



## *Veterans Health Administration Novel Therapeutics Preparedness Act*

Senator Sheehy's *Veterans Health Administration Novel Therapeutics Preparedness Act* would establish a dedicated Office of Novel Therapeutics within the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to ensure the Department is prepared to responsibly evaluate, research, and implement emerging mental health therapies for veterans suffering from PTSD, depression, and other conditions.

Emerging therapeutic interventions, including certain psychedelic-assisted therapies currently under FDA review, may significantly change how conditions such as PTSD, treatment-resistant depression, substance use disorders, traumatic brain injury, and chronic pain are treated. These therapies often require intensive clinical oversight, interdisciplinary care teams, and structured preparation and integration that differ from traditional outpatient care.

The Veterans Health Administration Novel Therapeutics Preparedness Act ensures VA is prepared to safely evaluate and implement emerging therapies by establishing centralized governance, workforce readiness planning, and clinical implementation infrastructure within the Veterans Health Administration.

### **WHAT THE BILL DOES:**

- Establishes an Office of Novel Therapeutics within the Veterans Health Administration to coordinate research, clinical standards, and implementation planning for emerging therapeutic interventions.
- Develops national clinical standards and care models for intensive therapeutic interventions, including patient eligibility guidance, safety protocols, interdisciplinary team models, and integration with VA mental health and suicide prevention programs.
- Assesses workforce readiness and establishes national training standards for clinicians and peer support specialists involved in emerging therapeutic interventions.
- Creates a Clinical Implementation Program to evaluate the safety, effectiveness, and feasibility of emerging therapies in real-world VA clinical settings and inform potential system-wide adoption.
- Authorizes VA to designate Centers of Excellence to lead research, training, and implementation of emerging therapies and share best practices across VA medical centers.
- Establishes a Veteran Advisory Committee composed of veterans, caregivers, academic affiliates, and subject matter experts to provide input on patient safety, access, and patient-centered care.
- Requires coordination with federal partners, including FDA, HHS, CMS, DoD, and DEA, to support regulatory readiness and reimbursement pathways.
- Requires annual reporting to Congress on research progress, clinical outcomes, workforce readiness, and implementation barriers.

### **WHY IT MATTERS:**

- Ensures VA is prepared to safely implement emerging mental health treatments as they become available.
- Strengthens coordination between research, clinical operations, and workforce training within VA.
- Positions VA to lead the responsible evaluation and implementation of innovative therapies for veterans with complex mental health and brain health conditions.
- Helps ensure veterans can access emerging treatments within VA's integrated healthcare system rather than relying on costly or fragmented care outside the Department.

**CO-LEAD & COSPONSORS:** Sens. Gallego, Duckworth, and Boozman

**ENDORSEMENTS:** IAVA, Veteran Mental Health Leadership Coalition, No Fallen Heroes Foundation, BrainFutures

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