

President-Elect Trump May Be Considering Radical Changes to VA

Wednesday, President-elect Donald Trump met with a host of health care CEOs to discuss revamping the health care system provided by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

Among those who took part in the meeting were:

- Mayo Clinic President and CEO Dr. John Noseworthy
- Johns Hopkins Medicine CEO Dr. Paul Rothman
- Partners HealthCare System CEO Dr. David Torchiana
- Cleveland Clinic President and CEO Dr. Toby Cosgrove

According to press pool members covering the activities at Trump's Mar-A-Lago estate in Palm Beach, Florida, the president-elect wanted to know more about giving more options to veterans and allowing them to go to any hospital of their choice. The discussion centered on a public-private option where veterans could potentially choose to use the VA-provided system, the private health care system, or a combination of both.

While nothing was formalized in the meeting, it's clear the president-elect is looking at making some very radical changes to the delivery of health care to veterans. It was hinted that Wednesday's meeting could have been the beginning of a new advisory council that will aid in making those changes.

Pressed further about the meeting and Trump's process for selecting a new VA secretary, transition team spokesman Sean Spicer, who will inherit the job of White House Press Secretary on Jan. 20, told reporters during Thursday morning's press briefing the president-elect is under "no pressure" to quickly nominate, but rather is being methodical in his

approach to ensure the eventual nominee is the right person for the multifaceted job.

“Whether that’s the providing of health care or providing low-interest mortgage assistance, we want to ensure our veterans get quality,” he said. “We want to ensure veterans get a world-class system that provides the care and services they deserve.”

Thursday Meetings

Spicer said Trump was not scheduled to hold any additional interviews with potential Cabinet appointees on Thursday. However, he was scheduled to meet with his inner circle of advisers, including Reince Priebus, Steve Bannon, Kellyanne Conway, and Stephen Miller.

Phone Call With Obama

The president-elect spoke on the phone Wednesday with President Obama. Officially, the conversation was said to have focused on “the transition process,” but Spicer declined to comment on specifics, saying the details of the conversation between the incoming and outgoing presidents would remain private.

Sprint Jobs

Wednesday, Sprint announced it would be bringing 5,000 overseas jobs back to the U.S., as well as 3,000 jobs from its OneWeb subsidiary. Spicer said he believed this was just the start of what will be a flood of new job announcements to come as more companies become encouraged by the Trump administration’s tax and regulatory policies.

A Few Numbers

Spicer also shared a few numbers with the media Thursday morning:

- 4—the number of Cabinet and Cabinet-level appointments yet to be announced
- 22—days before the Inaugural
- 30—presidential appointments announced
- 75—calls Trump and Vice President-elect Mike Pence have taken from world leaders
- 38,000—resumes filed with the transition team at
- 210,000—ideas submitted by citizens at

New Year's Plans

Trump will remain at Mar-A-Lago through New Year's Eve and return to Trump Tower in Manhattan on New Year's Day. Pence will remain in Indiana with his family through New Year's Day.