

Reaching Out through Vet Centers

Each night in Seattle, between four and five thousand individuals are without housing. Veterans comprise 40% of this population. It is estimated that if all the inpatients in VISN20 were discharged tomorrow, 51% would be homeless. The average age of the Vietnam soldier was nineteen. For the most part, they returned with no college education or trade prior to their military service. They arrived home in the middle of a recession, and while they may have found work in the trades during the last thirty years, those jobs have dwindled. Many veterans moved here seeking manufacturing jobs or seasonal work in the fishing and timber industries. When their jobs ended, many found themselves homeless in a city where affordable housing is limited.

Ron Boxmeyer, Seattle Vet Center director/team leader, and Alan Castle, Coordinator of Health Care for Homeless Veterans (HCHV), work with a dedicated staff of counselors and therapists to provide community based care to homeless veteran clients. Rox Boxmeyer states, "A wide range of services are offered at Vet Centers, and since our inception, we have seen over 10,000 veterans." He added, "We really have made a difference in folks' lives."

"The heart of the Vet Center's mission is to provide counseling to service men and women for readjustment problems in an efficient and compassionate manner," Boxmeyer states. In the 70's during the Carter Administration, Congress established the Readjustment Counseling Service Program aimed at providing special services to both male and female veterans who served during wartime or had experienced sexual trauma while on active duty. Some two hundred Vet Centers were established, including five in Washington State located in Bellingham, Seattle, Tacoma, Yakima and Spokane. Boxmeyer added, "We are very proud of our vet centers and the impact our services have had on the lives of veterans."

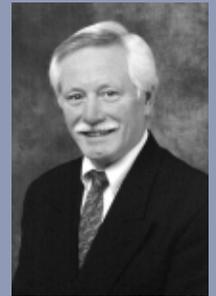
Vet Center Services Include: Readjustment Counseling; Sexual Trauma Counseling; Spouse/Significant Others Counseling; ETOH/Drug Abuse Counseling, Employment Assistance (a State Employment Service representative is on site twice a week); Psychological Services; Homeless Veteran Assistance (working with other organizations; such as The Salvation Army) Benefits Counseling, referrals for neighborhood dental clinics; The *Gift of Sight* through Lenscrafters; referrals for medical services at VA Puget Sound Health Care System.

Services may vary, depending on the location of the Vet Center and the needs of the veterans in that community. This is truly one stop shopping for the veteran

For more information contact: **Bellingham Vet Center** (360) 733-9226; **Seattle Vet Center** (206) 553-2706; **Spokane Vet Center** (509) 444-8387; **Tacoma Vet Center** (253) 565-7038; **Yakima Vet Center** (509) 457-2736. Additional information about the Vet Center and HCHV is available on the videotape, "One VA Partnerships Serving Homeless Veterans" which is available through the VA Puget Sound library. It is well worth viewing.

Comments from the Director

Dr. Leslie M. Burger, (network clinical manager), was recently appointed as acting network director for VISN 20. Dr. Burger conveyed his pride in our accomplishments by stating, "We have already made great strides



Timothy Williams
Director

toward integration of our health care delivery system, and in the process, we have made a difference in the lives of our patients. We have aggressively pursued VISN-wide accreditation by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations, with much success. We can take great pride in our scores, and we are looking at ways to expand the use of Baldrige principles to guide our strategic planning and leadership processes."

At the VISN level, we will proceed with streamlining our organizational structure, to ensure that we are working to constantly improve access and quality of care across the system. Toward that end, we will continue to demonstrate our commitment to Secretary Principi's three areas of emphasis: quality, access and living within our budget. We must focus on maintaining the quality of care that has been our hallmark, and at the same time continue to ensure that access will be available to those who rely on us for their care. We must live within the resources allocated to us by Congress. We will continue to identify and measure quality standards that move our organization beyond current levels of achievement.

(Continued on page 6)

Quality

Why Measure Performance?

Why does VA Puget Sound Health Care System spend so much time talking about and measuring performance? The system we use is based on the strategic plan for both Veterans Health Administration (VHA), the Veterans Integrated Network 20 (VISN20) plan, and VA Puget Sound. This article and future articles will trace the implementation of the Performance Measurement System through VISN20 and our facility.

The performance plan is based on the premise that better quality, access and satisfaction, are often more effective than a focus on cost. For example, if we encourage patients to receive pneumococcal vaccinations (a relatively inexpensive vaccine), the result is fewer, less expensive visits to the hospital. The measures are designed in each domain service to provide a framework that will show how effective, responsive and quickly we provide improved quality of care to veterans by reducing their rates of certain types of disease.

The Office of Quality and Performance has identified and keeps track of key aspects of the Performance Measurement Plan to:

- Provide demonstration of an integrated health system, consistently using the best scientific evidence in clinical practice, which facilitates the achievement of better health outcomes;
- Set national benchmarks for preventive and therapeutic healthcare services that exceed U.S. Government Healthy People 2010 goals and private sector goals;
- Unify managers and clinicians by use of an annual contract between VA Central Office and Networks called the Network Performance Plan;

- Profile care to a larger veteran population without increasing health care expenditures;
- Directly link to VHA's Mission, Vision, Strategic Goals, and Strategic Planning;
- Track and ensure that we are meeting key Domains of Value: access to care, quality of care, patient functional status, cost of care, customer satisfaction, and building healthy communities

The underlying philosophy of the Performance Measurement Program includes:

- Evidence-based practice: multi-disciplinary national experts within VHA incorporate best evidence derived from research into clinical practice guidelines for VHA's highest volume, highest risk conditions;
- Measurement and Accountability: clinical experts and administrative leaders develop measures to track clinical and other outcomes that should result from the implementation of practice guidelines. The performance contract holds managers accountable for achieving the performance target.

Each year the Performance Measurement Plan is communicated through a manual. Each measurement is outlined with identified data sources, data definitions and collection methods. This ensures that the data collected meets all scientific methods of data measurement so that the measurements are an accurate reflection of our veterans' needs.

For more information contact Quality Improvement at (206) 764-2353

Moving Up in the VA

VA Puget Sound's commitment to its employees extends deep into the organization and was put into action with the recent job opportunity fair titled "Moving Up in the VA. Karol Brown, event chair, gave high marks to the organizing committee: Esther Simpson, Marina Quiles and Georgia Vitense (EEO special emphasis managers); the Joint Partnership Council; the Center for Education and Development; the Executive Office; and Human Resources Management Service. The one-day event at both divisions, provided employees with information on careers in VA, and tips on advancing their careers within VA. Panel discussion topics included the VA job application process; educational support; networking to find job openings; mentoring and coaching.

Videotapes are available for check out in the library for those who missed the fair. To obtain more information, call Karol Brown at extension 76670.



n A c t i o n in Action

Why Accreditation is Important to You

Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO)

To guarantee that you will receive the best health care in a safe environment, by doctors, nurses and other providers who have received up-to-date training, you would always select a JCAHO-approved facility. We are pleased to announce that VA Puget Sound Health Care System was accredited for 3 years in October 2001 by JCAHO. Additionally, Veterans Integrated Service Network 20 (VISN 20), which includes VA medical centers, clinics and domiciliaries in Alaska, Idaho, Oregon, and Washington, has received a 3-year Network Accreditation from the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO).

JCAHO is an independent, not-for-profit organization that evaluates and accredits nearly 20,000 health care organizations and programs in the United States. It uses criteria to assess patient rights, patient treatment, and infection control. It examines integration and coordination of care and services, organization ethics, educating and communicating with veterans and staff, management of data and information, and improving performance. The standards focus not simply on what the organization has, but what it does.

Standards set forth performance expectations for the safety and quality of patient care. JCAHO develops its standards in consultation with health care experts, providers, measurement experts, purchasers and consumers. Becoming “accredited” demonstrates VA’s commitment to safety and quality. On its web site, JCAHO provides a comprehensive guide to help individuals learn more about the safety and quality of JCAHO accredited health care organizations and programs throughout the United States. The performance report provides detailed information about an organization’s performance and how it compares to similar organizations. Printed performance reports are available through the Customer Service Center, (630) 792-5800. Check out the website and always choose a facility that has been accredited by JCAHO ...it makes a difference in your care and safety.
<http://www.jcaho.org/>



Improving Practices

The Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO), a national hospital standards accreditation agency, has recently identified, “reducing restraints and improving documentation of restraints” as a top priority for the nation. To address this concern JCAHO created several standards, or rules, to reduce the risks associated with use of restraints.

The practice of restraining a patient is a last-step procedure used in modern healthcare practice. Safety of patients and staff are the overriding factors in deciding whether or not to use restraint. Extensive training is provided to staff on the safest method of restraint.

To implement this change in philosophy, VA Puget Sound Health Care System’s Executive Board established an interdisciplinary task force to develop and direct a comprehensive restraint alternative program. This team started by looking at historical data, current processes, and research-based practice standards and hospital policy. They redefined the policy to reflect VA’s new philosophy of restraint reduction and movement toward a restraint-free health care system. Next, the team assisted the process by providing staff education, developing reporting and discussion guidelines, and providing alternatives to restraints. The use of alternative devices such as bed alarms, elbow immobilizers, and mittens (not tied to the bed) have allowed health care providers to protect patients yet keep them unrestricted and unrestrained. Thanks to the dedication, ingenuity, hard work, and daily commitment of the staff, restraint use has plummeted 63%; furthermore, fall and injury rates have not increased. The team has also developed and implemented additional standards to provide patient and family education. This allows patients and their families to better understand and participate more actively in the care of the patient. We are very proud that the decreased use of restraints has contributed to the health and dignity of VA’s patients.

Research & Development at VA Puget Sound Health Care System

R&D plays a vital role in our mission; nowhere is this more evident than at VA Puget Sound Health Care System. The program is a reflection of the Health Care System's commitment to providing the highest quality of care to its veterans. It is an integral part of the affiliation with the University of Washington, bringing that Institution's premier academic medicine program to the Health Care System; ensuring that the professional staff and quality of care here is of the highest caliber.

Research in the VA has always provided a valuable tool for recruitment of physicians and scientific staff. Currently 150 of our Health Care System staff are Principal Investigators. We receive approximately \$12 million annually in VA intramural funding and another \$13 million in non-VA funds (including support from NIH, volunteer health organizations, and the pharmaceutical and biotechnology industries) to support over 400 active research projects. Principal Investigators represent virtually every major clinical department, including:

The effects of a strong R&D program go well beyond recruitment of high quality clinical staff. The contributions to patient care cannot be overstated. Patients at this institution have access to the latest pharmaceutical therapies and diagnostic techniques, and receive enhanced care as a result of participation in clinical studies; the quality of "routine" care is enhanced by the personal commitment of staff to increase their professional capabilities and to actively contribute to the advancement of their fields. R&D provides a significant workforce of physicians, nurses and technicians, as well as equipment and other tangible resources that otherwise would not be available to the institution.

Outstanding Achievement in Health Services Research



*Stephan D. Fihn,
M.D., MPH*

The Department of Veterans Affairs, Under Secretary's Award for Outstanding Achievement in Health Services Research was presented to Stephan D. Fihn, M.D., MPH, VA Puget Sound Health Care System, at the annual Health Services Research and Development (HSR&D) meeting in Washington DC. This award is a major honor for Dr. Fihn and a landmark for VA health services research.

"Dr. Fihn is widely recognized as one of the preeminent investigators in Health Services providing essential leadership not only for the HSR&D Center of Excellence at VA Puget Sound, but for clinical and teaching programs in primary care," states Dr. Gordon Starkebaum, chief of staff at VA Puget Sound. Dr. Fihn has published over 100 articles in peer-reviewed journals plus some 50 other publications including clinical reviews, book chapters and technical reports. He is the recipient of over 30

competitive grants totaling over \$10 million from VA, National Institutes of Health, the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality and other organizations. Fihn now serves as a formal consultant to the Office of Quality and Performance and provides advice on collecting health status information from patients.

Nationally, Dr. Fihn has represented VA on committees and task force groups such as the National VA Health Care Reform Program that placed Veterans Health Administration at the forefront of primary care and quality improvement. He has also worked with the joint task force of the American College of Cardiology, American Heart Association, and the American College of Physicians-American Society of Internal Medicine, and is responsible for guidelines for the management of chronic stable angina. He recently authored a widely cited editorial in the New England Journal of Medicine about advances in quality improvement within VA.

SELECT Study Targets Prostate Cancer

Healthy men age 55 and older are needed for the Selenium and Vitamin E Cancer Prevention Trial (SELECT), which seeks to learn if these two dietary supplements can protect against prostate cancer. The study needs a total of 32,400 men, and will take up to 12 years to complete. VA Puget Sound is recruiting veterans from Washington, Alaska and Idaho.

Men may be eligible for the SELECT study if they:

- Are age 55 or older; age 50 or older for African American men
- Have never had prostate cancer or any other cancer, except non-melanoma skin cancer, in the last five years and are generally in good health

Interested men may contact VA Puget Sound's SELECT study office at (206) 768-5283.



IN THE NEWS

2002 Outdoor Adaptive Sporting Clinic

The 2nd Annual Adaptive Sporting Clinic was a huge success, according to Dave Tostenrude, Recreation Therapy Manager. The event is coordinated through VA Puget Sound's Recreation Therapy Program, Spinal Cord Injury (SCI) and Rehabilitation Care Services (RCS). "Individuals with physical disabilities had the opportunity to learn about shooting sports, hunting and access to outdoor recreation activities, and included trap shooting, rifle, pistol and target shooting, and archery," states Tostenrude. Veterans also received information about access to parks and outdoor recreation areas. Through this experience the participants received education about the sports and how to incorporate them into their lives.

Twenty-seven veterans from SCI and RCS, along with four non-VA participants with spinal cord injuries, participated. Over thirty individuals from the community, family members and VA Puget Sound staff volunteered their time to help make this event a success! The Seattle Rifle and Pistol Association once again provided their club's facilities and shared their time, expertise and love of sports; making this a great event for veterans. Thanks go to the Oregon and Northwest PVA, who donated equipment and lunch. For more information contact Dave Tostenrude at (206) 277-1648, or Kristi Kvitle at (206) 764-2263 .



New EEO Manager Joins VA Team



Grallin Butler

VA Puget Sound Health Care System is pleased to announce the appointment of Grallin Butler as the new Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) manager. Butler has worked in Equal Employment Opportunity since 1991 and managed the EEO program for the Pacific Northwest for the past 6 years. Most recently, he worked as an alternative dispute resolution specialist and an equal employment opportunity manager with the U.S. Coast Guard. Prior to his assignment to the Pacific Northwest, he was the lead trainer and equal opportunity counselor at the U.S. Coast Guard's Training Center in Petaluma, CA.

In joining the VA team, Butler states, "this is a great opportunity to continue to expand the already strong efforts to educate all employees and managers about the EEO process, and to create a more open dialog on issues that often lead to conflict and misunderstandings in the work environment." Butler is a 24-year veteran of both the U.S. Navy and the U.S. Coast Guard. His office is located in the EEO Office in Bldg. 100/Rm 6B-102. He can be reached at (206) 764-2806.

VA Staff Honors Volunteers Las Vegas Style

Once again VA Puget Sound's Director Tim Williams, Deputy Director Sandy Nielsen, and Chief of Staff Gordon Starkebaum led 30 staff members in honoring VA volunteers with a "ViVA Las VAgas" show at the Sea-Tac Doubletree Hotel.



"VA Puget Sound Health Care System employees are proud to work side by side with VA Volunteers, as health care provided to veterans is definitely enhanced through this partnership," says Williams. During 2001, 1,132 men, women, and youth served over 171,000 hours at the American Lake and Seattle divisions, the Vet Centers, the DAV Transportation Program, Community Based Outpatient Clinics, and the Tahoma National Cemetery. Barbara Hatred, director of Voluntary Service explains, "Volunteers have become more involved; they augment staff in such settings as hospital wards, nursing homes, community-based volunteer programs, end-of-life care programs, foster care and veterans outreach centers." Along with their valued service, which equates to nearly \$2.5 million, individuals and VAVS organizations contributed in cash and in-kind donations totaling more than \$397,000.

Thank You Volunteers!

IN THE NEWS

*(Comments from the
Director
Continued)*



Survey data and performance measures will guide our decision-making.

We will maintain our collaborative partnership with the Veterans Benefits Administration to assure a timely Compensation/Pension (C&P) exam process. We will continue to effectively address the increasing demand for care that has resulted in longer wait times, and the desire to expand our Community Based Outpatient Program (CBOC's), within the framework of resource challenges.

Billing and Collections What every veteran should know

First in a series...

Many veterans wonder why they receive a bill from the VA or why their insurance is being billed. In future editions of the VA Newsletter we will try to demystify the VA revenue process. Our mission is "to maximize the recovery of funds due to the VA for the provision of health care services to veterans, dependents and others using the VA system." For more information about the revenue office (MCCR), contact 1-800-329-8387, extension 62340.

Seasonal Allergies

Hay fever, which is triggered by "allergens" such as pollens or molds, affects 35 million people in the United States. For persons who have seasonal allergies, or hay fever, lawns and gardens can mean endless sneezing, itchy eyes, congestion, scratchy throat, and sometimes asthma episodes.

"On windy days, and for days afterward, counts are high because the pollen has been spread throughout the air," says Gillian Shepherd, M.D., chair of the Education Sub-Committee of the American Academy of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology. "After it rains, counts drop as the rain washes the pollen away."

Though high pollen counts can result in numerous types of symptoms, the most common complaint is a runny nose. Common weeds such as ragweed, pigweed and Russian thistle tend to be highly allergenic. By contrast maple trees and apples trees cause few allergic reactions because their pollen is too heavy and sticky to float through the air.

In most cases, pollens are unavoidable. Wear a mask when gardening; leave all gardening tools and clothing outdoors; shower immediately after working. Skin testing by an allergist/immunologist can determine which allergens trigger allergic reactions for an individual. These specialists can help develop strategies for avoiding problem plants and prescribe medications to alleviate symptoms.

For more information on allergies, visit the Patients and Consumers Center website for the American Academy of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology (AAAAI) <http://www.aaaai.org/patients.stm>

Northwest
News
Corner

One VA on Display

The Veterans Health Administration (VHA) has developed an exciting new Learning Map poster designed to help veterans and beneficiaries learn about and access valuable benefits and programs. Twelve informational fact sheets accompany the poster with information about nine benefits.

- Education
- Life Insurance
- Homes
- Disability Compensation and Pension
- Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Benefits
- Health Care
- Family and Survivor Benefits
- Burial
- Other Federal and State Benefits

These materials will soon be displayed in various areas at both American Lake and Seattle divisions. Veterans who would like more information may call the Business Office at American Lake, (253) 583-8440, extension 76542, or in Seattle at (206) 764-2200.



Veterans

OUR FAMILY, OUR FRIENDS

Veterans Letters

Dear Dr. Hunt:

I am a former POW from WWII. Over the years I have received letters from the Veterans Administration urging me to come in for an examination. I did not respond as I have been leery of what kind of treatment I would receive from a big, impersonal government run outfit.

WHAT A SURPRISE! I could not have been welcomed more warmly and treated in such a professional and cordial way. The Doctors, Lab Technicians, X-Ray personnel, Audiologist and the tread-mill staff were all so very cordial and helpful.

*I want you to know what a great team you have. I am blown away!
Thank you....thank you all.*

With deep appreciation from a 77 year old veteran

Mr. Williams,

Thanks to the cooperation of many of your staff, particularly the Patient Advocates, many veterans that might otherwise have gone with a need unmet, or left with a misunderstanding that might have had untoward consequences to their health or quality of life, received compassionate and timely assistance. Such collaboration serves as a hallmark to our effective and successful partner-ship. For this we are most grateful.

Thank you for the compassionate quality health care you provide to our county's veterans and for allowing us to assist.

*Sincerely,
Director, National Veterans Service
Veterans of Foreign Wars
Washington, DC*

Dear Ms. Hatred:

My brother stayed at VA Puget Sound for a total of 45 days. He did not feel really well for any of those days, yet it was an experience of tremendous grace for him and the entire family, because he was given such loving care and excellent medical attention. There are not words to adequately express the comfort from that and gratitude we hold for the staff which ministered to him. Thank you all for your compassion and generosity.

*Sincerely yours,
His grateful sister*

Inspiring Veteran Wins Award for Photography



Steve Wilber

Steve Wilber was wounded during his service on river-boats in Vietnam. After returning home, he was riding his motor-cycle and lost his left leg after being hit by a drunken driver. He joined the US

Amputee Soccer Team after moving to Seattle in 1984. "At first, I came out to the games just to take pictures, then they said they needed me as a player." Wilber states, "I always try to take pictures of one particular player who shows great inspiration on the field and off. We have traveled around the world in our World Cup events, and our next trip will be to Sochi, Russia, in September."

In July of 2000, Wilber was diagnosed with throat cancer due to Agent Orange exposure. "After my treatment, I've got a clean bill of health. I am proud to be a veteran and am grateful for receiving such great care at VA Puget Sound, which has given my life back." Wilber further states that "after going through what I have, I always try to be an inspiration to other people."

World Cup
Amputee Soccer
- Brazil 2001

Photo by Steve
Wilber

1st Place,
Photography
Veterans Art
Competition
2002



Defense Against Bio-terrorism

Bio-terrorism, the intentional use of infectious agents, or germs, to cause illness as an act of hostility is a sad but real concern since September 11. "Our number one priority is to protect our veteran patients and staff in the unlikely event of a biological attack," said Dr. Gordon Starkebaum, chief of staff at VA Puget Sound.

"We also participate in a series of meetings with area hospitals and the King County Public Health Department to coordinate bio-terrorism responses," Dr. Starkebaum said. "We are focusing on smallpox, as the most dreadful of scenarios. Smallpox has characteristics that would be highly contagious, potentially lethal, with an immunity that is probably waning. If there were an outbreak, a coordination of medical care would be required throughout." Smallpox outbreak prevention and containment are among the strategies being developed by this group.

Continuous staff training on the safe handling of biohazards and contagious diseases has been up-dated to feature bio-terrorism awareness. Ware-housing of pharmaceuticals to treat anthrax is also planned.

Identity theft fastest growing crime

Identity theft occurs when someone steals your personal information in order to commit fraud or theft. Identity theft may involve taking just a few pieces of valid identification, such as your name, Social Security number, credit card number, or some other piece of your personal information. With this information, identity thieves can make purchases, apply for and receive loans, credit cards or debit cards in your name. Your credit rating can be quickly damaged. Your efforts to correct these problems can be literally exhausting!



To prevent identity theft, invest in a locking mailbox and a shredder. Resist using your birthday or social security number for passwords, and make sure you protect your private information as it comes into and goes out of your home. Police suggest you shred or burn papers that contain Social Security numbers, checking account numbers, or other forms of identification.

Additional information on how identity thieves work and how to protect yourself from this crime are listed in the following web sites:

www.privacyrights.org

www.consumer.gov/idtheft

<http://www.fraud.org/>

<http://www.aarp.org/confacts/money/identity.html>

www.wa.gov

Emergency Preparedness

There's More to the Story

The natural and man-made disasters of 2001 gave emergency preparedness a renewed priority. "Fires, earthquakes, bomb-threats, are just some of the events covered in VA Puget Sound's Emergency Management Plan," reports Ron Smith, fire safety specialist. Smith, who has 32 years fire fighting experience says, "A plan like this is very extensive with many different elements. Every service line and every department has a copy of our plan. We also have two drills yearly to prepare for both internal and external disaster scenarios."

"History has shown that any area struck by a disastrous situation will be on its own for the first 24 to 48 hours," says Leslie Burger, M.D., VISN 20 acting northwest network director. "After that time, resources can be rallied from other areas for aid. That is exactly what is planned in our VISN," he said. "There are several plans in place for emergency situations in VISN 20: a communication plan to support staff, patients and their families, and a transportation plan to move resources. There are also plans for medical logistics, pharmaceutical warehousing, laboratory and emergency blood supply." For more information contact Joe Cain, safety manager, VA Puget Sound at (206) 764-2267, or Edward James, VISN 20 area emergency manager, at (360) 737-1431.



Puget Sound Health Care System
American Lake & Seattle

VA Puget Sound News is published quarterly, each autumn, winter, spring and summer by the Office of Public Affairs. VA Puget Sound Health Care System proudly serves veterans throughout the Northwest with facilities located in Seattle and at American Lake. VA Puget Sound is part of the VISN 20 network of health care facilities.

VA PUGET SOUND HEALTH CARE SYSTEM

Mr. Timothy B. Williams, Director;
Ms. Sandy J. Nielsen, Deputy Director;
Gordon A. Starkebaum, MD, Chief of Staff;
Jeri A. Rowe, Public Affairs Officer

Editorial Board:

Alisa Bradrick
Robin Cook, RN
Lynn Curry, RN
Fred Fiscella
Ellen Flores
Barbara Hatred
Lin Hoisington
Charles Keelin
Eden Palmer
Pamela Popplewell, RN
Jeri A. Rowe
Dave Tostenrude
John Weber
Walt Werkhoven
Claudia Zink

Contributors:

Karol Brown
Grallin Butler
Susan Goss
Wendy Riverman
Fran Syrcle
Steve Wilber

Comments or future story ideas may be submitted to the VA Puget Sound News Editorial Board via Outlook to Jeri Rowe and Ellen Flores. All photos for newsletter inclusion must be taken or approved by the Editorial Board.

Back Issues of VA Puget Sound News are available on the VA Puget Sound Web Site

www.Puget-Sound.med.va.gov