

U.S. Sen. Baldwin: Successfully pushes VA to address doctor's misdiagnoses of veterans' brain injuries

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WASHINGTON, D.C. – After more than a year and a half of advocating on behalf of Wisconsin veterans, Senator Tammy Baldwin successfully pushed the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to address a disturbing pattern of a doctor misdiagnosing neurological conditions at the Tomah VA Medical Center. As a result of the misdiagnoses, these veterans were denied proper benefits and compensation.

Since 2021, Senator Baldwin has been working with multiple Wisconsin veterans who report their traumatic brain injuries (TBI) and other conditions have been misdiagnosed by Dr. Mary Jo Lanska, MD at the Tomah VA – some with evidence from outside providers showing their proven condition. Senator Baldwin has been calling on the VA to investigate the pattern of misdiagnoses, ensure misdiagnosed veterans get a new exam, and get the veterans the proper compensation and benefits they are deserved.

In response, the VA recently announced that it will review all of the compensation and pension exams that were done by the doctor in question and will be reaching out to all impacted veterans – including those that the Senator has been working with – to give them the opportunity for a new compensation and pension exam to ensure they get the benefits they deserve. Additionally, the Veterans Health Administration and Veterans Benefits Administration have launched a special hotline, 608-372-3971, extension 64775, for veterans who may have been misdiagnosed at the Tomah VA by Dr. Lanska.

“We have a commitment to do right by those who served our country, but sadly, it appears many of our Wisconsin Veterans did not get the care at the VA that they earned,” **said Senator Baldwin**. “Fighting alongside some of our Veterans, I am happy to report that those who may have been misdiagnosed will have the opportunity to get the care that they deserve. I will continue fighting to ensure that our VA system delivers the high-quality care that our heroes need.”

Senator Baldwin has been working with Wisconsin veterans who report inconsistencies with their diagnoses at the Tomah VA, including some who recount only receiving brief screenings that outside providers state do not sufficiently assess brain injuries. The misdiagnoses have caused some to miss vital treatments and not be considered for disability benefits they may be owed, leading some to take matters into their own hands and pay out of pocket for outside exams and treatment.

In a March meeting, Senator Baldwin [pressed VA Secretary Denis McDonough](#) to investigate the pattern of misdiagnosis and shared the Wisconsin veterans’ concerns. In August 2022, Senators Baldwin and Tammy Duckworth (D-IL) sent a [letter](#) to Secretary McDonough highlighting their concerns about TBI misdiagnosis at the Tomah VA and pushing for answers about the process for veterans who may have been improperly diagnosed and not receiving the benefits they deserve. After hearing from additional veterans, in September 2022, Senator Baldwin [called](#) on the VA to conduct a comprehensive investigation into the practices of this doctor to determine whether there is a broader pattern of her misdiagnosing patients’ neurological disorders that is preventing veterans from receiving care or benefits they earned.

An online version of this release is available [here](#).