

Untitled document

By Chris Jensen

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Veterans in Coos County deserve a medical clinic in Colebrook, according to a letter sent to the Department of Veterans Affairs by Senators Kelly Ayotte and Jeanne Shaheen and Rep. Charlie Bass.

"While Coos County's population is small compared to the area covered, there are some 3,605 veterans in New Hampshire's North Country, of which 1,821 are in the VA medical system," the letter says.

"Given the substantial obstacles veterans in the North Country confront in getting the VA care they have earned, we ask the VA to consider whether the unique circumstances in Coos County warrant the establishment of a Community-Based Outpatient Clinic."

There is already such a facility in Littleton in northern Grafton County. But the letter notes many of the patients are veterans of Korea, World War II or Vietnam and a drive to Littleton can be a challenge, particularly in bad weather.

The letter asks the VA to consider funding such a facility which would provide primary care.

For specialized problems veterans must travel to White River Junction.

In remarks to Congress about a decade ago a top VA official said the ideal would be that no veteran has to travel more than 30 miles to reach such a facility.

Colebrook is almost 60 miles from Littleton.

Studies have generally found such facilities make health-care simpler for veterans.