

Veterans' Health Today

WINTER 2012

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**VA DESERT PACIFIC
HEALTHCARE NETWORK**



**VA
HEALTH
CARE**

Defining
EXCELLENCE
in the 21st Century



New Technologies Make Accessing VA Care *Easier*

Access to VA care is now available to more Veterans living across the nation thanks to new technologies that allow clinicians to remotely connect with patients. VA is striving to offer services that are easier to access and meet your personal needs.

For example, VA Loma Linda Healthcare System (VALLHS) has expanded services in Blythe, CA with the recent opening of a new Rural Health Outreach Clinic as part of their Tele-Health Program. Using tele-health technology, a provider at the main VA Loma Linda Medical Center will use videoconferencing equipment to connect with patients located at the Blythe clinic. The clinic provides connection for a number of services, including mental health, the MOVE! Program, gastrointestinal health, women's health, smoking cessation, and dementia care. In addition, any photos or exams, such as an eye exam or a photo of a skin problem, can be stored and then securely forwarded to a doctor for further review.

This project will allow remote VA health care access to Veterans who visit the Blythe clinic. VA is committed to meeting your needs wherever you choose to live.

“This is an exciting experience for the VA,” says Judith Jensen, Certified Case Manager for Home Health, Rural Outreach and Tele-Health at VALLHS. “Tele-health has proved its worth in this small project and others like it. It expands the reach of a provider in the VA to Veterans living at a distance who choose to access care in their own community.”

Here are some new technologies that you may benefit from:

- ▶ **MyHealthVet:** After a one-time, in-person authentication (IPA), your registration for this online service will include access to your medical records and your health care team. Using your home computer, you can send a secure message to your care team and get information on a wide range of topics. Appointments and pharmacy refills no longer require you to call the VA – now you can just log on through the Internet to MyHealthVet at www.myhealth.va.gov.
- ▶ **Tele-Care Nurse Advice Line (877-252-4866):** This service provides access to a nurse right away! You may use this service 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.



These nurses also communicate issues that require follow-up with the providers at your home VA or Community Clinic.

- ▶ **Interactive Voice Response (IVR):** If you have a specific health issue, such as diabetes, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), chronic heart failure, hypertension or depression, this program allows you to use a phone (home or mobile) to access the VA database and get personal responses to your specific health questions. The information you provide will be transmitted securely to the RN Care Coordinator at the VA. This coordinator will review the responses and needs and will be available to coordinate your care with your primary or specialty doctor. You may also use this service to provide vital sign data or blood results for yourself. At the clinic, the provider may mention this option to you if you qualify or will ask the Lead Care Coordinator to contact you to discuss this resource.
- ▶ **Home Tele-Health Technology:** VA providers install equipment in your home to provide you personalized tele-health access through your phone line. This program is one of many ways that VA supports Veterans and their families to keep you safe and at home. Veterans who meet the inclusion criteria for additional monitoring using home tele-health will be referred

by their provider to the Home Tele-Health team. All Veterans are able to participate in Home Tele-Health if they have a clinical need. Patients who have diabetes, COPD, hypertension or depression are screened to see if this intervention would assist them in self-management. Other patients who have or are currently participating in the MOVE! (weight management) program may also have this support. Contact your Caregiver Support Coordinator to discuss which tele-health programs are available to you.

All VA programs have a strong preventive care component as well. “The most important thing we can do today is to prepare for tomorrow,” says Jensen. “And that starts by using support systems with many resources to prevent negative outcomes.”



- MyHealthVet (www.myhealth.va.gov)
- Tele-Care Nurse Advice Line (877-252-4866)
- Interactive Voice Response (IVR)*
- Home Tele-Health Technology*

* Contact your Coordinator for more information. **Check into these programs and services!**

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Keeping You Well

by Keeping You

Well-Informed



There are many ways to learn about new programs offered by VA. Whether you prefer to get your news through e-mail, social networking sites, the VA website, or your mobile phone, your VA is using several methods to communicate with Veterans.

Social media is an easy way to learn skills to keep healthy. For example, if you “follow” VA Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System (GLA) on Twitter or “like” them on Facebook, there is a chance that you have “partied” with them, too! Yes, GLA really knows how to throw a social networking party! According to Health Promotion and Disease Prevention (HPDP) Program Manager Alisa Donner, “We’ve hosted Twitter parties a few times. Each party focuses on a different Healthy Living or Health Care topic that we feel will be beneficial to our Veterans. We take every opportunity to help our Veterans understand the importance of healthy living for them and their families.”

Donner, like other program managers throughout VA Desert Pacific Healthcare Network, strives to provide the tools you need to enhance your quality of life by offering information that helps you:

- ▶ promote healthy living and disease prevention
- ▶ actively partner with providers and health care teams
- ▶ engage your family and social support systems
- ▶ develop self-management and coping skills
- ▶ connect with the proper VA health care resources

VA has many health education initiatives throughout the organization. “A large focus of my job is to coordinate with all the programs that are offering health education, and work together with them to maximize their effectiveness. Our goal is for Veterans to get the information they need from these programs because when they have access to actionable and easy-to-understand resources, they are empowered to make healthier choices,” explains Donner. VA wants more Veterans and their families to be healthy at every stage of life. When you receive preventive care, you can have better health and lower health care costs. A focus on prevention and wellness helps you live a long and productive life and can help combat rising health care costs. In support of this effort, the HPDP program has launched

a communications campaign that focuses on nine Healthy Living messages that are promoted through yearly events in printed marketing materials and websites.

While social networking is a large part of the HPDP campaign at GLA, if you have been in contact with your local VA medical center, you have probably noticed the HPDP program at work on-site. The program uses many different types of marketing to help get your attention. VA wants you to be engaged in conversations with your medical care team to create an atmosphere that results in better medical care for you. When you leave your VA medical facility, you will be able to take printed materials with you that will help raise awareness, interest and hopefully lead you to act in healthier ways. These handouts can also list websites with additional information.

In some facilities, there are Healthy Living messages on closed circuit televisions in waiting areas and patients' rooms. Walking down the hall, there's a good chance you will run into an educational display table hosted by HPDP staff. You will see banners, posters and displays as you walk through the hospital. You may also hear Healthy Living messages if you are placed on hold on a telephone call.

The HPDP program manager works closely with the Health Behavior Coordinator and Health Education Coordinator at your medical center. The Health Behavior Coordinators have experience in health behavior change training and are responsible for training, mentoring and guiding the Patient Aligned Care Teams (PACT) and other clinical staff to help patients manage their own health-related behaviors through the use of coaching, motivational interviewing and other communication approaches.

The PACT model is an important part of this education. With this patient centered care, not only do you have your own medical care provider, but you have your own nurse and clerk, too! When you call to ask questions, you speak to a member of your team. You get to know them, and they get to know you. Your PACT can help you to understand your behaviors and guide you in making healthier decisions that fit your lifestyle. They can direct you to the specific type of care you may need to live a healthier life.

In addition, Donner recommends that you sign up for an upgraded MyHealthVet account at www.myhealth.va.gov by completing the one-time, In-Person Authentication Process. This website offers you, your family and/or caregiver access to VA health care information and services. It's a free, online account where you can access health education resources, track your health, refill your VA prescriptions and have conversations with your VA health care providers through secure email messaging.

The Healthy Living Messages Campaign focus is on reinforcing these nine positive health style behaviors.

Be Involved in Your Health Care

- Take an active role.
- Work with your health care team to improve your health.

Be Tobacco Free

- Quitting smoking is the single most important thing you can do to improve your health and the health of your family.
- Don't use tobacco in any form.

Eat Wisely

- Eat a variety of foods including vegetables, fruits and whole grains.
- Limit your salt, fat and sugar intake.

Be Physically Active

- Get up and move, avoid inactivity.
- Aim for at least two and half hours of moderate intensity aerobic activity each week.

Strive for a Healthy Weight

- If you need to lose weight, losing even a little will help.
- If you are of normal weight, maintain it.

Limit Alcohol

- If you choose to drink alcohol, drink in moderation.
- Avoid binge drinking.

Get Recommended Screening Tests and Immunizations

- Recommendations for preventive services depend on your age, gender, health status and family history.
- Ask which screening tests and immunizations are recommended for you.

Manage Stress

- It is important to pay attention to your stress levels.
- Learn about ways to help you manage and reduce your stress.

Be Safe

- Find out how to prevent sexually transmitted infections, falls and motor vehicle crashes.
- Take action to protect yourself and those you love from harm.



While VA employees nationwide have always shared values that have included providing the best care possible to support Veterans, there has not been a single set of Core Values and Characteristics that applied to all VA employees. Now, with the launch of I CARE, VA has a unified workforce with one set of shared principles.

According to Network Director Stan Johnson, “Leadership at each of our sites of care has personally shared our I CARE values, characteristics and expectations with their staff. We wanted to demonstrate once again our personal commitment to serving Veterans.”

The process used to develop these Core Values and Characteristics was comprehensive, taking nearly two years to complete. Input was received from staff in all three VA Administrations on health care, benefits, and memorial services.

Why is this important? This set of Core Values helps to define the VA culture and will dictate how we care for you, your family and other Veterans. The VA Core Values are:

- Integrity** Acting with high moral principle; keeping the trust of all.
- Commitment** Working hard to serve Veterans; driven by a belief in VA’s mission.
- Advocacy** Being Veteran-centered; identifying and advancing the interests of Veterans.
- Respect** Treating all those served with dignity and respect.
- Excellence** Striving for the highest quality; being thoughtful and decisive in leadership; willingness to admit mistakes and correct them.

The Core Characteristics help guide how the VA will perform their mission. They shape VA’s strategy and influence how important decisions are made within VA. The Core Characteristics are:

- ▶ **Trustworthy** – VA earns the trust of those it serves through the actions of all employees.
- ▶ **Accessible** – VA welcomes all Veterans and will help them use all of its services.
- ▶ **Quality** – VA provides the highest standard of care and services while managing the costs. VA is a model of excellence. VA employees are empowered, trusted and respected for their competence and dedication.
- ▶ **Innovative** – VA prizes initiative. They seek improvement and remain at the forefront in knowledge, proficiency and capability.
- ▶ **Agile** – VA anticipates challenges and new requirements. They continuously assess the environment and work at finding solutions to better serve Veterans.
- ▶ **Integrated** – VA links care and services across the Department; other federal, state and local agencies; and partner and Veterans service organizations to provide useful programs to Veterans.

Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki sums it up this way, “Our characteristics are inspirational goals that we want everyone — VA employees, Veterans and the American people — to associate with our department and with our workforce.”



Eric K. Shinseki
Secretary of Veterans Affairs

Can't Make Your Appointment?

You can help improve VA care and help your fellow Veterans by always calling ahead if you can't make an appointment. If you call to cancel or reschedule your appointment at least 24 hours in advance, another Veteran can be given your time slot. This helps us provide timely service to all our Veterans. Our goal is for Veterans to be able to see their primary care provider when they want to see them (within one or two business days). We are making every effort to make sure that Veterans don't have to schedule appointments far in advance because there are no sooner openings. To change your appointment, just call the Scheduling Desk and a patient services assistant will reschedule your appointment for a time that is more convenient for you!

Fight the flu

Come in to the VA to get your flu shot!

- Protect yourself, protect others—get a flu vaccine every year.
- Prevent the spread of germs—cover coughs and sneezes.

To learn more, visit www.cdc.gov/flu
THE FLU ENDS WITH U
Get the flu vaccine, not the flu.



U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

VA GREATER LOS ANGELES HEALTHCARE SYSTEM

Make, cancel or change your Appointment(s): (800) 952-4852 press 2 and then follow the menu prompts to speak to a scheduling representative

VA LOMA LINDA HEALTHCARE SYSTEM

Make an Appointment: (800) 741-8387 or (909) 825-7084 listen to the options and press 3.

Cancel or change your Appointment(s): (800) 741-8387 or (909) 825-7084 listen to options and press 1.

If you are registered with My HealthVet you can send a Secure Message directly to your provider to schedule, change or cancel an appointment.

If you haven't been assigned a Primary Care Provider and have already enrolled you may walk into our Intake Clinic, Monday through Friday (except holidays).

VA LONG BEACH HEALTHCARE SYSTEM

Make, cancel or change an Appointment: (562) 826-8000 and press 2.

VA SAN DIEGO HEALTHCARE SYSTEM

Make, cancel or change your Appointment(s): call the Primary Care Call Center at (858) 552-7475 or 1-800-331-8387, or call the phone number printed on the bottom of your appointment letter.

VA SOUTHERN NEVADA HEALTHCARE SYSTEM

Cancel an Appointment: (702) 636-3000 or (888) 633-7554 and press Option 8 to cancel

Make or change your Appointment(s): Call the particular clinic; the phone numbers are provided below.

Central Clinic	(702) 636-6370
North Clinic	(702) 636-6380
East Clinic	(702) 636-6360
Northwest Clinic	(702) 636-6320
Henderson Clinic	(702) 636-6363
Pahrump Clinic	(775) 727-7535
Women's Clinic	(702) 636-3076
Spinal Cord Injury-D Clinic	(702) 636-3015
Geriatrics Clinic (Central Clinic)	(702) 636-6334
Geriatrics Clinic (East Clinic)	(702) 636-6323

Access to your VA care has never been easier! To enroll, visit www.va.gov.

Veterans' Health Today
 300 Oceangate, Suite 700
 Long Beach, CA 90802

This publication is provided as a service to enrolled Veterans in So. California and So. Nevada.
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 Address changes should be sent to your local VA medical center.

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Thank you for your service. Now let us serve you.

★ VA Medical Centers

VA Southern Nevada Healthcare System
 P.O. Box 360001
 Las Vegas, NV 89036
 702-636-3000
www.lasvegas.va.gov/
 Facebook: LasVegasVA
 Twitter: VALasVegas

Mike O'Callaghan Federal Hospital
 4700 Las Vegas Blvd. North
 Las Vegas, NV 89191
 702-653-2215

VA Loma Linda Healthcare System
 11201 Benton Street
 Loma Linda, CA 92357
 909-825-7084
www.lomalinda.va.gov/
 Facebook: VALomaLinda
 Twitter: VeteransHealth

VA Long Beach Healthcare System
 5901 East 7th Street
 Long Beach, CA 90822
 562-826-8000
www.longbeach.va.gov/
 Facebook and Twitter:
 VALongBeach

VA San Diego Healthcare System
 3350 La Jolla Village Drive
 San Diego, CA 92161
 858-552-8585
www.sandiego.va.gov/
 Facebook and Twitter:
 VASanDiego

VA Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System
 11301 Wilshire Boulevard
 Los Angeles, CA 90073
 310-478-3711
www.lasvegas.va.gov/
 Facebook: LasVegasVA
 Twitter: VALasVegas

▲ Primary Outpatient Clinics

Anaheim
 Effective February 15, 2012
 2569 W. Woodland Drive
 Anaheim, CA 92801
 Phone: TBD

Antelope Valley
 547 W. Lancaster Blvd.
 Lancaster, CA 93534
 661-729-8655

Symbol Key
 ★ VA Medical Centers
 ▲ Primary Outpatient Clinics

- Bakersfield**
 1801 Westwind Drive
 Bakersfield, CA 93301
 661-632-1800
- Blythe Telehealth Clinic**
 205 N. 1st Street, Suite C
 Blythe, CA 92225
 760-619-4243
- Cabrillo**
 2001 River Avenue, Bldg. 28
 Long Beach, CA 90810
 562-826-8414
- Chula Vista**
 835 3rd Avenue, Suite B
 Chula Vista, CA 91910
 619-409-1600
- Corona**
 800 Magnolia Avenue #101
 Corona, CA 92879
 951-817-8820
- East Los Angeles**
 5400 E. Olympic Blvd. #150
 City of Commerce, CA 90022
 323-725-7557
- Escondido**
 815 East Pennsylvania Ave.
 Escondido, CA 92025
 760-466-7020
- Gardena**
 1251 Redondo Beach Blvd.
 3rd Floor
 Gardena, CA 90247
 310-851-4705
- Henderson**
 2920 Green Valley Parkway,
 Suite 215
 Henderson, NV 89014
 702-636-6363

Imperial Valley
 1600 South Imperial Drive
 El Centro, CA 92243
 760-352-1506

Laguna Hills
 25292 McIntyre Street
 Laguna Hills, CA 92653
 949-269-0700

Las Vegas Homeless Veterans
 916 West Owens Avenue
 Las Vegas, NV 89106
 702-636-4077

Laughlin Outreach Clinic
 3650 South Point Circle
 Laughlin, Nevada 89029
 Phone: TBD

Los Angeles
 351 E. Temple Street
 Los Angeles, CA 90012
 213-253-2677

Mission Valley
 8810 Rio San Diego Drive
 San Diego, CA 92108
 619-400-5000

Murrieta
 28078 Baxter Road, Ste. 540
 Murrieta, CA 92563
 951-290-6500

Oceanside
 1300 Rancho del Oro Drive
 Oceanside, CA 92056
 760-634-2000

Oxnard
 2000 Outlet Center Drive
 Suite 225
 Oxnard, CA 93036
 805-604-6960

Palm Desert
 41-990 Cook St., Building F
 Suite 1004
 Palm Desert, CA 92211
 760-341-5570

Pahrump
 2100 E. Calvada Boulevard
 Pahrump, NV 89048
 775-727-7535

Rancho Cucamonga
 8599 Haven Ave., Suite 102
 Rancho Cucamonga, CA 91730
 909-946-5348

San Gabriel
 420 W. Las Tunas
 San Gabriel, CA 91776
 626-289-5973

San Luis Obispo
 1288 Morro St., #200
 San Luis Obispo, CA 93401
 805-543-1233

Santa Ana
 1506 Brookhollow Drive
 Suite 100
 Santa Ana, CA 92705
 714-434-4600

Santa Barbara
 4440 Calle Real
 Santa Barbara, CA 93110
 805-683-1491

Santa Maria
 1550 East Main Street
 Santa Maria, CA 93454
 805-354-6000

Sepulveda
 16111 Plummer Street
 Sepulveda, CA 91343
 818-891-7711

Victorville
 12138 Industrial Blvd., Ste. 120
 Victorville, CA 92395
 760-951-2599

Whittier/Santa Fe Springs
 10210 Orr and Day Road
 Santa Fe Springs, CA 90670
 562-466-6080

