider should be available locally as often as possible; and

WHEREAS, VHA is still struggling to achieve the appropriate balance of General Internal Physicians and Specialists in many areas of the country; and

WHEREAS, VHA has established now over 1000 treatment sites, many of which are only operating on a part-time basis resulting in continued reports of long distance referrals for services and extended waits for many heavy volume medical specialties; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By The American Legion in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, September 8, 9, 10, 1998, That The American Legion monitor the progress of VHA in establishing patient centered primary care within each Veterans Integrated Service Network, including both rural and urban localities, and ensure that the model of care features both the quality and efficient combination of medical physicians and other medical specialists tailored to the needs of the local veterans population as measured by uniform outcome criteria.