

Recent internet traffic has noted that some VA medical care for veterans is being farmed out to CVS MinuteClinics in the Phoenix area, on a trial basis.

Until recently my only experience with CVS was as a customer in their retail outlets. Management of our household's prescription plans was turned over to CVS Caremark a couple of months ago. Their introductory information included an extensive list of medications which would no longer be covered by CVS Caremark. One member of our household was denied a medication prescribed by a physician and for which there is no substitute. My glucose monitoring refills of diabetes testing equipment were denied, the only glucose monitoring prescription which would be covered by CVS Caremark was something of known poor reliability.

The outcry among people whose prescriptions were effected was so great that CVS Caremark is being dropped later this year from administering our prescriptions.

I have had no experience with CVS MinuteClinics, but based on the experience with CVS Caremark, I would urge extreme caution and great professional oversight for those seeking treatment with the CVS MinuteClinic program. It would be tragic if the VA in their haste to speed up medical care is unwittingly pushing vets into substandard care whose only goal is cost cutting. I have had no experience with CVS MinuteClinics, but based on experience with another CVS operation, I only urge caution. This is especially relevant if CVS MinuteClinics lack full time physicians on staff and use their authority to countermand decisions made by physicians.

My only position is to urge caution. I recall overhearing a pharmacist changing a prescription for a customer saying "It's just about as good, and will save you money."

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