



VA HEALTH CARE
Defining EXCELLENCE in the 21st Century

Veteran Connection

A Portland VA Medical Center Newsletter



Keeping the  Advancing Excellence

Portland VA Medical Center

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Produced by the PVAMC
Public Affairs Office

QUESTIONS / COMMENTS ??

Please email us at...

VHAPOR-PublicAffairs@med.va.gov
or call 503-402-2975

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Calendar

- ♦ Sept. 5, 1:30-3:30 p.m. PVAMC Salem CBOC Grand Opening/Open House
- ♦ Sept. 19, SAVE THE DATE: Fisher House Ground-breaking, TBD
- ♦ Sept. 23, SAVE THE DATE: Veteran Forum, Portland Auditorium, 9:30-11am
- ♦ Sept. 26, 1:00 p.m. — PVAMC Lincoln City Clinic Open House event; 4422 NE Devils Lake Blvd, Suite 2,

August 2014

Volume 1, Issue 2

Welcome from the Director



Joanne M. Krumberger,
Director, Portland VA
Medical Center

Greetings.

I am pleased to provide you with the second issue of the Portland VA Medical Center (PVAMC) *Veteran Connection* newsletter. In case you did not see our July issue, this product is one aspect of an expanded effort to improve two-way communication between PVAMC and all our stakeholders.

As most of you are probably aware, Robert A. McDonald was appointed as the new Secretary of the VA on July 30 and we are immensely fortunate to have him leading this organization. Though people change, our mission and commitment to ensuring that PVAMC is the provider of choice for care remains steadfast. We look forward to meeting the challenges ahead and exceeding the expectations of the Veterans we serve. We are committed to continuously improving the care and services we provide.

To do this, I need your help. Stakeholders provide valuable insight into the needs of Veterans and can be incredibly productive partners in assuring that Veterans get the best service possible. My leadership team and I plan to invite, meet and engage our Veterans and stakeholders through various venues including small workgroups, larger forums with Veteran Service Organization Leaders and Veteran Service Officers, to open forum town hall-style meetings. You may have already seen these invitations to various events and engagements, but you will see more in the future. I'd greatly appreciate your participation or forwarding of this information to your constituents accordingly.

Finally, in the months ahead, we will have more information regarding the "Veterans Access, Choice & Accountability Act of 2014." VA is currently reviewing this legislation and we will communicate what this means to the Portland VA.

Thank you again for your support to our Veterans and the Portland VA Medical Center.

I look forward to our continued partnership.

Joanne

2013 Portland VA Annual Report is available online



The very first PVAMC Annual Report is ready for your reading pleasure! Topic include the following...

- Director's message
- History of PVAMC
- Eliminating Veteran homelessness;
- Portland VA Research;
- PVAMC's Telehealth program
- ALS Multidisciplinary Clinic
- Access to care
- Designing patient-centered care
- My HealtheVet;
- Portland VA Fisher House
- Supporting the needs of our returning Veterans
- and more...

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



MyHealthVet saves time & improves care experience

Refill your prescription, make appoints, and communicate with your care team — all online.

If you haven't signed in to your My HealthVet (MHV) account in a while, it's time.

Ten years from its initial launch, the online e-health portal now allows VA patients to view, print and download the bulk of your electronic health record, including doctors' progress notes. The vast majority of the records are available just three days after being signed by the physician. Patients may also send non-urgent, automatically-encrypted communications to primary, specialty and administrative healthcare teams to request or change appointments, discuss symptoms, request medication renewals and ask billing-related questions. MHV also allows VA patients to order prescription refills, view lab results and appointments, track vital statistics and research health conditions all in one convenient place— www.myhealth.va.gov

71,000 Veterans (83%)

associated with the
Portland VAMC have
registered for
My HealthVet

31,000 Veterans (36%)

associated with the
Portland VAMC have
signed on to use
Secure Messaging
Through My HealthVet

For more information,

go to
www.myhealth.va.gov
or call the MHV Helpline
at 1-877-327-0022

facebook

Do you Facebook? [PVAMC](#) does.

A great place for information!

Get Recommended Screenings and Immunizations

The Fall Influenza Vaccination Campaign is rapidly approaching! But there are other vaccines that are important to protect you, your family, our Veterans and the community. Visit the [CDC Vaccines & Immunizations website](#) to learn more. Specifically, check out the [CDC immunization schedules](#) for people of ALL ages

Watch the [Portland VA Web site](#), [Facebook page](#) and signage in our facilities about how you can get your Influenza Vaccination this fall. If you ever have questions, please talk to your care team.

PVAMC Savvy Caregiver Program

This is a FREE, six-week series designed especially for unpaid caregivers caring for a loved one with a dementia diagnosis.

PVAMC Vancouver Clinic; Fri. 10 a.m. – 12 p.m., Sept. 5, 12, 19, 26, Oct. 3, 10

Center 50+, 2615 Portland RD NE Salem; Tues. 10 AM – 12 p.m. Oct. 7, 14, 21, 28, Nov. 4

To register, call Kristi Ketchum, (503)-220-8262, ext. 58594

PVAMC hosts 2nd Annual Mental Health Summit — August 8

This event was designed for any community providers who work with Veterans, non-profit agencies, government and VSO organizations, and others who have interest in mental health issues for Veterans and their families.

Sponsored by the Portland VA Medical Center, Mental Health Division, this event provided an opportunity to sustain and enhance the positive working relationships and joint vision with our community partners. A panel of Veteran and family members presented to the group to help us better understand military culture and their experiences.

We look forward to hosting this event again next year!

For ALL PVAMC classes/events, see the [PVAMC Events Calendar](#)



Deputy VA Secretary Sloan D. Gibson visits PVAMC



Deputy Secretary of Veterans Affairs Sloan D. Gibson visited PVAMC in Portland on Friday, August 8, meeting with local facility leadership, speaking with employees, stakeholders, and he conducted a media event.

“VA needs to look at this crisis as an opportunity.... In as little as two years, people would look at VA and say, gosh—look at that organization. Look at the quality and the care and the consistency of care that they’re delivering. You remember what people were saying about VA back in 2014?”

Deputy Secretary Gibson addressing Veteran Service Organizations and Congressional Stakeholders, August 8, 2014



Deputy Secretary Gibson speaking to local media outlets on August 8, 2014— Pictured left to right: Gibson, Portland VA Medical Center Director, Joanne Krumberger, and VISN20 Network Director, Larry Carroll

Fisher House Update

PVAMC will hold a groundbreaking ceremony for the Vancouver Fisher House on September 19, TBD. This 16-suite house will provide lodging to Veterans and their family members during treatment.



Construction on the house should take about a year, with an projected opening in fall 2015.

New Lincoln Clinic opened June 25



We at PVAMC are extremely happy to present our newest Outpatient Clinic (CBOC) for service to Veterans in and around the Lincoln City area.

The clinic is located at 4422 NE Devils Lake Blvd, Suite 2, Lincoln City OR 97367. As a partnership with Lincoln County, we will have primary care services only at this time.

Please join us for our ribbon cutting of this great facility on September 26 at 1:00pm.

Frequently asked questions — feedback on your questions

QUESTION 1. Why did Portland go to electronic payments for beneficiary travel?

ANSWER 1. In 2013, the U.S. Treasury Department issued a mandate that all federal agencies reduce or eliminate the use of cash for beneficiary payments. On July 15, 2014, Portland VA Medical Center began paying all beneficiary travel payments through electronic funds transfer (EFT) to bank accounts and credit unions.

QUESTION 2. How does a Veteran receive a waiver for the electronic beneficiary travel payment?

ANSWER 2. Low income Veterans or Veterans facing a financial emergency can request a one-time emergency waiver by contacting our Enrollment Office in Portland on the first floor of the main hospital building.

QUESTION 3. The media reported \$7.9 million being sent to Portland to help with access to care. How is that money being allocated?

ANSWER 3. Portland received \$7.9 million to outsource Veterans to community providers to receive services that we are unable to provide in a timely manner. We project outsourcing approximately 6000 appointments to community providers who are close to the Veterans' homes.

QUESTION 4. Can you explain the "Veterans Access, Choice & Accountability Act of 2014" and what it means to Veterans locally?

ANSWER 4. The Department's goal continues to be to provide timely, high-quality healthcare for Veterans. Veterans and VA employees nationwide understand the need for reform, and VA is pleased that Congress has passed and the President has signed into law important legislation that will help the Department continue to move Veterans off of wait lists and into clinics. The Department's focus and priority is on timely and effective implementation of this highly complex piece of legislation. VA is fully reviewing the legislation and as this process continues, VA will work with other Departments, Congress, Veterans Service Organizations and stakeholders to ensure that provisions are implemented as quickly and efficiently as possible.