



Fayetteville Veterans Affairs Medical Center

Communicator

Fayetteville VAMC & Community Based Outpatient Clinics
throughout North Carolina

www.fayettevillenc.va.gov

VA HEALTH CARE Defining EXCELLENCE in the 21st Century



*Elizabeth Goolsby
Fayetteville VAMC Director*

Director's Forum

by Elizabeth "Betty" Goolsby

Fayetteville Priority — Access to Care

In August 2014, President Obama signed into law the Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act perhaps better known as VACAA or the Choice Act. This is a new temporary program to improve Veterans access to health care by allowing certain Veterans to receive health care from eligible community providers. You have no doubt been asked by Veterans what this program is about and if you are a Veteran, you may also have questions.

Some points to be aware of with the program:

- The goal is to provide Veterans with timely, high quality care;
- Veterans Choice Program is one component in a comprehensive effort to increase access to care. Other components include funding to increase staffing, especially clinical staff, purchase equipment that improve access to care;
- Basic eligibility includes Veterans who have been enrolled in VA health care before August 1, 2014 or be eligible to enroll as a combat Veteran. Additionally must meet the following:
 - ◊ Veteran told by VA medical facility will need to wait more than 30 days for an appointment from the date determined by the provider or if no date provided, the Veteran's preferred date;
 - ◊ Veteran's residence is more than 40 miles driving distance from the **closest VA medical facility**;
- The Choice Card mailed to the Veterans is not an insurance card. Veterans must call the Choice Program Call Center at **866-606-8198** to verify eligibility and set up an appointment.

If you have questions about the Choice Act, please contact the following individuals for additional information:

Ira Shaw – 910-488-2120, ext 7971
 Jeff Stanko – 910-488-2120, ext 7032
 Derrell Lee – 910-343-5300, ext 2219

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Highlights

Turner settles in as new FVAMC associate director

Fayetteville VA Medical Center has a new associate director.

Sean N. Turner will provide direct oversight for facility operations and resources for the Fayetteville VA enterprise, which delivers care to more than 61,000 veterans each year and has a \$317 million operating budget.

“We are excited to bring Mr. Turner on board. His exemplary leadership skills and knowledge of Veterans health care will be an asset to the facility, the employees and volunteers, and most importantly, for the Veterans we are honored to serve,” said Elizabeth B. Goolsby, Fayetteville VAMC Director.

Turner comes to Fayetteville from Gainesville, Fla., where he served as chief, Medical Administration Service (Health Services Administration) for the North Florida/South Georgia Veterans Health System comprising Gainesville and Lake City VAMCs. He said he’s excited to be joining the Fayetteville VA and Mid-Atlantic Health Care Network (VISN 6) team.

“I feel very fortunate to have been chosen for this opportunity and I look forward to the challenges of this new role,” said Turner. “



Sean N. Turner

“I feel very fortunate to have been chosen for this opportunity and I look forward to the challenges of this new role.”

During his first few weeks, he has been busy meeting each of the administrative service chiefs, touring their respective work areas and meeting frontline supervisors and staff.

A longtime Florida resident, Turner received his bachelor’s degree in Psychology and a minor in

Business Administration from the University of Florida in 1996.

His VA career began shortly thereafter at the Bay Pines VAMC in Miami in 1996. He later transferred to the North Florida/South Georgia Veterans Health System where he has worked the past 15 years, gaining extensive experience in the administrative areas of a medical center including Office of the Director, Nursing Service, Psychology, Medical Administration Service and a stint as acting associate director.

He succeeds acting associate director Debra Young, who was appointed in December after her predecessor James Galkowski, who had held the position since March 2011, returned to clinical side of the house, accepting a position as physician assistant at Durham VAMC.

Although still settling in, Turner said he has formed some initial impressions about the Fayetteville VAMC.

“I am proud of the fact that approximately 48 percent of our VA employees in the Fayetteville enterprise are Veterans! Not many VAMCs within the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) have reached that accomplishment,” the new AD said. “I am impressed with both the architecture and cleanliness of our VA

(Continued on page 3)



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Highlights

: New FVAMC associate director

(Continued from page 2)

medical center. Most importantly, I have found the personnel very cordial and professional.”

His learning curve should be less steep as the Fayetteville VAMC has many similarities to the previous VA health care system he worked at which consisted of 13 VA care sites located in both urban and rural counties.

His work philosophy has always been “lead by example.”

“I truly believe that respect is earned – not demanded, simply as a result of a title or role. I am committed to the mission of the VA and take great pride in the fact that I have had the opportunity to work within the Department of Veterans Affairs for the last 18 years,” Turner said. “As

opposed to community hospitals, the VA routinely builds lasting relationships for life with Veterans. Every day, newly enrolling Veterans apply for VA health care benefits for the very first time who have served during very different periods of military service. Therefore, I think it is important that we strive to keep in mind the impression we make, or have the opportunity to make - every day.”

Although new to Fayetteville VAMC and the Fayetteville area, he likes what he sees of the area. In fact, he said one of the reasons he was interested in joining the Fayetteville VAMC team was the unique opportunity to work within a VAMC in the heart of a military town.

“It is my perception that our VA system has a very special op-

portunity to make that first impression of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) for many service men and women, due to the fact that Fort Bragg, Pope Air Field and Camp Lejeune are all located within our primary service area.

“During the first weekend that I arrived in Fayetteville, I made a visit to the Veterans Park located in downtown Fayetteville. I have visited many Veterans memorial parks throughout the state of Florida over the years and had the wonderful opportunity to participate in community events at these sites. However, the Freedom Memorial Park located in downtown Fayetteville is certainly the most impressive memorial park for Veterans that I have ever visited.”

Senator Tillis makes first visit to Fayetteville VAMC

On April 7, Sen. Thom Tillis (R, N.C.) made his first visit to the Fayetteville VAMC since his election in November 2014. While at the medical center, Tillis met with hospital leaders, received a briefing and toured the facility. Senator Tillis was accompanied by his wife, Susan; his state director, and his senior advisor for military and Veteran issues and military liaisons.



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America's Veteran

Memorial Day Ceremony in CLC



Fayetteville VAMC joined the rest of the nation in honoring those who made the ultimate sacrifice by giving their lives while serving in the Armed Forces. The facility held a Memorial Day Ceremony May 22 with remarks from Army Lt. Col. Bradley Boyd, commander, Fort Bragg's 2nd Battalion, 325th Infantry Regiment.

Left, FVAMC Associate Director Sean Turner and guest speaker Lt. Col. Bradley Boyd take part in the wreath laying ceremony.

Below, CLC staff assist residents attending the Memorial Day Ceremony.

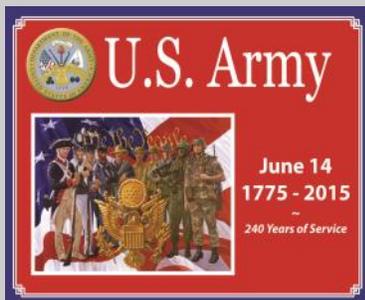


U.S. Army Ground Forces Band Brass Quintet plays a selection.



Photos by Brad Garner

Happy 240th Birthday U.S. Army



June 14, 2015, marks the 240th birthday of the U.S. Army. On June, 14, 1775, Congress approved the raising of 10 companies of riflemen to enlist in Maryland, Pennsylvania and Virginia until the end of the Revolutionary War. These were the first troops Congress agreed to pay from its own funds, and later became the 1st Continental Regiment. George Washington received his appointment as commander-in-chief of the Continental Army the next day, and formally took command at Boston on July 3, 1775.



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Highlights

VA, America pay weeklong tribute to nurses each May

Fayetteville VAMC joined VA and the rest of the nation in honoring America's nurses during National Nurses Week. This year's Nurses Week theme was "Ethical Practice. Quality Care."

Nurses throughout the Fayetteville VA enterprise were honored with information fairs, Blessing of the Hands ceremonies, Traditional White Uniform contests, luncheons, awards ceremonies and more.

Among the highlighted activities was the presentation of Excellence in Nursing Awards, bestowed annually to four individuals whose patient-centered contributions to the care of patients demonstrate such excellence as to merit recognition from their peers. This year's honorees were: RNs Connie Baxter and Pearlline Reid, LPN Stephanie Roger-Kreiser and NA Barbara Stewart.



RN Connie Baxter



RN Pearlline Reid



LPN Stephanie Rogers-Kreiser and Joyce Alexander-Hines, then-Associate Director of Patient Care Services.



NA Barbara Stewart



Samuel Smith blesses Roshanda Bronson's hands

White Uniforms Day contest winners, from left, Lillian Ortiz (3rd), Mary A-Boateng (2nd) and Stacey Davis (1st place)



White Uniforms Day group photo

Photos by Brad Garner



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Highlights

Rural Health team supports NC Indian Unity Conference

Fayetteville VAMC's Rural Health Outreach team supported the North Carolina's Indian Unity Conference March 19-21 in Raleigh.

Since 1976, the Unity Conference has gathered North Carolina's eight tribal leadership teams with the North Carolina Commission of Indian Affairs to address issues affecting Native American communities in the state.

According to NCCIA Executive Director Greg Richardson, this year's event provided a great opportunity for VA staff to meet and get to know tribal leaders and about 250 attendees. Richardson said, "Each year, we strive for an agenda at that helps our leaders learn more about VA benefits like education and housing, compensation, access to health care," adding "Having the rural health team here adds great value to conference."

Rural Health Teams complement the care Veterans receive in the



Photo by Jeff Melvin

Sonya Oxendine and Melvin Peterson of the Fayetteville VAMC Rural Health Team distribute literature and engage passersby at the North Carolina's Indian Unity Conference March 19.

community. They integrate the services Veterans can get at VA medical centers and outpatient clinics with care available to them in their community. The effort is focused on enrolling Veterans, offering health-related education and solving Veteran's problems.

Fayetteville's Rural Health team has fostered a strong relationship with NCCIA and the tribal communities of southeastern North Carolina, and South Carolina.

In the last year, the Fayetteville team has conducted nearly 50 ed-

ucational sessions covering topics such as diabetes, weight management, and computer skills training for MyHealthVet.

"The team has attended tribal POW-WOW's in the Lumbee, Coharie and Waccamaw-Siouan Native American communities helping to foster greater collaboration," said Michael Shaw, Rural Health program support assistant.

Sonya Oxendine, a member of the Lumbee Tribe, is one of the Rural Health Team's registered nurses. "We strive

to support the health and well-being of Veterans who live in rural communities by removing barriers to accessing their VA care/benefits," said Oxendine, who spearheaded the team's participation in the Unity Conference.

What distinguishes rural Veterans is their restricted access to health care and overcoming transportation challenges. Outreach worker Melvin Peterson provided information and assistance on preventing homelessness, mental health services, home-based primary care and hospice services. He also assisted Veterans with their disability claims, and helped two deceased Veterans' widows complete their pension claims. Peterson likes to say, "I am here to serve the Veteran whether it is under a bridge or at a facility."

The team's care collaboration with the tribes brings all of the best pieces of the community and VA together for Veterans.



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Highlights

Sexual Assault Awareness & Military Sexual Trauma Survivor Support Walk

During April's Sexual Assault Awareness Month, FVAMC staff and guests participated in a march on the Fit Trail to bring attention to sexual assault awareness and support the survivors of military sexual trauma. Any veteran who was sexually traumatized while serving in the military is eligible to receive counseling regardless of gender or era of service. Veterans looking for more information on sexual trauma services can call Fayetteville VAMC MST Coordinator Dr. Sylvia Branson-Ellis at (910) 488 2120 Ext 5482 or FVAMC WVPM Dr. Juana Hernandez at Ext 7979. Vets can also contact their VA primary care provider or visit www.mentalhealth.va.gov/msthome.asp.

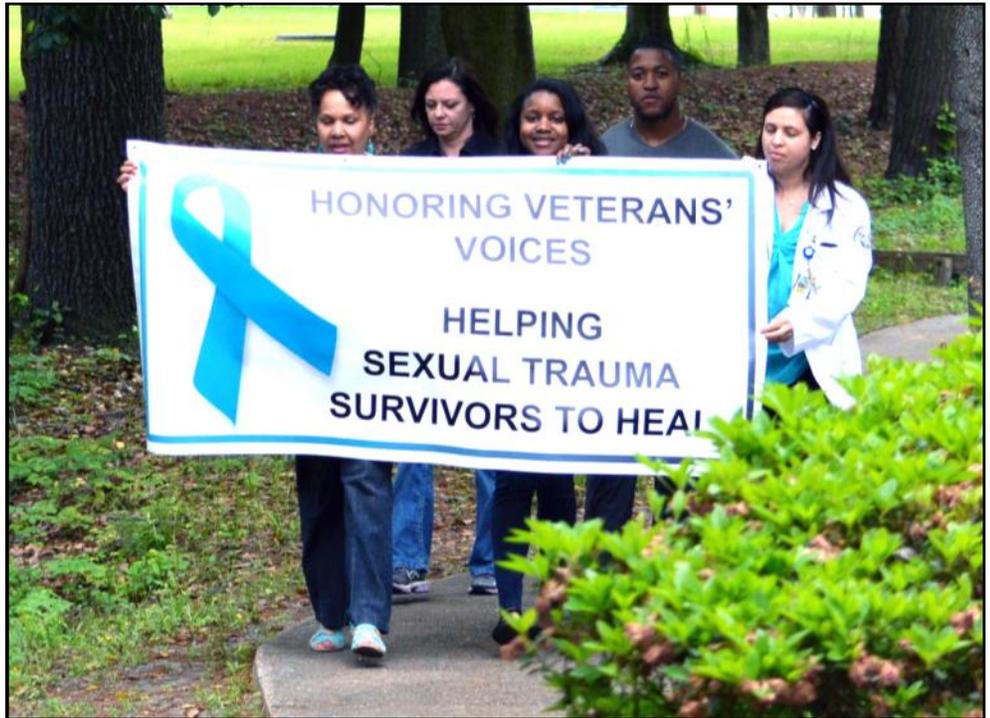


Photo by Jeff Melvin

Construction Update

Construction on the new health care center continues to progress. Some of the highlights include: Continued equipment startups and testing. Continued installation of plumbing fixtures, overhead lighting fixtures and ceiling

grids. Continued landscaping, and pouring concrete curbs, 75% complete patient parking area. Continued with outside canopies and smoking and picnic shelters.



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Harnett, Cumberland Co. Veterans Courts celebrate milestones

Shortly after Veterans Day 2015, milestones in Harnett and Cumberland Counties boosted North Carolina's desire to be the nation's most Veteran-friendly state.

On Nov. 12, Harnett County's Veterans Treatment Court (VTC), the state's first, marked its one year anniversary with its first graduation ceremony.

Among the dignitaries on hand were Governor Pat McCrory, Melissa Fitzgerald, senior director of Justice for Vets, Department of Public Safety Secretary Frank L. Perry, and N.C. Department of Veterans Affairs Director Ilario Pantano along with Harnett County and Fayetteville VAMC officials.

On Nov. 13, Cumberland County, which has one of the largest veteran populations per capita in the country, celebrated the opening of the state's second VTC.

These special courts help veterans with mental health or substance abuse problems receive treatment rather than jail time. Veterans avoid jail time by getting help for underlying problems that sent them to court, pairing with Veteran mentors who meet with them regularly and help keep them on track to rehabilitation. VTCs provide the treatment and structure they need to resume productive lives.

Fayetteville VAMC Veterans Justice Outreach (VJO) Specialist Curtis Morrow serves as a VTC consultant and the FVAMC liaison between the assorted parties involved in the VTC program. VJO Specialists work with Veterans in a variety of justice system settings, but their work in the courts is the most visible.

"These milestones are certainly good news for area Veterans. We anticipate the successes we've

seen in Harnett County will be duplicated in Cumberland County," Morrow said.

The courts demand accountability. There are no "get out of jail free" cards. The veteran must attend counseling,



Photos by Jeff Melvin

Gov. Pat McCrory

community support meetings, participate in a stringent drug testing program and perform community service. At the end of the year-long program, the successful graduate may be eligible to have his or her original charges dropped or expunged.

"This court shows the true power of what veterans can do – even in the most difficult and dire circumstances," said Governor McCrory, who pledged to expand the program to counties across the state.

The court was made possible through a \$66,000 grant from the Governor's Crime Commission. Governor McCrory also thanked presiding Judge Albert Corbett, District Attorney Vernon Stewart,

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Harnett County officials, then-President Judge Albert Corbett, District Attorney Vernon Stewart, and Clerk of Superior Court Marsha Johnson.

: Veterans Court

(Continued from page 8)

Clerk of Superior Court Marsha Johnson, court coordinator Mark Teachey and Sheriff David Huffman of the Governor's Crime Commission.

The key to the court's success, according to Teachey, is the veterans from the community who serve as volunteer mentors to the veterans who go through the court. "Soldiers lifting soldiers," Teachey, a retired U.S. Army officer says. "That's a great thing."

The Cumberland County VTC was three years in the making. According to retiring Chief District Court Judge Elizabeth Keever, local officials began planning for a court in 2011 but had to delay the plans after the state legislature stopped funding for special courts.

A nearly \$70,000 grant from the Governor's Crime Commission jump started the program which hopes to benefit from the experience of the successful Harnett County venture.

The court will be staffed by veterans. Craig Shore, a 20-year Air Force veteran who has spent 31 years as a substance abuse counselor, is the coordinator.

District Court Judge Lou Olivera, an Army Veteran who served during the Gulf War, will preside over the court. The assistant district attorney, clerk and a lawyer

assigned to the special court also are veterans.

"We're all a team," said Shore. "We're all working in the same direction."

Maj. Gen. Jeff Smith, deputy commanding general of the 18th Airborne Corps and Fort Bragg, said the new court would add value to the community.

According to Melissa Fitzgerald, senior director of the national clearinghouse for Veterans Treatment Courts "Justice for Vets," there are about 200 veterans treatment courts operating today. "Justice for Vets" is committed to ensuring that veterans involved in the criminal justice system have access to Veterans Treatment Courts and benefits, services and treatment they earned.

"These are life-saving courtrooms," said Fitzgerald, who spoke at both events. "It's rebirth. It's restoration."

For more information about the VJO program, call Morrow at 910-488-2120 ext. 7225, or email curtis.morrow@va.gov. For information about the Harnett



Photos by Jeff Melvin

Former Chief District Court Judge Beth Keever



Maj. Gen. Jeff Smith, ctr, and District Court Judge Lou Olivera talk following the opening ceremony for the Cumberland Co. VTC.

County VTC, contact Mark Teachey at (910) 814-4515 or Mark.A.Teachey@nccourts.org. Contact coordinator Craig Shore at (910) 475-3243 or Craig.V.Shore@nccourts.org for information about the new Cumberland County VTC.



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‘Healing environments,’ help Vets, staff, earns designer VA award

By Jeff Melvin
Fayetteville VAMC Public Affairs Officer

In recognition of the significant contribution she has made in the area of project planning and coordination for the Fayetteville VA Medical Center, facility interior designer Liz Bruce earned recognition as 2014 VA Interior Designer of the Year.

To determine the winner, a panel of judges Environmental Programs Service at VA headquarters reviewed nominees work over a 12-month period, paying careful attention to examples of personal mastery, creative thinking, technical skills and customer service.

“I am honored and humbled to receive the VA Interior Designer of the Year Award from my peers within the VA Interior Design Community,” said Bruce, who began working for Fayetteville VAMC in May 2012, after starting here VA career in March 2005.

“I am always proud of the important and meaningful work in which we as VA Interior Designers are able to participate,” she continued. “We take our mission of improving the Healthcare Environment very seriously. My colleagues and I are constantly conducting exchange of ideas, researching evidence based design, and applying patient centered care principles every day to create healing environments for our Veterans and our staff. This is truly my passion in life and I am happy



Photo by Jeff Melvin

Liz Bruce, VA Interior Designer of the Year

(Continued on page 11)



: Interior Designer of the Year

(Continued from page 10)

to be a part of our exciting new projects.”

As an example of personal mastery, her then-supervisor former Environmental Management Service Chief David Irwin described Ms. Bruce’s involvement with the project planning of a three story Health Care Center along with over 200,000 square feet of new construction. Irwin said she is adept at uncovering the clinical processes and identifying how they affect and shape the space and actively seeks out Veterans’ opinions in design projects.

For the HCC design, she “assembled a multi-disciplinary team of providers, nursing, behavioral health, and Veterans advisors to not just ‘pick colors’ but shape the building footprints and basic design concepts based on how the clinics will work with new processes and new technology.”

The facility interior way finding project that she developed illustrates Bruce’s well-researched and creative solution to complex issues. With this pro-



ject, she delved into the root causes of how the Veteran’s abilities and limitations dictate how way finding is perceived and contribute to the navigation of the built environment. Key features of the project included creating focus, decreasing visual clutter, and reducing anxiety.

Her communication with staff and veterans was singled out. She conducts research through scientific articles, observation, and polling Veterans for responses and applies evidence based design to real world projects. “She

illustrates a willingness and ability to listen to the views and ideas of others, and encourages the free exchange of ideas, and incorporates those ideas into design goals,” wrote Irwin in his nominating package.

In addition to being named VA’s top interior designer for 2014, Bruce’s leadership and efforts to further the Interior Design Program, prompted VA officials to ask her to be an inaugural member of the Environmental Programs Service Interior Design Program Advisory Council.



Highlights

2014 NLD class hosted service dog awareness event

The Non-Supervisory Leadership Development Class of 2014 sponsored a Service Dog Awareness Day as the culminating project for the 10 month leadership program.

The event included demonstrations of services the dogs provide as well as testimonials from local Veterans with service dogs.

Members of the NLD class include Barbra Bylicki, Lynette Mefford, Pearline Reid, Shaneka Holmes, Robert Person, Lois Allen, Carmen Rosado, Steve Harriman, Ola Gabriel, Gregory Mency and Uganda Jones.

The NLD Class put together an informative and innovative program to provide an overview to Veterans, healthcare providers and staff members about service dogs and the assisted services they can provide. Information



Photo by Brad Garner

Pat Hairston, Program Manager for Canines for Service with his dog Titus. Seated at the table is Ronnie Sadoski, CEO, Wags 4 Tags

packets provided to participants included brochures regarding types of dogs by services provided, the process of obtaining a service dog and typical timeframes for training the dogs for specifically identified needs.

The service dogs are individually trained to perform tasks that assist the Veteran with targeted needs. Service dogs can assist Veterans in many ways, including guiding those with impaired vi-

sion, alerting Veterans to take scheduled medications and reach and grab objects out of reach.

One presenter, Rick Hairston, CEO of Canines for Service in Wilmington, NC, demonstrated that his dog could pick up an item as small as a dime and place it gently in his hand. Canines for Service is a national program that encourages and trains mili-

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Highlights

: Service dog awareness

(Continued from page 12)

tary prisoners to train dogs from shelters to provide services for disabled Veterans. This triple win approach provides rehabilitation opportunities for military prisoners and renewed purpose for rescued shelter dogs. The Veteran receives a service dog that can assist in more than 90 tasks and receives more than 2500 hours of training. The service dog is valued at \$40,000 and all the Veteran pays is \$75 - \$125 per month for food and maintenance.

Fayetteville VAMC offers three developmental leadership programs for employees. Some of the topics covered in these programs include self-assessment for awareness, behavioral resume writing and developing mentoring relationships. For more information, contact Cynthia Flynn, Healthcare Talent Management Coordinator at (910) 488-2120 Ext. 7377.



2014 NLD Class members (L-R) Robert Person, Lois Allen, Barbra Bylicki, Steve Harri-man, Lynette Mefford, Shaneka Holmes, Carmen Rosado. Not pictured are: Pearline Reid, Ola Gabriel, Gregory Mency, and Uganda Jones.



Photo by Brad Garner



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Customer Service

Consider this strategy for dealing with irritable customers

It's happened to every frontline service rep — they pick up the phone and the caller is angry, upset or abusive. If only all customers were in a calm and receptive state of mind.

Unfortunately, getting customers to that state isn't always easy.

The secret, says Mark Goulston, author of *Just Listen*, is for the rep to take control of their emotions and then to help the customer regain control so that they can work together toward a solution.

In the June issue of *The Customer Communicator* newsletter, Goulston offers several strategies including what he calls moving from "Oh Fudge" to "Okay" or from panic to logic by using self-talk and breathing.

The first step is the "Oh Fudge" phase or the reaction phase, which is often an overreaction. The rep might say to himself, "OMG, this customer is terrible. This is a disaster. I'll never be able to get through this."

After acknowledging these feelings, the rep should breathe deeply and let go of the negative emotion.

The next step is the release phase, where the rep takes a moment to silently vent. They might say to themselves, "This is a mess. I hate having to clean up these situations. Why does this always happen to me."



After acknowledging these feelings, the rep should again breathe deeply and let go of the negative emotion.

The final step is to re-engage. Here the rep might say, "Okay, I am ready to fix this."

"It's a way of talking yourself down from a potential over-reaction and getting yourself re-centered," Goulston says. "And once reps have learned this process and go through it a few times, it will start to come naturally, whenever these situations present themselves."



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IN OUR MEDICAL CENTER CHAPEL**
PROTESTANT SERVICE: SUNDAYS 2:00 pm
CATHOLIC MASS: SUNDAYS 11:00 am
MONDAY - THURSDAYS 12:00 pm
All Are Welcome! Contact us at 7031/5906



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Patient Safety

Someone should know about this....

Report Patient Safety Concerns, Adverse Events and Close Calls!

Click the “ePER link” electronic Patient Event Report

It's Fast, Easy and Anonymous (if you want follow up, you have to call or email Tamara so she'll know who submitted it)

Not sure if you should report something?

Ask Tamara or an “ePER – Liaison” in your area!

JCBOC: Laura Radcliff & Kristine Godwin

Brynn Marr: Rickey Ruffin

Village Green: Tina White

Hamlet CBOC: Jessica Holmes

Goldsboro CBOC: Sarah Pittman

Dialysis: Colissia Jacobs

Interested in becoming an ePER or Patient Safety Liaison?

Contact your Supervisor &

Tamara Passut, your Patient Safety Manager (ext 5097) for more info



WHAT IS OUR FACILITY DOING ABOUT PATIENT SAFETY ISSUES?

It starts and ends with YOU!

In addition to internal performance improvement, when an adverse event or close call is reported in ePER the event will be reviewed and classified by actual and potential frequency and severity.

Some events warrant an individual Root Cause Analysis and some are held for Aggregate Root Cause Analysis if it is a very frequently occurring event. A multidisciplinary team then meets several times to analyze our facility processes, best practices and determine what caused the event. They present their recommended changes or actions to our leadership to prevent reoccurrence.

The facility thanks Fayetteville VA Employees identified on the right for stepping up and serving on a Root Cause Analysis to improve our safety-focused processes and teamwork across disciplines so far this year alone!

Root Cause Analysis Participants

George Almazan, Debra Barton, April Bess, Craig Blue, Maureen Chapman, Stephanie Cox, Wilfredo Davila, Sharon Foutz, Tiffany Gatling, Emelda Giacolone, Lisa Gildon, Vicki Goblirsch, Mark Griffio, Kimberly Gunn, Chereke Henderson, Juana Hernandez, Erica Hines, Marisol Huertas, Amita Kamireddy, Atul Kantesaria, Eleanor Mendoza, Lover Montgomery, Abby Parker, Penny Peacock, Pamela Pickett, Mary Pressey, Ellen Ray, Sophia Payton-Savage, Chris Sikes, Brian Scholz, Rebecca Simpson, Djuna Sutton, Mark Wallace, Wesley “Howard” Walsworth, Tina White, Danita Thomas-Wilkes, Shelby Williams, and Rebecca “Nicole” Williford



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Highlights

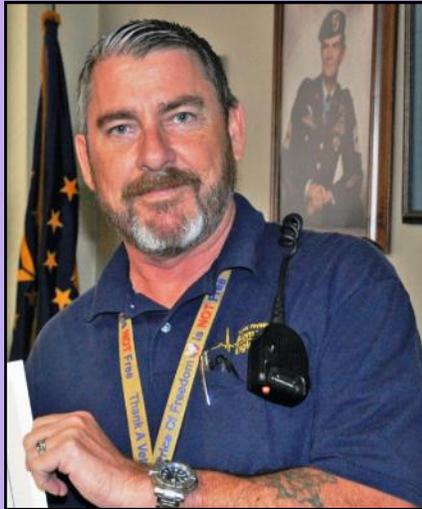
Tele-dermatology saved my life

By Kenny Murray
Biomedical Engineering Dept.
Fayetteville VAMC

Two years ago I was walking around unaware of the fact that I had the most dangerous form of skin cancer someone could have, "Melanoma." Melanoma isn't the most common of the skin cancers, but it causes the most deaths.

My wife noticed a couple of questionable lesions on me and requested my primary care physician refer me to the Fayetteville VA Medical Center's Tele-dermatology Clinic where she works as the master preceptor & imager.

They took high-resolution images of the lesions and a dermatologist at the Durham VAMC viewed them. After reviewing the lesions, the dermatologist recommended I get biopsies.



I had the results in two days. They discovered that I had Melanoma and it was in an early stage. They quickly scheduled a surgical procedure and I had it removed.

I am very grateful and am a living testimony of how well the VA's Tele-dermatology program works. The staff was professional, punctual and courteous.

Through the coordination of care between the Fayetteville VAMC and the Durham VAMC where the Duke Dermatologists worked on a part-time basis, my Melanoma was discovered and I'm forever grateful to this wonderful team of clinicians. I cannot overstate how important it is to pay attention to your skin.



Visit us on the web at
www.fayettevillenc.va.gov

The newsletter is published by the last week of each month.

Please share your story ideas and photos with us.
Enjoy!

Jeff Melvin, Public Affairs Officer/Editor,
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Cover design by Brad Garner,
Visual Information Specialist



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