



Fayetteville VA Medical Center Community Update

Vol. 2 No. 8

Items of interest for our stakeholders

September 2011

Donations welcomed at the FVAMC

Members of the Dunn Chapter of the Order of the Eastern Star recently came out to the Fayetteville VA Medical Center Dialysis Clinic to donate 10 hand made quilts to Fayetteville VA Medical Center dialysis patients. The quilts are to help make the Veterans more comfortable during their treatment sessions.

Some of the quilts took more than 60 hours to stitch, but Jenny Tart and Louise McLeod said it was worth it when they presented them to Veterans in the process of receiving their dialysis treatment. The treatments take up to four hours each, with each patient receiving treatments three days a week.

Tart said her group would continue making the quilts since the Dialysis Clinic patient population is growing. The clinic was opened in May as the first free-standing outpatient dialysis clinic in the VA. It has the capability of providing



Jenny Tart and Louise McLeod, members of the Dunn Chapter of the Order of the Eastern Star, with the quilt they made and donated to Fayetteville VA Medical Center dialysis patient Mark Green. Photo by Ed Drohan

the life-saving treatments to 64 Veterans.

The Fayetteville VA Medical Center is always in need of donations, whether monetary or through in-kind donations, said Voluntary Service Chief Norma Fraser. Donations are used to directly benefit Veterans in a variety of ways.

Monetary donations can be earmarked in various ways, i.e. the General Post Fund, the Social Work Service Emergency Fund, or the Social Work Service Meal Ticket Fund.

“The general post fund allows us to use it where the need is the greatest at any

particular time, for example to purchase comfort items or new clothing, and to sponsor special events for both inpatient and outpatient Veterans,” Fraser said. “The Social Work Service Emergency Fund is used to do things like purchase bus tickets for Veterans who may be trying to get home or to another treatment facility, but have no way of getting there. The Social Work Service Meal Ticket Fund is just what it sounds like — used to purchase meals for homeless Veterans. These are the current accounts we are trying to build up. There are other accounts as well”

Fraser is also happy to accept donations of supplies they can use for Veterans. Her current wish list includes Dial Body Wash (specifically the wash since it is gentle on the skin so it can be used for the Community Living Center residents), sweatpants in all sizes up to 5X, long sleeve T-shirts in all sizes, and women’s sports bras in all sizes. She can’t accept used clothing donations, so the items must be new, she said.

Anybody or any organization interested in donating should contact Fraser at (910) 822-7027.

— Ed Drohan

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Veterans MOVE! for good health

Many Veterans have decided to move toward a promising future of healthiness, and the Fayetteville VA Medical Center is assisting in the process.

Last year, the Fayetteville VAMC and associated community-based outreach clinics averaged roughly 1,000 Veterans who enrolled in MOVE!, a national weight management program designed by the VA National Center for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention to help Veterans lose weight, keep it off and improve their health.

The program at the Fayetteville VAMC offers a month long course. Participants meet every Monday to learn about a variety of topics ranging from food and nutrition to medication management and dietary behaviors. A one-on-one course is also offered for Veterans who are not comfortable sitting in a class.

Currently, the class size for the MOVE! program has been up to 60 people, which is considered incredibly high.

“I know the Veterans enjoy it because of the large outcomes we have,” remarked Lucille Williams, a supervisory dietician and the MOVE! program coordinator.

With so many health benefits associated with the program, it makes sense why so many Veterans are participating.

“Some (Veterans) will come off of medications and...decrease the complications they have because of...diseases,” said Williams. “When they lose weight, it automatically helps.”

MOVE! was created in response to the Veterans Health Administration’s recognition of the severity of weight mismanagement among Veterans. With the program now available nationwide, participants



Dietitian Mary Lynn Haddock talks to Veterans enrolled in the MOVE! class about ways to eat to help reduce their weight.
Photo by Adara Ingram

across America have seen dramatic improvements in their health due to the support, advice, and direction provided by the program.

Just ask Rita Ishmael.

“I was right at around almost 400 pounds,” she said. “Now I weigh 290.5.”

Ishmael was able to lose over 100 pounds while enrolled in the MOVE! program. She said she believes the topics discussed as well as the staff involved helped her achieve the weight loss despite having allergies, asthma and diabetes.

“It’s awesome,” Ishmael said. “You come in and you go through the meetings. They teach you what to eat, what to go buy... You do this the rest of your life. This is the healthy way. You’re eating healthy.”

After participants complete the program, they can choose to advance to the MOVE! follow up program, which offers similar

instruction but meets every three months, or they can re-register for the month long course. There is also TeleMOVE!, in which participants can monitor their progress in the comfort of their own homes. This newer feature of the program has become quite popular among Veterans.

“We’re actually getting a lot of our Veterans on (Telemove), especially those that are out of the country,” said Williams.

Ishmael plans on continuing in the program until she reaches her weight loss goal of 180 pounds.

She said it best when she exclaimed, “It works!”

She as well as many other Veterans are using the MOVE! program as a stepping stone to better health and fuller lives. With such high participant numbers, it is evident that patients and the VA are united in pursuing good health.

— Adara Ingram

Community Update is published monthly. The contents provide readers with information on programs and happenings at the Fayetteville VA Medical Center.

If you have questions or comments about the newsletter, email edward.drohan@va.gov or call (910) 488-2120, ext. 5991.

- Elizabeth Goolsby Director
- James Galkowski Associate Director
- Joyce Alexander-Hines Associate Director, Patient Care Service
- Dr. Anna Teague Interim Chief of Staff
- Ed Drohan Public Affairs Officer/Editor



Women's services expand

Women Veterans are a force to be reckoned with. You'd know that immediately if you met Penny Cacoulidis, a Marine Veteran.

"I'd love to go back and do it again," she said when asked about her experience. "I would in a heartbeat...once a Marine always a Marine."

Or you could speak with Eleanor Raines, an Army Veteran. Behind her small frame is a strong declaration.

"We did as much as the men did," she said.

Both of these women have faithfully served their country, and unfortunately, both have experienced discrepancies in treatment as Veterans.

Women Veterans are the fastest growing group in the Veteran population, with over 69,000 in North Carolina alone. Unlike their male counterparts, they tend to be younger and need specialty care for gender-specific issues.

The Fayetteville VA Medical Center has been providing extended services to women through their

women's clinic since the mid 90's. The clinic seeks to meet the primary care needs as well as female-specific needs of patients.

Eglintine Rigaud is the women Veterans program manager. Her goal for the women's program is simple.

"(The) goal is to provide comprehensive, high quality care to our women Veterans," she said.

With a women's specialty clinic, women Veterans like Penny and Eleanor can receive the care they need and deserve.

The renovation of the women's clinic is much needed, but improvements for women throughout the facility were noticed long before construction began.

"(Things) started changing in the seventies...Before, men got appointments (for primary care) before women did," Penny said. "That doesn't happen now."

Eleanor also noted changes in VA healthcare for women.

"It is growing. It is improving," she said.

Eleanor does note a key issue voiced by many women.

"There are still so many things they have to outsource," she said. "We have to go here there and everywhere just to receive treatment."

The VA does utilize community physicians for services not provided through their facilities. However, with the Veteran demographic quickly changing, these services have high hopes of being offered through the VA fairly soon.

The Fayetteville VA Medical Center has made great strides in the past year to bolster the specialty care provided to women Veterans. Dr. Mark Griffo, the women's clinic gynecologist, takes pride in listing some of the services provided.

"(We) offer cryosurgery (freezing of warts). We treat sexually transmitted infections, and we offer endometrial ablations, which is a safer alternative to hysterectomies," he said. "We'll be offering tubal ligations

soon."

The clinic also provides urogynecological care for issues such as incontinence, and staff can conduct colposcopies on site to provide a more detailed evaluation for an abnormal pap smear.

"It's amazing how far we've come," Griffo said. "It makes me happy."

Currently, over 8,000 women are enrolled in the Fayetteville VA Medical Center. Penny was recently added to this number after meeting a VA spokesperson at a conference. Up until then, she had no idea what she was eligible for through the VA.

"I was just never told...Nobody ever briefed me on what I was entitled to."

Now enrolled in Fayetteville's system, Penny receives the majority of her healthcare through the VA. She now receives the care she deserved for so long.

"(The) goal is to provide comprehensive, high quality care to our women Veterans."

Eglintine Rigaud, Women Veterans Program Manager

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**Fayetteville
VA Medical Center
Priorities**

- Access to Care
- Employer of Choice
- Good Stewards of our Resources

I CARE
DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

American Legion donates \$500 for hospital programs

Fayetteville VAMC Director Elizabeth Goolsby, second from left, accepted a \$500 contribution from the American Legion Department of North Carolina to be used to support programs for medical center patients and community living center residents. Presenting the check are, from left, North Carolina American Legion Auxiliary President Sue Gooch, American Legion Department Commander Ben Lee and American Legion Department Service Officer Cajun Comeau.

Before the presentation, members of the American Legion and Auxiliary met with Goolsby to discuss issues of importance to the Veterans who make up their membership, as well as their families, and to hear updates on improvements currently underway both in the facility and in outlying clinics.

Photo by Ed Drohan



WOMEN, *from Page 3*

“Today... a lady came up to me and asked, ‘Are you Penny?’ and I said yes. She said ‘Come right in, it’s time for your appointment.’ I was amazed.” Penny said.

Meeting the needs of women Veterans continues to be a top priority for the VA. Accomplishing this goal begins with educating patients and staff.

Often times, women in the facility are assumed to be the relative of a Veteran instead of the actual Veteran. This has been known to upset many women, including Eleanor.

“I wish they would be more considerate of the wording they use,” she said.

Dr. Rigaud notes that sometimes women aren’t even aware they are Veterans. Without women recognizing themselves as such, they will never receive the benefits they earned.

“I think that many times, women may not view themselves as being Veterans because perhaps they didn’t serve in combat,” she said. “But any woman who has served in the military is a Veteran and is entitled to the services and benefits that the VA has to offer.”

— Adara Ingram



Senator visits FVAMC

Senator Kay Hagan talks with a Veteran at the Fayetteville VAMC Dialysis Center during her visit Aug. 9. The senator and several staff members toured the Dialysis Center, Compensation and Pension Clinic, and the Village Green Primary Care Annex. In addition to meeting patients and staff members, Hagan and medical center leadership discussed future plans for resource sharing between the VA and Department of Defense.

Photo by Brad Garner

New service helps families encourage Veterans to seek VA medical care

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has launched a telephone service, Coaching into Care, to provide assistance to family members and friends trying to encourage their Veteran to seek health care for possible readjustment and mental health issues.

“Those closest to Veterans are often the first to recognize when Veterans are having difficulties,” said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki. “Family members and friends may not know what to say to encourage their Veterans to seek much needed readjustment and health care. The Coaching into Care line will help them find the right words.”

To help Veterans address problems and support Veterans in making decisions about getting care, the Coaching into Care program offers unlimited, free coaching with family members or friends over a series of telephone calls. The priority is connecting Veterans with VA care in their community through the family member’s help and encouragement. Callers receive professional coaching on solving specific logistical obstacles and en-

couraging sometimes reluctant Veterans to seek care while still respecting the Veteran’s right to make personal decisions.

Coaching into Care, launched in March 2011, has had more than 650 calls with family members or friends of greater than 175 Veterans to encourage them to seek care. This phone line is connected to VA’s Veterans Crisis Line, Caregiver Support Line, and the National Call Center for Homeless Veterans. This way, if the caller or Veteran is in an immediate crisis, or has concerns regarding caregiving for a disabled Veteran, or seeking assistance regarding homelessness, there is no wrong number for families to call.

Callers can reach VA’s Coaching into Care program at the toll-free number 1-888-823-7458, 8 a.m. – 8 p.m., Mondays through Fridays, and online at <http://www.mirecc.va.gov/coaching/>. As always, Veterans can reach immediate help at the Veterans Crisis Line at 1-800-273-8255, press 1 for Veterans.

— Courtesy of VA Public Affairs

VA Streamlines Online Applications for Health Benefits Renewal

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has automated its online Health Benefits Renewal (10-10EZR) form as part of its ongoing effort to streamline access to benefits.

“This action dramatically reduces the time it will take for enrolled Veterans to submit updates to their demographic information and further reduces access bar-

Automated 10-10EZR Form Simplifies Updates

riers to needed care for Veterans,” said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki.

Previously, Veterans filling out the online 10-10EZR were required to print a copy, sign it and send it to their local medical center before updates to their personal, insurance or financial informa-

tion could occur. Veterans may now submit these updates online.

For additional information, go to www.va.gov/healtheligibility or call VA’s toll-free number at 1-877-222-VETS (8387). The online form is available at <https://www.1010ez.med.va.gov/sec/vha/1010ez/Form/1010ezr.pdf>.

— Courtesy of VA Public Affairs

Starbucks now open at FVAMC

Michael Bab, chief of the Fayetteville VAMC Veterans Canteen Service, takes an order from a staff member during the opening day celebration for the medical center’s new Starbucks coffee shop.

Starbucks, the nationwide chain that many Americans wake up to everyday, is now offering its special brand of coffees, pastries and other morning staples at the Fayetteville VAMC. The store, located near the outpatient entrance in the hospital’s basement, is open Monday through Friday from 7:30 a.m.—3:30 p.m. for Veterans, visitors and staff members.

Photo by Brad Garner



FVAMC hosting 'Welcome Home' event

It's going to be a party with a purpose when the Fayetteville VA Medical Center welcomes home Operations Enduring Freedom, Iraqi Freedom and New Dawn Veterans Sept. 17.

The event will start on the Fayetteville VAMC campus at 10:45 with an opening ceremony, presentation of colors and welcomes from medical center and community leaders. There will be a free lunch

for participants, entertainment — including four different musical performance groups, and native American dancers with festivities ending at 4 p.m. There will be door prizes and other give-aways in between performances.

More than 40 community partners and VA offices will be available throughout the event so Veterans can get information on a variety of resources available to

them. Those who haven't enrolled for the VA health care benefits will be able to do so on the spot during the event as well.

Those who'd like to enroll should bring a copy of their DD Form 214 as well.

For more information on the Welcome Home Event, contact Wil Davila at (910) 488-2120, extension 5836, or Elita Hill at extension 7055.

— Ed Drohan

Flu shots now available in clinics, CBOCs

Flu shots are now available on a walk-in in all primary care clinics. Veterans must show their VA ID card to receive the immunization.

To help ensure every Veteran has an opportunity to receive this important immunization flu shots will also be available certain Saturdays and evenings.

Saturday Flu Shots are the following dates: Sept. 17, Oct. 15, Nov. 19 and Dec. 10 from 9 a.m.-noon in Room 071, basement floor of the medical center.

Evening Flu shots will be from 4-6 p.m. on Sept. 21, Oct. 19, Nov. 16 and Dec. 14. in room 071

The Emergency Room will also be available for Flu shots during off hours.

Getting a flu shot is the best way to slow the spread of the flu. The flu shot can protect you against the flu. The flu shot helps your body build antibodies to fight flu viruses. These can help prevent you from getting sick with the flu. Once you get the flu shot, it takes about two weeks for your body to make enough antibodies to protect you.

Flu viruses can change over time. Every year, the flu shot is updated to contain the flu viruses most likely to spread that year.

People more at risk of illness from the flu include:

- People with other health problems, like asthma, diabetes, and heart disease;
- People older than 50;
- Women who are pregnant or want to become pregnant;
- People caring for an infant or a family member with health problems; and
- Health Care Personnel.

Can a flu shot give me the flu?

NO. Some people get minor body aches, a headache, or a low-grade fever, but this is NOT the flu. If these problems occur, they begin soon after the shot and usually last one to two days. Most people have none of these symptoms.

There is no live virus in the flu shot so you cannot get the flu from a flu shot. Almost all people who get the flu shot have no serious problems from it.

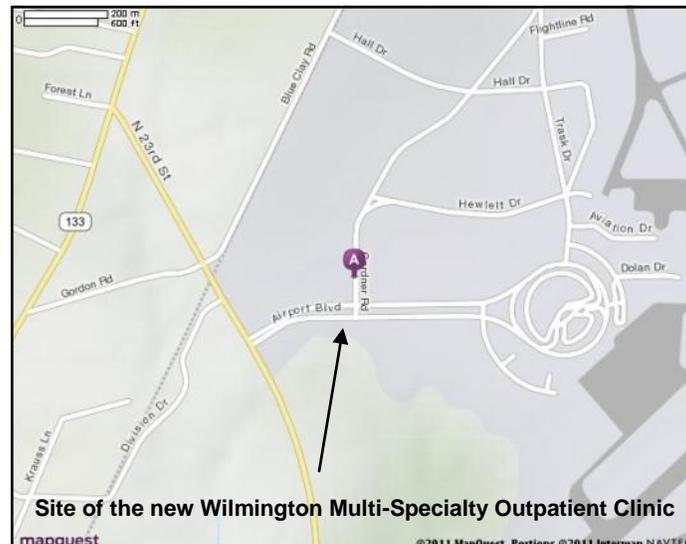
— Ed Drohan

Groundbreaking set for new Wilmington clinic

VA and community officials will gather in at the coast Sept. 19 to break ground for the new Wilmington Multi-Specialty Outpatient Clinic.

The ceremony will start at 1 p.m. at the clinic's new site, 1725 Gardner Road near the intersection of Airport Road. Congressman Mike McIntyre and other local officials are expected to attend.

The new clinic will greatly expand services for coastal Veterans once completed. The MSOC will have about 85,000



square feet of space compared to the present clinic's 10,000 square feet, and will offer specialty care that hasn't been available through the local VA clinic in the past.

Construction is expected to take about 12 months to complete, and it will take about three months for the VA to furnish and set up equipment in the new facility so that patients can be seen.

The ground breaking ceremony is open to the public.

— Ed Drohan

Get the Flu Shot!

The reasons are all around you.



Content and graphics courtesy of the Canadian Coalition for Influenza Immunization



www.publichealth.va.gov/InfectionDontPassItOn



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your fellow Veterans**

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