



VA MID-ATLANTIC HEALTH CARE NETWORK • VISN SIX

Vol. 4, No. 1

“Excellent Care – Earned by Veterans – Delivered Here”

Voices of VISN 6

Official news from around *your* VISN

October 31, 2013

My HealthVet Database Celebrates 10th Birthday

Kenita D. Gordon
VISN 6 public affairs

On Veterans Day 2003, VA Launched My HealthVet (MHV) – an interactive, online personal health record database designed for Veterans, active duty servicemembers, their dependents and caregivers.

MHV was conceptualized to become an online environment where Veterans, families, and clinicians could come together to optimize a Veteran’s health. MHV opened the door to provide users ac-

cess to a host of health related information which includes their medical records.

In its first year, MHV experienced more than one million visits. Since 2003, MHV’s capabilities have expanded exponentially, evolving into what is now a robust service which includes e-mail reminders of VA appointments, access to lab results, the ability to refill prescription and perhaps one of the most exciting services, secure messag-

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Randy McCracken
Veteran and VA employee Michael “Trey” Kindlinger logs on to the My HealthVet website.

VISN Clinics Expand Hours, Increase Access

By Steve Wilkins
VISN 6 public affairs

Veterans receiving health care in VISN 6 are now able to access that care during extended hours on weekdays and weekends. All eight medical centers along with clinics in Raleigh, Charlotte and Winston-Salem, N.C. have arranged to staff and support operation of primary care, mental health, and women’s health care clinics during these new hours.

“Operating these new extended hours reflects our commitment to provide the greatest access possible to quality care for Veterans,” said Dr. Karin

Soobert, VISN6 Primary Care Service Line lead coordinator. According to Soobert, a great effort went into the extension of service at each facility. “It was no small feat,” she said. “Schedules for staff from administrative and records to nurses and doctors, lab and x-ray technicians and pharmacy staff had to be juggled, without increasing staff or compromising the quality of care throughout the regular periods of operation.”

According to Dr. David Buyck, “Veterans in VISN 6 now have enhanced access to mental health treatment, substance abuse treatment and homeless prevention

services.” Soobert said the same is true for individuals who find it more convenient to see their primary care physician without taking time off from work or who might find it easier to arrange transportation at that time.

Two facilities in the VISN were recognized for the speed they ramped up the extended hours program for appointments.

Hampton and Asheville VAMCs were among the top ten nationwide in August, seeing 276 and 223 Veterans respectively. Hampton VAMC used weekends to fill appoint-

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Veterans Day Honors All Who Have Served

On Nov. 11, America will commemorate Veterans Day. There will be parades, barbecues and special ceremonies to remind us of the 42 million men and women who have served to protect and defend our great nation since the Revolutionary War.

In 1918, the cessation of hostilities between the Allied Nations and Germany went into effect on the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month which is the reason, Nov. 11, 1918, became known as Armistice Day.

In November 1919, President Wilson proclaimed the first commemoration of Armistice Day saying: "To us in America, the reflections of Armistice Day will be filled with solemn pride in the heroism of those who died in the country's service and with gratitude for the victory, both because of the thing from which it has freed us and because of the opportunity it has given America to show her sympathy with peace and justice in the councils of the nations...."

While Armistice Day was created to honor World War I Veterans, after World War II and Korea, the 83rd Congress in 1954 amended the Act of 1938 by striking out the word "Armistice" and inserting in its place the word "Veterans."

In VA, every day is, and should be regarded as "Veterans Day" because our sole purpose is to serve those who have secured our freedom and made possible the greatest democracy on earth. Our medical centers and clinics exist to care for those who have "borne the battle," and I take great pride in being part of America's premier health care system which is charged with caring for all the eligible Soldiers, Marines, Sailors, Airmen and Coast Guardsmen who live in this region.

History is such that the age range of the Veterans we serve spans seven decades. In some places, three generations of Veterans make our clinic waiting areas a melting pot of those who served in different eras. The one common thread of all those we care for is that at some point, every person holding a VA ID card took an oath to "...support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domes-



tic" and to "bear true faith and allegiance to the same."

Some of those we serve carried M-1 carbines while others carried M-16s. Some operated M4 Sherman tanks while others fought from M1 Abrams. Some flew B-29s and F-105s while others crewed B-52s and F-15s. Regardless of where or when they served, or what uniform they wore, our Veterans share a common bond and it is that bond between the 8 million Veterans enrolled that allows VA to know the health care needs of Veterans better than any other health care provider.

Every day in VISN 6 is Veterans Day and it is for this reason I take great pride in our motto: Excellent Service – Earned by Veterans – Delivered Here.

I hope you'll join with me in extending a sincere thanks to all those who have worn the uniform. I thank all our Veterans for your patriotism, love of country, and willingness to serve and sacrifice for the common good.

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@va.gov or call 919-956-5541.

Excellent Care – Earned by Veterans – Delivered Here
Voices of VISN 6
Official news from around your VISN

Daniel F. Hoffmann, Network Director
Augustin Davila, Deputy Network Director
Mark Shelhorse M.D., Chief Medical Officer
Bruce Sprecher, Director, Public Affairs
Steve Wilkins, Network Public Affairs
Jeffery Melvin, Network Public Affairs
Patrick W. Schuetz, Newsletter Layout



New Stamps Honor WWII Medal Of Honor Recipients

The Medal of Honor is the nation's highest award for valor in combat. It is presented "for conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of life, above and beyond the call of duty."



On Veterans Day, the U.S. Postal Service is issuing a new stamp titled Medal of Honor: World War II, highlighting this award and the very special men who received it for their service during the Second World War. Of the 464 men who received the Medal of Honor for their actions during World War II, more than half were killed in action.

The new issuance contains two different Forever® stamps. One features a photograph of the current Navy version of the Medal of Honor, and the other features a photograph of the current Army version of the award. The Air Force version of the medal is not shown, because it was not created until after World War II.

The President presents the Medal of Honor on behalf of Congress, which is why the award is sometimes called the Congressional Medal of Honor.

The idea for the Medal of Honor was conceived during the first year of the Civil War when the nation recognized a need to reward acts of heroism. President Abraham Lincoln signed the Navy and Army Medals of Honor into law in 1861 and 1862, respectively.

The stamps will be released on Monday, Nov. 11, 2013, at the National World War II Memorial in Washington, D.C. The ceremony will begin at 9 a.m.

Nov. Is American Indian, Alaska Native Heritage Month

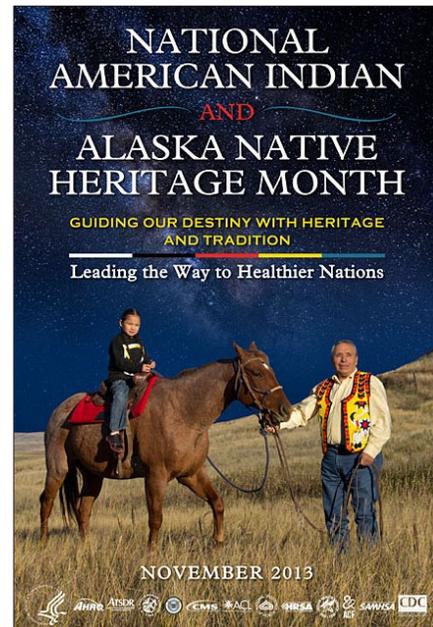
VA joins the nation in celebrating American Indian and Alaska Natives (AIAN) Heritage Month.

After years of sporadic celebrations across multiple states to celebrate the accomplishments, contributions, service, and sacrifices of AIANs, President George H. W. Bush signed a joint resolution designating November as National American Indian Heritage Month in November 1990.

AIANs have contributed significantly through military service to defend our country - fighting in every conflict since the Revolutionary War. In fact, AIANs enroll in the armed services at a higher rate than any other ethnic population.

In VISN 6, the Asheville VAMC's namesake is that of an American Indian Medal of Honor recipient Charles George. A Cherokee, Charles George enlisted in the Army during the Korean War. On Nov. 30, 1952, George threw himself on a grenade during combat to shield his comrades.

Because of his courage, heroism, gallantry and ultimate sacrifice above and beyond the call of duty, Charles George was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor in 1954.



Extended Hours continued from Pg 1

ments for new Veteran patients, which not only helped those Veterans, but also helped reduce overall wait times for first appointments.

The numbers nationwide indicate Veterans are very interested in the extended service.

According to Shenekia Williams-Johnson, VISN 6 Women Veterans program manager, women's health care, which is also offered during extended hours includes: acute and chronic illness; gender-specific primary care; preventive health services; reproductive health services; mental health services and coordination of care.

"We have made great strides in enhancing access by adding new sites of care over the last 10 years," said Network Director Daniel Hoffmann. "Adding the sites

of care made a huge difference, giving access to thousands of Veterans by reducing travel distance and time. In today's economy, many of our Veterans are working or going to school and some provide care to others. This new extended hours program addresses the challenges of those who are juggling work schedules with other activities of daily living. I'm thrilled to be able to offer this new level of service in response to our Veteran's needs. As Veteran needs change, we will continue to adapt our programs to ensure the best service possible."

Facilities have posted their extended hours for appointments and some will accept walk-ins on a limited basis. For more information Veterans should contact their home facilities.

Fayetteville VAMC Announces New Chief Of Medicine

Fayetteville VAMC welcomed Dr. Gary L. Badzinski, an interventional cardiologist with 25 years of interventional experience as the medical center's new Chief of Medicine on October 1.

Dr. Badzinski held prior positions in VA as well as the private sector and several teaching positions. He joins the facility's leadership team after serving as a staff cardiologist and interventionalist with special interest in structural heart disease at Oklahoma State University Medical Center, where he also had teaching duties and was Chair of the



Morbidity and Mortality Committee and Cardiovascular Service Line Chief.

As Chief of Medicine, Dr. Badzinski will manage the bulk of hospital-related operations including nephrology, internal medicine, gastrointestinal medicine, cardiology, pulmonary medicine and infectious diseases.

"We are quite fortunate to acquire a leader who has talent of the breadth and depth Dr. Badzinski brings with him," said medical center Director Elizabeth Goolsby. "The experience he brings will certainly contribute to our efforts to offer Veterans the best possible care." She concluded, adding, "The insight I am confident he is bound to provide on a variety of functional levels will be fresh and distinctive."

Dr. Badzinski, who is trained in nuclear medicine, has founded and directed three cardiac rehabilitation centers in Colorado and Oklahoma.

When Reintegration Goes Awry: Unraveling The Factors That Put Veterans At Risk

By Mitch Mirkin

Reprinted from VA Research Currents, Fall 2013

Dr. Eric Elbogen is a forensic psychologist at the Durham VAMC. His recent research has focused on returning Veterans' risk factors for criminal and violent behavior, homelessness, and other reintegration problems.

Earlier this year, when an Iraq Veteran who had been diagnosed with posttraumatic stress disorder shot and killed Chris Kyle, a former Navy SEAL who wrote the autobiography *American Sniper*, a slew of news reports focused on the PTSD angle.

According to Elbogen, the media—and people in general—often want to "explain acts of violence without going deep enough into the multiple causes. PTSD is related to violence, but so are lots of other factors." Elbogen studies the link between mental health and criminal behavior, particularly violent crime. In recent years, much of his work has focused on returning Veterans.

The researcher, based at the Durham VAMC and the University of North Carolina–Chapel Hill School of Medicine, says one of his key messages is that PTSD is not the same for each Veteran. It's different from one person to the next. Some might have PTSD symptoms that, according to research, do predict violent behavior. Others might have a form of the disorder that is in no way linked to violence or aggression.

A related message Elbogen tries to convey is that "you have to go beyond PTSD."

"You have to consider the non-PTSD risk factors," he says. "These people may have served in a war, but



Linnie Skidmore

Dr. Eric Elbogen is a forensic psychologist at the Durham VAMC. His recent research has focused on returning Veterans' risk factors for criminal and violent behavior, homelessness, and other reintegration problems.

they're also human beings. You have to look at factors such as younger age, a history of violence before the military, financial instability, lack of emotional support network, substance abuse. Some of these factors are stronger than PTSD as predictors of criminal behavior."

He acknowledges that some of the factors are intertwined in subtle ways, and there is much that even the experts don't fully understand. But they all have to be considered to "avoid a kneejerk reaction" to a complex problem, he asserts.

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My HealtheVet continued from Pg 1

ing with VA providers and staff. In 2010, the system experienced more than 37 million visits.

My HealtheVet now has an improved helpdesk staffed by permanent VA employees. “The system has become more interactive and continues to evolve to meet the needs of our Veteran population. Site managers and engineers are constantly working to improve the system” said Gail Bonham VISN 6, MHV coordinator.

MHV presently offers three levels of access: Basic, Advanced or Premium. As of October 2013, there are more than 1.9 million registered MHV users with 1.3 million Veterans having Advanced or Premium accounts. Within VISN 6, there are more than 170,000 Veterans registered for MHV and of those, 122,000 have Advanced or Premium accounts.

MHV has been recognized for its best practices such as the creation of its online medication ordering and secure messaging features. In 2008, MHV won the Utilization Review Accreditation Commission’s first-ever Gold Award in the Best Practices in Consumer Empowerment and Protection Awards category.

In 2006, MHV garnered VHA’s Excellence in Public Affairs Award. In 2007, the site won the “Top 5” site award by Excellence.gov. In 2008, the site won the CIO 100 Award from CIO Magazine in recognition of its innovative use of information technology, and also in 2008, a MHV commercial won the Platinum Award for Best in Show at the Winter 07/08 Aurora Awards.

As one can imagine, VA’s first priority is to protect the personal data available on line. Program coordinators and site managers use collaborative approaches to securing MHV. “The information is encapsulated in the MHV program itself which is behind our firewall. Veterans are notified through their personal email when they have a secure message to read and must sign in with their unique username and password identifiers to access their information” says Bonham.

In addition to its awards, MHV boasts other accom-

Basic, Advanced and Premium Accounts:

Basic Account - Anyone who registers on My HealtheVet starts with a Basic Account. This account does not require that you have your identity *Authenticated*.

Authentication is a process by which the VA verifies a Veterans' identity before allowing access to their VA health record and can be done in person at a local VA medical facility or online through e-benefits.

Advanced accounts offer a higher level of access to features offered in MHV and is for Veterans and/or VA Patients only and requires authentication. It provides users the ability to view some information in their VA and/or DoD records.

Premium accounts offer users the highest level of access to MHV and also requires authentication.

Users with **Premium** accounts can have their MHV profile information linked to VA/DoD records.

plishments and benefits to Veterans and those who care for them.

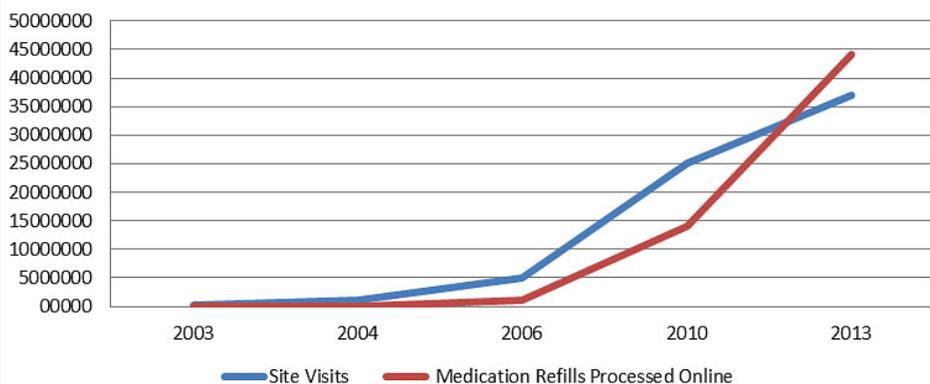
From a clinical aspect, the MHV system has been an invaluable resource for Veterans and their providers to interact in a more effective and time-conscious way. MHV’s secure messaging feature allows for more collaboration between providers and Veterans which further implements the Patient Aligned Care Team (PACT) model.

“Empowering patients to order and manage their medications and allowing primary care teams to be able to communicate directly with patients are some of MHV’s greatest successes” says Bonham.

Dr. Jennifer Sargent, primary care physician at the Richmond VAMC shares that “We have a lot of Veterans who also see non-VA providers. Secure Messaging allows us to better coordinate care with both the non-VA providers and the Veterans.”

Continued on Pg 6

MHV Site Visits and Online Medication Refills Statistics



Salisbury Bowling Center Re-Opens After Renovation

By Michael Maddox
Salisbury VAMC public affairs

During a ribbon cutting ceremony Sept. 30, leadership from the Salisbury VAMC and from the Armed Forces Families Foundation re-opened the Bowling Center in Building 6.

The Armed Forces Families Foundation donated the \$41,000 for the renovations, which include an electronic scoring system, a new shoe rack, new shoes and balls, new furniture and fresh paint.

The Bowling Alley had been closed since February 2013 when the renovation began.

As one of the only active bowling facilities in the VA system, the center's six-lane bowling alley offers both entertainment and therapy to Veterans and their families.

Many Veterans also come to the center's bowling alley to use their wheelchair-friendly equipment and train for the National Wheelchair Games and National Golden Age Games.

According to Aleashia Brandon, supervisory recreation therapist at the Salisbury VAMC, recreational therapy tools like the bowling alley also serve as an integral part of a patient's treatment and can enhance patient outcomes by learning new skills that carry over to everyday life and can make a difference in an individual's quality of life.

John Sherrill, an area coach with Taco Bell, which is a member of the Armed Forces Families Foundation,



Leadership from the Salisbury VAMC and the Armed Forces Families Foundation officially re-opened the Bowling Center in Building 6 during a ribbon cutting ceremony Sept. 30.

said his team is more than happy to serve those who have served.

"We truly appreciate the freedom that we have in our country, and we honor our military Veterans and their families," he said. "It's our pleasure to raise money to honor and support them."

The Armed Forces Families Foundation, who donated the money for the renovations, is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization made up of volunteers from many communities across the United States.

My HealthVet continued from Pg 5

Dr. Aaron Fox, primary care physician also at the Richmond VAMC agrees. "I think MHV is wonderful because it cuts out the middle men. It allows me to quickly address Veterans' medical concerns by giving me the ability to easily reach out and contact them if I have an issue or question."

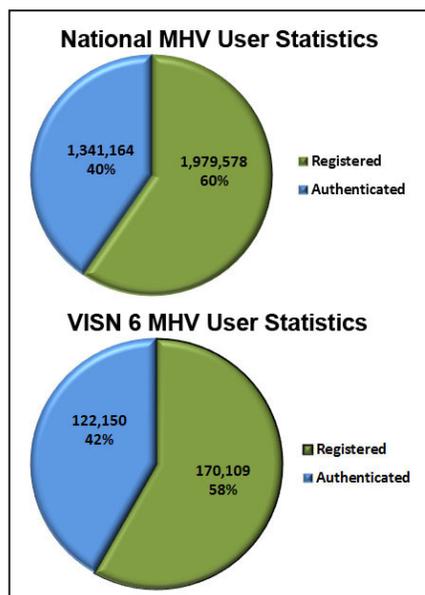
All of Fox's PACT team members work together in responding to MHV secure messages. "In the end, it all comes down to providers wanting to improve access for their patients," says Fox. Patients agree. "My HealthVet has made care much more accessible especially with the secure messages and online prescription ordering" says Michael "Trey" Kindlinger of Asheville, N.C. "I feel more connected to my primary care team because they are great about responding to my secure messages."

Some primary care providers are even seeing a decrease in the numbers of walk-ins due to the more interactive features MHV offers. "I think having these communication options has cut down on walk-ins. It also improves our follow-up visits as many patients now take ownership in their healthcare, often arriving with their own medical records in hand with specific

questions for me" says Sargent.

Many employees and medical providers are excited about the advancements MHV is making in patient care and encourage the use of the system. "At every visit with Veterans, I provide handouts and encourage the use of MHV," says Sargent. "I've embraced it and as a result, more than half of my patients are signed up and use it regularly. Ultimately it helps me take better care of my patients," says Fox.

For more information about the many services available through My HealthVet, visit www.myhealth.va.gov/index.html.



Daylight Saving Time Ends November 3

Daylight Saving Time (DST) ends at 2 a.m. on Sunday, Nov. 3. This is the time of year when most of the United States will set their clocks back one hour to adjust.

In the past the States were free to observe or not observe DST which created inconsistencies that impacted people during interstate travels – “one could drive less than 100 miles and change back and forth in time observance many times” said Linda Lawson, director, Office of Safety, Energy and Environment. “As of result of the widespread confusion and detrimental impacts on commerce, Congress adopted the Uniform Time Act of 1966” said Lawson.

The act provided national uniformity for the beginning and ending dates of daylight saving time, an ‘opt-out’ provision for any State that does not want to observe,

and an enforcement mechanism whereby DOT may go into Federal District

Court to obtain an injunction against any jurisdiction not observing the correct time, said Lawson.

Many may ask, “What is the purpose of DST?” The purpose of DST is to make better use of daylight hours. According to the US Department of Transportation DST has been shown to save energy, save lives by prevent traffic injuries, and it reduces crime.



Richmond VAMC To Offer Hotel Lodging

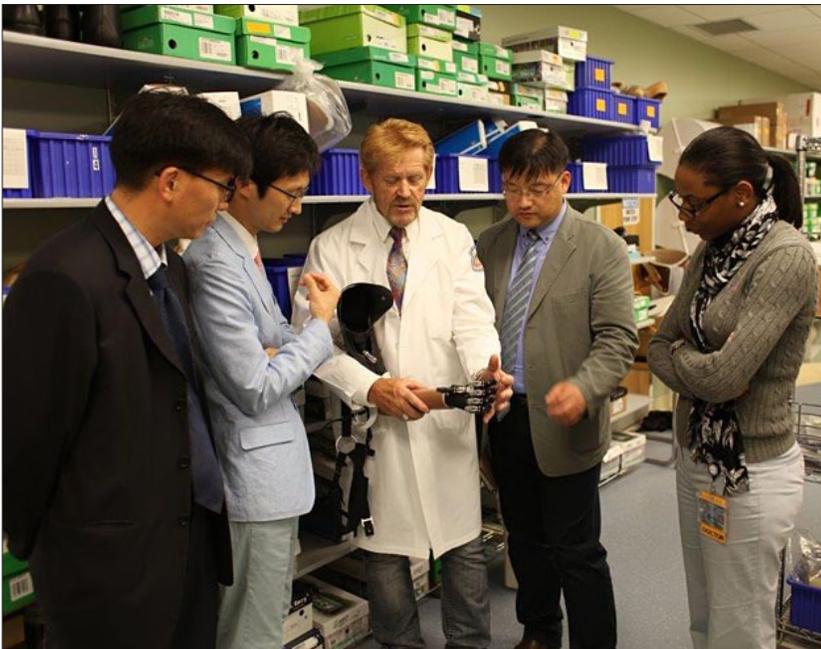
Beginning Nov. 4, Veterans who have previously used the Richmond VAMC’s Hoptel program will soon be using the “Hotel Based Lodging Program.” This program provides Veterans who qualify an opportunity to lodge at a nearby commercial hotel at no expense while awaiting medical services at the Medical Center.

“Our program is changing to enhance our services to the Veterans and their family members. The new program provides Veterans and their families the comforts they need and deserve while anticipating health care treatment,” says Darlene Edwards, Richmond VAMC’s spokeswoman. “A shuttle service will be available be-

tween the medical center and the hotel,” she added.

According to Edwards, patients who need specialized attention will continue to be lodged at the medical center while awaiting their treatment. However, most Veterans will use a nearby hotel room that will offer a safe and comfortable environment with the potential to have up to three family members stay overnight in order to be present to support the Veteran during their health care treatments.

Questions about the Richmond VAMC Hotel Based Lodging program can be directed to Yvette Scott at 804-675-5850 or by email to yvette.scott2@va.gov.



Korean Docs Visit Richmond

Clinical guests from South Korea, Tae-Woo Kim MD, Nam-Wook Yoo and Tae-Yong Chang, discuss with John Fox, Richmond VAMC’s Chief of Orthotic Lab and Dr. Joelle Makon, Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, as they demonstrate the upper extremity above elbow prosthesis with a I-Limb terminal device (hand) which has an electric motor in each finger allowing it to “grasp” objects. The South Korean clinicians spent a week at Richmond VAMC learning more about the Polytrauma system of care and rehabilitation process. They will use the information as a foundation for their development of a rehabilitation hospital in South Korea.

Fernandez Scott



Health Video: A Powerful Tool For Healthy Living

If a picture is worth a thousand words, then video must be worth a million. The words and images can come to life, increasing understanding and engagement. And the impact continues even after the screen fades to black. Learning via video can increase retention of information by up to 16 times over that of print alone.

The Veterans Health Library harnesses this power with a library of health videos and multi-media disease management guides.

“The Veterans Health Library is for and about Veterans, providing information that they can trust and use to improve their health and quality of life,” explains Dr. Rose Mary Pries, National Program Manager for Veterans Health Education and Information at NCP. “The videos in the Library are a great resource to that end.”

Information Veterans can trust and use

The Video Library includes over 150 health topics important to Veterans and their families. But the value goes beyond information. The videos focus on how Veterans and their families can apply the information to:

- Prevent and manage health problems
- Communicate more effectively with their health care team members
- Make informed decisions about their health care

“Including videos that are accessible and usable by all Veterans, including those with disabilities and special needs, was also a top priority,” according to Pries. For example, closed captioning can be turned on to suit the needs of Veterans who may have trouble hearing the audio.

Multi-media learning

In addition to stand alone videos, the Veterans Health Library offers Go-to-Guides™. These interactive workbooks combine text, audio, video and anima-



There are thousands of health information websites...

But only one designed for you.

www.veteranshealthlibrary.org

VA HEALTH CARE Defining EXCELLENCE in the 21st Century

tion for a true multi-media learning experience.

“Different people have different ways that they prefer to learn,” explains Pries. “Go-to-Guides allow Veterans to learn in the manner that best suits them. Often a combination of media proves best.”

Go-to-Guides are designed to build self-management skills for chronic conditions such as heart failure, heart disease, diabetes, asthma and COPD.

Available 24/7

Veterans and their families can view videos any time they want on the Veterans Health Library. Featured videos appear on the Library home page.

The video library can be found under ‘Additional Resources’ in the left-hand navigation. To make browsing easy, videos are divided into categories such as Mental Health, Cardiovascular, Cancer, Diabetes, OB/GYN and more. Videos are also included in search results.

Visit www.veteranshealthlibrary.org or via My HealthVet at www.myhealth.va.gov to explore the Video Library for yourself.



Operation Cold Front Underway

Military Order of the Purple Heart Al Meyer Chapter 637 presents Durham VAMC Director DeAnne Seekins and Assistant Director Stephen Black with 26 coats to kick off the medical center's 4th Annual Operation Cold Front Program. Operation Cold Front provides new winter coats to Veterans in need during the upcoming season. Durham VAMC's Voluntary Service is collecting new coats of all sizes for men and women. For additional information, please contact Voluntary Service at 919-286-0411 x 7810.

'Honor Flight' Premier To Be Held In Fayetteville Dec. 8

Honor Flight, One Last Mission, will be held at the Crown Arena in Fayetteville at 2:30 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 8, 2013. Admission is free for all World War II Veterans and their families.

Honor Flight is a heartwarming documentary about four living World War II Veterans and a Midwest community coming together to give them the trip of a lifetime.

The trips are called "Honor Flights" and for the Veterans, who are in their late 80s and early 90s, it's often the first time they've been thanked and the last trip of their lives. The 24-hour journey is full of surprises that deeply move all who are involved. It's uncommon for World War II Veterans to talk about the War, but the Honor Flight experience brings their stories out. Many Veterans say, with the exception of their wedding day and the birth of their children, the trip is the best day of their life.

However, success is all but ensured. Volunteers race against the clock to fly thousands of WWII Veterans to Washington, DC to see the memorial constructed for them in 2004, nearly 60 years after their epic struggle. While more than 5,000 Veterans have been flown from North Carolina, 1,000 World War II Veterans die every day and getting them on an Honor Flight in time is a constant battle.

The film features Orville Lemke, a former plumber and beloved father of nine who fights to hold off terminal cancer so he can make the trip, and Julian Plaster, an 89-year-old poet who has survived almost all of his friends and family.

Honor Flight also chronicles the stories of Veterans Joe Demler and Harvey Kurz. They raise money for and promote the Honor Flight program to help fly as many of their fellow Veterans as possible.

Joe, a soft-spoken retired postmaster, was famously pictured in Life magazine as "the Human Skeleton" upon his liberation from a German POW camp. Days from death, he weighed just 70 lbs. His comedic sidekick, Harvey, saw the iconic flag go up at the Battle of Iwo Jima, unbeknownst to the shoppers he bags groceries for at the local Pick n' Save.



ies for at the local Pick n' Save.

As the Honor Flight trip unfolds, Orville, Julian, Joe, Harvey and others share their stories and wisdom. The Honor Flight Network is a nonprofit organization that has flown over 100,000 Veterans to Washington, DC. It consists of 117 hubs across the country. If you'd like to get involved or donate to the cause, please visit www.honorflight.org.

People interested in attending the show should call 910-323-1991 or visit www.community-concert.com.

Happy 238th Birthday United States Marine Corps



On Nov. 10, 1775, the United States Marine Corps (USMC) was formed in response to the demand for soldiers to fight in the American Revolutionary War. On this day a committee of the Continental Congress met at Tun Tavern in Philadelphia to draft a resolution calling for two battalions of Marines able to fight for independence at sea and on shore. As the first order of business, Samuel Nicholas became Commandant of the newly-formed Marines. Tun Tavern's owner and popular patriot, Robert Mullan, became his first captain and recruiter. They began gathering support and were ready for action by early 1776.

Veteran Job Fair Set For Charlotte Motor Speedway Nov. 21

The military-to-civilian recruitment firm RecruitMilitary, in cooperation with The American Legion, will produce a Veteran Opportunity Expo, a hiring event for Veterans and other men and women with military backgrounds, at the Charlotte Motor Speedway on Nov. 21, from 11 a.m. until 3 p.m.

RecruitMilitary expects more than 40 employers, franchisors, educational institutions, and government agencies to reserve exhibitor booths at the Expo.

Already signed up are Norfolk Southern Corporation, Chesapeake Energy Drilling Division, Bank of America, DeVry University, Mastec Network Solutions, First Command Financial Planning, State Farm, Transocean Offshore Deepwater Drilling, The Mission Continues, T A Operating Group, Medical Sales Col-

lege, Limestone College, Assure South, Inc., and Trident University International.

Also participating are United Rentals, The Art Institutes, Lowe's Companies, Inc., Georgia College of Construction, Winston-Salem Police Department, New Horizons Computer Learning Center, American Income Life Insurance Company, and Heavy Construction Academy.

RecruitMilitary has scheduled the following additional Veteran hiring events through 2014: Charlotte, June 5, 2014; Raleigh, March 20, 2014, Richmond, Aug. 21, 2014.

RecruitMilitary has produced Opportunity Expos since 2006. For more information, visit: <https://events.recruitmilitary.com>.

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“The PTSD diagnosis is relevant,” he says, “but it’s the tip of the iceberg. And people often stop there in terms of looking at why an incident may have happened.”

What percentage of returning Veterans commit violence?

During a recent talk, Elbogen asked attendees to estimate what percentage of returning Veterans had been involved in some form of violent behavior in a one-year span. The guesses ranged from 5 to 80 percent. “The estimates were all over the map,” says Elbogen.

He shared with the audience study findings from a representative sample of Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans, VA and non-VA enrollees alike, from all branches of the military and all 50 states. Elbogen summarizes those results:

“We found that about 10 percent of Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans had reported severe violence—harming someone else, or inflicting potentially lethal harm—during a one-year period,” says Elbogen. “In total, 25 percent reported some type of physical aggression toward others in that time frame.”

Among those who had received a PTSD diagnosis, says Elbogen, the percentage of those who reported committing violence during the following year rose from 10 to 20 percent. However, notes Elbogen, “Among that 20 percent, there are those with a history of violence or criminal arrest before they joined the military. If you isolate only that group, the number jumps to 32 percent. But if you take them out, and look only at people with PTSD and without this prior history, the number goes down to 15 percent.”

“It’s tricky,” he says. “It depends how you ‘slice’ the data. But that’s what we know using this national data. That’s the scope of the problem.”

The bottom line, he says, is that “the majority of Veterans, with or without PTSD, did not report vio-

lence, aggression, or criminal behavior. At the same time, the data indicated that violence remains a serious problem for a subset of Veterans.”

The money factor

Elbogen says financial instability is an underappreciated risk factor for returning Veterans. He has conducted money-management workshops at the Durham VAMC for the past six years.

Poor money-management skills, not surprisingly, can put Veterans at risk for a host of problems, including homelessness, he notes. That point was borne out by a study of Elbogen’s that was published in the American Journal of Public Health.

“The article should be an eye-opener for people,” he says. “On the one hand, as my statistician likes to say, it’s empirical data showing the glaringly obvious—that if you don’t manage your money well, you can become homeless. On the other hand, no one I’m aware of has published this finding yet—for Veterans or civilians.”

Elbogen says case managers who staff homelessness programs in VA often provide informal money management help for Veterans. But it’s not required or formalized. “This is a potential opportunity for VA,” says Elbogen.

Which PTSD symptoms are linked to violence?

The latest diagnostic guidelines group PTSD symptoms into four clusters:

- Re-experiencing — These include, for example, flashbacks, bad dreams, and scary thoughts.
- Hyperarousal — Jumpiness, irritability, and anger; sleep problems; reckless, aggressive, or destructive behavior.
- Avoidance and numbing — Feeling emotionally numb; staying away from anything that might trigger

Continued on Pg 11

The Affordable Care Act, VA And You

VA enrollment means you don't need to take additional steps. If you are enrolled in any of VA's programs below, you have coverage under the standards of the health care law:

- Veteran's health care program
- Civilian Health and Medical program (CHAMP-VA)

- Spina bifida health care program

The health care law does not change your VA benefits or out-of-pocket costs. You can continue to enjoy VA health care, which means you have:

- Medical care rated among the best in the U.S.
- Immediate benefits of health care coverage. Veterans may apply for VA health care enrollment at any time.
- No enrollment fee, monthly premiums, or deductibles. Most Veterans have no out-of-pocket costs. Some Veterans may have to pay small copayments for health care or prescription drugs.
- Met the new requirement to have health care coverage that meets the minimum standard.

It's in the Mail

Enrolled Veterans will also receive this information through the mail. The letter from VA is another means to inform you that there is no need to take additional steps to comply with the health care law coverage standards going into effect in January 2014. Letters are being mailed in Priority Group order, starting with Veterans in Priority Group 1 through Priority Group 8. The mailings should be complete by the end of October.

Additionally, VA will mail proof of health coverage enrollment to each beneficiary to use for tax purposes at a later date.

Reintegration continued from Pg 10

traumatic memories.

- Negative thoughts and mood or feelings —Depression or guilt; problems with concentration or memory; social withdrawal.

Until this year, the second category, hyperarousal, had not explicitly included the violence-related symptoms. Prior research by Elbogen and others had in fact revealed a strong link between violence and aggression and the other hyperarousal symptoms—especially irritability.

One study found that Veterans with PTSD who were frequently irritable were twice as likely to get arrested, compared with others with PTSD but without that symptom.

Another more recent study by his group found that anger—part of hyperarousal—was related to family violence. The study also found, for the first time, that flashbacks—part of the “re-experiencing” cluster—

For more information about your health benefits, visit www.va.gov/healthbenefits anytime or call 1-877-222-VETS (8387), Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. or Saturdays 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., Eastern.

VA and Other Health Insurance

If you have other forms of health care coverage, such as a private insurance plan, Medicare, Medicaid or TRICARE, you can continue to use VA along with these plans. Remember: it is always a good idea to inform your doctors if you are receiving care outside of VA so your health care can be coordinated.

Family Members and the Marketplace

Even though you are covered by your VA health care enrollment, your family members who are not enrolled in a VA health care program should use the Marketplace to get coverage. They may get lower costs on monthly premiums or out-of-pocket costs. They could be eligible for free or low-cost coverage through Medicaid or the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP). They can submit an application for health care coverage through the Marketplace, and learn the amount of assistance they are eligible for. For more information, visit www.healthcare.gov.

Canceling Your Enrollment...A Word of Caution

If you choose to cancel your VA health care enrollment, you may reapply for enrollment at any time; however, acceptance for future VA health care enrollment will be based on eligibility factors at the time of application, which may result in a denial of enrollment. For more information visit www.va.gov/health/aca/EnrolledVeterans.asp, or www.healthcare.gov.

were related to violence against strangers. Elbogen cautions, though, that the flashback linkage needs to be confirmed in further research.

Elbogen says it's important for researchers to continue to tease out the different PTSD symptoms and understand which are predictive of violence or other dangerous behaviors, and which are not. “A clinician seeing a Veteran wants to know, what are the things I need to be attuned to, to know if this Veteran is at risk.”

Veterans 

Crisis Line 1-800-273-8255

PRESS 1

VISN 6 Sites of Care & VA Vet Centers

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

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

Beckley VAMC
200 Veterans Avenue
Beckley, WV 25801
304-255-2121, 877-902-5142
www.beckley.va.gov/

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Goldsboro CBOC
2610 Hospital Road
Goldsboro, NC 27909
919-731-9766

Greenbrier County CBOC
804 Industrial Park Rd.
Maxwelton, WV 24957
304-497-3900

Greenville CBOC
800 Moye Blvd.
Greenville, NC 27858
252-830-2149

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

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

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
Midway Park, NC 28544
910-353-6406

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

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

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

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

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/

Staunton CBOC
102 Business Way
Staunton, VA 24401
540-886-5777

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

Village Green Annex
1991 Fordham Drive
Fayetteville, NC 28304
910-488-2120 ext. 4020,

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

**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

Beckley Vet Center
1000 Johnstown Road
Beckley, WV 25801
304-252-8220

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

Fayetteville Vet Center
4140 Ramsey St.
Fayetteville, NC 28311
910-488-6252

Greensboro Vet Center
2009 S. Elm-Eugene St.
Greensboro, NC 27406
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

Princeton Vet Center
905 Mercer Street
Princeton, WV 24740
304-425-5653

Raleigh Vet Center
1649 Old Louisburg Rd.
Raleigh, NC 27604
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