



VA HEALTH CARE Defining EXCELLENCE in the 21st Century

Veteran Connection

VA Portland Health Care System Newsletter

Keeping the Promise - Advancing Excellence



VA Portland Health Care System

3710 SW U.S. Veterans Hospital Rd.
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Produced by the VAPORHCS Public Affairs Office

QUESTIONS / COMMENTS ??

Please email us at...

VHAPOR-PublicAffairs@med.va.gov

or call 503-402-2975

Lincoln's Promise (VA Mission Statement)

"To care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow, and his orphan" by serving and honoring the men and women who are America's Veterans.

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For [VAPORHCS Events and Classes](#)—got to the VAPORHCS Web page...

www.portland.va.gov/calendar.asp

Message from the Director



Todd D. Burnett, PsyD
Acting Director, VA Portland Health Care System

Improving Access and our Veterans' experience at VAPORHCS remains our top organizational priority. In early April, VA leadership announced the [My VA Access](#) initiative to support this effort.

My VA Access is a declaration from VHA and every single staff member at VAPORHCS to the Veterans we care for; it is a call to action and the reaffirmation of our core mission to provide quality care, and to offer that care as soon as possible to Veterans how and where they desire to receive it. My VA Access is a demonstration of our commitment to actively engage in and support our transformation into a more Veteran-centered service organization, incorporating aspirational goals such as same day access to mental health and primary care services for Veterans when it is medically necessary.

We know we have work in VAPORHCS to meet these goals, but as we fill vacant provider and other clinical positions in the coming weeks and months, I am certain we will.

I have been with VAPORHCS just one month and I am incredibly impressed with the quality and dedication of the staff. We

have world class facilities and the right people to match who can and will make the changes needed to meet and exceed the expectations of the Veterans we serve.

One way we engage our Veterans and gain feedback and ideas on how to improve the care we provide and work with our community partners to this end, is through the MyVA Cascadia Board. More details are on the following page about this organization, but I plan to join the board on May 9 as a board member at a Veteran Town Hall in Bend. Our goal is to gain ideas and brainstorm new strategies to address existing Veteran issues, VA related or otherwise. This is the second such event in our catchment area this year and we are ever so thankful to the [19 My VA Cascadia Board members](#) for their efforts. I hope you can join us.

Lastly, I have been assured that VHA is actively perusing a new director for VAPORHCS and expects to have the right person in place in the next few months. In the meantime, I am honored and privileged to serve our Veterans here in the Pacific Northwest and to be a part of this excellent team of professionals.

To share ideas and feedback, please send them to my Public Affairs team at VHAPOR-publicaffairs@med.va.gov.

Thank you,
Todd D. Burnett

[VA Veterans Town Hall & Claims Clinic](#) — May 26, Portland VAMC

FOR WHO? Veterans, family members and media representatives are invited

WHEN? May 26, 2016; Claims Clinic is 4–5 p.m.; Town Hall 5-6:30 pm

WHERE? VAPORHCS PVAMC Auditorium, 3710 SW U.S. Veterans Hospital Rd. & via teleconference at five clinics.

WHAT? At the **Claims Clinic**, Veterans

can speak to VBA specialist about specific claims issues or questions or to VAPORHCS Patient Advocates about your specific health-related issues or questions.

At the **Veterans Town Hall**, get the latest updates from the Directors of VAPORHCS and VBA Portland Regional Office and ask questions and speak to staff.

More information on this & other events are on the [VAPORHCS Facebook page](#)

If you would like to be added to the VAPORHCS Partner email list, please email us at VHAPOR-PublicAffairs@med.va.gov

MyVA Cascadia Board holds 2nd town hall in Bend on May 9

As members of the board, VAPORHCS, VBA and NCA directors support event



MyVA Cascadia - *Putting Veterans First*

The MyVA Cascadia Board is holding its second community meeting and its first in the Bend area on May 9 (details below).

The community meeting, hosted by the Board Chair, Tom Mann, is open to all interested individuals and is intended to allow the sharing of ideas and brainstorm new strategies to existing Veteran issues. As members of the board, VA

Directors from VAPORHCS, Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) Portland Regional Office, and Willamette National Cemetery Director are scheduled to be in attendance to support the event.

The MyVA Cascadia Board is based on a VA model under the [MyVA Communities initiative](#) established in 2015 as part of the MyVA Transformation Plan. The 21-member board is a collaborative network of local Veteran service providers, advocates, and other stakeholders that organize in order to improve outcomes for Veterans and their stakeholders.

MyVA Community boards around the country, like the MyVA Cascadia Board, are not established by VA, nor are they managed or controlled by VA. The boards are locally sponsored community movements organized by individual communities and guided by a community Veterans engagement board convened by community leaders. They are not designed to accomplish the VA's corporate agenda but established and driven by non-VA leaders organizing their local community to improve Veteran services and outcomes.

For more information about the MyVA Cascadia Board, please go to their Web site at www.myvacascadia.com or contact them at myvacascadia@yahoo.com or by mail at MyVA Cascadia, PO Box 3576 Salem, OR 97302.

MyVA Cascadia Bend area Veteran Town Hall

FOR WHO? Veterans, family members and community leaders

WHEN? May 9, 2016, 6 to 8 p.m.

WHAT? Town hall-style meeting and VBA Claims Clinic with MyVA Cascadia Board including VAPORHCS, VBA and Willamette National Cemetery Directors.

Also—VBA will have a claim specialists at the event to address issues and answer questions.

WHERE? Hitchcock Auditorium at Central Oregon Community College, 2600 NW College Way, Bend, Oregon

WHY? To provide ideas and priorities to help identify and solve Veteran issues using resources within the community. Click [here](#) for a press release.

Groundbreaking ceremony for new Vancouver Primary Care Clinic

New facility expected to open summer 2017

(See more photos on [VAPORHCS Facebook](#))



The official party of the groundbreaking ceremony does the ceremonial first shovel for the new Vancouver Primary Care Clinic on April 22, 2016, at the Vancouver Campus. Pictured from left to right is Ronald Grewenow, MD, Acting Primary Care Clinical Director, Todd Burnett, PsyD, Acting VAPORHCS Director, Dena Horton, Southwest Washington outreach director for Senator Cantwell, Bryan Stebbins, Southwest Washington representative for Senator Murray, Dale Lewis, District Issue work director for Congresswoman Herrera Beutler, Michael Major, VAPORHCS Engineer and project manager, Karen Martin, Vancouver Primary Care Clinic Operations Manager, and Mike Uhrig, Vice President of Hanke Constructors, the general contractor of this new clinic.

VAPORHCS staff and guests celebrated the start of construction of a new Primary Care Clinic on April 22 with a formal groundbreaking ceremony on the Vancouver Campus. The new facility, located just north of the Clark County Health building, will have more than 21,000 square feet and 30 exam rooms with an additional 46 parking spaces. With 16 authorized Patient-Aligned Care Teams (PACT), the new facility is expected to open in the summer of 2017.

An artist rendition of the new Vancouver Division Primary Care Clinic currently under construction on the Vancouver Campus. The 22,000+ square foot clinic is expected to be fully operational in the summer of 2017.





Free caregiver training for family members

Hosted by VAPORHCS Caregiver Support Program

May 4 at the Portland Convention Center, 431 NE Multnomah St., Portland



Class: *Taking Care of Yourself*

Date / Time: Wednesday May 4, 9 a.m. to noon

What You Will Learn:

- Healthy Eating and Recipes
- Protecting and Improving Your Physical Health
- Falling and Staying Asleep
- Protecting and Improving Your Emotional Health
- Caregiver Survival Tools
- How to Create a Personal Action Plan for Taking Care of Yourself

Class: *Problem Solving and Effective Communication for Family Caregivers*

**Date / Time: Wednesday May 4,
1 to 4 p.m.**

What You Will Learn:

- A 5-step approach to problem solving
- To Apply these 5-steps to a problem you are facing
- To Communicate Assertively
- Communication Skills
 - Learning appropriate 'I' statements
 - Empathic listening
 - Verbal aikido
- Practice session in class

Are you the family Caregiver of a Vet-

eran? If you are, we know you are busy and may find it hard to take time to take care of yourself. VA's Caregiver Support Program's Taking Care of Yourself course is designed to provide you with some quick and easy strategies, tools, and tips to help you protect and improve your health and well-being. Caregivers of Veterans who receive care from VA and Veterans who are Caregivers are eligible to attend this free 3 hour session taught by licensed health care professionals. Talk with your Caregiver Support Coordinator (CSC) to learn more and to register to attend. **Each class is limited to 25 Caregivers** and everyone will receive a Taking Care of Yourself Workbook to take home.

For more information & to register;

VA Portland Caregiver Support Program at: (503) 273-5210

LUNCH is PROVIDED at noon

Education Workshops for Veterans and family members

Are you interested in the healing properties of food?
Do you want to learn how to prepare simple life-giving healthy nutrition?

Join us for a lively cooking demonstration by our guest Chef who will discuss the healing properties of food, healthy fats and gaining weight healthfully post treatment.

Be inspired with a delicious, whole-food meal (yes, you will get to try it!) so you can aim for a more healthful diet.

Food as Medicine with Special Guest Chef Jessica Berliner

Date: Thursday, June 2
Time: 10a.m. to noon
Where: PVAMC Building
101, Room 109
(near the credit union)

CCNT
Cancer Care
Navigation Team
Supporting Veterans Through Their Journey
Farmacy



One should eat to live, not live to eat. -Molière

Cancer support group for Veterans & caregivers

Held the third Thursday of each month, 10 a.m. to noon

Each session is two hours and includes an educational cancer-related topic, nutritional education, activity and a light lunch.

For all three classes:

RSVP: (503) 220-8262 Ext.
51754 (limited seating)
Marcia Long, LCSW, OSW-C
Cancer Care Navigation
Team Social Worker

These two classes are
located at
Portland VAMC
1st, Building 100,
Room 1C-188
(Across from
Physical Therapy)

Art as Therapy for Cancer Survivors and Caregivers

Second Thursday of each month, 10 a.m. to noon

Our program will offer you a chance to express yourself, treat yourself to a relaxing and restorative activity, and connect with others going through cancer treatment and recovery.

- Become more self-aware, express fears, anxieties, and other emotions that may be difficult to talk about
- Communicate and interact better with others
- Build self-esteem, reduce stress, improve quality of life
- Find comfort, freedom, and hope

VBA and Veteran Service Officers available at PVAMC

VBA and VSO representatives are on site at PVAMC to assist Veterans



What: A VBA representative is on station at PVAMC to support for Veterans of all Eras to help with the claims process, E-benefits, GI Bill, and more.

When: Every Wednesday, 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Where: Transition and Care Management (TCM) Office, Bldg. 101, Rm. 107, PVAMC, 3710 10 SW US Veterans Hospital Rd. Portland

Veterans can walk-in or schedule appointments through the main Transition and Care Management Office.

Contact: Peter Perrimoore, Support Assistant (503) 273-5075 or (503) 220-8262, ext. 53062.



What: A VFW Veteran Service Officer is on station at PVAMC to support Veterans with claims.

When: Every 2nd and 4th Monday, 9 a.m. to noon

Where: Bldg. 101, Rm. 121, PVAMC, 3710 10 SW US Veterans Hospital Rd. Portland

Veterans can walk-in or schedule appointments through the VFW Office below

Contact: VFW Portland VSO Office (503)412-4757



What: An American Legion Veteran Service Officer is on station at PVAMC to support Veterans with claims.

When: Every 2nd and 4th Monday, 9 a.m. to noon

Where: Bldg. 101, Rm. 121, PVAMC, 3710 10 SW US Veterans Hospital Rd. Portland

Veterans can walk-in or schedule appointments through their DSO below.

Contact: American Legion Department Service Officer (DSO) (503) 444-1307



What: A Military Order Purple Heart Veteran Service Officer is on station at PVAMC to support Veterans with claims.

When: Every Wednesday, 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Where: Bldg. 101, Rm. 121, PVAMC, 3710 10 SW US Veterans Hospital Rd. Portland

Veterans can walk-in or schedule appointments through their VSO below.

Contact: MOPH VSO Brian Olson (503) 412- 4770

What Veterans should know about their travel benefits related to their care at the

The VA is authorized to provide payments or allowance for Beneficiary Travel (BT). This benefit is available for those Veterans who meet travel eligibility criteria when traveling to or from a VA or VA authorized healthcare appointment. The BT program was designed to be adaptable in meeting the transportation needs of eligible Veterans and includes Special Mode Transportation (SMT) (ambulance, wheelchair van) when medically necessary.

The BT program focuses on the most economical to the government, medically appropriate mode of transportation that meets the Veteran's needs. The mode of travel used should be in line with how the Veteran commutes while conducting normal daily activities.

Recent audit results on the use of SMT have identified a need for change throughout the VA. As a result, VHA introduced new guidance for determining the Veterans medical eligibility for SMT. The new guidance places an emphasis on medical necessity for the authorization of SMT reimbursement.



Veterans may see a reduction in Special Mode Transportation (SMT) authorizations and an increase in Veteran's use of the following modes of transportation:

- Mileage reimbursement (travel eligible Veterans) - http://www.portland.va.gov/VTP/Beneficiary_Travel.asp
- Community transportation resources— http://www.portland.va.gov/VTP/Community_Transportation_Resources.asp
- Veterans Transportation Service (VTS) <http://www.portland.va.gov/VTP/VTS.asp>
- Disabled American Veterans (DAV) <http://www.portland.va.gov/VTP/DAV.asp>
- Portland/Vancouver Shuttle http://www.portland.va.gov/VTP/Shuttle_Service.asp

More information on BT benefits can be obtained on the VA BT Frequently Asked Questions website: <http://vaww.va.gov/hec/bt/btfaq.asp#1>

Questions or concerns should be directed to the VA Portland Health Care System Mobility Manager, Monty Hughes at (503) 220-3423.