

Salary caps at vet centers would result in turnover and harm veterans

To the Editor:

“Healing the Wounds of War Downtown” in the January issue of The Tribeca Trib beautifully captures the essence of the current state of affairs at the Manhattan Vet Center at 32 Broadway.

Veterans and family members who receive therapy and support are grateful for the exceptional staff led by Ms. Michelle Mullany, L.M.S.W., the team leader of the center.

Justifiable concerns are brewing, however.

Veterans have recently learned that the most qualified and exceptional staff at over 200 vet centers across the nation face salary caps.

Such caps pose a significant threat to the retention of those quality caregivers.

The resulting turnover would harm

the very veterans that vet centers like this one seek to treat.

Long-term bonds that form between therapists and patients are integral to the psychological and emotional support needed for recovery from the stress and trauma of combat deployments.

Staff impermanence brought on by these ill-advised salary caps would hinder effective treatment.

It is the hope of many that the Department of Veterans’ Affairs in New York City and elsewhere receive the proper funding, resources and personnel to reform a broken system.

In the meantime, the Manhattan Vet Center is a model of care that should be applauded by lawmakers and emulated by clinicians.

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