



VA MID-ATLANTIC HEALTH CARE NETWORK • VISN SIX

Vol. 6, No. 2

“Excellent Care – Earned by Veterans – Delivered Here”

Voices of VISN 6

Official news from around *your* VISN

November 30, 2015

VA Health Care Center In Fayetteville Now Operational

By Jeff Melvin
Fayetteville VAMC
Public Affairs Officer

Just a few weeks after its 75th anniversary, Fayetteville VAMC celebrated another significant milestone when the new Fayetteville VA Health Care Center (HCC) opened Nov. 3, providing exceptional health care to Veterans in Cumberland County and surrounding areas.

The facility, located at 7300 South Raeford is open Mon-Fri from 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., offering

nearly 260,000 net usable square feet of space for health care services. With capacity to serve around 38,000 Veterans, long-awaited relief to patients wait times is expected.

Along with increased capacity and greater access, improved efficiency, quality of care and overall patient satisfaction are also anticipated.

“The center’s opening in November culminated the efforts of community and federal entities to bring health care services

[Continued on Pg 6](#)



Jeff Melvin

Laboratory technician Shanna Roderre draws blood from Veteran Jesse James McGee on opening day in the new Fayetteville Health Care Center.

VA Makes Changes To Veterans Choice Program

VA has announced a number of changes to make participation in the Veterans Choice Program easier and more convenient for Veterans. The move, which streamlines eligibility requirements, follows feedback from Veterans along with organizations working on their behalf.

“As we implement the Veterans Choice Program, we are learning from our stakeholders what works and what needs to be refined,” said VA Secretary Robert A. McDonald. “It is our goal to do all that we can to remove barriers that separate Veterans from the care they deserve.” To date, more than

400,000 medical appointments have been scheduled since the Veterans Choice Program went into effect on Nov. 5, 2014.

Under the old policy, a Veteran was eligible for the Veterans Choice Program if he or she met the following criteria:

- Enrolled in VA health care by 8/1/14 or able to enroll as a combat Veteran;
- Experienced unusual or excessive burden eligibility determined by geographical challenges, environmental factors or a medical condition impacting the Veteran’s ability to travel;
- Determined eligible based on the Veteran’s

current residence being more than 40 miles driving distance from the closest VA medical facility.

Under the updated eligibility requirements, a Veteran is eligible for the Veterans Choice Program if he or she is enrolled in the VA health care system and meets at least one of the following criteria:

- Told by his or her local VA medical facility that they will not be able to schedule an appointment for care within 30 days of the date the Veteran’s physician determines he/she needs to be seen or within 30 days of the date the Veteran wishes to be

[Continued on Pg 5](#)

Inside in Brief

Pg 3
Pg 4
Pg 5
Pg 7
Pg 8
Pg 9
Pg 11
Pg 12

Womack gains beneficiaries in agreement with Fayetteville.

Salem VAMC organizes Stand Down for homeless Veterans.

Frequently Asked Questions about changes to Veterans Choice Pgm.

Operation Cold Front underway; Side-by-side comparison of VCP.

Fayetteville fosters the memory of Veterans in their care.

VA holds Stand Down to reduce access to care appointment issues.

Veterans Day commemorated at Virginia War Memorial.

Index of VISN 6 Sites of Care and VA Vet Centers.

From The Director

The transformation continues

Last month, I had the opportunity to participate in an event that inspired a great deal of camaraderie and team spirit.

VA Secretary Bob McDonald brought all VA's Senior Executive Service leaders together for training that focused on developing management tools necessary to create and sustain culture change in our organization.



Highlights included sharing our own personal journeys to build and facilitate more meaningful relationships. It's believed this effort will carry over to relationships with our staffs, the Veterans we serve and all those we collaborate with in our work to deliver the best health care possible.

Secretary McDonald led the "Leaders Developing Leaders" conference along with contributions from Deputy Secretary Sloan Gibson, Under Secretary for Health Dr. David Shulkin, and leadership expert Professor Noel Tichy. The conference contained activities that challenged us to look into our personal experiences in an effort to help develop new ways of thinking and new tools to share lessons from those experiences in teachable ways.

Along with the medical centers directors, I left the conference feeling more energized about the direction VA is headed. As a team, we are determined to enhance the service we provide to every Veteran. Together, we committed to sharing this training with our respective leadership staffs so they could in-turn cascade the training to everyone in the VISN.

In early November, the directors and I engaged our respective leadership teams in a VISN-wide conference that imparted the new concepts and tools to them.

This exercise is a valuable part of the transformation process, and I hope that in the near future, every Veteran who comes through our doors and engages with the VISN 6 team will truly receive the best possible customer service experience.

I'd also like to take this opportunity to share a recent study that speaks directly to the care VHA pro-

vides on a broader scale.

Section 201 of the Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act of 2014 requires an Independent Assessment of 12 areas of VA's health care delivery systems and management processes.

VA engaged the Institute of Medicine of the National Academies to prepare an assessment of access standards and engaged the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services Alliance to Modernize Healthcare to serve as the program integrator and as primary developer of the assessments. CAMH along with the RAND Corporation and MITRE delivered the report

"Independent Assessment of the Health Care Delivery Systems and Management Processes of the Department of Veterans Affairs" to VA on Sept. 1.

Among the report's conclusion is the statement that VHA consistently performs as well as and often better than private sector health-care providers. The VHA does this with patients who are sicker, older, and poorer than many of their counterparts seen in the private sector. Key findings included:

- Postoperative morbidity was lower for VA patients compared with non-Veterans receiving non-VA care.
- Inpatient care was more or as effective in VA as in non-VA hospitals.
- VA hospitals were more likely to follow best practices in the use of central venous catheter line infection prevention and rates of mortality declined more quickly in VA over time than in non-VA settings for specific conditions.

The report also found that veterans in nursing homes were less likely to develop pressure ulcers; that outpatients and those suffering chronic conditions got better follow-up care, and that VA health providers offered better mental health and obesity counseling and blood pressure control, particularly for African Americans.

The report confirmed what many fighting for what is known as "right care"—defined as avoiding toxic, unnecessary tests, medications, and procedures—have long understood: that the VHA has been a pioneer in providing clinically appropriate care to Veterans.

View the report at <http://prospect.org/article/report-va-outperforms-private-sector-key-measures>.

I wish you all the best.

Sincerely,

Dan Hoffmann

Voices of VISN 6 is published monthly by VA Mid-Atlantic Health Care Network.



Questions or comments about the newsletter, e-mail Bruce Sprecher at [va.gov](mailto:Sprecher@va.gov) or call 919-956-5541.

Daniel F. Hoffmann, Network Director
Mark Shelhorse M.D., Chief Medical Officer
Bruce Sprecher, Editor, Dir. Public Affairs
Steve Wilkins, Network Public Affairs
Patrick Schuetz, Chitra Productions



Womack Gains Beneficiaries In Agreement With Fayetteville

By Sameria Zavala
Womack Army Medical Center Public Affairs

Womack Army Medical Center and the Fayetteville VAMC signed an amended resource sharing agreement, Oct. 29.

“Resource sharing has been taking place for some time to the benefit of both organizations,” said Elizabeth Goolsby, FVAMC director. “This document is an expansion of that collaboration as well as an acknowledgement of the current fiscal realities.

“VA as well as DoD, must continue to find ways to offer a greater range of services to our respective patients in more cost-effective ways. Cooperation and collaboration makes sense on so many levels.”

A cost-effective measure included in the agreement gives WAMC facilities the ability to provide care for Fayetteville VAMC beneficiaries as well as increased educational opportunities through integrating VA/DoD cross-training programs for professional staff.

“People may not realize, but there are VA beneficiaries who have to travel to the Durham and Richmond VA for services that we have at Womack and we have the capacity to do them here, but we didn’t have an agreement in place,” said Col. John Melton, WAMC chief of staff.

As mentioned in the agreement, delivery of the services to beneficiaries will not affect the range of service or the quality of care for patients.



Jeff Melvin
Col. Ronald Stephens, WAMC commander (right) and Elizabeth Goolsby, FVAMC director (left), signed an amended resource sharing agreement, Oct. 29.

“This is an organization-wide commitment, as opposed to a few services offered here and there,” said Col. Ronald Stephens, WAMC commander.

“The partnership we have with VA is an outward manifestation of our focus on readiness and commitment to taking care of patients,” said Stephens. “Every member of our team is committed to providing safe, high-quality, patient-centered care, designed to maximize readiness, health and wellness.”

Karin L. McGraw To Lead Pittsburgh VAMC

By Debbie Voloski
Beckley VAMC Public Affairs Officer

Beckley VAMC Director Karin L. McGraw has been selected to be the new director of the VA Pittsburgh Healthcare System, effective Jan. 10, 2016. In her new role, Ms. McGraw will oversee delivery of health care to nearly 70,000 Veterans with an operating budget of \$583 million.

McGraw has served as Beckley VAMC’s director since 2008. She began her career of more than 36 years as a staff nurse at the Beckley VAMC and progressed through various leadership roles including serving as the associate director from May 2004 to April 2008.

“It has been an honor and privilege to serve the Veterans of southern West Virginia for these many years. Being appointed as the director of the VA Pittsburgh Healthcare System will give me the opportunity to embrace a new career challenge while continuing to do what I love – taking care of our beloved Veterans,” McGraw said.



“Karin has played a major role in VA health care for this region and in this VISN, having dedicated her entire career to serving Veterans. I know she will apply all the same talent and expertise as a nurse and executive to her new job, and the Veterans who use the Pittsburgh VAMC will be well served,” said Daniel F. Hoffmann, VISN 6 director.

“We are excited to bring Ms. McGraw on board as the new director of the VA Pittsburgh Healthcare System,” said William H. Mills, VISN 4 interim director. “Her leadership experience will be a valuable asset for the facility, the employees and volunteers, and most importantly, for the Veterans we are honored to serve.”

An interim director for Beckley VAMC has not yet been announced.

Salem VAMC Organizes Stand Down For Homeless Vets

By Brian Sipp
Salem VAMC Public Affairs

More than 110 Veterans received assistance during the 11th Annual Stand Down for Homeless Veterans on Nov. 18, at the Salem Civic Center in Salem, Va.

According to Nancy Short, Health Care for Homeless Veterans Coordinator/Supervisor at the Salem VAMC, fewer Veterans turned out for this event than years past, but the decline is likely due to our efforts to end homelessness. "While this year's turn out may be smaller, we will not let up on our efforts to care for any Veteran in need," added Short.

This year's event focused on numerous public and private partnerships. Community partners, including Total Action for Progress, This Valley Works and the Roanoke Veterans Council, worked hand-in-hand with Salem VAMC staff to ensure maximum success.

The Rolling Thunder Chapter Four Motorcycle Club donated backpacks, hats and gloves; the Bank of Floyd provided toiletries and miscellaneous items; the Salem Wal-Mart Supercenter and the Salvation Army provided blankets; and Salem VAMC's Voluntary Service unit provided a multitude of other useful personal care items.

Highlights of this year's event included more than 20 cosmetology students from Miller-Motte Techni-



Nancy Short
Veteran John Paul Casey, Jr. receives a free beard trim and haircut from one of 20 participating Miller-Motte Technical College cosmetology students during the 11th Annual Stand Down for Homeless Veterans held Nov. 18, at the Salem Civic Center in Salem, Va.

cal College providing haircuts and beard trims to the participating Veterans and a panel of formerly homeless Veterans speaking about their experiences exiting homelessness.



David Hodge

Morgan Moses laughs with Veterans at Richmond VAMC.

Morgan Moses Visits McGuire VAMC

By Armenthis Lester
Richmond VAMC Public Affairs

On Nov. 9, Morgan Moses, offensive lineman with the Washington Redskins, visited Richmond VAMC's Spinal Cord Injury and Disorders Clinic and Polytrauma Unit. For many of the Richmond locals and Redskins fans, Moses' visit had great significance. Not only was Moses a local high school football star and former University of Virginia Cavalier, he was also drafted by the Washington Redskins in 2014. Thus, his visit to the medical center was a homecoming of sorts. While on site, it was evident many staff and patients knew him personally and had watched his career over time. Moses was hailed as the hometown hero who didn't stray far from home.

While in the medical center, Moses took the time to meet and greet Veterans and staff. He also signed autographs, posed for photos, and teased a Veteran who came to the "meet and greet" wearing a Carolina Panthers hat. Moses is no stranger to the rehab setting. In 2014, his rookie season ended prematurely due to a Lisfranc injury to his left foot which required surgery. He spent all of the off season in rehabilitation.

Thankfully, Moses recovered from what is typically a career ending injury. In recognition of his tenacity and steadfastness, the NFL and Redskins organization awarded him with the 2015 Ed Block Courage Award. This award is given annually to a player from each NFL team who has demonstrated extraordinary courage in

[Continued on Pg 7](#)

Frequently Asked Questions About Changes To VCP

Q: Why is VA making these changes?

A: VA recognizes that there are opportunities to improve access to, and experience with, the Veterans Choice Program. Through collaboration with our partners in Congress, we were able to make a number of changes to the legislation. These changes align with our goal to expand Veteran access to timely, high-quality health care.

Q: How do Veterans make appointments for care through the Veterans Choice Program?

A: The way appointments are made have been improved based on Veteran feedback. To make an appointment:

- Distance-eligible Veterans call 866-606-8198 to make sure they qualify for the program and to schedule an appointment. When they call, they will be asked for:
 - First and last name
 - Full address
 - The name of their preferred community physician

Wait List-Eligible Veterans will receive a phone call from one of VA's community health care partners (a non-VA phone number). When they receive this call, they will be asked for their:

- First and last name
- Full address
- Date of birth
- Last 4 digits of your social security number

Veterans should continue to call 866-606-8198 or visit www.va.gov/opa/choiceact with general questions about the Choice Program.

Q: How is it determined if a VA medical facility has a full-time primary care physician?

A: A "full time primary care physician" means at least

VCP continued from Pg 1

seen if there is no specific date from his or her physician;

- Lives more than 40 miles driving distance from the closest VA medical facility with a full-time primary care physician;
- Needs to travel by air, boat or ferry to the VA medical facility closest to his/her home;
- Faces an unusual or excessive burden in traveling to the closest VA medical facility based on geographic challenges, environmental factors, a medical condition, the nature or simplicity or frequency of the care needed and whether an attendant is needed. Staff at the Veteran's local VA medical facility will work with him or her to determine if the Veteran is eligible

one individual physician whose workload, or multiple physicians whose combined workload, equates to a 0.9 full time equivalent employee that works at least 36 clinical work hours per week.

Q: What related to the specific nature and frequency of health care needs might qualify a Veteran for the Choice Program?

A: Examples of some health care needs that could qualify a Veteran for the Choice program include:

- The nature or simplicity of the hospital care or medical services the Veteran requires, or
- How frequently the Veteran needs hospital care or medical services, or
- The need for an attendant who provides aid and/or physical assistance to the Veteran.

This will allow VA to determine, for example, if routine and simple procedures that do not necessarily require the expertise or best practices of VA physicians can be sought through the Veterans Choice Program. Similarly, if a Veteran needs repeated appointments for a course of treatment, the frequency of travel could become an excessive burden on the Veteran that could be alleviated or lessened by receiving care closer to home. If a Veteran requires an attendant to travel to a VA medical facility, coordination could become burdensome and may be alleviated by use of the Veterans Choice Program. These examples are demonstrative and not exhaustive. VA will make a determination on a case-by-case basis.

Q: Where can I get more information about the program?

A: Please review the VA Choice Program website at www.va.gov/opa/choiceact/.

for any of these reasons; or

- Lives in a State or Territory without a full-service VA medical facility which includes: Alaska, Hawaii, New Hampshire (Note: this excludes New Hampshire Veterans who live within 20 miles of the White River Junction VAMC) and the United States Territories (excluding Puerto Rico, which has a full service VA medical facility).

Veterans seeking to use the Veterans Choice Program or wanting to know more about it, can call 866-606-8198 to confirm their eligibility and to schedule an appointment. For more details about the Veterans Choice Program and VA's progress, visit www.va.gov/opa/choiceact.

Remembering Pearl Harbor December 7, 1941



HCC continued from Pg 1

to our Veterans in a setting that's equally high on visual appeal and functionality, and is intelligently designed to allow us to expand our services," said Fayetteville VAMC Director Elizabeth "Betty" Goolsby.

The HCC relocates outpatient health care services from the medical center's main campus and Village Green and Breezewood Primary Care Clinics to the new South Raeford Road location. Administrative offices, in-patient care and some specialty care remain at the medical center.

Health care will be delivered to Veterans through engaged, collaborative Patient Aligned Care Teams focusing on whole-person care and life-long health and wellness.

"Our Veterans will remain the center of their care team that includes their family members, caregivers, and their health care professionals — primary care provider, nurses and an administrative clerk. When additional services are needed to meet their goals and needs, other care team members will be added," Goolsby said. Among the clinical and specialty services available at the HCC are:

- Primary Care, Women's Health, Mental Health, Optometry, Audiology, Podiatry, Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation;
- Day Surgery: Eye, Skin, Gastrointestinal, other minor surgeries;
- Imaging Services: Radiology, Ultrasound, CT Scan, Bone Density, Magnetic Resonance Imaging and Mammography;
- Medical Specialties may include: Cardiology, Dermatology, Gastrointestinal, Pulmonary, and Neurology;
- Surgical Specialties may include: Gynecology,

Urology, Orthopedics, Ophthalmology, Ear/Nose/Throat and General Surgery.

Amenities include: a Veterans Memorial Wall; a healing garden; beautifully landscaped grounds with well-defined areas for respite and exercise; and 1,850 parking slots (with more than 1,000 for patients with 180 set aside for Valet parking and 225 spaces reserved for those with handicapped placards).

Built to Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standards to support wireless technologies and save on energy and water, the building's energy footprint will be reduced.

VA holds a 20-year lease with first year cost of \$7 million and annual rent of approximately \$10 million thereafter. HCC leasing costs include: lease of facility and grounds, grounds maintenance, lighting and sprinklers, facility daily cleaning and maintenance, recycling, minor repairs and facility upkeep.

Describing the facility as "roomy, colorful and bright," Goolsby said Veterans and staff alike will be pleased with their new medical home. "Not only is it a beautiful space, it's also a welcoming environment."

Please visit www.fayettevillenc.va.gov for more information.



Operation Cold Front Underway

By Ronni Miller
Durham VAMC Voluntary Services

The Durham VAMC Voluntary Service is accepting new coats for Operation Cold Front. Operation Cold Front provides winter coats for Veterans in need served by the Durham VAMC. In the past, recipients have included residents in Durham's Community Living Center, Veterans participating in the Home Based Primary Care Program, Medical Foster Care Program and those receiving care at the Raleigh, Greenville and Morehead City CBOCs.

Coats of all sizes are welcome and neutral colors such as black, blue, beige and brown are recommended so that they can be provided to men or women.

Coats may be brought to Durham VAMC's Voluntary Service room B1009. For more information, please call 919-286-0411 extension 7810.



Linnie Skidmore
(L-R) Dave Kuboushek, Stephen Black, Gregory Goins and Art Saraphis show off some of the coats the members of KOC purchased and donated to the medical center for Operation Cold front.

Side-By-Side Review Of Changes To Veterans Choice Program

<u>Old Policy</u>		<u>New Policy</u>
Veteran must have been enrolled in VA health care by 8/1/14 or able to enroll as a combat Veteran to be eligible for the Veterans Choice Program.	➔	Any Veteran enrolled in VA health care will meet basic eligibility for the program.
Unusual or Excessive Burden eligibility determined by geographical challenges, environmental factors, or a medical condition impacting the Veteran's ability to travel.	➔	The nature of the hospital care or medical services, how frequently the care is needed, and the need for an attendant are now also considerations for eligibility under the unusual or excessive burden eligibility criterion for Veterans who reside less than 40 miles from the closest VA medical facility.
Veterans must call Third Party Administrators (TPAs) themselves to follow-up on authorization updates.	➔	Contractors now have the ability to make outbound calls to Veterans directly once authorizations are received. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Distance-eligible should call Choice Program Call Center (866-606-8198) to make an appt. Wait List-eligible Veterans will receive a phone call from the contractor to set up an appt.
If a Veteran's current residence is more than 40 miles driving distance from the closest VA medical facility, they are eligible for the program.	➔	If a Veteran is more than 40 miles driving distance from the closest VA medical facility with a full-time primary care physician, they are eligible for the program.

Moses continued from Pg 4

the face of adversity. "I know what it means to go through rehab. I've been there," said Moses.

Standing at 6'6" and weighing 318 lbs., Moses can easily command a room. However, as one spends time with him, it is quickly revealed he is a "gentle giant" who is humble. While fans yelled his name and sang, "Hail to the Redskins," Moses redirected the appreciation toward the Veterans he met.

He paused and shared words of gratitude for the Veterans in the room. "I can put on my jersey every Sunday and play football because of what you did. I am not a hero. You are the real heroes," he said.



Fayetteville VA Honors Veteran By Arranging Final Farewell

By Stephen Wilkins
VISN 6 Public Affairs

Funerals tend mostly to be a time of sadness and despair, as loved ones gather to honor the deceased. They allow the family to meet friends and pay respect to past deeds and nostalgic remembrances. They help to establish a legacy. That can be a comfort to those who feel their time ebbing. They know that they'll be remembered and their legacy will live on.

Some aren't so fortunate. In fact, in VA hospitals across the nation some Veterans leave us without family or friends to bid farewell. They may not feel the comfort of knowing their legacy will continue. For staff at the Fayetteville VAMC, as in other medical centers around the nation, thinking of Veterans without a friend or relative at the time of their passing is too much to bear.

A recent incident at the Fayetteville VAMC helped to assure the Veterans witnessing that they would have someone with them at the end to honor their lives and their service.

Fayetteville VAMC Director Elizabeth Goolsby related that a Veteran had passed away at the facility without any family. "There was no one to plan a funeral, no one to honor the Veteran, no one to say a final good-bye."

Several staff members jumped to action without hesitation. "It was an honor to be a part of making certain our Veteran had the dignified burial he earned

through his service to our country," declared Norma Fraser, chief of Voluntary Services.

Her unit contributed a suit, dress shirt, tie, dress shoes and socks to prepare the Veteran for burial. "I wanted him to be remembered. I wanted to serve him one last time; as he so willingly served us as a soldier." Fraser's sentiments were reflected in the actions of her colleagues as they scurried to bring a service together.

Abby Parker, who received and brought the flag (that draped his casket) back to Fayetteville from Salisbury National VA Cemetery, where he is buried, arranged for "an upgraded casket, along with a military funeral detail service, honor guard, 21-gun salute, and a grand entrance into the cemetery by former Veterans motorcycle escort (of about 50 grateful riders)." She was also part of the HAS contingent that dedicated the flag for posterity as a display with a plaque that reads, "In memory of a Vietnam Army Veteran, Who is gone but not forgotten, Presented to the Fayetteville VA Medical Center, August 27, 2015."

According to Goolsby, "All of the staff members were determined that this Veteran would be buried with the respect and dignity he was due."

This event, for Goolsby and the rest of her staff represents the good in each staff member that many don't see, but which remains evident for those Veterans looking on in the hallways and CLCs, hospice and other areas of inpatient care who witness their devotion daily.

[Continued on Pg 9](#)

A Gesture Of Caring At Durham

By George Squires, RN, MSN, CMSRN
Durham VAMC, Nurse Manager, CLC and Hospice

In VA medical centers across the country, Voluntary Services work to provide items that extend beyond the delivery of health care. Many of these items, such as hand-made quilts, are more focused on creating an environment of caring and respect.

At the Durham VAMC, Pat Jetter of Undercover Quilters and Pat Benane of Pine Tree Quilters have been creating memorial quilts for more than six years. Through their tremendous commitment to Veterans, each Veteran in hospice is provided a patriotic themed quilt. When the Veteran passes, the "memorial quilt" is presented to the family as a token of respect and honor.

People interested in creating and donating quilts should contact the Voluntary Service Office at their nearest VA medical center.



George Squires
Pat Jetter of Undercover Quilters (left) and Pat Benane of Pine Tree Quilters (right) exhibit just a few of the many quilts they've made for Veterans in hospice at Durham VAMC.

VA Holds Stand Down To Reduce Access To Care Appt. Issues

By Stephen Wilkins
VISN 6 Public Affairs

VA medical centers across the nation participated in a first-ever Access Stand Down Nov. 14 to alleviate a growing bulge in appointments characterized as urgent. Clinical providers, leaders, administrators and volunteers devoted extra hours that November Saturday to make sure VA is meeting Veterans' health care needs.

In keeping with its commitment to timely access to care for Veterans as determined by their clinical needs, each medical center staffed a contingent that reached out to Veterans with the most critical and acute needs during the week to make sure they were seen at the earliest possible time whether that be in VA or in the community.

Not every type of clinic appointment has the same urgency, or the same medical risk to patients, in the event of a delay, so staff focused on the highest priority needs first and worked on others through a preliminary classification according to four levels of sensitivity including "important or acute, important or chronic, routine or support services."

During the process, it was discovered that many of the consults classified as urgent should actually have been classified at a lower level.

Facilities are currently developing better educational and tracking processes to ensure each consult will be handled more appropriately and accurately. VA's efforts to fix access issues and timeliness of appointments will continue.

A few sites of care identified the need to more closely track and coordinate appointments through a proposed concept position called the Group Practice Manager. Future implementation of such positions could help some facilities better control the flow of appointments and streamlining of Veteran care. According to VA Under Secretary for Health Dr. David Shulkin, "We will not rest until we fix our system in order to better the health needs of those that need our help most."

Each facility in the VISN addressed the Stand Down to handle their most critical Veteran needs. One facility focused on making appointments and continuing to streamline their processes. Other facilities, which found themselves ahead of the curve, used the time to bring Veterans in and free up more future appointment times.

In Asheville, leadership not only provided staff that included patient advocates and others to assist with tertiary Veteran needs, but they also included a representative from HealthNet, the third party vendor that sets Veteran appointments in the community. Although some community providers were not available on Saturdays, the representative, working with staff was able to help make a considerable dent in getting Veterans the appointments they needed.

The use of the term Stand Down may have confused some Veterans, because it is most commonly used by VA in the provision of other benefits. But, many were able to take advantage of the opportunity and word will spread, so that the next Stand Down will be even more effective for still more Veterans.

Asheville VAMC Works To Become First Tobacco Free Campus

By Paul Waldrop
Asheville VAMC

"Be Tobacco Free!" It is all the rage and the message of the season from the Charles George VAMC's Tobacco Cessation Committee.

Dr. Glen Rehtine, a spine surgeon that heads the Tobacco Cessation program at the Charles George VAMC, says the message on the "Be Tobacco Free" signs seen around the Asheville medical center is more

relevant today than ever before.

"The goal here in Asheville is to be the first 100 percent tobacco-free VA medical facility campus in the country," Rehtine said.

"The Tobacco Cessation committee has increased Tobacco Cessation classes and fewer people are now smoking on campus. Increased enrollment indicates more employees are trying to quit," he said.

"It's never too late, and every day is a great day to quit smoking."

Fayetteville continued from Pg 8

Once received in Salisbury, Kasey Boyd-Smith coordinated efforts for mourners. "Making sure an unclaimed deceased Veteran's funeral services are well attended is the least we can do for American heroes. Anyone within HAS at our VA would and will do the same exact thing for any Veteran in the future," she said.

Boyd-Smith adds that as this type of thing happens, as with all Veteran care, staff approach it with the same advanced level of devotion to caring for America's Veterans they would in any other situation, in line with VA's mission, "caring for those 'who shall have borne the battle' and for their families and survivors."

Veterans Day Commemorated At Virginia War Memorial

Story and photos by David Hodge
Richmond VAMC Public Affairs

Veteran's Day activities in downtown Richmond provided an opportune moment for Veterans Affairs leadership to represent the VA during the annual ceremony at the Virginia War Memorial.

Leaders representing two of the three VA medical centers in Virginia along with the network director gathered for the annual ceremony in which Gov. Terry McAuliffe announced the state had functionally ended Veteran homelessness with the help of state and federal institutions and community organizations.

"The Commonwealth (of Virginia), as you know, we have the fastest growing Veteran population in the nation," McAuliffe said during the ceremony. "We have the largest percentage of women Veterans, and the largest percentage of Veterans under the age of 25. And, we have the largest number of wounded Veterans per capita in the United States of America. That is a tremendous honor, but with that honor comes tremendous responsibility."

Functional zero – as the term is often referred to – doesn't mean Veteran homelessness has ended, but rather an effective system is in place to identify homeless Veterans and connect them with the services and resources they need.

Representing VA were Daniel F. Hoffman, director of the VA Mid-Atlantic Health Care Network, John A. Brandecker, director at the McGuire VAMC, and Michael H. Dunfee, director at the Hampton VAMC.



Michael H. Dunfee, Daniel F. Hoffman, and John A. Brandecker present a wreath at the 2015 Veterans Day ceremony.



NO-COST FLU SHOTS FOR VA PATIENTS

If you're enrolled in the VA Health Care System, getting your flu shot at Walgreens or Duane Reade is easy:*



1. Just fill out the flu form below
2. Bring the completed form, your VA ID card and a photo ID to your neighborhood Walgreens or Duane Reade location
3. Walgreens or Duane Reade will automatically update your VA Electronic Health Record in the VA Health Care System

Nearby locations | Walk in anytime

A wellness benefit brought to you by Walgreens and the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs

Information below must be completed prior to receiving your flu shot.

Name: _____

Date of birth: _____ Home ZIP code: _____

Plan ID IMZ Recipient # (Social Security Number): _____

Group #: 5933XBAYV

Walgreens pharmacist:

- Only veterans enrolled in the VA Health Care System are eligible. Family members and TRICARE members are NOT eligible.
- Verify information by checking VA ID card and a photo ID.
- Use the Social Security Number in the Recipient # field.

To find a location near you, call 800-WALGREENS (800-925-4733) or visit Walgreens.com/FindAStore



For questions or more information about the program, call **866-964-1812** or go to www.eHealth.va.gov/immunization.asp.



*Vaccine subject to availability. State-, age- and health-related restrictions may apply. This does not constitute an endorsement of Walgreens or Walgreens products.



VISN 6 Sites Of Care & VA Vet Centers

MEDICAL CENTERS

Asheville VAMC
1100 Tunnel Road
Asheville, NC 28805
828-298-7911, 800-932-6408
www.asheville.va.gov/

Durham VAMC
508 Fulton St.
Durham, NC 27705
919-286-0411, 888-878-6890
www.durham.va.gov/

Fayetteville VAMC
2300 Ramsey St.
Fayetteville, NC 28301
910-488-2120, 800-771-6106
www.fayettevillenc.va.gov/

Hampton VAMC
100 Emancipation Dr.
Hampton, VA 23667
757-722-9961, 866-544-9961
www.hampton.va.gov/

Richmond VAMC
1201 Broad Rock Blvd.
Richmond, VA 23249
804-675-5000, 800-784-8381
www.richmond.va.gov/

Salem VAMC
1970 Roanoke Blvd.
Salem, VA 24153
540-982-2463, 888-982-2463
www.salem.va.gov/

Salisbury VAMC
1601 Brenner Ave.
Salisbury, NC 28144
704-638-9000, 800-469-8262
www.salisbury.va.gov/

OUTPATIENT CLINICS

Albemarle CBOC
1845 W City Drive
Elizabeth City, NC 27909
252-331-2191

Brunswick Outreach Clinic
20 Medical Campus Drive
Supply, NC 28462
910-754-6141

Charlotte CBOC
8601 University East Drive
Charlotte, NC 28213
704-597-3500

Charlottesville CBOC
650 Peter Jefferson Pkwy
Charlottesville, VA 22911
434-293-3890

Chesapeake CBOC
1987 S. Military Highway
Chesapeake, Va 23320
757-722-9961

Danville CBOC
705 Piney Forest Rd.
Danville, VA 24540
434-710-4210

Emporia CBOC
1746 East Atlantic Street
Emporia, VA 23847
434-348-1500

Fayetteville HCC
7300 So. Raeford Rd
Fayetteville NC 28304
910-488-2120
800-771-6106

Franklin CBOC
647 Wayah St.
Franklin, NC 28734-3390
828-369-1781

Fredericksburg CBOC
130 Executive Center Pkwy
Fredericksburg, VA 22401
540-370-4468

Goldsboro CBOC
2610 Hospital Road
Goldsboro, NC 27909
919-731-4809

Greenville HCC
401 Moye Blvd.
Greenville, NC 27834
252-830-2149

Hamlet CBOC
100 Jefferson Street
Hamlet, NC 28345
910-582-3536

Hickory CBOC
2440 Century Place, SE
Hickory, NC 28602
828-431-5600

Hillandale Rd. Annex
1824 Hillandale Road
Durham, North Carolina 27705
919-383-6107

Jacksonville CBOC
241 Freedom Way, Suite 1
Midway Park, NC 28544
910-353-6406

Jacksonville II CBOC
306 Brynn Marr Road
Jacksonville, NC 28546
910-343-5301

Lynchburg CBOC
1600 Lakeside Drive
Lynchburg, VA 24501
434-316-5000

Morehead City CBOC
5420 U.S. 70
Morehead City, NC 28557
252-240-2349

Raleigh CBOC
3305 Sungate Blvd.
Raleigh, NC 27610
919-212-0129

Raleigh II Annex
3040 Hammond Business Place
Raleigh, NC 27603
919-899-6259

Robeson County CBOC
139 Three Hunts Drive
Pembroke, NC 28372
910-521-8452

Rutherford County CBOC
374 Charlotte Road
Rutherfordton, NC 28139
828-288-2780

Staunton CBOC
102 Lacy B. King Way
Staunton, VA 24401
540-886-5777

Tazewell CBOC
123 Ben Bolt Ave.
Tazewell, VA 24651
276-988-2526

Virginia Beach CBOC
244 Clearfield Avenue
Virginia Beach, VA
757-722-9961, ext. 1900

Wilmington HCC
1705 Gardner Rd.
Wilmington, NC 28405
910-343-5300

Winston-Salem CBOC
190 Kimel Park Drive
Winston-Salem, NC 27103
336-768-3296

Winston-Salem Annex
2101 Peters Creek Parkway
Winston-Salem, NC 27127
336-761-5300

Wytheville CBOC
165 Peppers Ferry Rd.
Wytheville, VA 24382-2363
276-223-5400

DIALYSIS CENTERS

VA Dialysis and Blind Rehabilitation Clinics at Brier Creek
8081 Arco Corporate Drive
Raleigh, NC 27617
919-286-5220

VA Dialysis Clinic Fayetteville
2301 Robeson Street, Ste. 101
Fayetteville, NC 28305
910-483-9727

VET CENTERS

Charlotte Vet Center
2114 Ben Craig Dr.
Charlotte, NC 28262
704-549-8025

Fayetteville Vet Center
2301 Robeson Street
Fayetteville, NC 28305
910-488-6252

Greensboro Vet Center
3515 W Market Street, Suite 120
Greensboro, NC 27403
336-333-5366

Greenville Vet Center
1021 W.H. Smith Blvd.
Greenville, NC 27834
252-355-7920

Jacksonville, N.C. Vet Center
110-A Branchwood Drive
Jacksonville, NC 28546
910-577-1100

Norfolk Vet Center
1711 Church Street
Norfolk, VA 23504
757-623-7584

Raleigh Vet Center
8851 Ellstree Lane
Raleigh, NC 27617
919-856-4616

Roanoke Vet Center
350 Albemarle Ave., SW
Roanoke, VA 24016
540-342-9726

Virginia Beach Vet Center
324 Southport Circle, Suite 102
Virginia Beach, VA, 23452
757-248-3665