



UNITED STATES SENATOR ★ SERVING THE CITIZENS OF IDAHO

LARRY CRAIG

NEWS RELEASE

[HTTP://CRAIG.SENATE.GOV/PRESS/](http://craig.senate.gov/press/)

For Immediate Release

March 6, 2007

Dan Whiting (202) 224-8078

Sid Smith (208) 342-7985

CRAIG ANNOUNCES SALMON TO OFFER NEW MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES FOR VETERANS

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Idaho Senator Larry Craig has announced today that the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has recently begun offering telehealth mental health services to veterans in and around the central Idaho community of Salmon.

In September the VA stationed a Licensed Clinical Social Worker in the Salmon community and he has been able to provide mental health assistance to veterans in the area. Within the past week the VA has been testing a new telehealth connection that would enable veterans to receive more extensive mental health services closer to home.

“Until recently, veterans in Salmon and the surrounding communities have had to drive to Boise or Montana for mental health services. That can be a five hundred mile or more round trip. Using today’s modern technology, more veterans are now able to get the mental health care they need much closer to home,” Craig said.

According to VA officials, the Salmon clinic is open five days a week, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. The new system VA officials are working on uses an Internet connection which Boise-based VA personnel hope will prove effective enough to be used by other VA staff in other parts of the country.

Craig has long been an advocate for using new technology to bring health care closer to home.

“On the last day of the last Congress, in December, the Senate approved a comprehensive veteran’s bill I authored. One provision expanded telehealth programs which provide mental health services to veterans. Using technology to bring medicine to patients in rural areas just makes sense,” Craig said.

The Idaho Republican is the immediate past chairman of the U.S. Senate Committee on Veterans’ Affairs and now serves as the top Republican on the committee.