

The VA Small Home Model: A Modern Approach to Veteran Care

MVH Augusta is a proud example of the VA Small Home Model of care, established in March of 2021. This model is significantly different than traditional care.



Picture 1 - *Traditional Nursing Home* (MVH - Caribou)



Picture 2 - *Small Home Concept* (MVH - Augusta)

Unlike the traditional home with long hallways, the small home concept has homes with 10-14 rooms that encircle a living room, dining room and kitchen – all designed with the look and feel of a house. The footprint of the MVH Augusta facility totals over 180,000 sq. ft. with 130 total beds that are organized into 12 unique neighborhoods to cater to a variety of care needs, including long-term care, memory care, assisted living, and skilled nursing.

This model is producing **positive** results!

- Reduction in falls
- Increase in food intake and weigh gain
- Decreased use of medications
- Decrease in staff turnover



Understanding VA Community Living Center Design Guidelines

At the time the MVH Augusta Home was constructed, the VA required all new construction to incorporate small-house principles of design and care delivery to qualify for matching federal construction grants. Some of the VA Small House requirements include:

- All private resident rooms with dedicated bathrooms
- 10-12 bed households with their own kitchens, living rooms, dens, spas, and personal laundry.
- Community centers with shared services and social spaces.
- Minimum of 1,000 S.F. per resident total net square feet.

Cost Implications of Providing Care in a Small Home

There is no doubting the benefits of a small home design. But modern care comes at a cost. The small-home more than doubled the overall footprint of the former MVH Augusta Home, built within the traditional model of senior nursing care.

Because of the increased size and decentralized layout, these facilities are more costly to build and operate. After more than a year of operation, costs associated with both staffing and building operations are being understood with greater clarity.

- **28% more staff** are needed
- **140% increase in square footage** required resulting in an increase of **125% in facility costs** (heating, cooling, electric, water, sewer)

	Traditional Home - Former Augusta	Small Home – New Augusta	Traditional Home - Bangor	Traditional Home - Scarborough
Total Beds	150	138	150	150
Budgeted Staff	168	216	178	169
Annual Staff Budget	\$8,659,000	\$12,877,000	\$10,408,000	\$8,904,000
Staff Budget (per Bed)	\$57,727	\$93,312	\$69,387	\$59,360
Square Footage	69,615	167,233	93,740	72,060
Annual Facility Cost (Heating, Cooling, Maint., etc.)	\$272,595	\$614,692	\$287,087	\$199,834
Annual Facility Cost (per Square Foot)	\$3.92	\$3.68	\$3.06	\$2.77
Annual Facility Cost (per Bed)	\$1,817	\$4,454	\$1,913	\$1,332
Annual Total Cost	\$16,993,000	\$27,042,000	\$19,494,000	\$22,957,000
Annual Total Cost (per Bed)	\$113,287	\$195,957	\$129,960	\$153,047

FY2021 Data

FY2023 Data

FY2023 Data

FY2023 Data



The Way Forward: Continuing to Care Those Who Served

As Maine Veterans' Homes continues to learn about the benefits and impacts of the VA Small Home model of care, we strive to work towards efficiencies and best practices that will allow us to continue upgrading our six Homes models that will support affordable, high-quality care for Maine's Veterans and their families for years to come.