



UPDATE

July /August 2012

A bi-monthly newsletter for Veterans served by the St. Cloud VA Health Care System, and for those who serve Veterans. Send news items and comments to St. Cloud VA Health Care System, Attn: Public Affairs Officer, 4801 Veterans Drive, St. Cloud, MN 56303, or via email to Barry.Venable@va.gov

Discover VA services for Women Veterans

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VA
HEALTH
CARE | Defining
EXCELLENCE
in the 21st Century

Health Care System Updates

Building 1 to Building 3 Corridor Closed: The construction associated with expanding the Dental Clinic in Building 3 is underway. The north to south connecting corridor between Building 3 and the main east to west corridor in Building 1 is closed for construction. We anticipate this corridor will be closed into the fall of 2012. The front entrance to Building 3 will remain open for access to the Dental Clinic and to the 2nd floor. The main connecting corridor running east and west will remain open for use in accessing the remainder of the facility, but it can no longer be used to access Building 3.

New Phone Number to Call for Wheelchair Repairs: Starting June 29, the St. Cloud VA will no longer perform repairs on outpatient wheelchairs at the hospital. Veterans should now call Prosthetics at (320) 252-1670, extension 6263 or extension 6782, to request wheelchair repairs. Prosthetics staff will then arrange for the repairs to be made by a contractor. Our goal is to provide the best service possible, and we appreciate your patience as we implement this change.



Facts and Stats

Did you know...?

Smokers have two to four times the risk of developing coronary heart disease compared to non-smokers, and the risk for having a heart attack increases with the number of cigarettes smoked each day.

QUOTES OF THE MONTH:

"Even if you are on the right track, you'll get run over if you just sit there."

- Will Rogers

"If I want your opinion, I'll give it to you."

- Al Capone

New help desk service available for My HealthVet

Veterans can now call 1-877-327-0022 (toll free) to get help resolving any problems they are having with their My HealthVet (www.myhealth.va.gov) account or if they simply have questions about VA's health care portal.

The help desk is available from 6 a.m. – 7 p.m. (CDT) Monday-Friday with the exception of federal holidays.

My HealthVet is a web portal designed to help Veterans better manage their health care. The portal offers the ability for Veterans to refill their VA prescriptions with a click of a mouse. Veterans also view their past and future VA appointments, plus get appointment reminders sent to their personal email account.



Another key feature to My HealthVet is Secure Messaging. With Secure Messaging Veterans can send safe and secure electronic messages to their VA health care team. With Secure Messaging Veterans don't have to wait on hold or worry about missed phone calls from their health care team.

Other features of My HealthVet include:

- View VA lab results
- Keep a personal online health record
- Tools to track various vital health statistics
- Online medical library

To sign up for a My HealthVet account Veterans should go online to www.myhealth.va.gov.



WOMEN VETERANS HEALTH CARE



*You served, you deserve
the best
care anywhere*

VA: Changing to Meet Your Unique Needs!

As more women like you serve in our nation's military, the VA recognizes a need to offer state-of-the-art programs that focus on women's health, creating an environment that is warm, comfortable and private.

We honor your service and are ready to serve you!

What if I'm not enrolled for VA health care?

For enrollment assistance:

- Locate your County Veteran Service officer online at www.macvso.org or
- Call 1-888-LinkVet (888-546-5838), or
- Contact the St. Cloud VA at 320-255-6340.

July is Women's Health Month

The St Cloud VA Health Care System provides care to women at the following locations:

St Cloud VA Medical Center
4801 Veterans Drive
St Cloud, MN 56303
(320) 255-6339

**Brainerd Community Based
Outpatient Clinic**
722 NW 7th Street
Brainerd, MN, 56401
(218) 855-1115

**Montevideo Community Based
Outpatient Clinic**
1025 North 13th St
Montevideo, MN 56265
(320) 269-2222

**Max J. Beilke Community Based
Outpatient Clinic**
515 22nd Ave E
Alexandria, MN 56308
(320) 759-2640

WOMEN VETERANS HEALTH CARE

★ *You served, you deserve the best care anywhere.* ★

Medical Care Services

We are pleased to offer top-quality medical services to women Veterans, including:

- Primary care
- Urgent care
- Preventive health screening, including breast, cervical and colon cancer screens and immunizations
- Family planning services, including pre-conception education and birth control
- Reproductive health care, including maternity care, and infertility evaluation
- Osteoporosis evaluation and treatment
- Menopause counseling and treatment
- Heart disease screening including blood sugar, cholesterol and blood pressure screening
- Smoking cessation
- Weight management

Mental Health Care Services

VA is committed to assisting women Veterans with a wide range of mental health services, including:

- Individual and group therapy
- Sexual trauma therapy
- Residential and outpatient treatment programs for substance abuse and mental health
- Post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) treatment
- Services for homeless women Veterans
- Psychiatric evaluation and treatment
- Programs for victims of domestic violence

St. Cloud VA Women Veterans Health Program
(320) 252-1670 X6994

A Promise Kept

VA Women Veterans Health Care promotes the health, welfare, and dignity of Women Veterans and their families by ensuring equitable access to timely, sensitive, high-quality health care.

A PROFILE OF WOMEN VETERANS TODAY

Rethink Veterans: Who is the woman Veteran?

She is returning from war or long deployments overseas. She is bringing home the physical and emotional scars of combat. She is a Veteran once she has been honorably discharged from the U.S. Armed Forces. She is also a Veteran if she has been deployed to a combat zone as a National Guard or Reservist. She may be a Veteran while still actively serving in the Guard or Reserve.

The definition of Veteran hasn't changed but the population has. The newest women Veterans from the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq are younger, and with different health care needs. The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is working tirelessly to enhance women's care, improve services, and change its culture to embrace this growing population. If you know a woman who served, ask her if she's checked out VA lately.

Did you know?

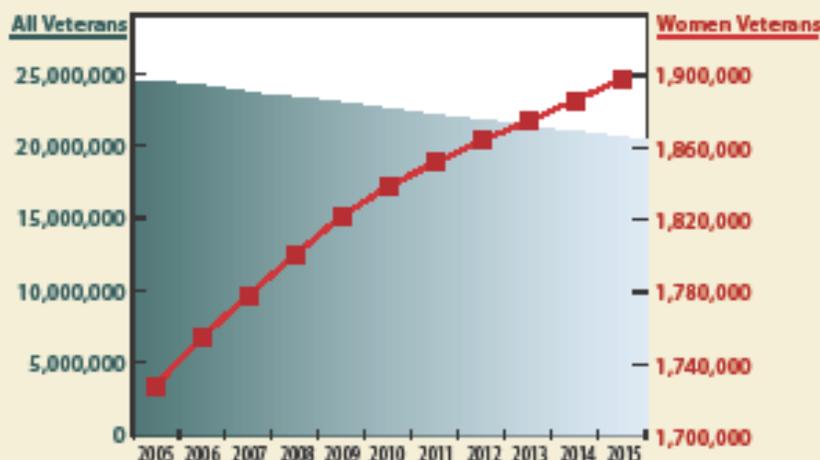
- Women represent nearly 15% of today's active duty military and 18% of guard and reserve forces.
- Women serve in every branch of the military.
- Women serve as gunners, police, pilots, truck drivers, and fuel suppliers.
- Women soldiers see intense combat and receive combat-related injuries.
- There are 1.8 million living women Veterans.
- The number of women Veterans is expected to increase dramatically.

- The average age of women Veterans is 48 years, compared to 63 years for male Veterans.
- By proportion, women Veterans using VA care are more likely than their male-counterparts to have a service-connected disability, meaning an injury or illness that was incurred or aggravated during service.
- 1 in 5 women Veterans of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan are diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).
- 1 in 5 women seen by VA health care respond "yes" when screened for Military Sexual Trauma.
- Women are the fastest-growing segment of the homeless Veteran population and are more likely to be homeless with children.

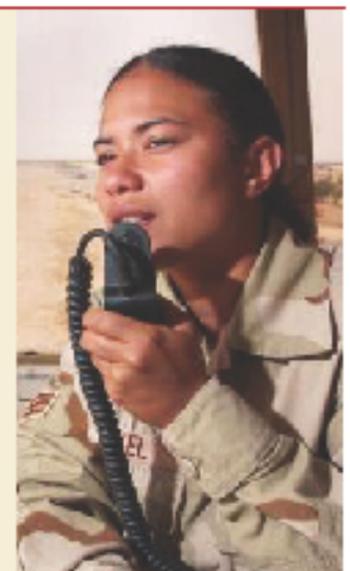
Women Veterans of OEF/OIF/OND

- Women comprise nearly 12% of soldiers who served in Iraq and Afghanistan.
- More than 79% of them are younger than 40.
- 88% are enlisted; 12% are officers.
- The largest group of women Veterans today served in Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF), Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) and Operation New Dawn (OND).
- Most common medical conditions for which they visited VA: diseases of the musculoskeletal and connective tissue, mental disorders (including readjustment difficulty) and undefined symptoms.

Women Veteran Population Growth



As the population of women Veterans increases, the total Veteran population is decreasing.





Healthy Mind ☀ Body ☀ Spirit

**Therapeutic Drumming—Zumba Fitness Fun
and the Relaxing Health Benefits of Tai Chi**

A Women Veterans Health & Wellness Event

Tuesday, September 25, 2012

5:30 p.m. - Social Gathering and Flu Vaccinations

6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. - Program

St. Cloud VA Medical Center

4801 Veterans Drive, St. Cloud, MN

Building 96

Also – Refreshments and Door Prizes

All women Veterans are welcome!

[You do not have to be enrolled in VA care to attend this event](#)



**For further information
and to register for the event,
call: 320-255-6371**

9 Ways to Stay Healthy

At the VA, our focus is keeping you healthy, and we need your assistance. Look over the “Healthy Living Messages” shown here, and pick one that you would like to work on. At your next appointment, you can talk with your health care team about how to make improvements in that area. Members of the team have been trained to help you make changes, set goals and coach you through setbacks. Together, we can help you enjoy the healthy life you as a Veteran deserve.



Healthy Living



A Better Way to LIVE

Talk with your health care team about your goals.



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 protect the health of your family members.
- Don't use tobacco in any form.



Eat Wisely

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



Be Physically Active

- Avoid inactivity.
- Aim for at least 2½ 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 (women no more than 1 drink a day; men no more than 2 drinks a day).
- 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

- Pay attention to stress.
- 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.

Veterans Play Project

Produced by Footprints Collective, Mixed Blood Theatre, and Bedlam Theatre
In partnership with MN Dept. of Veteran Affairs, MN National Guard, Beyond the Yellow Ribbon,
Women's Veterans Initiative, Coming Home Collaborative, Veterans for Peace, & Veterans in the Arts



JOIN us for a FREE workshop
TALK with other veterans and
COLLABORATE to
HELP us make a play
about **YOUR** experience.

WHEN:	Choose any of these dates: Saturday, June 30, 5:00-7:00 P.M., <i>hosted by Veterans for Peace</i> Thursday, July 12, 6:00-8:00 P.M. Monday, July 16, 6:00-8:00 P.M., <i>hosted by Minnesota National Guard</i> Wednesday, July 18, 6:00-8:00 P.M. Saturday, July 21, 2:00-4:00 P.M., <i>hosted by Coming Home Collaborative</i> Tuesday, July 24, 6:00-8:00 P.M. Thursday, July 26, 6:00-8:00 P.M. Saturday, July 28, 2:00-4:00 P.M.
WHERE:	Various locations in Minneapolis, MN. See http://footprintscollective.org for more details.
SIGN UP TO ATTEND:	Send an email to signup@footprintscollective.org . Mention the workshop date you are interested in attending.
QUESTIONS?	Email above or call Leah Cooper, artistic director, at 612-227-2046. <i>We promise never to share your email address with anyone.</i>

Who can attend? Any veteran of any age, gender, nationality, branch of service, and any ability or disability. If you need transportation or any kind of disability service, let us know.

What does it cost? It's free. And there will be food.

What are the rules? Share as much or as little as you want. Be sober. Be on time. Be a respectful listener to others in the workshop.

What will we do in this workshop? Activities will be simple, like telling stories, drawing pictures, moving around, writing down thoughts, just generally sharing your own experiences in a variety of ways. You can show up and if you don't feel like sharing, you can just watch. Nobody's stories or experiences will be used in the play directly like a documentary – they'll be blended together into a fictional story. And nobody's stories or experiences will be used without permission. This is an opportunity to be part of a creative team, making a play that brings your experiences – serving in the military, going to war, coming home – to life, to share with other veterans, families and friends of veterans, and civilians. It's an opportunity to share and to learn from others, to be creative, to have fun.

Pharmacy Adjusts to Meet Customer Requests

Patients urged to talk with Pharmacy after visits with providers.

Successful treatment of a medical problem often depends on the use of prescription drugs. During the course of treatment providers sometimes make adjustments in a prescription, for example varying the dose or timing, to ensure the medicine is working to its best effect. Your participation is the key to successful medication management!

To serve you better, the St. Cloud VA is making some small changes in the way we dispense medications. This will help us to get the right medication to you at the right time, and in a way that best suits your needs.

Changes include:

- * **We will now mail renewals and new prescriptions when ordered by the provider unless the patient talks with Pharmacy and declines the medication or wants it sent later.**
- * **We will hold renewals of over-the-counter medications with a co-pay until the patient requests them.**

Remember, Renewals are prescriptions that do not have more fills available or are too old or have expired. Renewals need action by a health care provider. You may have to see a provider or the pharmacy may have to contact them before you can get more medication.

Patients should talk with Pharmacy after a visit with a provider where a prescription is written or renewed. You will receive important education about new prescriptions and have the opportunity to ask questions. This also gives you an opportunity to inform Pharmacy staff if you do not wish to receive a medication or refill. *(continued)*

Managing your Medications

Properly managed medications promote your health and well-being. Managing your medications is a shared responsibility between you, your VA provider, and your pharmacist.

You can help your health care team by:

- Talking to Pharmacy staff after each visit with a provider where a prescription is written or renewed.
- Keeping a list of all medications you are taking with the dose and times that you take them. Be sure to include all medications you are taking, including over the counter medicine.
- Taking your medications as prescribed.
- Getting your prescriptions refilled when needed.
- Keeping appointments with your provider.

Summer Salads **5.49**
 Premium Signature Salads
 prepared FRESH daily
 July 9 - Aug 17

Spicy Thai Noodle Salad with Peanuts

Pacific Chicken & Wild Rice Salad

Chili Lime Salmon Salad

FRESH
 is always in season

vcs PatriotCafé

Cont. from previous page

Patients still must contact the Pharmacy to order refills, which are not automatically mailed to you. Refills are prescriptions that have more fills available and have not yet expired. The most efficient way to obtain refills is to call the Automated Patient Phone Service System at (toll free) 855-560-1724.

Medication refills and renewals should be ordered at least two weeks before you need a new supply.

Thank you for your service. We anticipate these small changes will help us to better serve you!

This month's USELESS FACTS

Former bricklayer Jack Kelly, father of actress and princess Grace Kelly, once headed President Franklin D. Roosevelt's national physical fitness program.

The South Pole has no sunshine for 182 days each year; the North Pole does slightly better — it has no sunlight for 176 days.

Before they became famous, many entertainers worked in sales. Johnny Cash sold appliances, Rue McClanahan sold blouses, Boris Karloff sold real estate, Leonard Nimoy sold vacuum cleaners, and George Takei sold men's ties.

Myrtle Beach, South Carolina has the most mini-golf courses per area in the U.S. At last count, there were 47 in a 60-mile radius.

Ordering Prescription Refills



For your convenience, there are several different ways to get refills.

1. In person: You may visit the Pharmacy Intake staff located in the clinic area and make your request.

2. By Phone: To order your refill by phone, call toll free 1-855-560-1724.

3. By Mail: When you get your prescriptions, you will also get refill slips with your order. To request a refill by mail, just complete the refill slip that comes with your prescription and send it to us at least two weeks before you need the medication.

Please mail your prescription refill slips to:

PHARMACY (119)
St. Cloud VA Health Care System
4801 Veterans Drive
St. Cloud, MN 56303

You may return your refill slips as soon as you receive them. The pharmacy will process your request and mail the medication approximately ten days before you need the new supply.

If you did not get refill slips with your medication, you may write on a piece of paper:

- Your full name.
- The last four digits of your Social Security Number.
- Name(s) of the medication(s) to be refilled.

Then, return that slip to us. We will use your note as a refill slip.

4. On the internet: Go to MyHealtheVet web site at www.myhealth.va.gov. To access Prescription refill, you need to be a registered user of MyHealtheVet. To learn how to register, call the MyHealtheVet coordinator at (320) 252-1670, ext. 7335.

5. By calling the Pharmacy Triage staff at (320) 255-6345, Monday – Friday, between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m.

Calendar of Events

Tuesday, July 3 - **St. Cloud Area Veterans' Law Clinic** - 12 noon to 2:00p.m. Free legal consultation for Veterans for: Social Security Law, Housing, Consumer, Child Support, Family Law, and Employment. No criminal law issues will be discussed. Please call 320.253.0138 or 1-800-622-7773 to schedule an appointment.

Wednesday, July 11 - **Veterans' Career Fair** - 11:00a.m. to 3:00p.m. Earle Brown Heritage Center, 6155 Earle Brown Dr., Brooklyn Center, MN. A career fair for Veterans with Veteran friendly employers. Learn more at the website: <http://www.PositivelyMinnesota.com/Veterans>.

Tuesday, July 17 - **St. Cloud Area Veterans' Law Clinic** - 12 noon to 2:00p.m. Free legal consultation for Veterans for: Social Security Law, Housing, Consumer, Child Support, Family Law, and Employment. No criminal law issues will be discussed. Please call 320-253-0138 or 1-800-622-7773 to schedule an appointment.

Friday, July 20 - **Southwestern Minnesota Veterans' Law Clinic**, 12 noon to 2 p.m., at the Montevideo CBOC. FREE legal consultation for Veterans for Social Security Law, Housing, Consumer Law, Child Support, Family Law, and Employment. No criminal issues will be discussed. Please call 320-430-1051 to schedule an appointment.

Saturday, July 21 - **Lyon County Veteran Expo and Career Fair** - 10:00a.m. to 5:00p.m. Free Veteran's Employment Event and Information Fair at the Lyon County Fairgrounds. Hiring issues that will be covered are: Writing a resume cover letter, hints and tips for interviewing, advice from HR professionals, VA benefits and education, VA Health Care System and Vet Center staff on hand, legal assistance and MN Action Council for Veterans will be there to answer questions. The St. Cloud VA Mobile Audiology Clinic will be on-site providing health and hearing screenings and hearing aid adjustments. For more information please call 507-530-8378 or email event113@iw.net.

Calendar of Events

Sunday, Aug. 5 — Benton County Fair Military Day, noon to 5 p.m., Benton County Fairgrounds, Sauk Rapids, MN. Paulette Carlson will be providing a “Tribute to the Troops” musical entertainment on the Beer Garden Stage in the afternoon. Silent Auction, Information Booths! For more information visit www.bentonfairmn.com.

Monday, Aug. 6—Crow Wing County Veteran Job Fair, 4 to 7 p.m., Crow Wing County Community Services Center.

Aug. 16—19, Douglas County Fair. The Douglas County Veterans Council operates a Veterans booth at the fair. Stop by and visit. For more information on the fair visit www.mndouglascofair.com

Saturday Aug. 18—Mille Lacs County’s 4th Annual Veterans Day Event, Mille Lacs County Fair Grounds, 1400 3rd Street S, Princeton MN 55371, from noon to 4pm. Information and education for Veterans offered by a variety of organizations.

Veterans
Eligible for VA Health Care?

Find Out. Apply.

320.255.6340 • www.1010ez.med.va.gov

You Served.
Now Let Us Serve You.

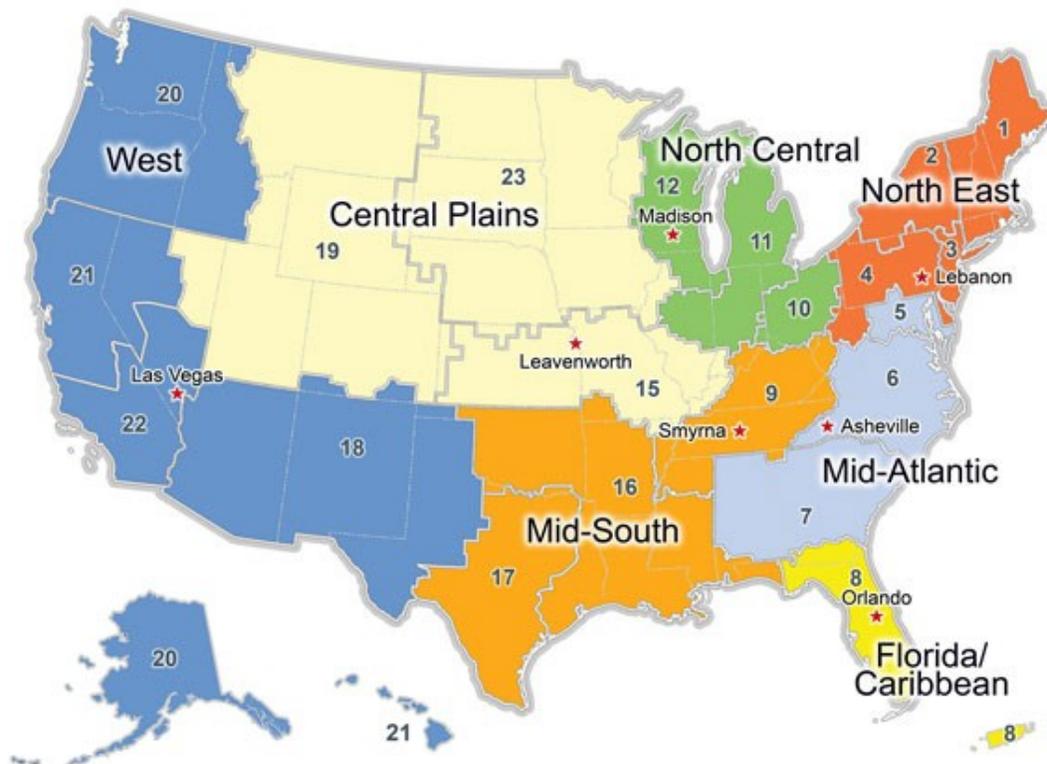
St. Cloud VA
Health Care System
Brainerd | Montevideo | Alexandria



The Rumor Mill

Hey, I heard the Business Office at the St. Cloud VA was shutting down!

Not True! The VA has reorganized the Revenue function nationwide, but that is only one small slice of the many services the Business Office provides Veterans. The establishment of seven Consolidated Patient Account Centers (CPACs) across the country is an effort to improve care and services by ensuring the most efficient practices are in place. The Central Plains CPAC in Leavenworth, Kansas, now provides Revenue activities for St. Cloud VA Veterans. It replaces the Revenue section formerly housed in the St. Cloud VA Business Office.



This graphic shows the seven CPAC districts within VA. Most of the Revenue functions previously provided by the Business Office at the St. Cloud VA are now handled at the Central Plains, CPAC, located in Leavenworth, Kansas.

But if there is not a Revenue section at St. Cloud anymore, who do I call with questions about billing and co-pays? Since you asked...the answers to this and other questions are on the next page.

Questions about VA billing, co-pays, waivers, Repayment Plans, Medicare, Income Verification Matching (IVM) audits, Treasury offsets, or obtaining a Payment History Report: Call 1-866-347-2352.

For other Business Office related questions:

Questions about Non-VA Care (bills received from an outside facility, what was paid/not paid at outside facilities, etc.): Call Non-VA Care (Fee Basis) at 320-252-1670, extension 6483, or visit them in Building 48/Room 241.

Questions about benefits, rating decisions, Combat Veterans, Means Tests, Medication Co-pay Tests, Long Term Care Co-pay Tests, or updating insurance information: Call Eligibility at 320-252-1670, extension 6226 or 6340, or (320) 255-6340, or visit them in Building 1/Rooms 122-124

Questions about beneficiary travel (travel pay eligibility, didn't receive travel pay, how to request travel pay, etc.): Call the Travel Clerks at 320-252-1670, extension 6442, or visit them in Building 5/Room 119

Questions about prescriptions (prescriptions received in error, didn't receive the correct quantity, etc.): Call the St. Cloud VA HCS Pharmacy at 320-252-1670, extension 6465. To order refills by phone call 1-855-560-1724 .

Questions about TRICARE or ChampVA (TRICARE/ChampVA eligibility, benefits, etc.): Call Sue Briese at 320-252-1670, extension 6437

Information on NPI #s, DEA #s, and provider licenses: Call the Privacy Officer at 320-252-1670, extension 6408.

For copies of your medical records or to add documents to your VA medical record: call Release of Information at 320-255-6336 or 6470, or visit them in Bldg. T-100.

Protect Your Skin and Prevent Sun Damage

Summer months bring outdoor fun in the sun, but they can also bring unwanted skin issues such as sunburn, freckles and skin cancer. The solution for these problems is to apply sunscreen. Sunscreen protects skin and fights the development of skin cancer.

It's important that everyone take precautions out in the sun year-round. Both sunburn and indoor tanning increase the risk of melanoma, the deadliest type of skin cancer, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

The sun gives off ultraviolet (UV) rays which can damage skin in as little as 15 minutes. UV rays are invisible rays released as energy by the sun, whether the day is bright and sunny or cloudy and hazy. The CDC says the hours between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. during daylight savings time are the most harmful for UV exposure in the United States.

The CDC recommends the following steps to protect skin from sun damage:

- Use sunscreen with SPF 15 or higher and both UVA and UVB protection
- Wear clothing that covers exposed skin
- Wear a hat with a wide brim to shade the face, head, ears and neck
- Wear sunglasses that wrap around and block up to 100 percent of both UVA and UVB rays
- Seek shade during midday hours.

Indoor tanning before the age of 35 increases melanoma risk by 75 percent, the CDC says. Using a tanning bed, booth or sunlamp to get tan is just as harmful as lying out in the sun. Indoor tanning has been linked with skin cancers including melanoma, squamous cell carcinoma, and cancers of the eye.

For more information on how to reduce the risk of skin cancer, go to www.cdc.gov/features/skincancer.

Application Period Announced for the 2012 Physically Disabled Veterans Deer Hunt and 2013 Physically Disabled Veterans Turkey Hunt

The St. Cloud VA Health Care System, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, and the Minnesota National Guard, Camp Ripley will host the 21st Annual Physically Disabled Veterans Deer Hunt. October 2-4, 2012, and the 9th Annual Physically Disabled Veterans Turkey Hunt, April 23-25, 2013, at Camp Ripley, near Little Falls.

Limited space is available for both hunts. In a change from previous practice, applications for both hunts will be taken July 1 through July 31, 2012.



These special hunts are available for physically disabled Veterans who receive outpatient treatment from the VA, or are eligible for VA care and cannot hunt during the regular firearms seasons.

Applicants should contact Dennis Erie at 320 255-6394 or email dennis.erie@va.gov for application instructions.



Just think - no more phone tag!

With Secure Messaging thru My Health^eVet, you can contact your VA Healthcare team without waiting on hold or playing phone tag. Secure Messaging is as easy to use as email, but completely safe and secure. It's great for non-urgent communication and general healthcare-related questions.

No Waiting on Hold!
No Waiting for a Call Back!
Don't Delay, Opt-in Today!

How to use Secure Messaging:

- 1) Log into your My Health^eVet account at: www.myhealth.va.gov
(Forgot your User ID or Password? Simply click on the 'Forgot User ID' or 'Forgot Password' link directly below the sign in box. Note, you only need to answer one of the two security questions that will appear.)
- 2) Select "Secure Messaging" on the top navigation bar, then click on the orange "Open Secure Messaging" tab in the middle of the screen.
- 3) If it's the first time you're accessing your Secure Messaging inbox, you will need to read the terms and conditions and select 'Opt In'.



- 4) Click 'New Message' and your provider's name will automatically be in the 'To' line of the message.

We hope you take advantage of Secure Messaging. If you have any questions about Secure Messaging or My Health^eVet, please contact me via phone or email. I'll be happy to explain this time-saving tool.

You can also stop by my office during your next visit to the St. Cloud VA and I'll help you get on-track with Secure Messaging and many of the other great tools and features of My Health^eVet.



Brian Vetter
My Health^eVet Coordinator
St. Cloud VA Healthcare System
Phone: 320-252-1670, dial 9 then ext: 7335



Minnesota Veterans Career Fair 2012

 **Wednesday, July 11th, 2012**
11 a.m. – 3 p.m.

 Workshop for job seekers offered
from 9 – 10 a.m.
– Workshop allows early admission to the Career Fair at 10 a.m.

 Earle Brown Heritage Center
6155 Earle Brown Drive
Brooklyn Center, Minnesota

 Map and Directions:
www.earlebrown.com

The Minnesota Veterans Employment Service invites all job-seeking veterans to this **“Veteran Friendly”** employer event. Job opportunities and educational information will be available. Service providers with expert knowledge of Veterans services will also be present. **Hope to see you there!**

For more information: www.PositivelyMinnesota.com/Veterans

This event is a collaboration between:





Customer Service is our Passion!
Vote Today



At Your PatriotStore&Café

Vote for the Associate that gave you great service!

Retail & Food Specials!

See Associate for details



July 19th-29th 2012

www.facebook.com/StCloudVAHCS



Connect with us on Facebook!

St. Cloud VA to Expand Mental Health Staff

Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki recently announced the department would add approximately 1,600 mental health clinicians as well as nearly 300 support staff to its existing workforce. VA estimates that 7 additional clinicians and 2 support personnel will be hired to support mental health operations at the St. Cloud VA. Recruitment for those positions is underway.

“If in need of immediate assistance, Veterans should not wait to seek care,” said Dr. Sherrie Herendeen, Director of Mental Health at the St. Cloud VA. “We are strongly committed to meeting the mental health needs of our Veterans and have the processes in place to get them the care they need.”

Currently, 226 mental health clinicians and support staff work locally supporting central Minnesota Veterans at the St. Cloud VA Medical Center and Community Based Outpatient Clinics in Alexandria, Brainerd, and Montevideo.

The St. Cloud VA has seen a 29% increase in the number of Veterans receiving mental health services since 2006, and has increased mental health staff by 62% in the same period, Dr. Herendeen said.

To use VA health care, Veterans must apply for enrollment. To apply, Veterans should contact a County Veteran Service Officer, call the St. Cloud VA at 320-255-6340, or apply online at www.101ez.med.va.gov. Immediate help is available anytime at www.VeteransCrisisLine.net or by calling the Crisis Line at 1-800-273-8255 (push 1) or texting 838255. *(continued next page)*

(continued)

Interested mental health care providers can find additional information about VA careers online at www.va.careers.va.gov. Open positions, including those at the St. Cloud VA, can be viewed online at USA Jobs (www.usajobs.gov).

With each additional mental health care provider, the St. Cloud VA could potentially reach hundreds more Veterans battling mental illness. New providers will join a team that is already actively treating Veterans through individualized care, readjustment counseling, and immediate crisis services. Additional staff members also afford opportunities to look long-term and expand into cutting edge Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) research and to explore alternative therapies.

Secretary Shinseki noted that “as the tide of war recedes, we have the opportunity, and the responsibility, to anticipate the needs of returning Veterans.”

VA anticipates the majority of mental health clinicians and support staff will be hired locally within approximately six months and the most hard-to-fill positions filled by March 2013. To speed the hiring process, VA developed the Mental Health Hiring Initiative to improve marketing, recruitment, and hiring efforts for mental health professionals so that the new 1,600 mental health providers can be hired as quickly as possible. The initiative is an aggressive, multi-faceted, sustained national marketing and outreach campaign that includes targeted recruitment of mental health providers willing to take positions in rural and highly rural markets, as well as throughout the nation to serve all VA medical centers and community clinics. *(continued next page)*

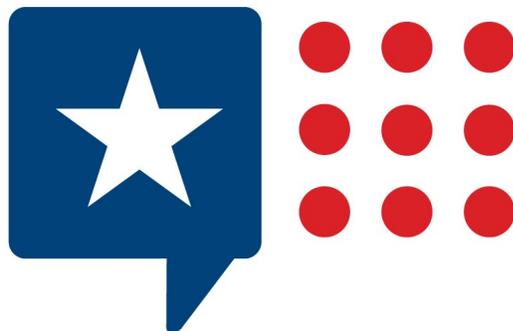
(continued)

“Mental health services must be closely aligned with Veterans’ needs and fully integrated with health care facility operations,” said VA Under Secretary for Health Dr. Robert Petzel. “Improving access to mental health services will help support the current and future Veterans who depend on VA for these vital services.”

Last year, VA provided quality, specialty mental health services to 1.3 million Veterans. Since 2009, VA has increased the mental health care budget by 39 percent. Since 2007, VA has seen a nationwide 35 percent increase in the number of Veterans receiving mental health services, and a 41 percent increase in mental health staff.

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Veterans Crisis Line



1-800-273-8255
PRESS 1

PUN-ographics

I changed my iPod's name to Titanic. It's syncing now.

When chemists die, they barium.

Jokes about German sausage are the wurst.

I know a guy who's addicted to brake fluid. He says he can stop any time.

I stayed up all night to see where the sun went. Then it dawned on me.

This girl said she recognized me from the vegetarian club, but I'd never met herbivore.

I'm reading a book about anti-gravity. I just can't put it down.

I did a theatrical performance about puns. It was a play on words.

They told me I had type-A blood, but it was a Type-O.

We're going on a class trip to the Coca-Cola factory. I hope there's no pop quiz.

I didn't like my beard at first. Then it grew on me.

Did you hear about the cross-eyed teacher who lost her job because she couldn't control her pupils?

When you get a bladder infection urine trouble.

Broken pencils are pointless.

I tried to catch some fog, but I mist.

What do you call a dinosaur with an extensive vocabulary? A thesaurus.

England has no kidney bank, but it does have a Liverpool.

I used to be a banker, but then I lost interest.

I dropped out of communism class because of lousy Marx.

I got a job at a bakery because I kneaded dough.

Haunted French pancakes give me the crêpes.

Velcro — what a rip off!

A cartoonist was found dead in his home. Details are sketchy.

Venison for dinner again? Oh deer!

A Recipe for Health

Little Cheddar Meat Loaves

Ingredients

2 egg whites, beaten
3/4 c. fat-free milk
1 c. reduced-fat shredded cheddar cheese
3/4 c. quick-cooking oats
1 med. onion, chopped
1 1/2 tsp. prepared mustard
1 med. Carrot, shredded
1/2 tsp. salt
3/4 lb. lean ground beef
2/3 c. ketchup
2 T. brown sugar

Directions

In a large bowl, whisk egg whites and milk. Stir in cheese, oats, onion, carrot and salt. Crumble beef over mixture and mix well. Shape into 8 loaves; place in a 9X13-inch baking dish coated with cooking spray. In a small bowl, combine the ketchup, brown sugar and mustard; spoon over loaves. Bake, uncovered, at 350° for 25-30 minutes or until no pink remains and a meat thermometer reads 160°. Serves 8.

Nutritional information: 187 calories, 7g fat, 550mg sodium, 18g carbohydrates, 15g protein.

Transportation Program to Expand



We are expanding the Veteran transportation program at the St. Cloud VA Health Care System!

These improvements are grouped under a new initiative called the Veteran Transportation Service (VTS).

VTS provides transportation for Veterans with special needs and Veterans who don't have transportation to and from their outpatient appointments. The new transportation program has been transporting Veterans to the main campus in St. Cloud since May 25, 2012.

The service is available to all Veterans living within a 50-mile radius of the St. Cloud VA campus who are in need of transportation to a medical appointment at the facility; priority is given to those with physical limitations.

VTS features two new wheel chair accessible vans, which gives us the ability to transport Veterans in wheelchairs. The new vans also increases the number of vehicles in the St. Cloud VA transportation fleet from three to five, allowing us to transport more Veteran than ever before.

VTS also incorporates centralized vehicle routing and scheduling software, and adds Global Positioning System (GPS) modules to vehicles for more effective and responsive control and dispatching.

To schedule a ride, Veterans can contact the Veterans Transportation Service by calling (320) 654-7622 to speak to a representative, or email Patricia Aljets: patricia.aljets@va.gov. *(continued next page)*

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While not currently available, transportation service is expected to be expanded to the Community Based Outpatient Clinics in Alexandria, Brainerd, and Montevideo in the near future.

Volunteers Needed

Volunteers are needed to expand the program. Two different volunteer assignments are available.

Transportation Assistants will be responsible for assisting with loading, securing, and unloading riders safely.

Drivers may be assigned to drive a sedan, or wheelchair accessible van or 12-passenger shuttle bus. Drivers need to have a valid Minnesota driver's license, pass a physical, and show proof of a safe driving record.

Both assignments require excellent customer service skills and a sincere desire to help Veterans get the health care that they need. The driver and assistant will work as a team to safely transport Veterans to their appointments and will generally require a time commitment of approximately five to eight hours per day. The number of days per month is flexible. Call (320) 654-7622 to volunteer.





Construction Update

We're expanding and improving



This is a view of what used to be the connecting corridor from Bldg. 3 to the main east-west corridor. All of this corridor, with the exception of the underlying steam tunnel, was demolished to make way for the expansion of the Dental Clinic.

Audiology Clinic Expansion

The Audiology expansion project will add a 2,800 square foot, single-story addition to the existing Audiology Department in Building 29 as well as remodel approximately 1,800 square feet of existing Audiology Department space.

We will be removing the three existing audiology booths and replacing them with six new, more accessible audiology booths in the new addition. This new addition will also include five rooms to be used for exam, fitting and office space.

Renovation of the existing Audiology space will include removal of the three existing booths and creation of exam rooms and offices.

This project will improve accessibility for hearing evaluations and decreasing wait times for appointments.

Audiology services will continue to be provided throughout construction, although services will be relocated in phases as the construction progresses.

The project is estimated to cost approximately \$1.6M and is anticipated to be completed in the Fall of 2012.



Dental Clinic Expansion



The Dental Clinic project will expand Building 3 by adding a 3,600 square foot, two-story addition on the north side between the north wings of the building.

The addition will include a new oral surgery room, a private operatory space for special needs Veterans, a dental office, and a new reception/waiting area.

This project will also renovate the existing 2,000 square feet of existing Dental Clinic space on first floor, adding seven new dental stations for a total of 18 stations.

We will also add an internal elevator in the building, where none currently exists, as well as expand the heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems currently serving the first floor dental clinic.

Construction of the addition requires removal of the internal connecting corridor from near the Building 5 Pharmacy area into the Dental Clinic. Veterans will use the front (South) entrance to Building 3 for dental services until the new corridor is connected this Fall.

Expansion of the Dental Clinic will decrease waiting times for Veterans as well as provide services for OIF/OEF/OND Veterans currently being referred to Non-VA care.

The project is estimated to cost approximately \$2.5M, and is anticipated to be completed in the Summer of 2013.

Pharmacy Expansion

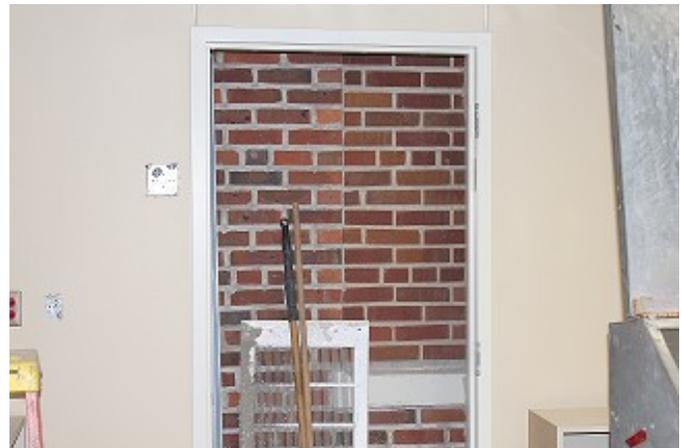
This project will improve our Pharmacy services by adding 2,000 square feet to Building 5. It will also include renovating approximately 5,500 square feet of existing Building 5 Pharmacy space.

The result will be a reconfigured Pharmacy that will improve efficiencies to better serve our growing veteran population.

This project will also provide a much needed replacement of the existing heating, ventilation and air condition system and controls serving the building.

All Pharmacy services will remain in operation throughout construction.

The project will cost approximately \$2M, and construction is anticipated to be completed in Winter 2012/2013.



Automated Phone Service System

The Automated Phone Service System assists you in managing appointments and ordering prescription refills 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Services include:

**Available 24 hours a day,
7 days a week**

**A touch tone phone is needed to use
this system**

Appointment Inquiry: Find out the dates and times of your future appointments. You may also cancel or request rescheduling of appointments.

Prescription Refill & Status: Access the automated prescription refill system to

order refills, check status of refills and to receive refillable prescriptions by mail, up to three days earlier than with mail-in requests.

How to Use the System

Call 855-560-1724

For Appointment Inquiry:

At the prompt, enter your full Social Security Number, followed by the "#" button. Then,

⇒ **Press 1** for Appointment Inquiry

For Prescription Refills & Status:

At the prompt, enter your full Social Security Number, followed by the "#" button. Then,

⇒ **Press 2** for Pharmacy Options

After you **Press 2** for the Pharmacy Options you will be asked to:

- **Press 1** for REFILLS (Enter prescription number followed by the “#” button)
- **Press 2** for STATUS OF PRESCRIPTION (Enter prescription number followed by the “#” button)

**County Veteran Service Officers
serving Veterans in the St. Cloud VA area**

<u>COUNTY</u>	<u>VSO</u>	<u>PHONE NUMBER</u>
Aitkin	Penny Harms	218-927-7320
Benton	Vacant	320-968-5044
Big Stone	Dan Meyer	320-839-6398
Cass	Kathleen Ramos	218-547-1340x314/308
Chippewa	Tim Kolhei	320-269-6419
Crow Wing	Bob Nelson	218-824-1058
Douglas	Ray Kallstrom	320-219-7780
Grant	Dustin Kindelberger	218-685-4801
Isanti	James Rostberg	763-689-3591
Kanabec	Lowell Sedlacek	320-679-6380
Kandiyohi	Trisha Appeldorn	320-231-6226
Lac Qui Parle	Josh Beninga	320-598-3445
Lyon	Terry Wing	507-537-6729
McLeod	Jim Lauer	320-864-1268
Meeker	Chuck Unterberger	320-693-5445
Mille Lacs	Michael Bina	320-983-8203
Morrison	Paul Froncak	320-632-0290
Pope	Hugh Reimers	320-634-5734
Redwood	Marty Caraway	507-637-4034
Renville	Lee Stock	320-523-3763
Sherburne	Eugene Graff	763-241-2740
Stearns	Terry Ferdinandt	320-656-6176
Stevens	Hugh Reimers	320-208-6555
Swift	David Barrett	320-842-5271
Todd	Pete Berscheit	320-732-4419
Traverse	Dustin Kindelberger	320-563-4411
Wadena	David Anderson	218-631-7617
Wright	Genell Reese	763-682-7325
Yellow Medicine	Michelle Gatz	320-564-3134



Take care of your buddy!

**Help a fellow Veteran enroll for
VA health care.**

**Contact your County Veteran
Service Officer, call the St.
Cloud VA at 320-255-6340, or
apply online at**

www.1010ez.med.va.gov