

Detroit Excellence

A Monthly Newsletter for Employees, Volunteers and Patients of the John D. Dingell VA Medical Center



VA
HEALTH
CARE

Defining
EXCELLENCE
in the 21st Century

August 2011

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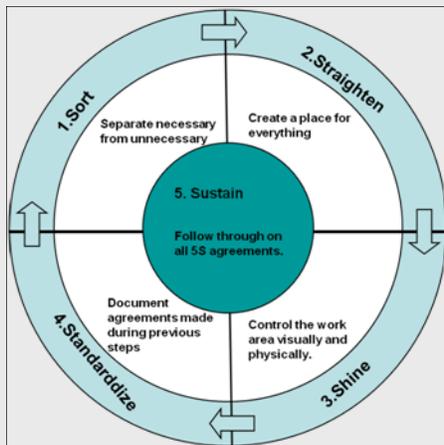
alysse.mengason@va.gov or lisa.olney@va.gov

5S Fridays...Put Some Lean into your Week!

Can you name the 5S's of Lean?

The Detroit VAMC's Systems Redesign Team is hoping you can, and that you begin to look at things in your work area and your job functions in a way that focuses on Lean.

In hopes of encouraging more of us to think this way, the Team has launched 5S Fridays. This month and next, they will walk through each floor of the medical center, encouraging staff to undertake projects that can eliminate waste and make their workplace much more cohesive and functional.



"Sometimes solutions aren't obvious to someone who works in an environment all day, everyday," said Frank Veltri, Management Analyst with the Systems Redesign Team. "That's where we can really help pinpoint ideas and solutions that may or may not be viable."

"If a team is having a hard time coming up with good Lean projects, many times we can look at an area and make very good suggestions," said Veltri. "We are trying to really jump start the Lean process in the medical center by pointing out areas where we can make improvements."

The team has already begun their 5S Friday walk-arounds in the medical center. Prior to a Friday visit, Systems Redesign will send an area 3 simple questions to answer. The visit will then focus on ideas generated by the area and help the projects come to fruition. Veltri encourages anyone with a Lean idea or an area you'd like the team to see, to fill out a form and forward it to the team. You can find much more information on the team's website on the Detroit VAMC Intranet site.

The Detroit VAMC... *WIRED!*

The Detroit VA Medical Center is named as one of the 'Most Improved' hospitals in the Hospital & Health Networks "2011 Most Wired Survey and Benchmarking Study".

The survey/study was developed in cooperation with Hospital and Health Networks (H&HN), American Hospital Association (AHA), McKesson, and the College of Healthcare Information Management Executives (CHIME). It's designed to survey hospitals and health systems to identify the best information technology (IT) practices in industry. 14 of the 153 recipients of "Most Wired" awards were VA Medical Centers. VISN 11 as a whole was recognized and awarded a "Most Wired" award with our facility also being recognized as "Most Improved".

For more information on the survey, click [here](#).



PRECEPTOR RECOGNITION CEREMONY

On July 19, 2011, the VA Nursing Academy (VANA) faculty, along with faculty from the University of Detroit Mercy (UDM), honored John D. Dingell VAMC staff nurses who volunteered their time to serve as preceptors for the UDM senior nursing students during the last academic year.

The morning event opened with welcome remarks by Ann Herm, Associate Director, Patient Care Services. Certificates of Recognition signed by the UDM Dean, College of Health Professions, McAuley School of Nursing, were presented to preceptors. Special words of gratitude and appreciation were given by Renee McCune, PhD, RN, Assistant Professor, McCauley School of Nursing and Janet Baiardi, PhD, RN, Interim Associate Dean, College of Health Professions.

In addition to the ceremony, cakes were shared with the staff of A3N, A4N, A5S, SICU, PACU, OR, B2N and B2S in appreciation for their active role as clinical teachers in a Dedicated Education Unit (DEU), promoting a quality and rewarding clinical experience for nursing students.

VANA begins its 4th year this month at the John D. Dingell VAMC. Last year, more than 100 pre-licensure BSN students received clinical experience here, many returning for second and third rotations. The goals of VANA are to address the anticipated nursing shortage by increasing baccalaureate nursing student enrollment, expanding nursing faculty and professional development of nurses, providing opportunities for educational and practice innovations, and increasing recruitment and retention of VA nurses.

Questions about the VANA program can be directed to the VANA faculty: Marge Freundl, Jemica Carter, Ginger Nelson, and Gregory Gmerek.



Pictured, L to R: Renee McCune, PhD, RN, Derrick Parker, RN, SICU, Dolores Garbacz, RN, OR, Timothy Johnson, RN, OR, Janet Baiardi, PhD, RN, Lindsey Jarrett, RN, A4N, Shina Ebenezer, RN, MICU, Lillibeth Pinga, RN, A5S and Ann Herm, RN.

Preceptors unable to attend: Aileen Evans, RN, A3S; Shawnya Abron-Harris, RN, A3N; Tammie King, RN, A3N; Ann Calcaterra, RN, OR; Clara Roper, RN, MICU; Kevin Todd, RN, MICU and Dustin Fitzpatrick, RN, MICU (QM).

Detroit VAMC Employee of the Month

Willard Green is the July 2011 Detroit VAMC Employee of the Month.

Willard joined the Detroit VAMC in April 2007. His current position Housekeeping Aid.

Willard was nominated by fellow employees who want to acknowledge his commitment to the VA Medical Center. According to one coworker, "Mr. Green has a professional, pleasing personality that makes it very easy to work with him. He always greets staff, patients, and visitors with his pleasant demeanor, and their appreciation of his courtesy is well noted. His attention to detail, work ethic, and awareness of the importance of his job in infection control is commendable. Daily cleaning of the unit results in an area that shines! We are grateful to have such a dedicated employee in an area where cleanliness and attention to every point of the job is critical to patient safety and wellness."

Congratulations Willard...and thanks for being our Employee of the Month!



Attention Employees!

Summer Voice of the VA Survey

The 2011 Summer Voice of the VA consists of 2 survey modules which provide employees an opportunity to respond to questions that measure various aspects of an organization and its employees. Please take a few minutes to complete the [survey!](#)



Detroit's Stroke Program...A Success Story

The Detroit VAMC's Stroke Care Program has been a work in progress for 2 years .

"The goal is to be on alert at ALL times to administer the t-PA to a patient who is suffering a stroke within 60 minutes of arrival, and within 3 hours of the beginning of symptoms," said Dr. Bassam Batarse, ACOS for Clinical Integrated Services.

t-PA is a clot buster, a procedure approved several years ago, for the management of acute stroke. It is considered the standard of care and is being used by stroke centers around the world. Administering t-PA on time requires complex, highly coordinated and orchestrated care protocols along with staff training and dedication.

"During the past year, we were able to administer t-PA four times, and with each administration...success," said Dr. Batarse. "We credit the commitment and the dedication of our staff in Neurology and our Emergency Department. What does this mean? Simply put, a cure was offered to 4 Veterans, who otherwise could have been incapacitated with strokes."



Two Michigan Agencies Receive VA Grants

Two Michigan agencies are among the 85 non-profit organizations to receive a portion of nearly \$60 million in homeless prevention grants. Wayne Metropolitan Community Action Agency in Wyandotte and Southwest Counseling Solutions in Detroit will help provide additional comprehensive support to Veterans and their families.

"This new homeless prevention program will provide additional comprehensive support to Veterans who have served honorably and now find themselves in a downward spiral toward despair and homelessness," said VA Secretary Eric Shinseki.

The grants are part of the new Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) program. The funding is expected to serve approximately 22,000 Veterans.

For more information on the program and a list of grant recipients, click [here](#).

You can learn more about the [Wayne Metropolitan Community Action Agency](#) and [Southwest Counseling Solutions](#) by visiting their websites.



Small Business Expo for Veterans...a Great Opportunity for Those who have Served

The Department of Veterans Affairs will host the National Veterans Small Business Conference and Expo in New Orleans, August 15-19.

The conference will attract thousands of attendees from the Veteran-Owned and Service-Disabled, small business community, federal departments and agencies and prime government contractors.

From small business start-ups to the largest defense contractors, the conference will serve as a fusion point for information, tools, tips, techniques and how-to instruction to start, build and expand a small business idea into a lifetime dream-making machine.

"Veteran-owned businesses provide world class services and expand employment opportunities for some of our Nation's most highly-trained and motivated men and women," said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki.

Veterans of military service often bring discipline, motivation and organizational skills that are essential to success. Their dedication, sense of teamwork, and mission focus ensure achievement of their personal and professional goals. This year's conference will help channel those skills into action.

Click here to learn more about this conference: [National Veteran Small Business Conference and Expo](#).



July Photo Album



Congressional Medal of Honor Recipient, Ron Rosser, visited the Detroit VAMC on July 6th. Staff and patients were able to greet him, one of only 85 living MOH recipients.



Navy Week in Detroit, July 18—23, brought a group to the Detroit VAMC to visit with patients and staff, including our own Dr. Pamela Reeves, Medical Center Director.



American Legion Auxiliary National President, Carlene Ashworth, visited the medical center on July 19.



We were there! Navy Week at Comerica Park was a hit, and the Detroit VAMC was able to reach out to hundreds of Veterans who helped cheer on the Tigers to a win on July 19!



The July heat couldn't keep our CLC residents indoors! A group headed to Wyandotte for a BBQ and bingo! The Mayor of Wyandotte (who is a Vet himself), visited with everyone.

I CARE Corner

This month, we are launching the I CARE Corner in Detroit Excellence! Have a comment you'd like to pass along for our medical center community to see? Forward it to us...we want to make sure it's recognized!

- In a letter addressed to Patient Advocate, Paul Miller, a patient writes: "Your dedication to Veterans, your diligence in doing your job and your skills as an advocate for those of us who fall through the cracks of a complex system, have all reinforced my belief that the VA Health System remains the best in the world."
- In a note addressed to Patient Advocate, Paul Miller, a Pontiac CBOC patient writes: "I have been seeing Dr. Shiva Rau at the Pontiac CBOC....Dr. Rau is very knowledgeable, thorough, caring and he listens."



How Can I Help our Veterans?

It's a question we are often asked..."How can I help our Veterans and what exactly do they need?"

Volunteers serve a variety of functions and help to make our patients' stay much more enjoyable.

If you or any of your friends and family would like to donate time, items or funds, you can click [here](#) for more information, or contact [Voluntary Services](#) at 313-576-3332.

Patient Aligned Care Team (PACT) and My HealtheVet Secure Messaging: Partnering to Make the VA Accessible to Veterans 24/7!

As the Detroit VAMC works to convert all of the Primary Care Teams to Patient Aligned Care Teams (PACT), they are incorporating new ways to communicate with Veterans. One of those new communication tools is Secure Messaging through the [My HealtheVet portal](#). Secure Messaging allows Veterans to communicate non-urgent, health related information in a private and safe computer environment.

Currently, we have 19 PACT teams, including the Pontiac and Yale CBOCs. That means 54% of our Primary Care Providers are participating in Secure Messaging. Secure Messaging is not just a Primary Care tool, it's helpful for all areas of our VAMC. Just ask Tara

Consolino in PTSD or Joann Naumoff in the MOVE! Program. They have been successfully using Secure Messaging and their Veterans love the program.

Some other interesting facts:

- 32% of Detroit VAMC Veterans are registered My HealtheVet users
- 7% of Detroit VAMC Veterans have received the "higher level" access by completing the In-Person Authentication (IPA) process
- To date we have exchanged more than 1400 Secure Messages with our Veterans!
- Secure Messages can be saved as a CPRS progress note with just a click of a button, saving staff valuable time!

Implementation of these types of innovative practices continue to move us towards the goal of being the Provider of Choice for our Veterans.

If you would like to know how Secure Messaging can benefit you and your work flow please contact Holly Eichner, My HealtheVet Coordinator at ext. 63509.



Now is the Time to Try My HealtheVet

What's new on [My HealtheVet](#)? VA patients can now see their VA Appointments on [My HealtheVet](#). If you are a Veteran enrolled at a VA health care facility, are registered on [My HealtheVet](#) and have an upgraded account, you have the option to see your VA Appointments. It's quick, easy and it's free!



Calendar of Events

- August 1—6, National Veteran Wheelchair Games, Pittsburgh, PA
- August 1, Ramadan Begins
- August 4, Coast Guard Day
- August 6, 1945, Atomic Bomb Dropped on Hiroshima
- August 7, 1990, Operation Desert Shield Begins
- August 7, 1782, Purple Heart Day
- August 7—13, Assistance Dog Week; National Health Center Week
- August 26, Women’s Equality Day
- August 28, 1963, “I Have a Dream” Speech, March on Washington

Are You a Blogger?

Even if you are just a blog reader, give the VA’s popular blog, [VAntage Point](#), a glance!

Each week, writers blog about events, issues and circumstances involving our nation’s Veterans. There’s even a guest column, which has sparked plenty of interesting debate!

The VA’s online communications staff promises that the blog will always be engaging and never dull!



A Message from your GEMS Coordinator

While we all hope the July heat is behind us, it’s important to remember that August can be one of the hottest months of the year.

For your health and safety, remember these guidelines when either working or just being outside on these hot days:

- Perform heavy work such as cutting the grass during the coolest part of the day which is usually in the morning or early evening.
- If you must work outside, let someone know where you will be or use the buddy system and work in pairs.
- Drink plenty of cool water.
- Wear light weight, light colored, loose fitting clothes.
- Wear sunscreen.
- Take frequent, short breaks in shade, pace your work and not overdo it.
- Refrain from alcohol and caffeine as they dehydrate you.
- Stay indoors in an air conditioned area if possible.
- Check on those that are at high risk due to the heat, including the people over 65, those with health problems and children.
- Dress infants and children in cool, loose clothing and shade their heads and faces with hats or an umbrella.
- Limit sun exposure during mid-day hours and in places of potential severe exposure such as beaches.
- Do not leave infants, children, or pets in a parked car.
- Provide plenty of fresh water for your pets, and leave the water in a shady area.

Remember if you start to experience signs of heat stroke, seek immediate medical attention. This is a life threatening emergency.

Warning signs of heat stroke vary but may include the following: An extremely high body temperature (above 103°F, orally); Red, hot, and dry skin (no sweating); Rapid, strong pulse; Throbbing headache; Dizziness; Nausea; Confusion; Unconsciousness.

If you begin to experience other symptoms due to the heat, such as heat exhaustion, heat rash, severe sunburn, please seek medical attention as these could be life threatening depending on your health. If you have any questions, consult your medical provider.

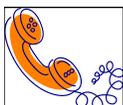


Warning signs of heat exhaustion include the following: Heavy sweating; Paleness; Muscle cramps; Tiredness; Weakness; Dizziness; Headache; Nausea or vomiting; Fainting .

The Telephone Call Center

here at the Detroit VAMC can assist with appointment management, prescription refills and medical questions or concerns.

Members of our call center staff are available Monday—Friday,
8:00 a.m.—4:30 p.m.



313-576-1051
800-511-8056

Follow the Detroit VA Medical Center on Facebook and Twitter!

We are reaching out to our Veterans, their families, our volunteers and our staff, providing them with good information on programs and services.

Have you visited our pages? Make sure you tell friends and family!

