

Dermatology

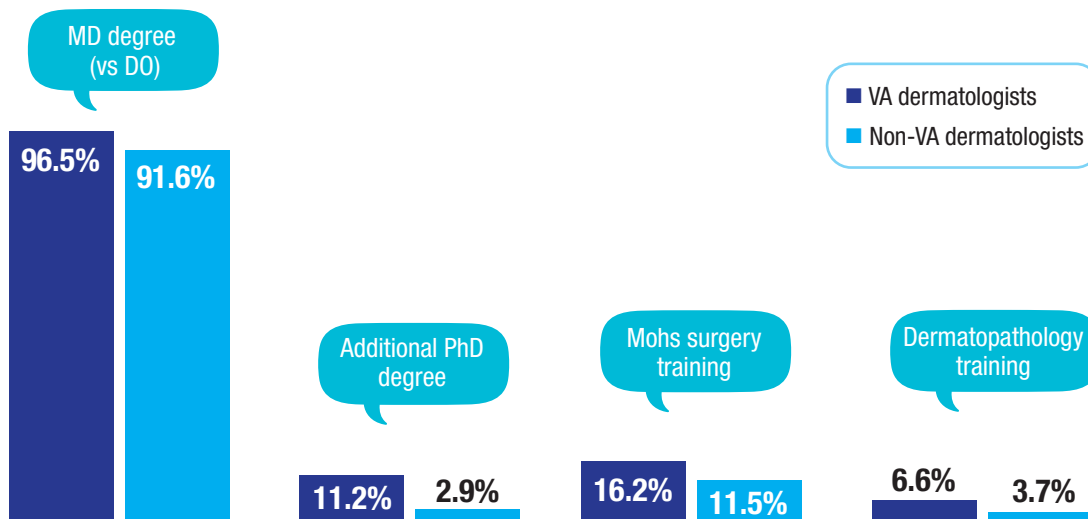
US veterans face substantial dermatologic disparities, with higher rates of skin cancer and psoriasis diagnoses compared with civilians.¹ Additionally, more than half of US states fall below the level of adequate access to care, defined as 4 dermatologists per 100,000 veterans.² The Maintaining Internal Systems and Strengthening Integrated Outside Networks (MISSION) Act was established in 2018 to help expand access to care for veterans.³ Dermatology appointment demand shifted to community care after the MISSION act.³ Overall wait times for dermatologists remain high and inconsistent across the US, likely driven by geographic provider density, rather than the policy change itself.^{2,3}

VA Dermatology Workforce Trends^{2,4}



A recent study reviewed data from the VA Specialty Care Programs Office and the Medicare National File on 780 VA dermatologists and over 12,000 non-VA dermatologists in 2023.

Dermatologist Credentials



Department Size

Number of dermatologists per group



Location of Dermatologists

Located in metropolitan counties; defined as an urban area with > 50,000 residents

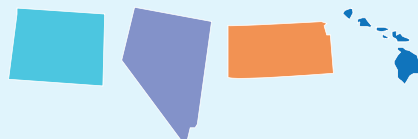
Access to VA Dermatologists



More than half of US states fall below adequate access standards.



4 states have < 1 dermatologist per 100,000 veterans: **Wyoming, Nevada, Kansas, Hawaii.**



Demand and Wait Times for Veteran Dermatology Visits³



Data from the VHA Corporate Data Warehouse (2014-2021) were analyzed to assess demand and wait times for dermatology appointments. Community dermatology appointments were included in the analysis. The MISSION Act allows veterans to qualify for reimbursed community care if a VHA specialty appointment exceeds a 28-day scheduling window, highlighting a shift in how veteran healthcare access is managed and distributed.



1,613,262 dermatology appointments

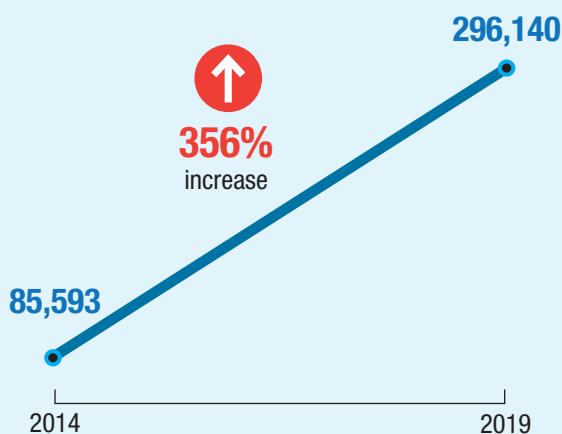
took place across



130 VHA facilities.

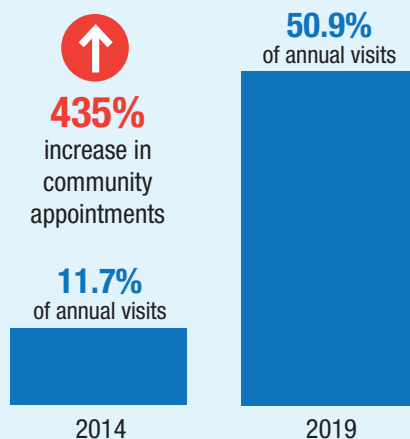
Number of Overall Dermatology Appointments

From VHA and Community Appointments



Percentage of Community Dermatology Appointments

From VHA referrals



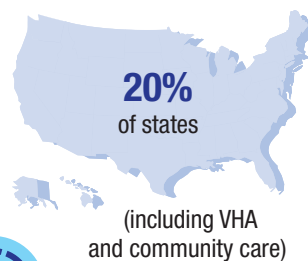
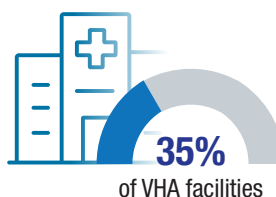
Mean Annual Wait Time Change

From 2014-2021



Longer wait times occurred in the community, especially from 2018 to 2021, with an **increase of 7.7 days**.

Median Wait Time of < 28 Days in 2021



Wait times for dermatology appointments at the VHA ranged from **6 to 93.5 days**, showing high variance in appointment wait times across VHA clinics.



The shift from VHA to community dermatologic care has led to longer wait times in the community, offsetting improvements within VHA facilities, potentially due to factors like specialist shortages and pandemic-related disruptions.