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Yukio Okutsu State Veterans Home in Hilo receives \$510,640 federal civil penalty for infection control deficiencies

HONOLULU – The Hawai'i Department of Health's Office of Health Care Assurance (OHCA) conducted a series of site visits at Yukio Okutsu State Veterans Home on behalf of the U.S. Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). The unannounced visits were designed to determine the Home's compliance with federal certification requirements.

The unannounced visits resulted in the facility being cited for not being "in substantial compliance" and for causing "immediate jeopardy to resident health and safety." A follow-up survey on Oct. 30 revealed the facility was still not being in substantial compliance and having the most serious scope and severity of deficiencies in infection control.

As a result, CMS has assessed federal civil monetary penalties totaling \$510,640 to Yukio Okutsu State Veterans Home in Hilo for failing to correct COVID-19 infection control deficiencies and for other deficiencies and imposed other remedies.

The remedies imposed on the facility include the denial of payment for new admissions and a directed plan of correction.

The facility's situation eventually improved. During a follow-up revisit of Yukio Okutsu State Veterans Home on Jan. 6, 2021, inspectors found the facility to be in compliance, avoiding a mandatory termination of the facility on April 16, 2021. However, in addition to the civil monetary penalty, Yukio Okutsu State Veterans Home will be denied payment for new Medicare and Medicaid admissions from Oct. 18, 2020 to Jan. 5, 2021.

Management of the Yukio Okutsu State Veterans Home was taken over by the state on Jan. 1, 2021.

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