A monthly newsletter for Veterans served by the St. Cloud VA Health Care System, and for those who serve them. 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.

Veterans Town Hall Meeting Planned in Montevideo

A Veterans town hall meeting focused on improving VA health care services and programs is scheduled on Aug. 22 at 5 p.m., at the Montevideo VA Clinic, located at 1025 N. 13th St., in Montevideo.

The town hall meeting provides Veterans the chance to hear from and have concerns addressed by St. Cloud VA officials.

Area Veterans have several options to participate in the town hall. They may:

- Attend in person.
- Watch on Facebook Live @StCloudVAHCS.
- Participate by phone. Area Veterans enrolled for VA health care will receive an automated phone call at 5 p.m. inviting them to join the town hall. Callers desiring to ask a question via telephone will be placed in queue. If some questions can’t be addressed during the event, VA staff will contact callers with questions following the event. Veterans who do not desire to participate can simply hang up the phone.

Veterans who are not aware or who have questions about benefits available to them are invited to come out and learn about the benefits earned through military service.

August 22, 2019, 5 p.m.

Beginning at 5 p.m., Veterans enrolled for health care at the Montevideo VA Clinic will receive a phone call invitation to join the town hall meeting. You can also join the town hall in person or watch it on Facebook Live.
Urgent Care Benefit
On June 6, the MISSION Act gave Veterans a new urgent care benefit that allows eligible Veterans to use urgent and walk-in care at participating clinics in their communities.

Under this new benefit, eligible Veterans do not need to get prior authorization from VA to visit an urgent care provider in VA’s network.

This urgent care benefit is meant to give Veterans who do not live close to a VA urgent care clinic or who need care after-hours a convenient way to get treatment for minor injuries and illnesses such as colds, strep throat and pink eye. To be eligible for urgent and walk-in care, Veterans must be enrolled in the VA health care system and have received care through VA from either a VA or community provider within the past 24 months.

Veterans can view participating urgent care clinics in their local area by visiting: https://vaurgentcarelocator.triwest.com/Locator/Care.

Feeling ill but unsure about going to an urgent care clinic?

Now you can receive care from VA without stepping foot into a clinic or hospital. The VA Health Chat app provides easy, online access to chat with VA staff when you have minor health questions and more, including when you need help figuring where to access care.

The VA Health Chat team can also help you:

• Find your closest VA facility
• Schedule an appointment
• Refill a VA prescription
• Send a non-urgent message to your health care team

If your Primary Care Provider is with St. Cloud, Minneapolis, or one of the associated CBOC locations, you are eligible to try VA Health Chat! VA team members are available to chat Monday through Friday from 7:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. local time, excluding federal holidays.

Get Started Today! Learn more about VA Health Chat at: mobile.va.gov/app/va-health-chat. Simply click the Launch VA App to get started.

More about VA Health Chat
St. Cloud VA Veterans can now receive care from VA without stepping foot into a facility with VA Health Chat.

Have a question about a minor health ailment, but not sure if you need an appointment? In as little as 60 seconds, you are connected to a VA health care team member, ready to give you medical advice. Chat hours are Monday through Friday from 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Having a reaction to a medication or need a prescription filled? VA health care team members can help determine next steps
with medication issues or can help you order your prescription refills.

VA Health Chat is available on the VA App Store by visiting: https://mobile.va.gov/app/va-health-chat.

To access VA Health Chat, you will need either a My HealtheVet premium account User ID and password, DS Logon, or ID.me. For more information on creating VA credentials visit: https://mobile.va.gov/login-information.

Veterans Whole Health Fair
The St. Cloud VA’s is hosting a Whole Health Fair on Sept. 19, from 10 a.m., to 2 p.m., in the auditorium, Bldg. 8, at the St. Cloud VA Medical Center.

The Health Fair provides an opportunity for Veterans to visit and speak with experts about the many areas of life that can affect health, including work environment, relationships, diet, sleep patterns and more. Additionally, the fair features Veteran speakers, healthy teaching kitchen demonstrations and even some prize drawings.

St. Cloud VA to host Women Veterans Expo
To honor and support women Veterans, a Women Veterans Expo is planned on Aug. 17, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., at the Whitney Senior Center, 1527 Northway Drive, in St. Cloud.

The goal of the expo is to celebrate the service of women Veterans and to provide information about VA and community services and resources for women Veterans. Speakers will address several topics, including suicide prevention, healthy eating, menopause and stress management.

Preregistration is requested but not required. Register by visiting: https://www.eventbrite.com/e/women-veterans-expo-tickets-63879017862 or by calling Amber Willert, Women Veterans Program Manager, at 320-252-1670, Ext. 6655 or Ext. 7625.

For more information about VA’s benefits and services for women Veterans, visit https://www.va.gov/womenvet.
2019 St. Cloud VA Summer Games
The 5th Annual St. Cloud VA Summer Games were held Saturday, August 3, 2019 at the St. Cloud VA Medical Center. The games were open to all Veterans enrolled at the St. Cloud VA. This year's events included: 1-mile walk/run/cycle, pool/billiards, rowing/ski erg, weightlifting, table tennis, horseshoes, pickleball, bowling and frisbee golf.
VA releases Launchpad app to streamline health care access for Veterans and caregivers
App combines telehealth tools for faster service

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) recently launched a new mobile application designed to save Veterans and their caregivers time online.

VA Launchpad for Veterans simplifies and organizes several existing tools and resources into one convenient location to help manage health care needs.

“VA has developed dozens of apps for Veterans to take charge of their health care,” said VA Secretary Robert Wilkie. “VA Launchpad makes it easier to have these important tools available at your fingertips.”

VA Launchpad arranges all of VA’s apps into five categories for Veterans: health management, health care team communication, vital health information sharing, mental health improvement and quality of life improvement. The new app enables Veterans to access all the features with a single secure login.

The app also includes many mental health care and personal improvement tools for individuals who are not enrolled in VA health care services. These tools are free and do not require secure logins to use.

VA Launchpad for Veterans is available for download in the Apple App Store and Google Play. To access VA’s secure apps within VA Launchpad, users must be a VA patient and have one of the following accounts: Premium My HealtheVet, DS Logon Level 2 (Premium) or ID.me.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Women Veterans Expo
Saturday, August 17 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.
This expo is to celebrate the service of women Veterans and to provide information about VA and community services and resources for women Veterans. Speakers will address several topics, including suicide prevention, healthy eating, menopause and stress management.
Preregistration is requested but not required. Register by visiting: https://www.eventbrite.com/e/women-veterans-expo-tickets-63879017862 or by calling Amber Willert, Women Veterans Program Manager, at 320-252-1670, Ext. 6655 or Ext. 7625.
For more information about VA’s benefits and services for women Veterans, visit https://www.va.gov/womenvet.

Introduction to Whole Health
Monday, August 19 2-4 p.m.
St. Cloud VA, Patriot Café (Bldg. 95, Canteen)
An education class taught by Veteran peers that equips you to take charge of your health by emphasizing a self-focus on body, mind, spirit and soul, surroundings and other factors that help you create a personal system of life care. Pre-registration is not required.
Veterans Law Clinic (by appointment only)
Tuesday, August 20 Noon-2 p.m.
St. Cloud VA, Bldg. 28, Room 34
Free legal consultation for Veterans for Social Security law, housing, child support, family law, employment and expungement. No criminal law issues will be discussed. Please call (320) 253-0138 or 1-800-622-7773 to schedule an appointment.

Voices for Veterans Radio Show
Wednesday, August 21 8:10-8:30 a.m.
WJON AM 1240

Taking Charge of My Life & Health
Wednesday, August 21 2-4 p.m.
St. Cloud VA, Patriot Cafe (Bldg. 95, Canteen)
Completion of Intro to Whole Health is a prerequisite.
Veterans may also choose to participate in an expanded Whole Health Pathway learning program referred to as Taking Charge of My Life and Health. These courses are designed to provide a group-based experience in camaraderie with other Veterans, and in the interests of privacy and respect for others, are limited to Veterans enrolled for care.

Veteran Town Hall Meeting
Thursday, August 22 5-6 p.m.
Montevideo VA Clinic
The town hall meeting provides Veterans the chance to hear from and have concerns addressed by St. Cloud VA officials.

Area Veterans have several options to participate in the town hall. They may:
- Attend in person.
- Watch on Facebook Live @StCloudVAHCS.
- Participate by phone. Area Veterans enrolled for VA health care will receive an automated phone call at 5 p.m. inviting them to join the town hall. Callers desiring to ask a question via telephone will be placed in queue. If some questions can’t be addressed during the event, VA staff will contact callers with questions following the event. Veterans who do not desire to participate can simply hang up the phone.

Veterans who are not aware or who have questions about benefits available to them are invited to come out and learn about the benefits earned through military service.

Connected Care Class
Monday, August 26 2-3:30 p.m.
St. Cloud VA, Patriot Café (Bldg. 95, Canteen)
Veterans enrolled at St. Cloud VA HCS are invited to attend hands-on training for all things connected care, including MyHealtheVet, VA Video Connect, Annie App and more!

Taking Charge of My Life & Health
Wednesday, August 28 2-4 p.m.
St. Cloud VA, Patriot Cafe (Bldg. 95, Canteen)
Following completion of Intro to Whole Health, Veterans may also choose to participate in an expanded Whole Health Pathway learning program referred to as Taking Charge of My Life and Health. These courses are designed to provide a group-based experience in camaraderie with other Veterans, and in the interests of privacy and respect for others, are limited to Veterans enrolled for care.
Outpatient Clinics Closed for Federal Holiday
Monday, September 2
Outpatient clinics and administrative offices, including VA Clinics in Brainerd, Montevideo and Alexandria will be closed. Urgent Care at the St. Cloud VA will be open from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Introduction to Whole Health for VA Community Clinics
Wednesday, September 4 2-4 p.m.
Brainerd VA Clinic, 722 NW 7th Street, Brainerd MN, Veterans at Montevideo VA Clinic and Max J. Beilke VA Clinic can participate via videoconference.
VA clinics in Brainerd, Montevideo and Alexandria now offer Introduction to Whole Health educational classes taught by Veteran peers that equips you to take charge of your health by emphasizing a self-focus on body, mind, spirit and soul, surroundings and other factors that help you create a personal system of life care. Pre-registration is not required. Veterans and family members desiring to attend can contact their care teams to register.

Introduction to Whole Health
Friday, September 6 2-4 p.m.
St. Cloud VA, Patriot Café (Bldg. 95, Canteen)
An education class taught by Veteran peers that equips you to take charge of your health by emphasizing a self-focus on body, mind, spirit and soul, surroundings and other factors that help you create a personal system of life care. Pre-registration is not required.

Coffee Talk
Saturday, September 7 9-11 a.m.
Montevideo VA Clinic, 1025 N 13th St., Montevideo
Veterans are invited to attend Coffee Talk to learn "How to use" the VA effectively, services overview, Q & A and a tour. Spouses and caregivers are welcome. Pre-registration is not required.

Connected Care Class
Monday, September 9 2-3:30 p.m.
St. Cloud VA, Patriot Café (Bldg. 95, Canteen)
Veterans enrolled at St. Cloud VA HCS are invited to attend hands-on training for all things connected care, including MyHealthVet, VA Video Connect, Annie App and more!

Coffee Talk
Friday, September 13 2-3 p.m.
St. Cloud VA, Patriot Café (Bldg. 95, Canteen)
Veterans are invited to attend Coffee Talk to learn "How to use" the VA effectively, services overview, Q & A and a tour. Spouses and caregivers are welcome. Dial-in to Coffee Talk via telephone at 800-767-1750 and enter participant code number 11242. Pre-registration is not required.

Introduction to Whole Health
Friday, September 16 2-4 p.m.
St. Cloud VA, Patriot Café (Bldg. 95, Canteen)
An education class taught by Veteran peers that equips you to take charge of your health by emphasizing a self-focus on body, mind, spirit and soul, surroundings and other factors that help you create a personal system of life care. Pre-registration is not required.
Veterans Law Clinic (by appointment only)
Tuesday, September 17 Noon-2 p.m.
St. Cloud VA, Bldg. 28, Room 34
Free legal consultation for Veterans for Social Security law, housing, child support, family law, employment and expungement. No criminal law issues will be discussed. Please call (320) 253-0138 or 1-800-622-7773 to schedule an appointment.

Whole Health Fair
September 19 10 a.m. -2 p.m.
St. Cloud VA, Auditorium (Bldg. 8)
An event filled with Veteran speakers, Healthy Teaching Kitchen demonstrations, Whole Health presentations, and prize drawings. This event is open to Veterans and their families. For more information on Whole Health contact: Judy Welter, 320-252-1670 ext. 6764

Voices for Veterans Radio Show
Wednesday, September 18 8:10-8:30 a.m.
WJON AM 1240

Taking Charge of My Life & Health
Wednesday, September 18 2-4 p.m.
St. Cloud VA, Patriot Cafe (Bldg. 95, Canteen)
After completion of Intro to Whole Health, Veterans may also choose to participate in an expanded Whole Health Pathway learning program referred to as Taking Charge of My Life and Health. These courses are designed to provide a group-based experience in camaraderie with other Veterans, and in the interests of privacy and respect for others, are limited to Veterans enrolled for care.

Connected Care Class
Monday, September 23 2-3:30 p.m.
St. Cloud VA, Patriot Café (Bldg. 95, Canteen)
Veterans enrolled at St. Cloud VA HCS are invited to attend hands-on training for all things connected care, including MyHealthEvet, VA Video Connect, Annie App and more!

Taking Charge of My Life & Health
Wednesday, September 25 2-4 p.m.
St. Cloud VA, Patriot Cafe (Bldg. 95, Canteen)
After completion of Intro to Whole Health, Veterans may also choose to participate in an expanded Whole Health Pathway learning program referred to as Taking Charge of My Life and Health. These courses are designed to provide a group-based experience in camaraderie with other Veterans, and in the interests of privacy and respect for others, are limited to Veterans enrolled for care.

For a complete Calendar of Events, go to https://www.stcloud.va.gov/calendar.asp
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
  • Care in the Community (non-VA care) 877-881-7618
Chaplain Service Ext. 6386
Community Care Referrals Ext. 6401
Discrimination Complaints Ext. 6304
Eligibility Ext. 6340
Nutrition Clinic Ext. 6376
Transition & Care Management Program Ext. 6453
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
Transportation Ext. 7622
TRICARE 844-866-9378
Voluntary Service Ext. 6365
VA Police Ext. 6355

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Sign up for our automated email service. Visit the St. Cloud VA Website at: http://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. There are also options presented to sign up for updates from other government sites.