



## **Robert A. Petzel, M.D.**

## **Department of Veterans Affairs**

Washington, D.C.

Robert A. Petzel, M.D., was appointed Under Secretary for Health in the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) on Feb. 18, 2010. Prior to this appointment, Dr. Petzel had served as VA's Acting Principal Deputy Under Secretary for Health since May 2009.

As Under Secretary for Health, Dr. Petzel oversees the health care needs of millions of veterans enrolled in the Veterans Health Administration (VHA), the nation's largest integrated health care system. With a medical care appropriation of more than \$48 billion, VHA employs more than 262,000 staff at over 1,400 sites, including hospitals, clinics, nursing homes, domiciliaries, and Readjustment Counseling Centers. In addition, VHA is the nation's largest provider of graduate medical education and a major contributor to medical research. More than eight million veterans are enrolled in the VA's health care system, which is growing in the wake of its eligibility expansion. This year, VA expects to treat nearly six million patients during 78 million outpatient visits and 906,000 inpatient admissions.



**Under Secretary for  
Health**

Previously, Dr. Petzel served as Network Director of the VA Midwest Health Care Network (VISN 23) based in Minneapolis, Minn. In that position, Dr. Petzel was responsible for the executive leadership, strategic planning and budget for eight medical centers and 42 community-based outpatient clinics, serving veterans in Iowa, Minnesota, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, western Illinois and western Wisconsin.

Dr. Petzel was appointed Director of Network 23 (the merger of Networks 13 and 14) in October 2002. From October 1995 to September 2002, he served as the Director of Network 13. Prior to that position, he served as Chief of Staff at the Minneapolis VA Medical Center.

Dr. Petzel is particularly interested in data-based performance management, organization by care lines, and empowering employees to continuously improve the way we serve our veterans. He is involved in a collaborative partnership with the British National Health Services Strategic Health Authority. In addition, he co-chairs the National VHA Strategic Planning Committee and the VHA System Redesign Steering Committee.

Dr. Petzel graduated from St. Olaf College, Northfield, Minn., in 1965 and from Northwestern University Medical School in 1969. He is Board Certified in Internal Medicine and on the faculty of the University of Minnesota Medical School.

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