

# FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 18, 2013

**Statement from the Department of Veterans Affairs**

WASHINGTON – The Department of Veterans Affairs issued the following statement:

**Health care treatment**

Aaron Alexis received treatment on August 23, 2013, when he visited the emergency room at the VA Medical Center in Providence, R.I., complaining of insomnia. After a medical examination, he was given a small amount of medication to help him sleep and was instructed to follow up with a primary care provider.

On August 28, he went to the emergency room at the VA Medical Center in Washington, D.C., to request a medication refill and attributed his insomnia to his work schedule.  He was given a small refill and was instructed to follow up with a primary care provider. On both occasions, Mr. Alexis was alert and oriented, and was asked by VA doctors if he was struggling with anxiety or depression, or had thoughts about harming himself or others, all of which he denied.

Alexis enrolled in VA health care in February 2011. According to VA records, he never sought an appointment from a mental health specialist, and had previously either canceled or failed to show up for primary care appointments and claims evaluations examinations he had scheduled at VA medical centers.

**Benefits**

Alexis filed a disability compensation claim with the VA and was granted a 20 percent disability rating by VA for orthopedic issues on December 12, 2011, which was increased to 30 percent on December 19, 2012, when he was awarded an additional 10 percent for tinnitus. Alexis received benefits in the amount of $395 monthly. The 30 percent was retroactive to his separation from service.

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