On June 6th, the MISSION Act was enacted to enhance how Veterans receive and access care in the community. This is a major change that touches almost every aspect of how care is coordinated in the community. Access standards have changed and there are many more options for Veterans seeking care now. There are many educational materials available at www.missionact.va.gov, so I will not dwell on the specific changes of the program.

What I would like to spend some time on is why Veterans should choose VA for their care. The VA is largest integrated healthcare system in the United States with 146 medical centers and nearly 1,400 community-based outpatient clinics. Together these healthcare facilities and the more than 53,000 independent licensed healthcare practitioners who work within them provide care to more than 8.3 million Veterans each year. VA often outperforms private healthcare providers in a number of important quality measures.

When a Veteran chooses to have their healthcare provided by the VA, they are getting the highest quality care and the best possible coordination of services. Too often, healthcare can be fragmented and transactional. When a Veteran seeks care at the VA, we look at the whole person. The innovative Whole Health programs offer an approach to healthcare that empowers and equips each individual to take charge of their health and well-being, and to live life to the fullest. Whole Health goes beyond the Veteran’s illnesses, injuries, or disabilities. It focuses on the Veteran’s values and aspiration, health and happiness, and includes self-care and complementary therapies along with conventional medical care.

This approach coupled with strong medical professionals, who ensure every aspect of care is considered, work tirelessly to ensure all care happens in concert and without interruptions. Even when it is necessary to refer Veterans to care in the community, there is a significant amount of care coordination that occurs to ensure the community provider has access to relevant parts of the health record, laboratory results, radiology images and medications you are taking. This management effort also ensures medical documentation from your visit to a community provider is pulled into permanent VA records so your medical record is a comprehensive and complete record of care received.

I encourage all Veterans to Choose VA for your care. Capitalize on the cutting edge services you have earned and let the committed professionals at the VA care for you. This will ensure you receive the highest quality care, the best possible outcome and a commitment to helping you live your life to the fullest.

Darwin Goodspeed
The MISSION Act is now implemented across the VA as of June 6, 2019

MISSION Act Resources

MISSION ACT Hotline (503) 220-8262, option 6, or (844) 698-2311 option 1 for MISSION Act for information on the following topics. To speak to a representative, select and listen to the entire message and then press "0" to be connected. The following are the Hotline topics...

- (1) Health Care Eligibility
- (2) Care in the Community Eligibility
- (3) Urgent and Walk-in Care Information
- (4) Copayment and Insurance Information
- (5) Complaint and Appeals Process

What is the MISSION Act? - it is an acronym for the “VA Maintaining Internal Systems and Strengthening Integrated Outside Networks Act.”

VA Portland Health Care System Community Care Team - (360) 759-1674; for Veterans to talk to a VA Portland staff member about their active non-VA care coordination status or any issues or concerns.

Web resource for Veterans = www.missionact.va.gov

12-page booklet - "Health Care Options Through VA", June 2019 (MISSION Act and other resources)

Community Care Fact Sheets (VA Office of Community Care)

- Health Care Eligibility
- General information
- Urgent Care
- Billing and Payment
- Getting Appointments

VA Urgent Care in the Community Details

CLICK HERE
Go to www.va.gov for all things VA...

Access and manage your VA benefits and health care

**Health care**
- Refill and track your prescriptions
- Send a secure message to your health care team
- Schedule and view your appointments
- View your lab and test results
- Apply now for VA health care

**Disability**
- Check your claim or appeal status
- View your payment history
- Upload evidence to support your claim
- File for a VA disability increase
- File a claim for compensation

**Education**
- Check your Post-9/11 GI Bill® benefits
- View your payment history
- Change your current education benefits
- Compare GI Bill benefits by school
- Apply for education benefits

**Records**
- Get Veteran ID cards
- Get your VA medical records
- Download your benefit letters
- Change your address
- Request your military records (DD214)
Veteran Listening Session
in The Dalles

Tuesday, July 23, 2019
5:30 to 7:00 p.m.
Oregon Veterans Home
700 Veterans Drive, The Dalles, OR, 97058

Veterans, families, Veterans Service Organizations, and all are invited join VA Portland Health Care System and Portland Regional Benefits Office (VBA) Directors to discuss ideas, ask questions, or raise concerns regarding VA services. All are welcome. Other VA staff members will be present to provide information about resources and programs available for Veterans such as:

• Veterans Benefits Administration
• National Cemetery Administration
  • VA Health Care Enrollment
  • My HealtheVet
  • Women’s Health
• Transition and Care Management
  • Office of Veteran Experience

If you are a Veterans Service Organization that would like a table at this event, please email VHAPOR-PublicAffairs@med.va.gov or call (503) 808-1920.

Thank you Oregon Veteran’s Home for hosting this event!
Veteran Listening Session in Astoria

Thursday, July 25, 2019
4:30 to 6:00 p.m.
American Legion Clatsop Post 12
1132 Exchange Street, Astoria, OR, 97103

Veterans, families, Veterans Service Organizations, and all are invited join VA Portland Health Care System and Portland Regional Benefits Office (VBA) Directors to discuss ideas, ask questions, or raise concerns regarding VA services. All are welcome. Other VA staff members will be present to provide information about resources and programs available for Veterans such as:

- Veterans Benefits Administration
- National Cemetery Administration
  - VA Health Care Enrollment
    - My HealtheVet
    - Women’s Health
- Transition and Care Management
- Office of Veteran Experience

If you are concerned about physical access to the location, please let us know. We will meet with anyone upstairs or outside.

If you are a Veterans Service Organization that would like a table at this event, please email VHAPOR-PublicAffairs@med.va.gov or call (503) 808-1920.

Thank you American Legion Clatsop Post 12 for hosting this event!
VA health care facilities to go smoke-free by Oct. 1

VHA Modifies Policies to Increase Quality of Care to Veterans

WASHINGTON — As part of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs’ (VA) commitment to provide excellent health care for Veterans, the department will implement a new policy restricting smoking by patients, visitors, volunteers, contractors and vendors at its health care facilities by October.

Although VA has historically permitted smoking in designated areas, there is growing evidence that smoking and exposure to secondhand and thirdhand smoke creates significant medical risks, and risks to safety and direct patient care that are inconsistent with medical requirements and limitations. Accordingly, VA’s Veterans Health Administration (VHA) has collaborated with key stakeholders to update and recertify the policy to be consistent with the department’s commitment to Veterans and the community.

A recent VA survey revealed that approximately 85% of responding facility leadership support smoke-free campuses, and this new policy for patients, visitors, volunteers, contractors and vendors allows VA to ensure the health and well-being of VA staff, patients and the public.

“We are not alone in recognizing the importance of creating a smoke-free campus,” said VA Secretary Robert Wilkie. “As of 2014, 4,000 health care facilities and four national health care systems in the U.S. have implemented smoke-free grounds. This policy change coincides with additional VHA efforts to help us become the provider of choice for Veterans and the reason why Veterans will ChooseVA.”

VHA’s new smoke-free policy applies to cigarettes, cigars, pipes, any other combustion of tobacco and non-Federal Drug Administration approved electronic nicotine delivery systems (ENDS), including but not limited to electronic or e-cigarettes, vape pens or e-cigars.

To learn more about resources to quit & health risks associated with smoking...

- Talk to your VA provider.


- VHA has extensive resources and programs to assist Veterans in their smoke-free journey. They can be found at https://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/quit-tobacco/.
Sign up to get email alerts on all things VA Portland!

- Emergency Notifications
- News & Announcements
- Customize to get ANYTHING VA

Go to the VAPORHCS main web page
And click
"CONNECT WITH VA PORTLAND HEALTH CARE SYSTEM"

VA Portland Health Care System
Classes, events at VAPORHCS...

Dementia Education Workshops

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Dates / Times</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exploring Long Term Care</td>
<td>West Linn Clinic 1750 SW Blanken-ship Rd Ste 300 West Linn, OR</td>
<td>Monday, July 15 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effective Communication Strategies for Dementia Caregivers</td>
<td>Vancouver Campus 1601 E. 4th Plain Blvd Vancouver, WA</td>
<td>Tuesday, July 30 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Grief & Loss Drop In

Portland VA Medical Center: Tuesdays 10:00 – 11:30 a.m.
Vancouver VA Campus, Tuesdays 10:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Grief and Loss Spiritual Care will assist you in exploring your natural grief response to loss in your life and support you through the healing process.

Grief is a normal part of life and continues through different stages and ages of life. Each session, group or individual, includes time for individual grief work in a supportive and safe environment.

Chaplain Stephen Obold Eshleman 503.220.8262 ext. 56025 (Portland)
Chaplain Lian Stout 503.220.8262 ext. 31262 (Vancouver)

Cooking with Diabetes 4-part Series

Portland VA Medical Center: 4 Thursdays, 2 - 4 p.m. July 18, 25; Aug. 1, 8 Bldg. 101, Rm 109

Take charge of your diabetes by preparing more meals at home so you feel well and can live life to the fullest.

To Register  Call (503) 273-5112
Construction-related Road Detours & Closures on Vancouver VA Campus

We are sorry for the inconvenience, but if you travel on the Vancouver VA campus you will likely experience some detours and/or delays. Starting July 8, contractors began work on a steam upgrade that will take approximately two months to complete. Directional signage is in place to assist.
Veterans Healing Garden

Summer Garden Social

Portland VA Medical Center
3710 SW U.S. Veterans Hospital Rd.
Wednesday, July 10
11:00 a.m.—1:00 p.m.

Join us as we celebrate the fourth year of the Veterans Healing Garden! Fresh cut lavender, learn about the Boots 2 Roots PDX Program, refreshing food samples by VA registered dietitians, and receive free gardening advice with Oregon State University Master Gardeners!

- All Veterans, families, staff, and visitors welcome.
- The Veterans Healing Garden is located between Portland VA Medical Center buildings 100 & 101 on the 1st floor near the Specialty Clinics.

For more information, please contact Scott Hoffman, Therapeutic Garden Program Coordinator, Whole Health, scott.hoffman3@va.gov