

# VA investigating nine deaths

October 5 2007

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The Veterans Health Administration is investigating nine patient deaths linked to surgeries at the VA Medical Center in Marion, Ill.

The deaths were recorded between October 2006 and March 2007, The Southern Illinoisan newspaper said Thursday.

U.S. Senator Dick Durbin, D-Ill., said he was informed of the deaths Wednesday during a meeting with Dr. Michael Kussman, Under Secretary for Health for the Veterans Health Administration.

The inpatient surgical unit at Marion has been temporarily closed while the investigation continues.

The newspaper said the director, medical director and chief anesthesiologist have been placed on administrative leave. A surgeon, Dr. Jose Veizaga-Mendez, has resigned his position, the report said.

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