

GUIDE TO SERVICES

ST. CLOUD VA HEALTH CARE SYSTEM



May 2019

VA



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Veterans Health Administration
St. Cloud VA Health Care System

All new enrollees receive a personalized *Veterans Health Benefits Handbook*, generally a few weeks after enrollment has been confirmed. The handbooks are tailored specifically for each Veteran and provide detailed, updated information about the VA health care benefits the Veteran may be eligible to receive, such as medications, prosthetics and dental care. An online version of the handbook is available at <https://www.va.gov/healthbenefits/vhbh/>. This *Guide to Services* supplements the *Veterans Health Benefits Handbook* by answering questions about local VA facilities and health care programs. We encourage your comments about your care. Your input will help us to continue to meet our goal of providing quality health care to Veterans.

The benefits your service has earned can support you and your loved ones in different ways throughout your life-like when it's time to go to school, get a job, buy a house, get health care, retire, or make plans for your care as you age. Find out more at: <https://www.va.gov>

Whether you're just getting out of the service or you've been a civilian for years now, the VA Welcome Kit can help guide you to the benefits and services you've earned. Access the VA Welcome Kit at <https://www.va.gov/welcome-kit/> or a broad overview of services VA can offer you.

For personal assistance with all VA benefits, you may also contact your County Veteran Service Officer (phone numbers are on page 62) or a service officer in a Veterans service organization.

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ABOUT THE ST. CLOUD VA

The St. Cloud VA Health Care System began serving Veterans in 1924 and now delivers care to more than 39,000 Veterans per year. The Health Care System provides primary and subspecialty medical, urgent, specialty and mental health care; acute psychiatry services; and extended care and rehabilitation services. Specialty outpatient services offered include audiology, dental, endoscopy, ambulatory surgery, laboratory, orthopedics, optometry, podiatry, pulmonology, radiology, urology, otolaryngology, respiratory therapy, rheumatology, hematology/oncology, cardiology, neurology, nephrology, and women Veterans health care.

The Health Care System also provides a number of special emphasis services including residential and outpatient mental health and substance abuse programs, a Mental Health Residential Rehabilitation Treatment Program, outpatient programming for serious mental illness, homeless Veterans programs, a suicide prevention program, a Transition and Assistance Program for Returning Veterans, a Women Veterans program, an Incarcerated Veteran Program, a Veterans Justice Outreach Program, and Vocational Rehabilitation and Supported Employment programs. Extended Care and Rehabilitation services include Home-Based Primary Care, Adult Day Health Care, Memory Care, Hospice Care, Short Stay and Nursing Home Care, including ventilator care.

The Health Care System does not maintain an inpatient medical unit. Those needs are met by authorizing care at local community hospitals and transfers to the Minneapolis VA Health Care System 80 miles to the south. Veterans can access care and services at the St. Cloud VA medical Center and three Community VA clinics in Alexandria, Brainerd and Montevideo.

LOCATIONS & HOURS OF OPERATION

St. Cloud VA Medical Center, 4801 Veterans Dr., St. Cloud, MN 56303
Phone: 320-252-1670 or 800-247-1739

Routine operating hours for most services are from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday-Friday, closed weekends and federal holidays.

Public access to the entry points of the Medical Center are closed from 6 p.m. to 7 a.m. daily.

The Urgent Care Clinic is available in Bldg. 1 (Main Entrance) from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., 365 days per year.

Community Based Outpatient Clinics (CBOCs)

Max J. Beilke VA Clinic, 515 22nd Avenue East, Alexandria, MN 56308
Phone: 320-759-2640

Brainerd VA Clinic, 722 NW Seventh Street, Brainerd, MN 56401
Phone: 218-855-1115

Montevideo VA Clinic, 1025 North 13th Str., Montevideo, MN 56265
Phone: 320-269-2222

All CBOCs are open from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday-Friday, closed weekends and federal holidays.

Please note that the St. Cloud VA HCS does not have an emergency department, acute medical care services or afterhours outpatient services at any of our locations.

ENROLLING FOR CARE

HOW TO APPLY

All Veterans must apply for enrollment in the VA health care system. Each Veteran's eligibility status is unique and is determined upon application. Veterans complete VA Form 10-10EZ to apply. These can be obtained from many places, including the Eligibility Office in Building 1, from County Veterans Service Offices, or online at <https://www.va.gov/health-care/apply/>. Once the form is filled out, you can submit it in several ways.

- Apply Online: <https://www.va.gov/health-care/application/introduction>
- By Mail (submit to one of these addresses):
 - St. Cloud VA Health Care System, Attn: Health Administration Service-Eligibility, 4801 Veterans Drive, St. Cloud, MN 56303
 - Health Eligibility Center, 2957 Clairmont Rd., Suite 200, Atlanta, GA 30329
- In Person: You can also bring the application form to the St. Cloud VA Medical Center. The Eligibility Office is located on the ground floor of Building 1.

Whether mailing or bringing your application, please include the following items:

- a copy of your DD214, 'Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty'
- a copy of both sides of your current insurance card (including Medicare, Medicaid or spouse's insurance if it covers you)
- Purple Heart recipients only, bring a copy of your award letter if 'Purple Heart' is not noted on your DD214

After your application has been processed you will receive a letter in the mail outlining your eligibility for VA health care and resources available to you. If you need to obtain information or assistance regarding your VA health care benefits, please contact the Eligibility (Veteran Services) Office at 320-255-6340.

INSURANCE

In 1985, the U.S. Congress passed the Medical Care Cost Recovery Act. This Act requires the Department of Veterans Affairs to bill third party health insurance for medical care provided to Veterans for treatment of their non- service-connected conditions or disabilities.

INCOME VERIFICATION MATCHING

Public law allows the VA to compare Veteran-reported means test income data with the IRS and Social Security Administration records. If your eligibility for VA medical care is based on income, you will be asked to provide income and dependent information for yourself and your spouse. All Veterans are asked to provide health insurance and employment information. Your VA means test is based on your prior year's gross household income.

PATIENT ALIGNED CARE TEAM (PACT)

A Patient Aligned Care Team (PACT) is each Veteran working together with health care professionals to plan for the whole-person care and life-long health and wellness. PACT is the cornerstone of the way Veterans receive their care. It is your medical home.

Every Veteran is assigned to a PACT that uses a team-based approach to health care. You are the center of the care team that also includes your family members, caregivers and a core team of health care professionals —primary care provider, nurse care manager (RN), clinical associate (LPN), and administrative clerk. Your team also includes extended PACT team members: social workers, pharmacists, dietitians and Primary Care/Mental Health Integration team members.

Together, the team focuses on:

- Partnerships with Veterans
- Access to care using diverse methods
- Coordinated care among team members
- Team-based care with Veterans as the center of their PACT

ACCESSING CARE

ROUTINE APPOINTMENTS

Once enrolled, you may elect to receive primary care at the St. Cloud VA Medical Center or at one of the VA Clinics in Brainerd, Alexandria or Montevideo.

Primary care is your gateway to VA health care. Your PACT team can take care of most of your health care needs. To schedule an appointment, call 320-252-1670 and press 2.

We serve a large number of Veterans. To increase our effectiveness for all Veterans, we need your help:

- Please check in on time.
- If you know you will be late or are unable to attend your appointment, please call 320-252-1670 and press 2 to cancel or reschedule.
- Bring any medical records you have from non-VA providers for your first visit.
- Bring a list of all prescribed and over-the-counter medications and immunization records if available.
- Contact your PACT nurse during regular business hours for any concerns instead of going to the clinic without an appointment.
- Unscheduled patients can experience long waits. In the case of an emergency dial 911 or go to the nearest emergency room.

Annual exams are used to benchmark and track your health. Even if you feel healthy, it is important to attend annual exams.

Schedule other appointments when you need to be seen for a particular concern or notice a change in your health.

Life happens. **If you can't make an appointment that's OK, but please let us know** so we can fit another Veteran into that slot.

Here's a quick look at the more common ways we work together to manage your appointments:

APPOINTMENT REMINDER LETTERS

We don't automatically schedule routine appointments, like annual exams. You have the option to schedule a future appointment during check-out or ask us to send you a letter reminding you to schedule these appointments. Once an appointment is made we send you a letter with appointment details. Here is an example letter:

Dear Veteran:

We are pleased to confirm the following appointments:

Date/Time: Feb. 28, 2017 at 8:00am

Clinic: STC LAB FASTING NEW

Location: Bldg. 1 Basement Rm. 2

Telephone: (320)255-6339

Date/Time: Feb. 28, 2017 at 9:00am

Clinic: STC ZZ NURSING/INTAKE

Location: Bldg. 1 1st Flr. Rm. 13

Telephone: (320)255-6339

Date/Time: Feb. 28, 2017 at 9:30am

Clinic: STC ZZ MD PACT 4

Location: Bldg. 1 1st Flr. Rm. 13

Telephone: (320)255-6339

Here is an explanation of various parts of the letter:

Date/Time: This is the date and time of this appointment. Read your letter carefully as you may be reminded of multiple appointments on the same day or appointments on more than one date in the same letter.

Clinic: The first three letters of the clinic give the location of the appointment. STC represents the St. Cloud VAHCS. BRD represents the Brainerd Clinic. ALX represents the Alexandria Clinic. MTE represents the Montevideo Clinic. The name after the first three letters represent the clinic name. In this example the first appointment is for LAB and FASTING NEW represents what labs will be drawn.

Location: The building number is shown first, then the floor, and lastly the room number.

Telephone: This is the phone number of the clinic. If you need to contact the clinic for any reason regarding your appointment on this date this is the phone number to use.

TELEPHONE

Call 320-252-1670, press 2 and then select the appropriate option for the appointment type you want to make or cancel:

- Option 2--Primary Care
- Option 3--Mental health
- Option 4--Audiology hearing clinic
- Option 5--Optometry eye clinic
- Option 6--Surgical and Specialty Care
- Option 7—Flu clinic information

AUTOMATED PHONE SERVICE SYSTEM

This system automatically calls to remind you of upcoming appointments.

- You can also use it to find out the dates and times of your future appointments and to order prescription refills 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- You may also cancel or request rescheduling of appointments.

To use the system, call 320-252-1670, and press option 2 then select option 1.

MYHEALTHEVET (MHV) AND ONLINE SCHEDULING

You can use Online Scheduling in MyHealtheVet to:

- Self-schedule primary care appointments for your assigned primary care provider.
- View or Cancel existing primary care and mental health clinic appointments.
- Make requests for help scheduling primary care and mental health appointments.

To use Online Scheduling, you will need a premium account. For personal assistance establishing an account, stop by the St. Cloud VA Health Hub in Bldg. 29, Room 20, during your next visit.

SECURE MESSAGING

A feature of MyHealthVet, secure messaging enables you to send emails to your care team, safely and securely, for non-urgent, non-emergency health related information, including requesting medical appointments. To use secure messaging, you need internet access. Go to <https://www.myhealth.va.gov> and register as a “VA patient.” You can also stop by the Health Hub in Bldg. 29, Room 20, for assistance.

TEXT MESSAGE REMINDERS

Our convenient text message system sends VA appointment reminders via a text message.

- You can confirm or cancel out of an appointment with an easy text message reply.
- Reminder messages are sent seven days before and two days before the appointment.
- Veterans with multiple appointments on the same day will receive multiple reminders.
- All appointment reminder messages contain instructions on how to end messages.
- Text messaging rates may apply according to individual phone plans.

Veterans are automatically enrolled in text messaging. If you opt out and want to restart text message appointment reminders, text “START” to a previous reminder message and service will resume, or text “START” to 909-954-0651.

GETTING CARE WHEN YOU NEED IT

Our goal is to provide Veterans with high quality care when it is needed, and to deliver it with a positive experience.

Sometimes your health care needs may not allow for advance scheduling. To meet these needs there are a variety of services and locations available to serve you.

ROUTINE APPOINTMENTS: Your PACT team can take care of most of your health care needs. Schedule PACT appointments when you need to be seen for a routine exam, particular concern or notice a change in your health. Most other services require a referral from your provider, however Veterans can self-refer to the following clinics without a referral: Optometry, Audiology, Nutrition, Podiatry, Wheelchair/Mobility, Amputee, and Respiratory Therapy (if seen by a respiratory therapist in the past year).

WALK-IN SERVICES

Audiology and Optometry also offer walk-in access for audiology appointments and eyeglass adjustments, respectively, subject to availability. Contact Audiology at Ext. 4370 or Optometry at Ext. 5432 with questions. Respiratory Therapy offers walk-in clinic for minor, routine matters such as CPAP mask fittings and download information from CPAP cards or machines. Contact Respiratory Therapy at Ext. 7473 or 7437 with questions. Walk-in services may be limited by volume and you may experience waits.

TELEPHONE CARE: Call and talk to a VA nurse when you have health care questions or need health care advice. Telephone Care is available at (320) 252-1670, press 3, 24 hours a day.

SAME DAY SERVICES

Our goal is that if you need care right away, you get services the same day, or if after hours, by the next day.

FOR PRIMARY CARE NEEDS: If you have non-routine needs, we will try and work you into your provider's schedule on the day the care is needed. Call 320-252-1670, press option 2 and select option 2 for Primary Care and ask for a same day appointment with your assigned PACT. Additional options for how care can be provided include via telephone, smart phone, through video care, secure messaging or other options. Care may be delivered by your provider or another clinical staff member based on availability and care needs.

FOR MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS: There are several options to seek help for non-routine Mental Health concerns:

- From 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday-Friday, contact your Mental Health case manager, or the Outpatient Mental Health Clinic at 320-252-1670, press 2 and select option 3.
- Visit the Urgent Care Clinic, in Bldg. 1, St. Cloud VA Medical Center. Urgent Care is open 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., 365 days a year.
- At all times, you may call 320-252-1670, and press 0 for assistance.
- Contact a VA Nurse at 320-252-1670, and press 3, 24 hours a day.
- **If you are having thoughts of suicide, call the Veteran Crisis Line at 1-800-273-8255 and press 1, or text to 838255, 24 hours a day.**

WHERE SHOULD I GO FOR CARE?

When and how to use:

- **Primary Care**
- **Telephone Care**
- **Urgent Care**
- **Emergency Care**

PRIMARY CARE

Veterans are assigned to a primary care provider and team. Seeing your primary care team over time allows them to know you and your health history well. Visits to your primary care team generally require an appointment. Primary care is the best option for non-urgent care needs such as:

- Annual wellness exams
- Long term back pain and other types of long-term pain
- Chronic disease management
- Routine screenings (blood pressure, lab tests, glucose monitoring)
- Minor illnesses (cold, flu, sore throat, urinary tract infection, bronchitis, allergy, rashes)
- Minor injuries (cuts, scrapes, sprains, dislocations, bruises)
- Immunizations/vaccinations
- Physical exams needed for school, work or pre-op

TELEPHONE CARE

Call and talk to a VA nurse when you have health care questions, need health care advice, are ill or injured and not sure if you should see your primary care provider, access urgent care or go to the emergency room. The nurse will ask about your symptoms, answer health care questions, give health care advice, and direct you to health care.

Telephone Care is available at (320) 252-1670, press 3, 24 hours a day.

URGENT CARE

Urgent care is an option when you need to be seen for a minor urgent illness or injury right away. Urgent care is open from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., 365 days a year. No appointment is necessary. Urgent care is appropriate for non-life-threatening conditions such as:

- Recent onset back pain
- Minor illnesses (cold, flu, sore throat, sudden onset body aches, urinary tract infection, bronchitis, allergy, rashes, head ache, eye pain, nausea, vomiting fever, nose bleed)
- Minor injuries (cuts, scrapes, sprains, dislocations, bruises)
- Broken bones not coming through the skin

The Urgent Care Clinic is located at the St. Cloud VA Medical Center in Building 1 (Main Building). The address is 4801 Veterans Drive, St. Cloud, MN 56303.

IMPORTANT POINTS:

- Urgent Care is not emergency care. Veterans who have a potentially life-threatening medical condition should call 911 or go directly to the nearest emergency room.
- Urgent Care does not provide: Emergency medical care, Pediatric care or Maternity care.

IN AN EMERGENCY

Call 911 or go to the closest community hospital with an emergency department (ED) if you believe you have a serious and possibly life-threatening issue or emergency mental health needs.

If you are having thoughts of suicide, call the Veteran Crisis Line at: 1-800-273-8255 and press 1, or text to 838255, 24 hours a day.

Get the care you need first, then you, a family member, friend, or hospital staff member should **contact the nearest VA medical facility as soon as possible (preferably, within 72-hours)**. Once notified, VA staff will assist you in making sure you receive any additional care without interruption and, when necessary, are transferred to a VA medical facility for care after being stabilized.

VA payment for emergency care varies per individual Veteran. For more info visit:

https://www.va.gov/COMMUNITYCARE/programs/veterans/Emergency_Care.asp

FAQ: EMERGENCY CARE IN NON-VA FACILITIES

When you need emergency care, go to the nearest hospital that has an emergency room or call 911. If you go to the hospital in an ambulance, the paramedics will usually take you to the closest emergency room.

What is a medical emergency?

A medical emergency exists when an injury or illness is so severe that without immediate treatment the injury or illness threatens your health or your life.

How do I know if I'm having a medical emergency?

Use your best judgment. If you believe you are suffering from an emergency call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room.

Do I need to call the VA before I obtain emergency care?

No. Call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room. If you are admitted, your family, friends or hospital staff should contact the nearest VA facility as soon as possible to provide information about your emergency room visit.

Does my enrollment in the VA Health Care System change my coverage for emergency care at VA expense?

Yes, it may. You may reach the Community Care billing department at 1-877-881-7618.

Does my other insurance (TRICARE, Medicare, Medicaid, Blue Cross, etc.) change my VA coverage for emergency services?

Yes, it may. You may reach the Community Care billing department at 1-877-881-7618.

Will VA pay for emergency care if I am in jail?

No. Usually, the jail has the responsibility for providing you with medical care.

Will VA pay for emergency care received outside the United States?

If you are outside the United States and being treated for a service-connected condition the VA will pay for emergency care. The VA will not pay for emergency care related to non-service-connected conditions. Contact the VA Health Administration Center at 303-331-7590 for more information, or go to www.va.gov/purchasedcare/.

How long do I have to file a claim for reimbursement for emergency medical care?

Please file your claim with the nearest VA Health Care System or Medical Center quickly. If your regional office recently determined your benefits, you should submit a reimbursement claim as soon as you can. Time limits usually apply. Contact the Community Care billing department at 1-877-881-7618, for an explanation of these limits.

Will I have to pay for any part of my emergency care?

It is possible. Sometimes co-pays are required based on your VA enrollment. Sometimes the extent of health care services reimbursable by the VA are limited by federal law.

The VA may be able to arrange and pay for the health care of eligible Veterans outside of VA medical facilities – but only in certain, limited circumstances:

- When the Veteran meets eligibility criteria
- When there is a medical need
- When VA medical facilities (or ‘sharing agreement’ facilities) are not available
- The VA’s ability to pay for the medical care of Veterans provided by the community is regulated by federal law.

If I am admitted to the hospital because of an emergency, how much will VA pay?

This depends on your VA eligibility. The VA may pay all, some, or none of the charge. Contact the Community Care billing department at 1-877-881-7618, about what is allowed under Non-VA emergency care programs:

- For service-connected conditions
- For non-service-connected conditions

You can get more answers to your questions on the Veterans Health Administration Community Care website at www.va.gov/purchasedcare/communitycare/. You may also contact the St. Cloud VA Community Care Center at (320) 252-1670, Ext. 7020, for details about your specific situation.

CO-MANAGED CARE

As an advocate for your health, your VA provider is continually reviewing your treatment plan, including medications, treatments and diagnostic tests, to ensure you are receiving the best and most effective health care. If you are a Veteran who is seeing both a VA provider and a community provider, your care needs to be coordinated.

For your health and safety, you need to:

- Inform your community provider of the treatment received by a VA provider and
- Inform your VA provider of care you received in the community

During your care, you may have recommendations for medications, treatments, and diagnostic tests from your community provider that you wish to receive through the VA.

For your request to be reviewed, you need to give your VA provider copies of the following information from your community provider's office:

- The name, address and phone number of your community provider
- Copies of office visit notes and diagnostic tests supporting the treatment recommendations
- Copies of prescription(s)

You can supply these copies to your VA provider by either:

- Bringing copies with you to your next scheduled VA appointment
- Requesting your community provider to fax information to (320) 255-6360

- Mailing information to:
Triage Clerk (PM-136A)
VA Medical Center
4801 Veterans Drive
St. Cloud, MN 56303

Medications, treatments and diagnostic tests can only be ordered after your VA provider has reviewed the recommendations and decided which are appropriate, effective, and necessary.

If you receive a prescription from your community provider and you need to start it right away, you will need to purchase a 30-day supply from your pharmacy while the recommendations are reviewed by your VA provider. VA cannot reimburse you for medications you purchase at a community pharmacy.

Information on VA co-managed pharmacy benefits:

- Your VA provider needs to follow and review your health by seeing you for a physical at least once a year. VA cannot be used only as your pharmacy.
- VA providers can only prescribe medications and supplies listed on VA's approved list (formulary). You and your community provider can see this list at:
<http://www.pbm.va.gov/apps/VANationalFormulary>
- The list includes drugs from all major categories. If the drug prescribed by your community provider is not on the list, your VA provider may prescribe a closely related medication.
- Some medications are only available after approval by a VA specialty service or other criteria are met.
- The VA prefers to do complete lab work for medications which require special monitoring unless circumstances such as geographic distance or physical immobility create a hardship.

- Your VA health care provider cannot prescribe medications which are high risk and need special monitoring (e.g. medications used to treat cancer, prevent blood clots, regulate heart rhythm or lithium) in the co-managed care program.
- Controlled substances prescribed by a community provider will not be reviewed or filled in the co-managed care program.
- Acute infection medications will not be reviewed or filled in the co-managed care program.
- Prosthetic devices or equipment can only be issued by the VA if ordered by your VA provider.
- Unnecessary, inappropriate, or harmful medications or supplies will not be prescribed.

PHARMACY SERVICES

Each time you meet with your provider, bring a list of all medications you are currently taking. This includes medications you are receiving from the VA, prescriptions you get from another pharmacy, over-the-counter medications and any herbal supplements you may be taking. After every provider visit it is required that you visit with a pharmacist before you leave to go home. Stop by Pharmacy Intake where a pharmacist will educate you on the new medications and we can process your medications to be mailed, put on hold, or process them for you to pick up at that time. If you do not stop at Pharmacy Intake your new prescriptions and the renewals the provider ordered will automatically be mailed to you and any applicable copay(s) will apply.

ORDERING MEDICATIONS

BY MAIL:

When you receive your medications, there will be a refill slip with a barcode on it. As soon as you receive this slip, you can mail it in and when it is time for your next refill we will mail it to you. Send refill slips to:

VA Health Care System
Attn: Pharmacy-119
4801 Veterans Drive
St. Cloud, MN 56303

If you prefer not to mail in the refill slip, we have a mailbox located in Pharmacy Intake, that you may come in and drop your refill slips into.

BY PHONE:

Call: 320-252-1670, press 1.

USE THE INTERNET:

www.myhealth.va.gov

My HealtheVet is a free, online personal health record that you can access 24/7 and request your medication refills.

REFILL INFORMATION

Most VA prescriptions mailed from the St. Cloud VA come from a filling center in Kansas or Tennessee. It usually takes between 7 and 10 days, by mail, for that medication to arrive to you. Please **request your refills 2-3 weeks** before you run out.

Refills for regularly used medications can be requested as early as desired. Once requested, the refill will be added to our computer records and when the time comes it will be filled and mailed to you.

We **DO NOT** have an “auto-refill” system that automatically sends out your next refill to you. **You must request every refill.** If you run out of refills, you may contact the pharmacy and we will contact your provider for you!

PAYING FOR CARE

COPAYMENTS

Actual copay charges will vary depending on service-connection, priority group level and financial information submitted on your health care applications or means test/copay test. There is no copay requirement for preventive services such as screenings and immunizations.

OUTPATIENT SERVICES

Only Veterans from priority groups 6, 7 and 8 are charged copays for outpatient services. The copay amount for outpatient care is limited to a single charge per visit, regardless of the number of health care providers seen. The copay amount is based on the highest level of services received:

- Basic care services, \$15/visit
- Specialty care services, \$50/visit

MEDICATIONS

As of Feb. 27, 2017, VA established copays for three classes of outpatient medications identified as Tier 1, Preferred Generics; Tier 2, Non-Preferred Generics including over-the-counter medications; and Tier 3, Brand Name. Copayment amounts for each tier are fixed and vary depending on the outpatient medication tier:

- \$5 for a 30-day or less supply - Tier 1 outpatient medication
- \$8 for a 30-day or less supply - Tier 2 outpatient medication
- \$11 for a 30-day or less supply - Tier 3 outpatient medication

These copays apply to Veterans without a service-connected condition, or Veterans with a disability rated less than 50 percent who are receiving outpatient treatment for a non-service-connected condition,

and whose annual income exceeds the limit set by law. Medication copayments do not apply to former Prisoners of War, catastrophically disabled Veterans, or those covered by other exceptions as set by law.

Copayments stop each calendar year for Veterans in Priority Groups 2-8 once a \$700 annual cap is reached.

Billing service representatives are available in Bldg. 5, Room 121, Monday through Thursday, from 9 a.m. to Noon. Please note that assistance is available for Veterans with billing issues for VA care only. You can also call the Veterans Health Resource Center at 1-866-347-2352, Monday to Friday, from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.

For assistance with Community Care claims contact 320-252-1670 ext. 7020 or 1-877-881-7618.

SELF SERVICE VETLINK KIOSKS

In an effort to improve Veterans' health care experiences, we have added self-service kiosks to streamline appointment check-in and to allow you to manage your own health information. The VetLink kiosks are very similar to systems used in airport terminals.



EASY TO USE TOUCH SCREEN

VetLink kiosks have touch-screen technology that provides Veterans easy access to check-in for appointments and make changes to their health information.

On VetLink, you can:

- Check-in for a previously scheduled medical appointment
- Update contact and demographic information
- Validate insurance information
- View account balance
- Print an appointment itinerary slip
- Request medical records
- File beneficiary travel requests

TRANSPORTATION

VETERANS TRANSPORTATION NETWORK (VTN)

VTN offers van transportation to and from appointments for ambulatory Veterans who do not have other means of transportation due to financial or medical hardship. Veterans must be able to independently get in and out of a vehicle. This service is available for Veterans who live within 50 miles of the St. Cloud VA Medical Center and within 20 miles of the Brainerd VA Clinic. Call 800-247-1739, Ext. 6676, to schedule.

The Veterans Transportation Network is a collaborative effort between the Disabled American Veterans (DAV) and the Voluntary Service program at the St. Cloud VA Health Care System.

VETERANS TRANSPORTATION SERVICE (VTS)

The Veteran Transportation Service offers free, safe and reliable transportation to and from St. Cloud VA-authorized appointments. VTS specialize in non-ambulatory Veterans, wheelchair bound Veterans who use oxygen and those who need assistance getting in and out of a vehicle. This service is available for Veterans and caretakers who live within 50 miles of the St. Cloud VA Medical Center. Rides can be arranged from 8 a.m.-3:30 p.m. daily. Call 320-654-7622, to schedule a ride.

BUS SERVICE TO MINNEAPOLIS VA

*Amended October 1, 2020, the weekday round trips from the St. Cloud VA Medical Center to the Minneapolis VA Medical Center have been cancelled. Call the Veterans Transportation Service (VTS) for transportation information at 320-654-7622.

BENEFICIARY TRAVEL

VA has a Beneficiary Travel Program to help reimburse costs of travel to medical appointments for eligible Veterans.

ELIGIBILITY

You may qualify if you meet any of the following:

- You have a service connected (SC) rating of 30% or more
- If less than 30% SC and you are traveling for treatment of a SC condition
- You receive a VA pension
- Your income does not exceed the maximum annual VA pension rate
- You are traveling for a scheduled compensation and pension examination
- Call 320-252-1670 and press 4 if you have questions about your eligibility.

OBTAINING MEDICAL RECORDS

Your records are available anytime via MyHealthVet. Visit the Health Hub in Bldg. 29, Room 20 to setup an account. You may also request records anytime by using the VetLink service kiosks located throughout our facilities.

Need help? Customer service representatives are available in Bldg. 5, Rm 121 for records requests and inquiries, Monday to Friday from noon to 3 p.m. Phone inquiries may be made by calling 320-255-6336, from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday to Friday. Simply leave a message with your name, last 4 of SSN and a contact phone number. An ROI representative will return your call by the next business day.

LODGING

LODGING

Temporary lodging (overnight sleeping accommodations) may be provided in certain unique circumstances. Veterans may qualify for lodging if resources are available and:

- The Veteran has a scheduled clinic appointment or test before 10 a.m. and travels 100 miles or more than 2 hours to the St. Cloud VAHCS or has transportation difficulties.
- The Veteran must be able to stay in an unsupervised setting and capable of self-care and administration of his/her medication, as directed by the medical provider.

A Veteran must call or present to the Medical Administration Assistant (MAA) before 6 p.m. in Building 111 or call 320-252-1670 and press 0 to determine if lodging is available.

GORECKI HOUSE

The St. Cloud Hospital Gorecki (Go-ret'-ski) Guest House welcomes Veterans and family members of patients who are receiving medical care in the St. Cloud community. The house offers a comfortable, homelike atmosphere that allows families the opportunity to stay close to their loved ones. Veterans traveling to St. Cloud for medical appointments or procedures may find the house a comfortable alternative to early morning commutes.

The Gorecki Guest House is conveniently located across the street from the St. Cloud Hospital, at 1309 Sixth Avenue North, in St. Cloud. The Gorecki Guest House does not provide medical care or assistance on site.

For more information, call 320-251-2700, Ext. 51774, or visit www.centracare.com/patients-visitors/gorecki-guest-house/.

COMMUNITY CARE

Veterans may be eligible to receive care in the community based on eligibility and availability of services. Your primary care provider will enter a referral for care that is needed. Please note to ensure your care is authorized don't make any community appointments until you have been contacted by a St. Cloud VA Community Care scheduler.

WAIT-TIME ELIGIBILITY

If you can't be seen in a timely manner within the VA healthcare system you may be eligible for community care. When scheduling an appointment, the scheduler will inform you if you have the option to potentially be seen in the community due to wait time. Please note if the service is offered at Minneapolis or a surrounding CBOC you will be appointed there prior to being reviewed for the community.

40-MILE ELIGIBILITY

If you live 40 miles or more from any VA facility with a fulltime provider, you may be eligible to be seen in the community. Please contact your primary care provider at the VA to have a consult placed for your care. If you are requesting to see a primary care provider in the community, please contact the community care department at 320-252-1670 Ext. 7020.

SERVICE UNAVAILABLE

If the service you need is not offered at the St. Cloud VA it will be reviewed first for access at the Minneapolis VA. If they are unable to provide the care it will be reviewed for community care. A member of the St. Cloud Community Care department will contact you to assist in scheduling in the community.

TRAVELING VETERAN PROGRAM

Many Veterans take extended travel and need care coordination during their travels. Contact your PACT if you are expecting to travel and need to arrange care.

IN AN EMERGENCY

Go to the nearest VA health care facility. If more immediate care is required, go to nearest emergency room and contact the nearest VA as soon as possible.

MEDICATIONS

- Take a supply of medications for the whole trip if possible.
- If your prescriptions will expire during your trip, ask your home primary care provider to extend them.
- For long stays, change the medication mailing address with your home pharmacist or primary care team. Refills will come directly to you during your travel.
- Update your address two weeks in advance of your appointment.

CUSTOMER SERVICE

The St. Cloud VA Health Care System takes pride in providing the highest quality of care and outstanding customer service. We recognize there may be times when a patient or family member has a concern that requires our attention. Because the best time to let us know of any issue or question is at the time it happens, please use any of the following ways to resolve your concern.

CONTACT STAFF IN EVERY AREA

No matter which service you visit, you should always be able to find a staff member to assist you in resolving your issue. We encourage Veterans and their families to speak up when they have a concern. If necessary, ask to speak to the supervisor.

PATIENT ADVOCATES – LOCATED IN BUILDING 48, ROOM 237 AT (320) 252-1670, EXT. 6353

The Patient Advocate and Veteran Experience Program is established to promote positive experiences for all our Veterans. Skilled Patient Advocates are available to help you with your concern. The Patient Advocates serve as liaisons between patients and the medical service areas, acting on the patient's behalf to resolve their concerns, and ensuring that patients understand their rights and responsibilities.

PATIENT FEEDBACK TOOLS

A variety of feedback tools allow you to provide information about the care and service you receive. Please take time to use these feedback tools.

- Comment Card Boxes are located throughout clinic areas.

- Press Ganey Survey – A few days after your clinic visit, you may receive a satisfaction survey in the mail that asks about your visit with your health care provider.
- Survey of Health Care Experience of Patients – After your visit, you may receive a confidential questionnaire in the mail asking you about your most recent outpatient or inpatient treatment at one of our facilities.
- Periodic Special Interest Questionnaires – Occasionally, when we are considering making changes, you may receive a short questionnaire at your clinic visit. These surveys help us understand how Veterans feel about the change we are considering and help improve service.

PATIENT RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES

Employees must respect and support your rights as a patient. If you would like more information about your rights as a patient, please talk with your VA treatment team members or if necessary, a Patient Advocate. Rights and Responsibilities are posted in outpatient and inpatient areas. If you have not received a copy of your Rights and Responsibilities, please contact the Patient Advocate at 320-252-1670, Ext. 6353, to obtain a copy.

If you need more help after talking to your care team and the managers in the area where you receive care, contact the Patient Advocate at 320-252-1670, Ext. 6353. Patients also have the right to contact the Medical Center's accrediting agency (Joint Commission) if their concerns cannot be resolved by working with Medical Center management.

SPEAK UP

We encourage Veterans to become involved in their health care.

Speak Up

- If you have questions or concerns, ask.
- If you don't understand, ask again.
- Don't be afraid to talk to your health care provider if you are unsure about something regarding your care.

Pay Attention

- Tell your nurse, provider, lab technician, or health technician if something doesn't seem quite right.
- Make sure you're getting the right tests, treatments, and medications from the right health care professionals.
- Don't assume anything.

Educate Yourself

- Gather information about your diagnosis, medical tests, and your treatment plan.
- Write down important facts your provider tells you.

Ask For Help From Those Close To You

- Have a trusted family member or friend with you when talking to healthcare workers.
- Make sure this person understands your preferences for care.

Know Your Medications

- Medication errors are the most common healthcare mistakes.
- Ask why you take a medication.
- Report any food or drug allergies.
- If you are taking more than one medicine, ask if it is safe to take those medications together. This includes vitamins, herbal supplements, and other over-the-counter drugs.
- If you do not recognize a medication, ask about it.

Use Common Sense

- If something doesn't make sense, ask about it.
- If you need more information before making a decision, get it.

Participate

- You are the most important member of the health care team.
- Be involved in all decisions about your treatment.

CONNECTED HEALTH

VA is working to expand the ways in which we interact with our Veterans to beyond brick and mortar buildings. Connected Health (sometimes referred to as Virtual Care) encompasses My HealtheVet, VA.gov, VA Video Connect, as well as VA Mobile Apps such as Annie and VA On-line Scheduling.

HEALTH HUB

St. Cloud VA's Health Hub is our one-stop-shop for Veterans to get hands-on assistance learning about, and registering for Connected Health features (My HealtheVet, Secure Messaging and Mobile apps). The Health Hub is in Building 29, Room 20, just down the ramp from the Canteen services. The Health Hub is staffed by knowledgeable volunteers and employees during all clinic hours. Veterans are encouraged to stop in before, after, or in-between their appointments to learn about what virtual health care options may best suit them.

MY HEALTHEVET - ONLINE PERSONAL HEALTH RECORDS

Once enrolled, Veterans can sign up for MyHealtheVet, a secure online service that enables Veterans to refill prescriptions online, view lab results, appointments, see VA notes and participate in Secure Messaging with their health care team.

To access My HealtheVet, go to www.myhealth.va.gov and follow the instructions on how to register. To fully access your My HealtheVet Personal Health Record complete an In-Person Authentication (IPA) at any of the St. Cloud VA HCS clinics. This will allow you to access all My HealtheVet features, such as:

- Activity & Food Journals
- Healthy Living Centers
- Log Your Military Health History

- Trusted Health Information
- VA Benefits & Services
- VA Prescription Refills
- Health Information Tracking & Graphing
- View Lab Results
- View Appointments
- View VA notes
- View Admission & Discharge Summaries
- View VA Allergies
- View VA Immunizations
- And much more

SECURE MESSAGING - ONLINE PERSONAL HEALTH COMMUNICATION

You can now take advantage of online communication with your VA health care teams. Secure Messaging, a feature of the My Health^eVet website, is a safe and secure, electronic mail system that allows you to communicate **non-urgent, non-emergency** health-related information with your VA health care team.

Some uses of Secure Messaging include:

- Getting test results and health information
- Requesting medical appointments
- Resolving hearing aid issues
- Prescription questions

Secure Messaging does not replace the telephone; rather it complements the telephone and helps increase communication opportunities between patients and health care teams.

To take advantage of Secure Messaging you can access your My Health^eVet Premium account. If you have questions, contact the St. Cloud VA Health Hub at 1-320-252-1670 Ext. 7271.

TELEHEALTH

Telehealth allows you the ability to travel a minimal distance to your VA clinic close to home to get the same care you would receive at a larger medical center. Benefits to telehealth include quicker access to some specialty services and shorter distances to drive.

Veterans are encouraged to check with their care team about adding telehealth as part of their care.

Telehealth is used in many clinical settings at the St. Cloud VA. Four of the most commonly used types of telehealth are:

- **Clinical Video Telehealth (CVT)** is a live video connection with providers making it possible for the Veteran to travel to the closest VA location and connect to a specialist at a distant location. In some circumstances, technology can be sent to the Veteran's home enabling the Veteran to remain in their home for visits.
- **Home Telehealth (HT)** provides equipment in the Veteran's home to assist with health status monitoring. This data is sent to the Veteran's care team daily and assists the Veteran in self-managing their disease processes.
- **Store and Forward Telehealth (SFT)** is technology that acquires data or images and then forwards this information to a specialist at another VA location.
- **VA Video Connect (VVC)** allows Veterans to stay in the comfort of their own home or wherever they are located and receive the same care as a face-to-face visit. Using video technologies, the Veteran can use any mobile device from any location. The mobile device must have a microphone, camera, and high definition connection to the internet. The video connection is simple, secure, and allows online connection with a member of your health care team.

VETERANS HEALTH LIBRARY

The Veterans Health Library (VHL) offers Veterans, family members, and caregivers 24/7 access to comprehensive, Veteran-focused health information. The Library is a one-stop source for health information to help Veterans stay well and well-informed. All health information is available to Veterans, their family and the public, no matter where the Veteran receives care. Visit the library at:

<http://www.veteranshealthlibrary.org/>

CHAPEL SERVICES

The VA Chapel is open Sunday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Services are held daily except for Saturdays.

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY:

- Morning Devotions: 8:15 a.m.
- Catholic Mass: 11:30 a.m.
- Confession on request

SUNDAY:

- Protestant Worship: 9:15 a.m.
- Catholic Mass: 10:15 a.m.
- Confession on request

NATIVE AMERICAN SWEAT LODGE

Ceremonies are conducted based on the availability of the Spiritual Advisor. Meetings with the Spiritual Advisor are followed by the Sweat

Lodge Ceremony. Those wishing to participate must get medical clearance from their health care provider and be scheduled to attend. Call 320-252-1670 Ext. 6532, 6390, or 6386 for further information.

OTHER RELIGIOUS SERVICES

These are available in the community or upon request, based on availability. Please contact the Chapel at 320-252-1670, Ext. 6386, for assistance.

PATIENT & VISITOR INFORMATION

DIRECTIONS & MAPS

A map of the St. Cloud VA Medical Center and directions to all locations is available at

<https://www.stcloud.va.gov/locations/directions.asp>

SIGN LANGUAGE & LANGUAGE INTERPRETER ASSISTANCE

If you need a sign language interpreter or an interpreter of a language other than English to assist you in communicating with your VA provider, or to assist your spouse/significant other or caregiver to communicate with us regarding your care, please notify staff so arrangements can be made as soon as possible. Service is provided at no cost to you.

PARKING

Parking is available for visitors in designated areas around the facility. Please see the included map. Cars that are improperly parked in handicapped or no parking zones will be issued a Courtesy Violation or a United States District Court Violation.

VISITING HOURS

Visiting hours and procedures are established by the individual patient care units. Visits to patients by family members, friends or persons considered significant in a patient's life are encouraged. The presence of visitors is a patient's choice unless the visitor's presence infringes on other's rights, safety, or is medically or therapeutically contraindicated. In the support of our commitment to patient-centered care, the St. Cloud VA HCS will provide a welcoming environment and patients will be allowed to decide whom to involve in their care and whom to call for emotional or social support. The St. Cloud VA HCS prohibits discrimination based on age, race, ethnicity, religion, culture, language, physical or mental disability, socioeconomic status, sex, sexual orientation, and gender identity or expression.

SUPERVISION OF CHILDREN

St. Cloud VA does not offer childcare facilities or services. In general, young children should not accompany patients into exam rooms, therapy areas or other procedure rooms. There may be instances when the presence of a child does not hinder the delivery of health care services. In these instances, children may be allowed into health care areas at the discretion of the patient, the provider, and any other persons involved with the health care visit. The presence of children who accompany a patient cannot interfere with the delivery of health care services to patients. Additionally, staff and volunteers cannot accept responsibility for the supervision of children accompanying patients.

ST. CLOUD VA HEALTH CARE SYSTEM – A SMOKE-FREE FACILITY

The St. Cloud VA Health Care System is a smoke-free facility. Smoking is permitted only in designated outdoor areas. Consult with staff for locations of designated smoking areas. Please safely extinguish all

smoking materials in ash trays in your privately-owned vehicles before entering the facility.

CELL PHONES

Please do not turn on or use cell phones in any patient care area as they may interfere with hospital equipment.

FOOD AND BEVERAGES

The Veterans Canteen Service provides retail, food, and vending services to Veteran patients, their families, caregivers, VA employees, volunteers and visitors. Its operating vision is simple: become an integral part of the VA and deliver merchandise and services of exceptional quality and value in an environment consistent with high levels of satisfaction and comfort. Sales taxes are not charged on VCS products and services.

PATRIOT STORE & CAFE

Open Monday through Friday from 7 a.m. to 4 p.m., Saturday 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. VCS offers a large variety of items found at any major retailer such as LED/LCD TVs, iPods, men's & women's fragrances, Military apparel, giftware, snacks and much more. The Patriot Café is open Monday through Friday from 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. VCS offers hot breakfast and lunch and includes a variety of menu choices to suit anyone's taste buds, including a selection of Smart Choice healthy options.

VENDING MACHINES

Vending machines are located throughout the St. Cloud campus.

ATM MACHINE

An ATM machine is in Building 5, near the Pharmacy.

SERVICE DOGS

PETS MUST STAY HOME--ONLY FULLY TRAINED SERVICE DOGS ARE PERMITTED.

We strive to deliver the best possible care to all Veterans, and under VA regulations service animals are allowed on VA owned or leased property. Only dogs that are individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability are considered service animals. There are no restrictions on the breeds of dogs that may be considered service animals.

All other animals are prohibited in VA facilities, unless expressly allowed as an exception under regulations for activities such as animal-assisted therapy programs or for other reasons such as law enforcement purposes.

Emotional support animals, companion or comfort animals and pets are not considered service dogs, and should not be brought to the VA.

Service dogs must always be under control of the handler and are allowed in all common areas of the VA except for:

- areas where staff wear protective clothing such as surgical areas—including operating rooms, most procedure areas and isolation rooms
- fitness/gym areas where they could be injured by equipment
- food preparation areas

Of special note are the surgical procedure areas. While not operating rooms, the procedures performed in these areas require significant infection control measures and service dogs are not allowed in them.

At the St. Cloud VA, these areas generally include areas such as the dental clinic, oral surgery, podiatry, urology, wound care and procedures such as endoscopies and colonoscopies. Patients undergoing such procedures should make advance arrangements for someone to care for their service dog. It is permissible to bring an alternate handler with you who can control the service dog while the owner undergoes a procedure. Patients arriving with service dogs and no plan to control and care for the dog will need to be rescheduled.

Additionally, leaving any animal in a car is not advisable at any time and is not a feasible alternative to care for a dog while attending appointments. Owners of animals left in automobiles on VA property will be contacted and asked to take care of the animal in an appropriate manner.

A service dog is one that has been individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability.

A service dog at work must:

- Be on a leash or harness
- Appear neat and well-groomed
- Be focused on the handler (versus distracted by surroundings)
- Be obedient to commands
- Be current on vaccinations

Fully trained service dogs do not:

- Urinate and defecate indoors
- Jump up on people or objects without command to do so
- Sniff or lick people
- Growl or otherwise show aggression to people or other dogs
- Pull on their lead

If an animal is not a service dog and is not under the control of its Veteran or an alternate handler, it will be denied access to or removed from VA property. This includes not being housebroken, or if the animal exhibits behavior or other signs that it poses a risk to the health or safety of individuals or other service animals while on VA property. Such signs may include biting, snapping, growling, baring its teeth, lunging or external signs of parasites or other external signs of disease or bad health.

VA understands the vital role that service dogs perform for Veterans and other visitors to VA facilities, and welcomes them as partners in care for our Veterans. All other animals should remain at home.

MENU OF SERVICES

PRIMARY & SPECIALTY MEDICINE

Primary and Specialty Medicine is your medical home and helps Veterans through the management of acute and chronic disease. Care is provided in an outpatient setting and includes a variety of services and programs:

- General Preventive Health Care
- Management of Chronic Diseases
- Depression Management
- Oncology Consultations
- Hematology Consultations
- Rheumatology Consultations
- Educational Programs on Prescribed Medications, Diabetes Management, Smoking Cessation and Weight Control
- Retinal Scanning (digital pictures of the eye)
- Respiratory Therapy Services (includes pulmonary testing, oxygen and CPAP therapies)
- Pulmonary Consultations
- Cardiology Consultations
- Neurology Consultations
- Nephrology Consultations
- Telephone Care Program (Nurse Advice Line)
- Urgent Care Services
- Home Telehealth
- Compensation and Pension Exams
- Environmental Exams
- Women's Health Clinic
- Social Work Services
- Infusion Clinic
- LGBT Care Coordination

THE FOLLOWING SERVICES ARE ALSO AVAILABLE IN PRIMARY CARE CLINICS:

- Psychological Evaluation and Treatment
- Behavioral Health Interventions
- Mental Health Medication Consultation

MAKING PRIMARY CARE APPOINTMENTS

- Routine clinic appointments are scheduled by calling **320-252-1670 press 2 then select option 2**. You may also call this number to reschedule an appointment. If you require an interpreter or translator, please notify the appointment desk.
- After appointments are made you can use our Automated Phone Service System to manage them. **Call 320-252-1670 press 2 then select option 1** to find out the dates and times of future appointments. You may also use this system to cancel or to request rescheduling of an appointment. If you submit a request to reschedule using this system, you can allow us to reschedule for you or you may call **320-252-1670 press 2 then select option 2** to reschedule.
- Online appointments using a web-based app known as VA Online Scheduling are also available. You can self-schedule primary care appointments for your assigned primary care provider; view or cancel existing clinic appointments; and make requests for help scheduling primary care and mental health appointments, all online. See page 7 of this guide for instructions on how to schedule your online appointment.

TELEPHONE CARE

For assistance with medical questions or concerns that may arise between visits, we encourage you to call Telephone Care at **320-252-1670 press 3**. Telephone care is staffed by registered nurses (RNs) who will assist you. After the nurse reviews your problem, he/she may refer

you to your local emergency room, make an appointment with your doctor or give you instructions to follow for self-care.

SURGICAL AND SPECIALTY CARE

The St. Cloud VA Health Care System currently provides the following Surgical and Specialty Care Services.

- Audiology (for eligible Veterans)
- Colonoscopies
- Dentistry (for eligible Veterans)
- Optometry (for eligible Veterans)
- Orthopedics
- Podiatry
- Outpatient Surgery
- Specialty Referrals to the Minneapolis VA Health Care System
- Urology
- Wound Care
- Oral Surgery
- Ophthalmology
- Otolaryngology
- Plastic Surgery (limited)
- General Surgery
- Endodontics

Outpatient surgical procedures are performed in our state-of-the-art Ambulatory Surgery Center (ASC).

Your primary care provider will offer a referral to most Surgical and Specialty Care services. Call 320-252-1670, Ext. 6429, with questions.

Veterans can self-refer to the following specialties to schedule a routine appointment without needing a consult:

- Optometry
- Audiology

- Nutrition & Food Services
- Podiatry
- Wheelchair/Mobility & Amputee Clinic

In addition to direct scheduling (no referral necessary), the Audiology and Optometry clinics provide walk-in clinic access for audiology appointments and eyeglass adjustments, subject to availability.

Contact Audiology at **320-252-1670 press 2 then select option 4**, or you may directly dial Ext. 4370. Contact Optometry at **320-252-1670 press 2 then select option 5**, or you may directly dial Ext. 5432 with questions.

MENTAL HEALTH

Mental Health Services provides treatment for mental, emotional, and substance use issues in both inpatient and outpatient settings.

ACUTE INPATIENT TREATMENT

This 15-bed unit provides a safe, supportive learning environment for Veterans who require hospitalization during an acute phase of their illness.

Services include:

- Psychiatric Intensive Care Unit
- Psychiatric Evaluation and Treatment
- Assessment & Treatment of Withdrawal from Alcohol/Chemicals
- Behavioral Interventions
- Supportive Counseling
- Health Education
- Medication Management
- Pastoral Care
- Recreation Therapy
- Discharge Planning

OUTPATIENT CLINIC & TREATMENT

The Mental Health Outpatient Clinic (Bldg. 111) provides:

- Psychiatric Evaluation and Treatment
- Care Coordination
- Individual and Group Therapy
- Health Education
- Medication Management

OUTPATIENT CLINIC SCHEDULING:

If your call is urgent, please let us know.

Monday-Friday (except Federal holidays), from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., please call **(320) 252-1670 press 2 then select option 3** for Mental Health.

HOMELESS PROGRAM

The Homeless Program offers the following services:

- Street and Shelter Outreach
- Grant & Per Diem Transitional Housing
- Contract Residential Care
- Department of Housing and Urban Development/VA Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH)
- Veteran's Justice Outreach (VJO)
- Health Care for Re-entry Veterans (HCRV)

If you are experiencing a homelessness crisis: **Call 877-424-3838** (877-4AID-VET).

RESIDENTIAL REHABILITATION TREATMENT PROGRAM

This 148-bed program provides treatment in a residential setting to Veterans with mental illnesses and with or without a substance use disorder. The program includes:

- Treatment of individuals who suffer from mental illness, substance use or a combination of these disorders
- Treatment of a variety of mental health issues such as depression, bipolar disorder or anxiety
- Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) treatment for Veterans with combat trauma or non-combat related trauma
- Independent Living Skills Program focusing on community re-entry

Veterans may self-refer. For admission information call **(320) 255-6390**.

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES

Vocational Services assists with identifying and achieving vocational goals. This includes exploring and planning for training or education, securing and maintaining employment. Vocational programming includes:

- Vocational Counseling
- Transitional Work
- Supported Employment

For more information, please request a consult from your provider or contact Vocational Rehabilitation Services at **320-255-6313**.

OCCUPATION THERAPY

Occupation therapy is a Veteran-centered outpatient program that provides psychosocial skills groups and therapeutic media to promote growth in ability to better manage mental health recovery and enhance quality of life.

MENTAL HEALTH INTENSIVE CASE MANAGEMENT

Mental Health Intensive Case Management provides community based intensive case management services to clients with a diagnosis of severe and persistent mental illness, a severe functional impairment, and who live within 40 miles of the St. Cloud VA Health Care System.

PSYCHOSOCIAL RECOVERY AND REHABILITATION CENTER

The Psychosocial Recovery and Rehabilitation Center (PRRC) – Building Bridges provides out-patient services for Veterans who experience serious mental illness that interferes with accomplishing their personal mission and vision, and general life satisfaction.

EXTENDED CARE & REHABILITATION (EC&R)

Extended Care & Rehabilitation Services provides quality care for Veterans in need of long-term and short-term skilled nursing services in a residential setting, and transitional rehabilitation in both residential and outpatient settings. EC&R operates the Community Living Center (CLC, or nursing home) and also provides specialized services including Home & Community Based Care and Adult Day Health Care.

Contact & Admissions Information:

- Main Number (Operator) 320-252-1670
- TDD (320) 255-6450
- Admissions Coordinator: Ext. 6414
- Community Health Nurse: Ext. 6369
- Rehabilitation: Ext. 6323
- Adult Day Health Care: Ext.6363
- Home Based Primary Care: Ext.7277 or Ext. 7056
- Hospice & Palliative care: Ext. 7339

RESIDENTIAL SERVICES

- Skilled Nursing Care
- Ventilator Care
- Community Living Center
- Infusion Therapy
- Rehabilitation
- Hospice & Palliative Care
- Respite Care
- Dementia Care
- Geropsychiatry
- Social Work Services

REHABILITATION SERVICES

- Speech Pathology
- Occupational Therapy
- Physiatry (Physical Medicine)
- Physical Therapy
- Pastoral Care
- Low Vision Services
- Wheelchair Prescriptions
- Spinal Cord Injury Support Clinic

ADULT DAY HEALTH CARE

- Rehabilitation
- Medical Appointment Assistance
- Activities & Socialization
- Noon Meal
- Personal Care Assistance

HOME AND COMMUNITY CARE PROGRAMS

- Contract Nursing Homes
- Community Adult Day Care
- In-home Skilled Nurse Program
- Home Health Aid/Homemaking Services
- In-home Respite Care
- Home Hospice Care
- Home Based Primary Care
- Home Telehealth

SUPPORTING SERVICES

The HCS also offers full service Laboratory and Imaging services, including MRI, CT, Ultrasound, Dexa Scans and Fluoroscopy studies.

VA COMMUNITY CLINICS

A VA Clinic is a health care site that is geographically distinct or separate from the parent medical facility. St. Cloud VA HCS operates VA Clinics in Alexandria, Brainerd, and Montevideo. Services available at the VA Clinics include:

- Primary Care
- Specialty Care Referrals
- Mental Health Services including individual, group and family counseling
- Psychological Assessment and Testing
- Medication Management
- Social Work Services
- Clinical Pharmacy Services
- Home-Based Care
- Tobacco Cessation Counseling
- Prescription Processing
- Laboratory Blood Drawing Services
- Chronic Disease Management
- Care Coordination for Home Telehealth
- Telehealth Classes (diabetes and weight loss)
- Diabetes and Weight Management Education
- LGBT Care Coordination

Additionally, the Brainerd VA Clinic provides Podiatry services.

SPECIAL PROGRAMS & OTHER SERVICES

Post 9/11 Transition and Care Management Program

Mike Mynczywor, Program Manager 320-252-1670, Ext. 6546

Rosanna Dahlinger, Program Support 320-252-1670, Ext. 6453

Website: <https://www.stcloud.va.gov/services/returning/index.asp>

Suicide Prevention Coordinator

Mary Jo Pine 320-252-1670, Ext. 6719

Patient Advocates

Brenda Smude, Karen Harrison & Anthony Meemken, 320-252-1670, Ext. 6353

Homeless Program Manager

Ellen Dinsmore, 320-252-1670, Ext. 6973

Veterans Justice Programs

Tanya Greene, 320-252-1670, Ext. 6275

Military Sexual Trauma Program Manager/Intimate Partner Violence Coordinator

Joy Finkelson, 320-252-1670, Ext. 6398

Caregiver Support Coordinator

Jessica Behrends, 320-252-1670, Ext. 7283

Women Veterans Program Manager

Amber Willert, 320-252-1670, Ext. 6655

Polytrauma Support Clinic Manager

Abbey Husby, 320-252-1670, Ext. 6460

Vision Impairment Services Team Manager

Lois Thesing, 320-252-1670, Ext. 7235

Spinal Cord Injury & Disorders Program Manager

Heidi Ampe, 320-252-1670, Ext. 7235

Former Prisoners of War Advocate

Christine Dawson, 320-252-1670, Ext. 7300

LGBT Veterans Care Coordinator

Annette Mason, 320-252-1670, Ext. 6749

Disabled American Veterans (DAV) Representative

320-252-1670, Ext. 6676

Building 8 (Monday – Friday from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.)

Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs

Veterans Service Officer

Building 48, Room 237

Call 320-252-1670, Ext. 6353, to schedule an appointment

Veterans Benefits Administration Advisor

Building 48, Room 237 (Tuesdays)

Call 320-252-1670, Ext. 6353, to schedule an appointment

Vocational Rehabilitation and Education Counselor

Building 48, Room 237

Call 320-252-1670, Ext. 6356, to schedule an appointment

Veteran Voting

Contact Voluntary Service Office, Building 8 (Auditorium)

Call 320-252-1670, Ext. 6365, or contact the Recreation Therapist assigned to your unit.

VOLUNTARY SERVICE

Voluntary Service supplies donations and volunteers to supplement the care of Veterans through the St. Cloud VA Health Care System. Our health care system depends on the good will of our benefactors and volunteers who want to give something back to America's Veterans. To donate to benefit Veterans of the St. Cloud VA Health Care System or to volunteer, contact the St. Cloud VA Voluntary Service office at 320-252-1670, Ext. 6365, or vhastcvavsstaff@va.gov.

VOLUNTEER

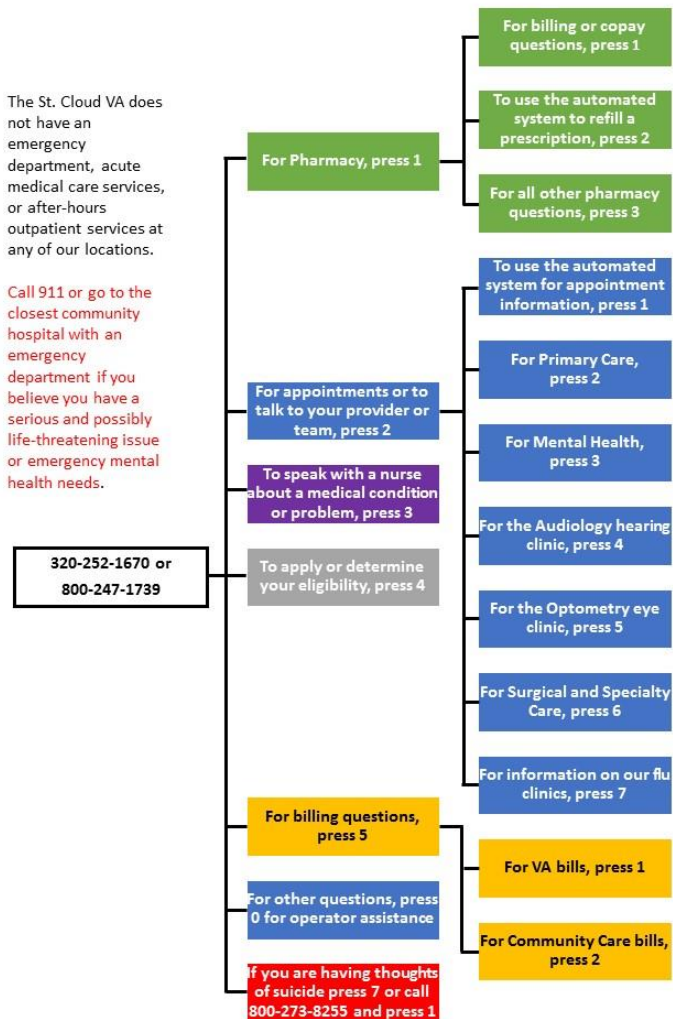
Volunteer opportunities are available for adults and students who are at least 14 years old. Groups and individuals are welcome. Volunteers can work in a multitude of assignments with patients to help the VA run smoothly.

GIVE

- Support programs, projects and activities with monetary donations.
- Sponsor or help with bingo, picnics or other parties.
- Donate new clothing, shower shoes, reading glasses, twin size quilts, gift cards to local grocery stores or restaurants or bus tokens/passes.

PHONE NUMBERS

Our main phone number is your gateway to the most commonly needed departments. Here is a diagram of the main features of the phone system and prompts to use:



QUICK REFERENCE PHONE LIST

Main St. Cloud VA HCS Phone Number 320-252-1670 *or* 800-247-1739

TDD User 320-255-6450

Max J. Beilke VA Clinic, Alexandria 320-759-2640

Brainerd VA Clinic 218-855-1115

Montevideo VA Clinic 320-269-2222

Veterans Crisis Line

800-273-8255 Press 1

Homeless Veteran Hotline 877-424-3838

Billing (VA Care) 866-347-2352

Billing (Community Care) 877-881-7618

Chaplain Service Ext. 6386

Community Care Referrals/Choice Ext. 6401

Discrimination Complaints Ext. 6304

Eligibility Ext. 6340

LGBT Care Coordinator Ext. 6749

Nutrition Clinic Ext. 6376

Patient Advocate Ext. 6353

Pharmacy Refill Line 855-560-1724

Privacy Officer Ext. 6408

Public Affairs Office Ext. 6353

Release of Information (Medical Records) Ext. 6336

Transition & Care Management Program Ext. 6453

Transportation Ext. 7622

TRICARE 844-866-9378

VA Police Ext. 6355

Voluntary Service Ext. 6365

Walk-in Services

Audiology Ext. 4370

Optometry Ext. 5432

Respiratory Therapy Ext. 7473 or 7437

COUNTY VETERAN SERVICE OFFICE

PHONE LIST

<i>County</i>	<i>Phone Number</i>
Aitkin	218-927-7320
Benton	320-968-5044
Big Stone	320-839-6398
Cass	218-947-7531
Chippewa	320-269-6419
Crow Wing	218-824-1058
Douglas	320-762-3883
Grant	218-685-4801
Isanti	763-689-3591
Kanabec	320-679-6380
Kandiyohi	320-231-6226
Lac Qui Parle	320-598-3445
McLeod	320-864-1268
Meeker	320-693-5445
Mille Lacs	320-983-8208
Morrison	320-632-0290
Pope	320-634-7846
Redwood	507-637-4034
Renville	320-523-3763
Sherburne	763-765-3100
Stearns	320-656-6176, Melrose office 320-256-1435
Stevens	320-208-6555
Swift	320-842-5271
Todd	320-732-4419
Wadena	218-631-7617
Wright	763-682-7325
Yellow Medicine	320-313-3037

STAY IN TOUCH

Visit our Website: <https://www.stcloud.va.gov>

Like us on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/StCloudVAHCS>

Sign up for our automated email service. Visit the St. Cloud VA website at: <https://www.stcloud.va.gov> and on the right-hand side of the page is a request to sign up for email updates. Enter your email address and you are automatically signed up to receive email updates from our web page and our monthly newsletter. There are also options presented to sign up for updates from other government sites.



Take care of your buddy!

Help a fellow Veteran enroll
for VA healthcare.
Contact your County Veteran
Service Officer, call the St.
Cloud VA at 320-255-6340,
or apply online at
www.vets.gov