



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

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.
Portland, OR 97239
503-220-8262 | 800-949-1004

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.

Inside this issue:

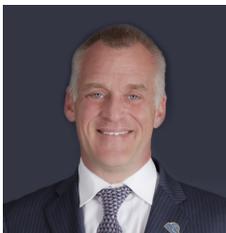
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For [VAPORHCS Events and Classes](#)—got to the VAPORHCS

Web page...

www.portland.va.gov/calendar.asp

Message from the Director



Michael W. Fisher
Director, VA Portland
Health Care System

I have great news to share about some new services now available in our health care

system.

- In February, VAPORHCS Nutrition & Food Services (NFS) started full room service for inpatient Veterans in Portland, similar to the service already in place at our Vancouver campus. We transitioned from a prepare-in-advance "cook-chill" system to preparing all meals fresh by our culinary team and delivered directly to the Veterans.

- In May, our new Positron Emission Tomography - Computed Tomography (PET/CT) scanner became operational at PVAMC! With this nuclear medicine technology, our providers are able to diagnose and determine the severity of and treat a variety of diseases, including many types of cancers, heart disease, gastrointestinal, endocrine, neurological disorders and other abnormalities within the body; this technology offers the potential to identify disease in its earliest stages as well as a patient's immediate response to therapeutic interventions.

- On May 15, I was proud and honored to host a ribbon-cutting event to celebrate the opening of the new VAPORHCS Vancouver Outpatient Imaging Center (VOICE). This project is a direct result of feedback from our Veterans requesting easier access to imaging services. This temporary ambulatory outpatient imaging center provides computed tomography (CT), magnetic resonance imaging (MRI),

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ultrasound, and fluoroscopy for the first time on our Vancouver campus. We are still planning to build a larger complex in the same vicinity that will include additional services and capacity. We expect that new facility to be open in the next two to three years or so.

Thank you to all the Veterans and family members who were able to participate in the Veteran Listening Sessions I have co-hosted with Portland Regional Benefits Office Director the past few months in Newport, Astoria and Redmond. These events allow the opportunity for me and my counterpart at VBA to meet and speak one-on-one with Veterans and family members about their ideas, issues and concerns. This helps tremendously in our ability to understand the unique challenges Veterans face in the many different communities we serve across the region.

I, in partnership with the Portland Regional Benefits Office Director, am scheduled to hold additional Veteran Listening Sessions / Community Meetings in The Dalles on June 14, in Albany on August 11, Portland on September 11, and in Lincoln City on September 29. The details are in this newsletter. At each of these events, both VAPORHCS and VBA staff from a wide variety of different service areas will attend to share information that many Veterans may find very helpful. I plan to continue to host these events and I look forward to meeting and hearing from the Veterans we serve.

Thank you for your service and for letting us serve you.

Michael Fisher

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

Memorial Day events in your area



VA



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Willamette National Cemetery hosts 68th Memorial Day ceremony May 28, 2018.

Patriotic music, flag displays, a rifle salute and fly-over will all be part of the 2018 Memorial Day Program at Willamette National Cemetery on May 28 at 10 a.m.



OREGON DEPARTMENT of VETERANS' AFFAIRS

[Oregon 2018 Statewide Memorial Day Events](#) (Hyperlink)



[Washington 2018 Statewide Memorial Day Events](#) (Hyperlink)



VA Veteran Listening Sessions/Community Meetings in The Dalles, Albany, Portland and Lincoln City

WHAT? VAPORHCS and Portland Regional Benefits Office Directors are hosting Veteran listening sessions/community meetings to hear from Veterans about issues, concerns and ideas so we can work on improving the care and services we provide to the Veterans in the community. VBA will have claims specialists to meet/speak with Veterans about their claims and VAPORHCS will have staff from several services to share information about community care, Choice, enrollment, and many other topics.

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

The Dalles

June 14, 2018; 12:00 – 1:30 p.m. (Please share [via the web](#) or [Facebook](#))

The Dalles Oregon Veterans Home, 700 Veterans Dr, The Dalles, OR 97058



Albany

August 11, 2018; 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. (More details to come)

Vets Helping Vets HQ Annual Picnic, Monteith Riverpark,
NW Water Ave, Albany, OR 97321

(This non-VA event is free and open to all Veterans and their families)

Portland

September 11, 2018; 9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

[Portland Veterans Stand Down](#)

Veterans Memorial Coliseum, 300 N Winning Way, Portland, OR 97227

(This non-VA event is free and open to all Veterans
focusing on homeless and at-risk of being homeless)

Lincoln City

September 29, 2018; 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. (More details to come)

Chinook Winds Casino annual Celebration of Honor event;
777 NW 44th St, Lincoln City, OR 97367

(This non-VA event is free and open to all Veterans and their families)

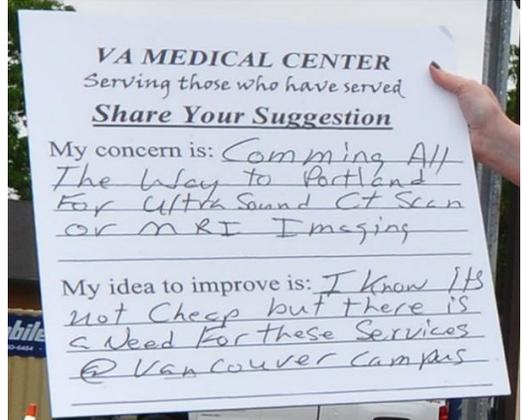
New imaging services open on Vancouver campus

The Vancouver Outpatient Imaging Center (VOICE) celebrated with a ribbon-cutting and open house event on May 15 on the VAPORHCS Vancouver campus. This new facility that opened for service earlier this month is a direct result of feedback from our Veterans requesting easier access to imaging services. This temporary ambulatory outpatient imaging center provides computed tomography (CT), magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), ultrasound, and fluoroscopy for the first time on our Vancouver campus. Planning continues to build a larger complex in the same vicinity that will include additional services and capacity.



VAPORHCS leadership, Imaging Service, and other support staff who were instrumental in making the new Vancouver Outpatient Imaging Center (VOICE) a reality celebrated with a ribbon-cutting and open house event on May 15 on the VAPORHCS Vancouver campus.

This is the Veteran comment from 2014 that was the inspiration for the new Vancouver Outpatient Imaging Center (VOICE). It reads, **"My Concern is: Coming all the way to Portland for ultrasound, CT scan, or MRI imaging."** **"My idea to improve is: I know it's not cheap, but there is a need for these services @ Vancouver Campus."**



See more on [Facebook!](#)



New imaging technology at Portland VA Medical Center

VAPORHCS Imaging Services has a new Positron Emission Tomography - Computed Tomography scanner at PVAMC.

The PET/CT scanner was delivered in March and is now fully operational providing the very latest digital imaging technology for our Veterans.

PET imaging is a type of nuclear medicine imaging. PET uses small amounts of radioactive materials called radiotracers, a special camera and a computer to help evaluate organ and tissue functions.

By identifying body changes at the cellular level, PET may detect the early onset of disease before it is evident on other imaging tests. By using these small amounts of radioactive material our doctors at VAPORHCS can diagnose and determine the severity of and treat a variety of diseases, including many types of cancers, heart disease, gastrointestinal, endocrine, neurological disorders and other abnormalities within the body. Because nuclear medicine procedures are able to pinpoint molecular activity within the body, they offer the potential to identify disease in its earliest stages as well as a patient's immediate response to therapeutic interventions. Nuclear medicine imaging procedures are noninvasive and usually painless medical tests that help physicians diagnose and evaluate medical conditions.



VAPORHCS Imaging Services Chief Technologist Laura Hatfield (Navy, '79-'92) and Ron Boucher (Navy, '83-2011), MD, Chief of Radiology, pose in front of a new Positron Emission Tomography - Computed Tomography scanner at PVAMC.



The new VA Portland's new Positron Emission Tomography - Computed Tomography (PET/CT) digital scanner being delivered in March 2018.

Whole Health Peer to Peer

Veterans helping Veterans set and achieve S.M.A.R.T goals for improved health and wellbeing
(Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Time Bound)

Weekly drop-in group open to all Veterans

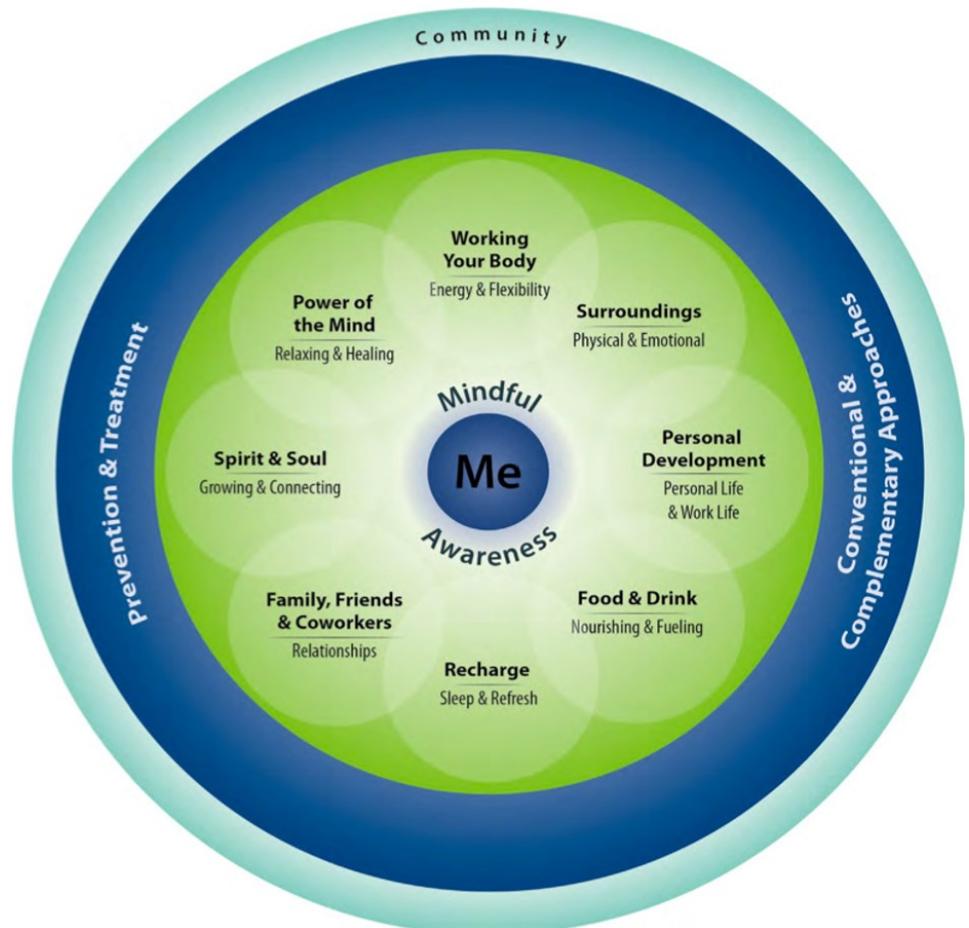
Vancouver campus
 Bldg. 20, Rm. 104,
 Mondays 10 - 11 a.m.

Portland VA Medical Center
 Bldg 100 Rm. 1C196J
 Fridays 10- 11 a.m.

Contact Brian:
(503) 220-8262 ext. 56106

Whole Health

Whole Health recognizes you as a whole person. Whole Health goes beyond your illnesses, injuries, or disabilities. It focuses on health and wellbeing and includes self-care and complementary therapies (such as Tai Chi and Yoga), along with your medical care. In Whole Health care, you are a more active partner with your health care team.





VHA Office of Community Care

Veterans Choice Program (VCP) VAPORHCS Fact Sheet

Veterans Choice Program:

- Veterans are eligible when the VA cannot provide the care within 30 days, the VA does not provide the service, or the Veteran lives greater than 40 miles from a qualifying VA facility.
- **TriWest (1-866-606-8198)** is the Choice Program third party administrator for the Portland VA ([click this link for an on - line “Check Your Eligibility” tool](#)).

Process:

- When scheduling a VA appointment, if one of the above eligibility criteria is met, the VA scheduler will ask you if you want to “opt in” or “opt out” of using the Choice Program.
- If you “opt in”, you will be able to get your care in the community through Veterans Choice.
 - ◇ Portland Community Care Office will send [eligibility verification \(Form 10-0386\)](#) along with your medical records to TriWest.
 - ◇ Portland Community Care Office will send you a Choice Packet with information to assist you through this process.
 - ◇ **TriWest will call you to schedule an appointment. If they do not call by the time you receive the Choice Packet from the VA please call TriWest at 1-866-606-8198.**
 - ◇ If TriWest tells you they don’t have your eligibility information or records, please call **Portland VA Office of Community Care at 360-759-1674** for assistance moving forward
 - ◇ If you “opt out” of Choice, you will keep your VA appointment.

Billing:

- Outside providers should not bill the VA or you for your Choice Care. If you are billed by an outside provider for services that were authorized through the Veterans Choice Program, please contact the billing department of the provider that billed you and ask them to bill TriWest for the services provided. If you have questions related to billing from the Choice Program, please contact **TriWest at (1-855-722-2838, option 3, 3)**.
- Please call **Portland VA Office of Community Care (360-759-1674)** if you have questions related to Veterans Choice/Tri West.

(continued on next page)



[Veterans Choice Program \(VCP\) Fact Sheet](#) (continued)

How To Get Your Medications:

- Tri West provider should write your prescriptions using the VA FORMULARY.
- Tri West Provider should fax your prescription along with the Choice Program to VA Pharmacy at (360) 905-1767
- VA Pharmacy will mail prescription to you within 14 days.

Urgent Medications:

- If you need an URGENT medication, please do one of the following:
- Present prescription to VA Pharmacy: Portland VA or Vancouver VA
- You may go to local pharmacy and have filled at your own expense (no VA reimbursement)
- Contact Nurse Care Manager in Community Care Department listed on your Choice letter for voucher (10 day worth of prescription only) if urgent/emergent.
- **Please do not fax or mail any urgent prescription requests**

Scheduled Medications:

Federal law requires an ink signed hard copy prior to dispensing this class of medication, Pharmacy may NOT accept faxed prescriptions for schedule II medications.

A signed hard copy can be mailed to:

VA Portland Health Care System, V-2-pharm,
3710 SW U.S. Veterans Hospital Road, Portland, OR 97207

Prosthetics / Durable Medical Equipment (DME):

All DME must be provided by the VA. It may be dispensed from a vendor, but they must have authorization from the VA prior to dispensing it. Please call your community care nurse case manager for any questions or issues related to DME.

Travel Pay:

Proof of attendance may be provided either by a memorandum from the clinic on their official letterhead, or by having them complete the form below. Complete the VA Travel Claim form (VA - 10-3542) and attach the proof of attendance. Submit both documents to:

VA Portland Health Care System, ATTN: P4-ENRO,
3710 SW U.S. Veterans Hospital Road,
Portland, OR 97239



Managing Chronic Pain and Suffering: A Resource Workshop

When: June 12 – 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Where: PVAMC, Building 101, Room 201

VA



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Veterans Health Administration
VA Portland Health Care System

Do you live with chronic pain? Join us to hear about the many resources available at Portland VA to help you manage chronic pain and increase your quality of life.

Presenters will include experts in:

Pain Medicine	Medications	Complementary Medicine
CBT for Chronic Pain	Nutrition	Movement Therapies
Sleep	Yoga/Tai Chi	Stress Management

You will learn about multiple evidence-based approaches to reduce your pain-related distress and will leave with a plan

For more information or to sign up, call Dr. Timothy Wright
At 503-220-8262 Ext. 55612

Program offered by NW Pain Clinic



Please share on Facebook

Vetride.net — the new VA Travel Portal

- To facilitate safe and reliable transportation within 20 miles of Portland VA Medical Center via your smart phone or computer

What is VetRide.net ?

VetRide is a web platform created to manage Veteran's trip requests to and from VA healthcare facilities. The platform allows Veterans to register for VetRide services, request a ride and receive notifications about status of their rides. This mobile-friendly platform enables Veterans to operate their account from their desktop as well as smart devices.

How It Works

Request



Confirm



Go



Fill out a ride request form from any computer or mobile device.

A Transportation Coordinator will call to confirm your appointment.

You will be picked up and taken to your destination ahead of your appointment.

Who can use the VetRide.net ?

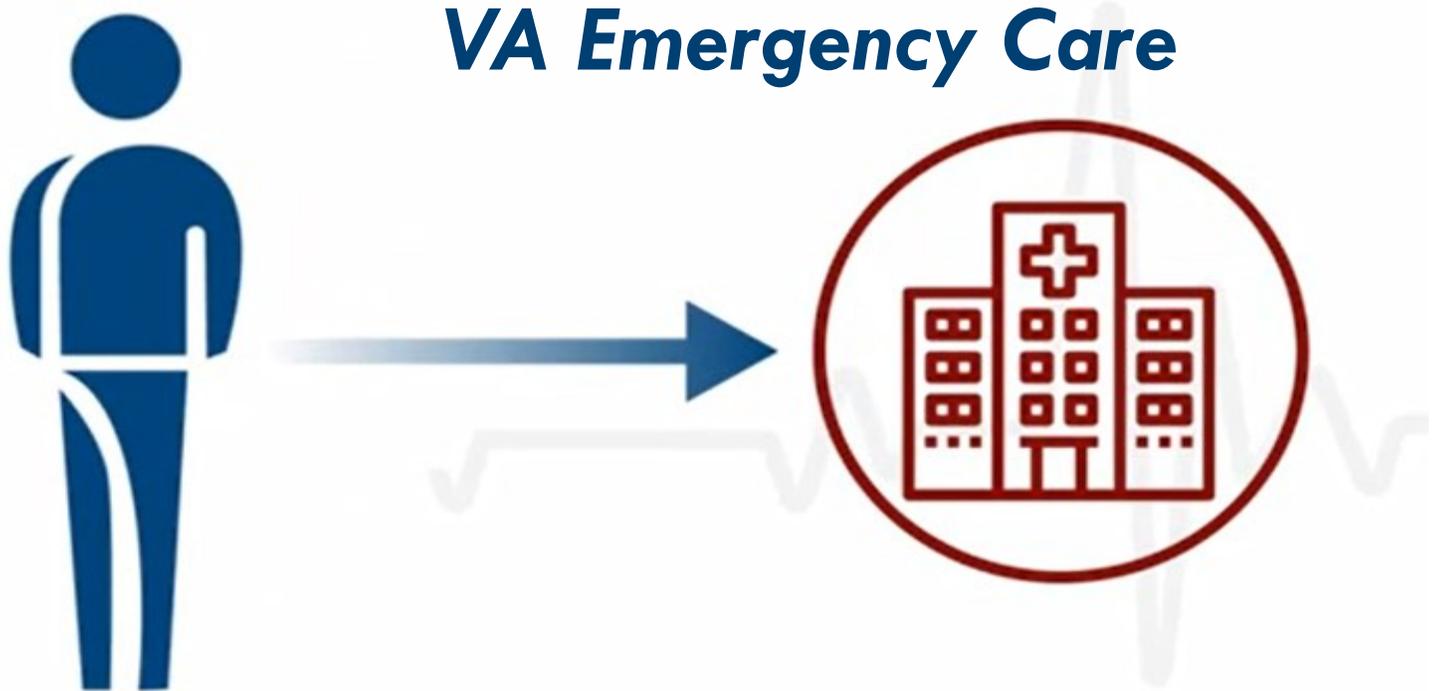
Veterans who are eligible for VA health care benefits and have a VA-authorized appointment are automatically eligible for transportation through the Veteran Transportation Services (VTS) program. **Requirements are:**

- * You must be a veteran
- * Enrolled in VA health care
- * Reservations must be made one day in advance
- * A veteran may be accompanied by one caregiver, spouse or family member

Why use VetRide.net ?

Vetride speeds up the process of requesting and confirming transportation. Veterans can see all of their past and future appointments from the convenience of their computer or smart phone. Passengers receive alerts via phone message or text when their driver is 10 minutes away from picking them up and when they will be picked up from the VA facility for their ride back home.

[VAPORHCS Veterans Transportation Service \(VTS web page\)](#)



VA Emergency Care

The VHA Office of Community Care (OCC) has updated communications products that explain when a Veteran should seek emergency medical care, and how VA can pay for a Veteran's service-connected and non-service connected emergency care from a community provider.

The following web resources are now available on this topic:

Video - Emergency Medical Care

Fact Sheet - Emergency Medical Care

Fact Sheet - Emergency Transportation (Ambulance)

Website - Emergency Care

Please help us raise awareness and understanding of when Veterans should seek emergency medical care, including the associated eligibility requirements and payment aspects. This will support greater consistency and better outcomes for Veterans.



CAMP LEJEUNE HEALTH *and* DISABILITY BENEFITS

Benefits for Camp Lejeune Veterans and family members include health care for 15 conditions listed in the Honoring America's Veterans and Caring for Camp Lejeune Families Act of 2012.

Veterans can receive disability and health care benefits for eight presumptive disease conditions associated with contaminants in the water at Camp Lejeune.

HEALTH

Health care and health care funding assistance to Veterans and family members who lived on Camp Lejeune and have one of the covered conditions.

Qualifying health conditions include:

- Bladder cancer
- Breast cancer
- Esophageal cancer
- Female infertility
- Hepatic steatosis
- Kidney cancer
- Leukemia
- Lung cancer
- Miscarriage
- Multiple myeloma
- Myelodysplastic syndromes
- Neurobehavioral effects
- Non-Hodgkin's lymphoma
- Renal toxicity
- Scleroderma

FOR INFORMATION

VA Health Care 1-877-222-8387

VA Benefits 1-800-827-1000

CL Family Health Care 1-866-372-1144

www.va.gov/healthbenefits/apply/

<https://explore.va.gov/disability-compensation>

www.clfamilymembers.fsc.va.gov/

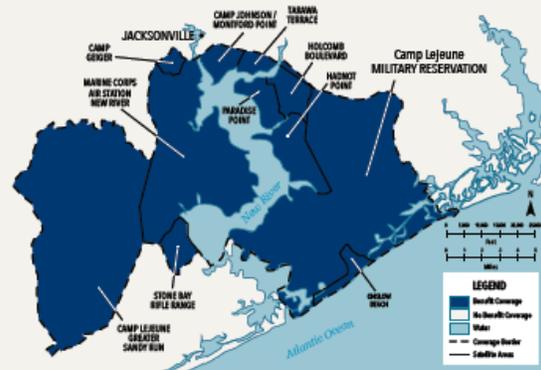
DISABILITY

The presumption applies to active duty, reserve, and National Guard members exposed to contaminants in the water supply at Camp Lejeune who later developed one or more of the following eight conditions:

- Adult leukemia
- Aplastic anemia and other myelodysplastic syndromes
- Bladder cancer
- Kidney cancer
- Liver cancer
- Multiple myeloma
- Non-Hodgkin's lymphoma
- Parkinson's disease

Family members are not eligible for disability benefits.

CAMP LEJEUNE DISABILITY BENEFIT COVERAGE AREA



ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Stationed at/lived on Camp Lejeune for at least 30 days between August 1, 1953 and December 31, 1987.



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs



Self Referral now offered for Podiatry, Nutrition Services, and Amputee/Wheelchair Clinics

Podiatry, Nutrition Services, and Amputee/Wheelchair clinics can all now see patients by Self-Referral, meaning they do not need a consult placed to be able to see a provider in one of these areas. In the community, depending on a person's insurance they may or may not need a referral to see a specialist. This option reduces the number of times a Veteran has to physically travel to a clinic since they do not need to see their PCP first and it gives them the ability to seek the care they need at the time they need it, with the goal of improving Veteran satisfaction and their health.

What are the changes Why is it important for our Veterans?	How to contact or direct dial number
<p>Podiatry – does the Veteran have new foot pain or open wounds on feet? They can call the Specialty Call Center and be referred directly to the Podiatry service for scheduling. The Veteran no longer needs to go through their PCP to have a consult entered.</p> <p>Nutrition Services – If a Veteran would like to see a dietitian, they can call the NFS direct dial number to be scheduled. The Veteran no longer needs to go through their PCP or Specialist to have a consult entered.</p> <p>Amputee clinic – for our Veterans who are missing a body part, they can call or come by the clinic to be scheduled. No consult needed.</p> <p>Wheelchair clinic – for Veterans in need of a wheelchair, power wheelchair/scooter they can call or come by the clinic to be scheduled. No consult needed.</p>	<p>Podiatry – through the Specialty Call Center, (503) 220-8262 ext. 50820</p> <p>Nutrition Services – (503) 273-5112</p> <p>Amputee & Wheelchair clinics – (503) 273-5018</p>