



DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

**Medical Center
79 Middleville Rd
Northport, NY 11768**

August 26, 2016

Congressman Lee Zeldin
31 Oak Street
Suite 20
Patchogue, NY 11772

Dear Congressman Zeldin,

Thank you for your August 25, 2016 letter regarding your request for information on the unfortunate incident that occurred in the parking lot of Northport VAMC. The following information adheres to HIPAA guidelines.

The deceased Veteran was found next to his car in a remote area of Parking Lot "1." An employee noticed the body lying on the pavement and called the proper authorities, who immediately responded to the area. Northport VAMC police, Suffolk County police and the FBI were notified and handled the situation. Based on the information we have, no other patient, employee, or visitor was in jeopardy at the medical center. It was not an active shooter situation.

After a preliminary review of the evidence available, there is no indication that the Veteran involved in this tragic incident met with foul play. We are awaiting the final coroner report. According to the information we have, it appears that at no point that day did the veteran enter any VA buildings, to include the Emergency Room. Nor was there an altercation with any staff or patients. Additionally, we have not found any evidence that the Veteran sought assistance from any of our staff, including visiting the Emergency Room that day. It appears the details of the tragic incident may have been misrepresented in the media coverage. Our facility's video surveillance indicates that the time from the Veteran entering VAMC grounds to the incident in parking lot "1" a total of 12 minutes elapsed and he didn't appear to leave the parking lot during that period. We also have reviewed our emergency room registration and cannot currently identify any record of him presenting on that day.

As with any investigation into a tragic incident such as this, we will conduct additional follow-up to ensure we have all of the facts. While at this time, it appears that the individual did not seek any medical attention we will continue to review additional surveillance cameras near the entrance of our emergency room, and all of our telephone records to see if the individual contacted our facility within the last week. Please understand that our staff of medical professionals would never turn away an individual who required any level of healthcare. A Veteran's suicide, wherever and whenever it happens, is terrible and we will seek to draw any lessons possible from this loss in order to better help others Veterans in crisis.

We understand that you will be monitoring this situation closely and will be supporting the medical center to provide factual and accurate information. Your shared support of veterans across Long Island is appreciated. I hope to maintain our frank and open dialogue whenever incidents impacting our Veterans occur. I always remain available to speak with you by phone or in person.

Thank you,


PHILIP C. MOSCHITTA
Director