

VETERANS' ADVANTAGE

SPRING 2009

THE WELLNESS MAGAZINE
FOR NEW YORK / NEW JERSEY VETERANS

**Get in shape
this spring**

**Supporting our
new Veterans**

**Health care for
everyone**



From the Network Director:

Do the right thing

Dear Veteran,

VA has become the standard-bearer for quality health care, outperforming other health care organizations on many measures. Publications from *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post* to “BusinessWeek” and “Washington Monthly” have lauded us for providing “the best care anywhere.”

Now we’re focusing on our next challenge—to disseminate a systems-focused model to improve ethical practices in health care. This model is called IntegratedEthics.

At each of our medical centers, our IntegratedEthics program consists of three core functions: ethics consultation to address individual ethical concerns; preventive ethics to consider ethics quality at the system-wide level; and ethical leadership to review ethics quality in the organization’s environment and culture. Network and facility committees meet regularly and help promote and improve ethical practices.

The results from our 2008 IntegratedEthics Staff Survey showed several areas in which we have strong ethical practices. For example, participants strongly believe that we do a great job informing patients of all treatment options and that we regularly educate staff about privacy and confidentiality.

Moving forward, we will refamiliarize employees with the rules of ethical conduct and ensure that “doing the right thing” is never sacrificed.

At VA, our goal is to be an organization where it’s easy to do the right thing, at the right time, in the right way.

Michael A. Sabo
VA Network Director

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<http://www.va.gov/visns/visn03>



Get your prescriptions online

You asked for it, and you got it! You can now use My Health Vet—VA’s online service for Veterans—to refill your prescriptions and view your prescription history online. To take advantage of this service, you must be a registered user of My Health Vet. As a registered user, you’ll also have access to a Personal Health Journal where you can record and track your health statistics online. To register for these important benefits, visit www.myhealth.va.gov.

We’re just a phone call away

Veterans, do you have questions about your health? During weekdays (Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.), staff at your VA Medical Center or VA Clinic are available to assist. After 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, weekends or holidays, call the VA Nurses Helpline at 1-800-877-6976 if you have a medical question. Remember to call 911 at any time if you’re having a medical emergency.

We're here for you!

BY CATHY ABSHIRE, VISN 3 OEF/OIF PROGRAM MANAGER

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has made a commitment to provide health care and support to Veterans returning from Afghanistan and Iraq. Returning

Stay informed!

For more information and a list of resources available to returning Veterans visit <http://oefoif.vssc.med.va.gov>.

Veteran program teams offer:

- **Combat Veteran call center outreach initiative.** We're calling any discharged Veteran who hasn't accessed VA health care and connecting him or her with a VA health care facility.
- **Reserve component demobilizations.** VA staff support and encourage 100-percent enrollment at demobilization sites.
- **Post-deployment health reassessment (PDHRA).** VA actively participates in DoD PDHRA



Members of the OEF/OIF team meet with Veterans and families during a VA New Jersey Health Care System Annual Homecoming Event

programs, providing information about VA care and entitlements and enrolling Veterans on the spot.

- **Yellow ribbon reintegration program.** This program provides National Guard and Reserve members with information and services throughout the deployment cycle.
- **Welcome-home events.** VHA hosts welcome-home events to provide access to VA resources. ■



Shape up for spring

BY PERRY HARTMANN, K.T., KINESIOTHERAPIST

Spring is a good time to increase your activity. Days are warmer, longer and less hazardous, making it a better time to become active.

Rates of obesity are increasing, even among kids and adolescents.

How physical activity helps

In the MOVE! (Motivating Overweight and Obese Veterans Everywhere) program, we use the term physical activity rather than exercise, since many activities that burn calories wouldn't normally be considered exercise. These activities include taking the stairs instead of the elevator, walking or riding a bicycle instead of driving and using manual implements instead of power tools for yard- and house-

work. These activities burn calories but generally won't produce physiological changes such as improvements in resting heart rate and blood pressure. When combined with a program of healthy eating and behavior modification, they can produce substantial results.

The other type of activity is programmed physical activities, such as walking on a treadmill, hiking,

riding a stationary bike or taking an aerobics class. They produce significant caloric expenditure and physiological changes over time. These activities are more strenuous and cause the heart rate to increase. ■

Get MOVE-ing!

Tips to increase your activity:

- Take stairs, not the elevator.
- Park at the far end of the parking lot and walk.
- Take a brisk walk while shopping at the mall.
- March in place during TV commercials.
- Stretch or do chair exercises while watching TV.
- On work breaks, take a 10- to 15-minute walk.





Children of PS 14 of the Bronx with (left to right) Miss Teen USA, Stevi Perry; Veteran SSG Ricky Boone (USANG Ret.); and State Senator Jeff Klein

The power of “thank you”

On Friday, February 13, the James J. Peters VA Medical Center (JJPVAMC) hosted a special celebration of America’s hospitalized Veterans. This event marked the 31st anniversary of the National Salute to Hospitalized Veterans, and it featured visits by the SUNY Maritime Color Guard, students of PS 14, State Senator Jeff Klein and Miss Teen USA, Stevi Perry.

The National Salute is a week-long celebration that occurs during the week of Valentine’s Day. During this time, VA Medical Centers across the country invite

James J. Peters VAMC
www.bronx.va.gov

local celebrities, elected officials and children to visit Veterans and bring Valentine’s Day cheer.

“This is a great celebration that gives everyone a chance to let our Veterans know just how much they are appreciated,” says JJPVAMC Director MaryAnn Musumeci. “We love seeing so many of our community partners coming by. Their presence heightens the celebration and brings a special note of cheer.”

Musumeci hopes visitors come away with a better understanding of the important roles that volunteers play at the medical center throughout the year. She encourages visitors to consider coming back to participate as volunteers. “Our medical center’s 668

volunteers are an important part of our health care team and donate more than 45,000 hours of their precious time to our Veterans. The National Salute program is a great way for people to learn more about helping the Veterans we serve,” Musumeci says. “Visitors are surprised at how varied the volunteer opportunities are.” ■

Help out!

Interested in learning more about volunteer opportunities within VA? Call the office of Voluntary Services at **(718) 584-9000, ext. 5473 or 5474.**

A sweet solution to that stomachache

BY CONTRIBUTING WRITER KATIE DAY, DIETETIC INTERN

From time to time, all of us experience stress, whether in the form of meeting deadlines at work or getting children off to school on time. With that stress often come stomach issues. A touch of peppermint or ginger is a sweet solution to your stomachache—and it can ease your anxiety, too.

Both peppermint and ginger are known for their soothing effects on the stomach. Peppermint leaf works to soothe the stomach through the action of essential oils, tannins, flavonoids, choline and potassium. Peppermint relaxes the digestive system, relieving gas, stimulating digestive juice flow and stimulating bile (the substance that's key in fat digestion). Peppermint also works on the stomach wall to relieve pain and feelings of nausea and prevent vomiting, while calming nerves and easing anxiety. Ginger root works as a digestive aid to help soothe the stomach. It helps relieve indigestion, gas pains, diarrhea,

nausea and cramping and can help ease motion sickness.

Many people drink ginger ale (diet or regular) to ease stomach symptoms. And ginger and peppermint teas can be very effective, tasty and relaxing. Another option, especially if you're on the go, is ginger or peppermint

candy, ginger chews or candied dried ginger. But don't overdo it on the candy, since too much sugar can exacerbate stomach symptoms and pack on the calories. Limit yourself to two pieces or the serving size listed on the package. One caveat: Ginger also works as a blood thinner, so avoid it if you have a clotting disorder or are taking blood thinners. ■

A hot cup of ginger or peppermint tea can have a soothing effect on your stomach.



Win the numbers game

BY WAVELL HODGE, M.D.

Innovations in technology, especially the electronic health record, have made great changes possible at VA. And several key ideas in patient care have evolved:

- Veterans have primary care doctors with whom they establish a relationship.
- Prevention is emphasized. Chronic diseases like heart disease, diabetes and high blood pressure are managed to minimize progression and secondary complications.
- Technology allows tracking of chronic illnesses, risk factors, medications and tests.
- Records are accessible, tests readily retrievable and tracking of preventive measures like vaccines a breeze.

As we age, we suffer from chronic illness. Developing one tends to lead to others, creating a downward spiral. To stop the progression, VA uses technology

to identify Veterans at risk and warns doctors to help patients lose weight and lower blood pressure, blood sugar and cholesterol.

A team effort

To make these concepts truly successful requires team effort. The team is comprised of you, your doctor and health care workers. Imagine yourself as an athlete: You're the quarterback, the doctor the head coach, other health care workers position coaches. The coaches teach, support and help with the game plan, but fine-tuning the execution is your job. It starts with basic knowledge outlined in the playbook.

In health care, knowing your playbook (key tests, their meaning and what affects them—and you) is essential.

During a health care visit, get a game plan to execute between visits. Study the playbook and make adjustments to live your life. Ask questions, take notes and come prepared, because you're a winner, intent on winning! ■



Wavell Hodge, M.D., is the Program Manager of Primary Care at VA Hudson Valley Health Care System.



Your playbook

Aim to meet these healthy goals:

Blood pressure: Get it below 120/80 mm Hg.

Fasting blood sugar: 80 mg/dL to 105 mg/dL. If it's higher than 126 mg/dL two or more times, or higher than 200 mg/dL, you have diabetes.

HbA1c (hemoglobin): Less than 7 percent. It represents blood sugar for the past three to four months.

BMI (body mass index): A measure of fat based on your weight and height; aim for 20 to 25.

Waist circumference: Less than 40 inches for men; less than 35 inches for women

Total cholesterol: Less than 200 mg/dL

Triglycerides: Less than 130 mg/dL

HDL (good cholesterol): Over 50 mg/dL

LDL (bad cholesterol): Less than 100 mg/dL

VA Hudson Valley Health Care System

www.hudsonvalley.va.gov

www.castlepoint.va.gov

www.montrose.va.gov

Help for our newest Veterans

VA health care services are available

BY JULIANA LAURENZI, LCSW-R

VA Hudson Valley Health Care System (HVHS) is poised to meet and serve the Veterans of Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan and Operation Iraqi Freedom in Iraq (OEF/OIF) as they return home to the Hudson Valley. The OEF/OIF program has been developed as part of a larger VA initiative and offers many means of assistance, including:

- providing information to Veterans and their families
- assisting Veterans in enrolling in VA health care and applying for benefits, including five years of free health care for combat Veterans, six months of dental care and educational and vocational benefits
- providing personal and case management services
- implementing additional assistance, such as group support and links to resources that have been developed for our newest Veterans

Veterans can also receive confidential readjustment counseling at the White Plains and Middletown Veteran Centers.

How to enroll

At VA HVHS, Veterans can enroll at the two main campuses at Montrose in Westchester County and Castle Point in Dutchess County, or at seven Community-Based Outpatient Clinics in Putnam, Dutchess, Rockland, Orange and Sullivan counties. At each site, an OEF/OIF case manager or social worker will greet the Veteran and provide screenings for common issues. If a Veteran has a positive screen, additional appointments will be arranged for further evaluation and treatment. Evening hours are available at the Castle Point and Goshen sites.

We encourage all Veterans to enroll in VA health care, where they'll be assigned a primary care doctor. Mental health clinics, physical therapy and other specialty services are available. Polytrauma clinics are also available for Veterans with traumatic brain injuries.

Anyone with a DD-214 (discharge paper) indicating an honorable discharge from a combat location is eligible. ■



Juliana Laurenzi, LCSW-R, is the Program Manager of Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom Veterans.



Debra Lucas is the Transition Patient Advocate. She and Laurenzi stand ready to assist Veterans in their transitions back to civilian life.

Readjusting to being home again?

If you're an OEF/OIF combat Veteran or family member, call us at **(914) 737-4400 ext. 2758** or **(845) 831-2000 ext. 5016** for assistance and information.

What can VA do for you?

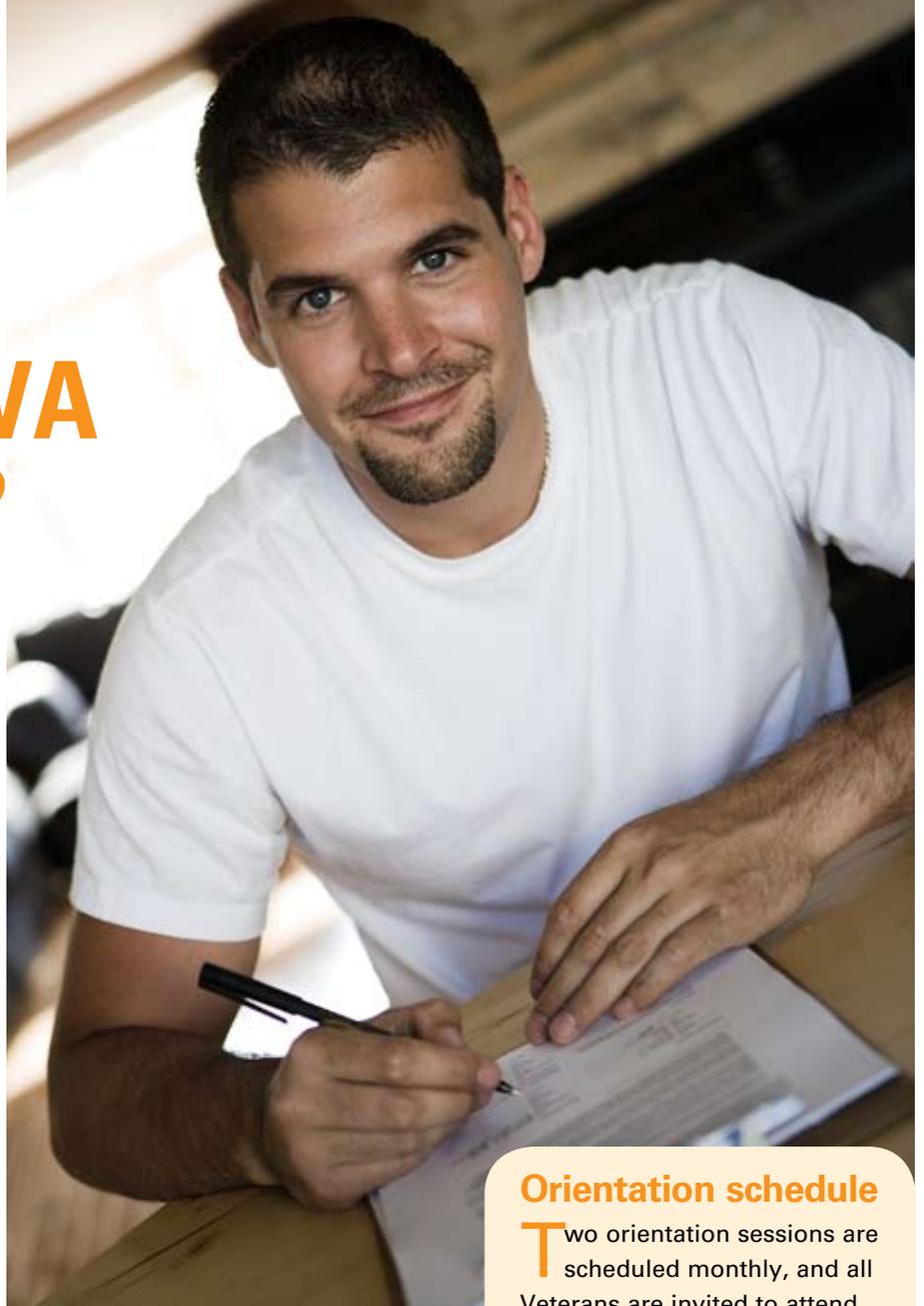
Attend an orientation session and find out!

VA New Jersey Health Care System provides a Veteran Orientation Program to help Veterans, their families and VA employees navigate their way through the sometimes overwhelming VA health care system. The orientation sessions have been a classic “win-win” situation for all involved.

Orientation topics are chosen based on what concerns Veterans the most. Topics include eligibility, medical care cost fund and billing, primary care and access to Community-Based Outpatient Clinics, pharmacies and benefits.

Join us!

If you're interested in attending a session, please contact Mack Harper at **(908) 647-0180, ext. 4225**, or Frank Quadrino at **(908) 647-0180, ext. 5815**. Reservations are strongly recommended so appropriate arrangements can be made for group size. Light refreshments are served at all sessions.



A subject-matter expert presents each topic in easy-to-understand terms and is available after the session to answer individual questions.

Employees are encouraged to attend orientation so they may better understand patients' perspectives and increase their own knowledge, enabling them to improve their performance and increase patient satisfaction. Employees who attend orientation receive two educational hours that are applied toward their annual 40-hour education requirement. ■

Orientation schedule

Two orientation sessions are scheduled monthly, and all Veterans are invited to attend.

WHEN: First Thursday of each month, 10 a.m.–noon

WHERE: Lyons Campus, Building 143, Multipurpose Room

WHEN: Third Thursday of each month, 10 a.m.–noon

WHERE: East Orange Campus, 1st Floor, Veterans' Museum

Orientation sessions are also offered quarterly in Ocean County at the James J. Howard Outpatient Clinic. Call **(732) 206-8900** for information.

Prime time to volunteer

The VA Voluntary Service Program at VA New Jersey Health Care System has a wide variety of volunteer activities available just for you! The program fulfills a national commitment to care for and enhance the lives of America's Veterans.

Our devoted volunteers and corporate participants offer ongoing support for a number of needs that serve to brighten the lives of our men and women who fought so bravely to preserve our freedom.

Many of our volunteers bring their diverse backgrounds and unique skills to their volunteer assignments. Others bring a desire to learn and explore, finding the

experience truly beneficial.

Join our VA Voluntary Service team and discover the personal satisfaction you'll receive "earning your stripes!" Your participation and support can make a difference, and it's guaranteed that your experience will be memorable and rewarding. ■



Ready to help?

If you're interested in learning more about becoming a volunteer, please contact Mary Beth Hynoski, Voluntary Service Program Manager at the Lyons campus, at **(908) 604-5814**, or Tyrone Steed, Voluntary Service Program Manager at the East Orange campus, at **(973) 395-7258**.

Get screened to beat cancer

VA New Jersey Health Care System has a

Comprehensive Cancer Prevention and Screening Program at our East Orange Campus, at 385 Tremont Ave. in East Orange. Our cancer specialists

offer comprehensive cancer screening exams, education, counseling and medical care.



The importance of screenings

The best way to cure cancer is to detect it early. Annual screenings are one way to find cancers fast, modify risks of developing cancer and maintain healthy lifestyles.

During a cancer screening, a

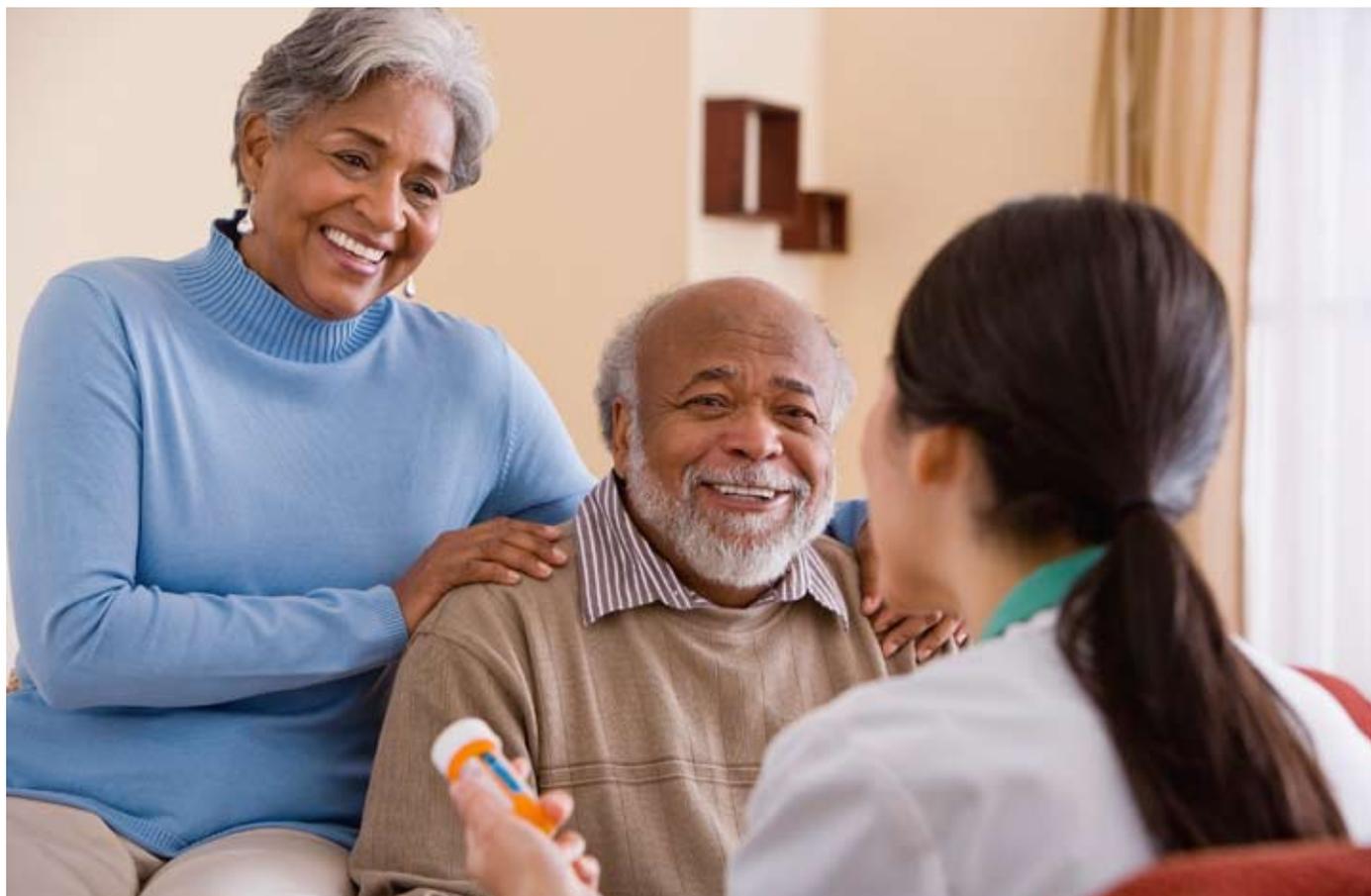
nurse practitioner will review your health, family history and lifestyle. We offer comprehensive and specific screenings that follow the American Cancer Society guidelines for cancer screening. ■

Get screened today

To make an appointment for a cancer screening at our East Orange campus, call the registration office at **(973) 676-1000, ext. 1843 or 1968**. You can also call toll-free at **1-800-475-2336** or e-mail Patricia Goyer at **patricia.goyer@med.va.gov**.

VA NJ Health Care System

www.eastorange.va.gov
www.lyons.va.gov



Make your health the highest priority

Your Northport VA Medical Center (VAMC) providers urge you and your family to become active members of the patient safety team.

What does your involvement in patient safety mean to you and your family?

Northport VAMC

www.northport.va.gov

- We need you to provide detailed information about your condition.
- You should clearly understand your diagnosis and treatment plan and know what to expect.
- We urge you to keep us informed of any changes in your condition, good or bad, such as an allergic reaction to a drug.
- It's important to speak up when you have a question about any aspect of your care.

Your active involvement in your care will help us consistently do the right thing at the right time for you.

Important safety tips

- When you get a prescription, make sure you know what it's for and what the side effects might be. Ask the provider or pharmacist if you have any questions. There are no wrong questions.
- Make sure your doctor knows what allergies or problems you've

Take charge of your health: Ask your doctor questions and tell him or her about the medicines you take and allergies you have.

had with medicines. You may have told us and it may be in your record, but it's still a good idea to remind the provider, especially if he or she is new to your care.

- Make sure your doctor knows about all the medications you take. This includes VA prescriptions and medications, vitamins and minerals you bought at a store.

- Write down questions before your visit and think about bringing a friend or family member with you. If you have questions, ask the provider until you fully understand. If you still don't understand, ask him or her if there's another way he or she can explain it to you.

- If you have a test, ask about the results. If the results don't seem right, speak to your doctor.

- If you're hospitalized, don't be afraid to remind friends, family and your health care providers to wash and sanitize their hands before coming into direct contact with you. Handwashing helps eliminate the spread of infection

and makes the medical center safer for everyone.

Before you leave the hospital

Your Northport VAMC providers want you to keep your care plan active after you're discharged from the hospital.

Before you leave, speak with your caregivers about medications, supplies, supports at home, follow-up care and anything else you believe you may need after your discharge.

It's easier to understand and answer questions and to provide necessary support while you're still at the medical center. We want you to be as prepared as possible to go home.

Information you should have before you leave the hospital:

- whether you'll be able to walk, climb stairs, go to the bathroom, prepare meals and drive
- any special instructions for daily activities (for example, should you exercise and how often?)
- how much help you'll need



from family and friends after you leave the hospital

- signs and symptoms to watch for and what to do if you have them

- any special equipment you'll need at home and where to get it
- how long it is expected to take for wounds to heal

- follow-up tests and visits you may need
- when you can plan to go back to work

- who you can call if you have any problems after leaving the hospital

Tell your family or friends when you expect to be discharged so someone will be available to assist you. If you're unable to get transportation home, let your social worker know.

Getting answers to your questions will make your recovery go smoothly, so ask the staff! ■

Help a Veteran

Make a difference in your fellow Veterans' lives by becoming a volunteer driver with the Disabled American Veterans (DAV) Transportation Program at Northport VA Medical Center. Volunteers use DAV vans to transport patients to and from VA appointments. To volunteer, call **(631) 261-4400, ext. 7183 or 7182.**

A winning view of war

Last summer, Brooklyn Veterans submitted artwork in the Art Therapy National Poster Project on the Afghanistan/Iraq Wars, sponsored by the VA National Office of Psychosocial Rehabilitation and hosted by the Creative Arts Therapy Program, New York Harbor Health Care System, Brooklyn campus. Navy Veteran Nicolas Spano's piece, "The War on Terror, God Bless the USA," was chosen by four judges to be made into a poster for the Compensated Work Therapy program. All submissions were hung in an exhibit at the Brooklyn campus.

Anthony Campinell, Ph.D., Director of Therapeutic and Supported Employment Programs at VA's Office of Mental Health Services, attended the opening of the exhibit and addressed the audience. "It's a tremendous honor to be here," he said. "As a Vietnam Veteran, this is very, very moving on so many levels. The images here not only reflect the experiences of the Veteran who created the art, but also are the reflection



Nick Spano holds his poster that was made from his photo montage of the Afghanistan/Iraq Wars.

of a greater camaraderie among all Veterans, regardless of the period of time you served in the military. There is something in these pictures that reflects the experiences of all who have served, and what it means to have served in the military. Nick Spano's artwork is a powerful tool because it will be distributed nationally. It will help Veterans see they have comrades who are willing to help them."

The poster is hanging in all

VA hospitals, Community-Based Outpatient Clinics, Veteran Centers and other federal offices. It will be distributed at Veteran Service Organization events around the country and in other VA-related venues. It's quite an honor for Spano, of Staten Island. "I was inspired by my son-in-law, who served in Afghanistan and Iraq. I have a lot of respect for him. He's a real hero, and I am very proud of him," he says. ■

A focus on women's health

In a commentary published in HSR&D Forum, November 2008, Patricia M. Hayes, Ph.D., VA Women Veterans Health Strategic Health Care Group, wrote, "The number of women Veterans utilizing VA health care will likely double in the next two to four years. Given this growth, VA must evaluate current services and develop an implementation plan to enhance services for women Veterans."

Kathleen Mertz, the VISN 3 Lead Program Manager, says VISN 3 has had full-time Women Veterans Program Managers (WVPM) for many years. The VA

NY Harbor Health Care System's (NYHHS's) commitment to an established program supports a recent mandate that all campuses must have a full-time WVPM.

"Even programs like ours, which are well established, are now required to participate in the Women's Comprehensive Health Implementation Plan involving a thorough scrutiny of each facility's programs with an eye toward finding and planning for improvement," says Lois A. Katz, M.D., Associate Chief of Staff for Special Emphasis Programs and Quality Management.

A major source of pride for the

NYHHS is the Brooklyn Women's Clinic, which is located in a separate area from the general primary care clinics. Since most Veterans are men, Mertz says, this arrangement provides for an all-women's waiting room, ensuring patient privacy. It also supports having primary care clinicians who specialize in women's health and have significant experience in reproductive health and osteoporosis.

Each facility in VISN 3 has recognized the merit of having Veterans available to treat Veterans. With OEF/OIF Veteran Catherine Nadal, R.N., M.S., joining the Manhattan VA, the management team now

counts four Veterans among its program managers, including Nadal; Cheryl Hansen, R.N., VA Northport; Amelia Deasa-Weiland, R.N., VA New Jersey; and Lauren Incontrera, R.N., VA Hudson Valley. ■



The VA NYHHS Women Veterans Management Team: (left to right) Catherine Nadal, R.N.; M.S., Lois A. Katz, M.D.; and Kathleen Mertz

**VA NY Harbor
Health Care System**

www.brooklyn.va.gov

www.manhattan.va.gov

www.stalbans.va.gov

Introducing the new Secretary of Veterans Affairs

Retired U.S. Army General Eric K. Shinseki was nominated by President Barack Obama on December 7, 2008, to serve as the seventh Secretary of Veterans Affairs. He was sworn in on January 21, 2009.

Secretary Shinseki served as Chief of Staff, U.S. Army, from 1999 to June 11, 2003. During his tenure, he initiated the Army Transformation Campaign to address both the emerging strategic challenges of the early 21st century and the need for cultural and technological change in the Army.

Following the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, he led the

Army during Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom and integrated the pursuit of the Global War on Terrorism with Army Transformation.

Secretary Shinseki previously served simultaneously as Commanding General, U.S. Army, Europe and Seventh Army; Commanding General, NATO Land Forces, Central Europe; and Commander of the NATO-led Stabilization Force, Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Secretary Shinseki has



The Honorable Eric K. Shinseki,
Secretary of Veterans Affairs

received the Defense Distinguished Service Medal, Distinguished Service Medal, Legion of Merit (with Oak Leaf Clusters), Bronze Star Medal with "V" Device (with two Oak Leaf Clusters), Purple Heart (with Oak Leaf Cluster), Defense Meritorious Service

Medal, Meritorious Service Medal (with two Oak Leaf Clusters), Air Medal, Parachutist Badge, Ranger Tab, Joint Chiefs of Staff Identification Badge and Army Staff Identification Badge. ■

Health care for everyone



VA plans to reopen enrollment in its health care system by July 2009 to about 265,000 Veterans whose incomes exceed current VA means test and geographic means test income thresholds by 10 percent or less.

In 1996, Congress established a priority-based enrollment system for VA and a uniform package of medical benefits for all enrollees.

Enrollment for Veterans not being compensated

for a military-related disability who have incomes above a set threshold was suspended in 2003, although those who were already enrolled were permitted to remain enrolled.

VA originally suspended enrollment for Priority 8 Veterans because it was unable to provide all enrolled Veterans with timely access to health care. However, VA now plans to reopen enrollment for a portion of these Veterans.

If you know a Veteran who may be affected by this, share this good news. If you have questions, speak with an eligibility specialist at any VISN 3 medical center. ■



When placed under the patient, a lateral transfer device provides a slick layer that makes it easier and safer for the staff to slide the patient from a bed to a stretcher or X-ray table.

Keeping our nurses healthy

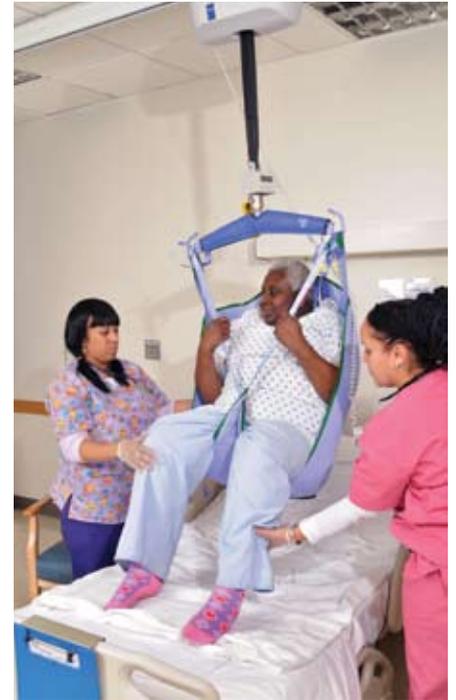
From strained backs to sprained wrists and inflamed joints, for years nurses have gotten hurt while lifting and supporting patients. Now, Veterans Health Administration (VHA) has acknowledged that specific techniques and technologies in Safe Patient Handling (SPH) procedures, along with proper training for moving and handling patients, ensures better care while protecting VA employees from injury. VHA is implementing SPH procedures and technologies at its hospitals over the next three years.

VISN 3 began this process with pilot projects in 2006. This strategic effort is now being rolled out nationally and supported by grants administered through the Deputy

Under Secretary for Health for Operations and Management.

The most dramatic goal is to install a lift over every hospital bed. Staff members like Occupational Nurse Coordinator Margaret Eichler, R.N., M.S.N., F.N.P., COHN-S, and Occupational Therapist Frances Simcha are thrilled about the new requirements. “At last! Finally!” says Eichler, who has worked at VA for 21 years. She explains that the disruptive consequences of having a staff member injured include lack of continuity of care, the expense of having to cover the staff member’s medical costs and the need to recruit a replacement.

The first units targeted for new equipment are areas associated



Mechanical lifts have a vest or sling connected to the lift to support the patient’s body weight. These devices help the patient to walk or be transferred to a wheelchair while avoiding risk of injury to patient or staff.

with highly dependent patients and staff with a high rate of injury, including intensive care, spinal cord units and emergency rooms.

Coordinators/Champions representing every site are charged with organizing Unit Peer Leaders (UPLs). UPLs will be proficient in the use of SPH, incorporating battery-operated lifts, patient room ceiling lifts and other specialized technologies for moving, transferring and handling patients. “Not only are we getting new equipment for patient and staff needs, but we have a plan for ongoing training to ensure that these protective measures are becoming the standard,” says Meredith King-Jensen, M.S.N., M.A., R.N., VISN 3 SPH point of contact. ■



http://www.va.gov/visns/visn03

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Bronx, NY 10468

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Where YOU CAN FIND US—ANYTIME

Bronx

Medical Center:

130 West Kingsbridge Road
Bronx, NY 10468
(718) 584-9000

Community Clinics:

23 South Broadway
White Plains, NY 10601
(914) 421-1951

124 New Main Street
Yonkers, NY 10701
(914) 375-8055

41-03 Queens Boulevard
Sunnyside, NY 11104
(718) 741-4800

953 Southern Boulevard
Bronx, NY 10459
(718) 741-4900

VA New York Harbor Health Care System

Medical Centers:

Brooklyn Campus
800 Poly Place
Brooklyn, NY 11209
(718) 836-6600

New York Campus
423 East 23rd Street
New York, NY 10010
(212) 686-7500

VA Primary and Extended
Care Center

179th Street & Linden Boulevard
St. Albans, NY 11425
(718) 526-1000

Community Clinics:

40 Flatbush Extension—8th Floor
Brooklyn, NY 11201
(718) 439-4300

1150 South Avenue
3rd Floor—Suite 301
Staten Island, NY 10314
(718) 761-2973

55 West 125th Street—11th Floor
New York, NY 10027
(646) 273-8125

VA New Jersey Health Care System

Medical Centers:

East Orange Campus
385 Tremont Avenue
East Orange, NJ 07018-1095
(973) 676-1000

Lyons Campus
151 Knollcroft Road
Lyons, NJ 07939
(908) 647-0180

Community Clinics:

970 Route 70
Brick, NJ 08724
(732) 206-8900

654 East Jersey Street—Suite 2A
Elizabeth, NJ 07206
(908) 994-0120

171 Jersey Street—Building 36
Trenton, NJ 08611-2425
(609) 989-2355

385 Prospect Avenue
Hackensack, NJ 07601
(201) 487-1390

115 Christopher Columbus Drive
Jersey City, NJ 07302
(201) 435-3055

317 George Street
New Brunswick, NJ 08901
(732) 729-0646

340 West Hanover Avenue
Morristown, NJ 07960
(973) 539-9791
(973) 539-9794

20 Washington Place
Newark, NJ 07102
(973) 645-1441

Patterson Army Health Clinic
Stephenson Avenue—Building 1075
Fort Monmouth, NJ 07703
(732) 532-4500

275 Getty Avenue
Paterson, NJ 07503
(973) 247-1666

VA Hudson Valley Health Care System

Medical Centers:

Montrose Campus
Route 9A/P.O. Box 100
Montrose, NY 10548-0100
(914) 737-4400

Castle Point Campus
Castle Point, NY 12511
(845) 831-2000

Community Clinics:

Jefferson Professional Plaza
60 Jefferson Street
Unit 3
Monticello, NY 12701
(845) 791-4936

150 Pike Street
Port Jervis, NY 12771
(845) 856-5396

20 Squadron Boulevard—
Suite 400
New City, NY 10956
(845) 634-8942

30 Hatfield Lane—
Suite 204
Goshen, NY 10924
(845) 294-6927

488 Freedom Plains Road
Poughkeepsie, NY 12603
(845) 452-5151

1875 Route 6
Warwick Savings Bank—
2nd Floor
Carmel, NY 10512
(845) 228-5291

2881 Church Street
Route 199
Pine Plains, NY 12567
(518) 398-9240

Northport (Long Island)

Medical Center:

79 Middleville Road
Northport, NY 11768
(631) 261-4400

Community Clinics:
4 Phyllis Drive
Patchogue, NY 11772
(631) 758-4419

1425 Old Country Road
Plainview, NY 11803
(516) 694-6008

Westhampton Air Base
(by appointment only)
150 Old Riverhead Road
Westhampton, NY 11978
(631) 898-0599