

Detroit Excellence

A Quarterly Newsletter for Employees, Volunteers and Patients of the Detroit VA Healthcare System



**VA
HEALTH
CARE**

Defining
EXCELLENCE
in the 21st Century

January/February/March 2015

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vhadetpublicaffairs@va.gov

Detroit VA Partners with Hiring Our Heroes for Another Successful Job Fair/Welcome Home Event

More than 75 employers, ranging from Quicken Loans and Sears to Verizon Wireless and DTE Energy, were on site here in the medical center on February 7, 2015, for the Detroit VA's second annual hiring event and Welcome Home.

Companies again took part in the hiring portion of the event, many of them hired Veterans on-site. The event was free for all Vets of all eras, and also focused on resume writing, interview skills, and job search techniques. All of these programs were also available to spouses of Veterans.

According to recent data from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, there are nearly 660,000 Veterans in Michigan, the 11th largest population of all states. More than 220,000 Veterans live in Oakland, Macomb and Wayne counties, accounting for 5.7 percent of the area's population. There are over 330,000 veterans in Oakland, Macomb, Wayne and St. Clair counties who utilize or are at least eligible for services at the Dingell VA in Detroit.

"We held an incredibly successful event in 2014, so it was logical for us to host one again this year. It's a perfect scenario for Veterans who are doing their best to find employment," said Dr. Pamela Reeves, Medical Center Director. "All of these employers are right here, inside our hallways, and ready to hire Veterans with a multitude of talents."

The event was also hosted by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation and University of Phoenix. *(More photos can be found on page 3)*



Message from the Director



Spring has sprung and it's a great time to reflect on all that we've accomplished here at the Detroit VA in 2nd quarter!

This is an incredibly unique time for the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. Each week, it seems as if there is a pivotal announcement out of our Washington DC

Central Office, many of which have a direct impact on our medical center. While we as a staff must do our best to fully understand and embrace these new challenges and initiatives, it's a top priority for us to help you understand the changes to the system and our continuing commitment to Excellence in Care.

A few months ago, VA launched the Veterans Choice Act program. To summarize, in the instance that an appointment is not available within 30 days of the preferred date of the eligible Veteran, the Detroit VA follows national guidance related to the program and schedules the soonest available appointment in the VA and places the Veteran on the Veterans Choice list which allows the eligible Veteran to see a community provider if a sooner appointment is available. We have placed more than 3,000 Veterans on the Veteran's Choice list since the program inception.

It's important to note that Detroit is currently completing more than 95% of specialty care appointments within 30 days. And, we have same day availability in Primary Care and Mental Health, in addition to Telephone Nurse Triage, Urgent care and Emergency Department to meet any immediate needs of our Veterans.

Making sure Veterans get the attention and care they are entitled to continues to be a priority for this medical center and our entire team.

We have much to look forward to, and I hope you enjoy Spring. As always, Thank You for your service!

Dr. Pamela Reeves
Medical Center Director



How do I call the Detroit VA?

800-511-8056

The Detroit VA Medical Center's Telephone Call Center is able to assist with appointment management, prescription refills and general medical questions or concerns.

Hours: Monday - Friday,
8:00 am - 4:30 pm

313-576-1000

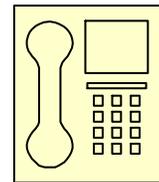
The John D. Dingell VA Medical Center
General Line

313-576-1051

Scheduling

877-424-8214

Triage Nurse



VA CAREERS

<http://www.va.gov/jobs/>



1-800-273-8255 PRESS 1

Follow the Detroit VA Healthcare System on Facebook and Twitter!





Additional photos from February 7th Hiring Fair/Welcome Home Event. Story can be found on page 1.



Detroit VA Staff Says THANK YOU to Providers with Annual Luncheon

The annual Providers Day luncheon was held in late March, a chance for staff to thank all providers, for their service and devotion to our Veteran patients. Hundreds of providers took time out of their busy schedules to attend the event.

"It's a very small token of our appreciation for their very large commitment to our patients," said Dr. Pamela Reeves, Medical Center Director.

Donation to Benefit Veteran in Area

The Piety Hill Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution are putting their time and effort into "The Veterans Project"!

For the 4th time, the fundraising efforts of the Piety Hill chapter will allow a local Veteran to attend a competitive national program specifically for Veterans. Past fundraising efforts have sent a wounded Veteran to the Para-Olympic Games and the National Veterans Wheelchair Games.

Working with William R. Browning, Chief of the Volunteer and Community Relations (second from left), at the Detroit VA, it was decided that this year's Piety Hill fundraising efforts will help send one local veteran to the National Veterans Golden Age Games which are being held this August in Omaha, Nebraska. The Games are one of the most progressive and adaptive rehabilitative senior sports programs in the United States – and the world. The largest of the VA's national rehabilitation programs, more than 700 Veterans are now attending this event each year.



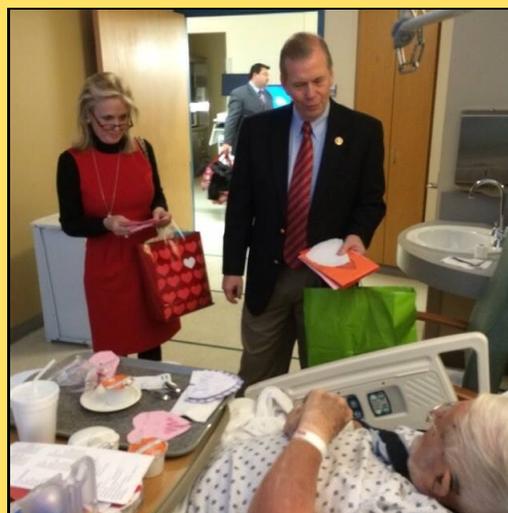
Detroit VA Salutes Veteran Patients During Week of Activities

Employees and volunteers took part in the annual National Salute to Veteran Patients Week, February 8—14, 2015.

"The National Salute Week is always during Valentine's Week, a time of caring and sharing we can give to our heroes," said Dr. Pamela Reeves, Medical Center Director. "This is our chance to treat our Veterans and their families to various events and activities to let them know how much we appreciate them for their sacrifices and their service. Each year, we invite elected officials, school groups, celebrities and others to visit our patients during the week. It's such a treat for everyone involved!"

While the National Salute is in mid-February, Detroit-area residents have the chance to show their appreciation to Veterans all year by volunteering their time. No medical experience is necessary.

To find opportunities, you can call 313-576-3332 or go to www.detroit.va.gov/giving.



Detroit VA Healthcare System STAFF and VOLUNTEERS!
Join us May 20, 2015, 11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.!

5TH ANNUAL VA 2K 2015 WALK + ROLL

**Walk will kickoff
at the flagpole,
Yellow Entrance at
11 a.m.

**Walk TWICE
around the
medical center
**Do something
HEALTHY while
helping our
Homeless
Veterans! All
participants are
ENCOURAGED to
bring a donated
item to participate
in the walk

**Lots of activities
and fun before,
during and after
the event!

**Plan to eat a
healthy lunch with
us! VCS will be
selling healthy box
lunches for just \$5!



MAY 20TH



I WALK + ROLL BECAUSE ICARE
ABOUT MY HEALTH AND OUR VETERANS HEALTH

VETERANS CHOICE PROGRAM



The Veterans Choice Program provides eligible Veterans the option to receive VA Community Care from approved providers in their communities.

Am I eligible?



- ✓ Have you been told by your local VA medical facility that they can't schedule your appointment **within 30 days** of the clinically indicated date or if no such date can be determined, your preferred date?
- ✓ Is your current residence **more than 40 miles** from the closest VA medical facility?
- ✓ Do you need to travel by air, boat or ferry to the VA medical facility closest to your home?
- ✓ Do you face an unusual or excessive burden in traveling to a VA medical facility based on the presence of a body of water or a geologic formation that cannot be crossed by road?

If you were enrolled in VA Health care on or before Aug 1, 2014 or you are eligible to enroll as a combat Veteran, and answered

"YES"

to any of the questions, you may be eligible!

How do I set up an appointment?

Call:
866-606-8198

1

Gather your information about any other health insurance coverage you may have (e.g., employer, union-based health plans)



2

Call 1-866-606-8198 to make sure you qualify + schedule an appointment. When you call, we will walk you through the following steps:

- You will be asked to enter your ZIP code, and first and last name.
- We will check to make sure you are eligible for this program.
- We will check which of your needs are covered by the VA.
- You will be asked for your address and the name of your preferred VA Community Care. Unfortunately, not all providers will be eligible to participate so if your preferred provider is not available, we will recommend other providers in your area.



3

We will then work with you to schedule an appointment.



This hotline is exclusively for making sure you are eligible for the Choice Program and setting up a VA Community Care appointment. If you have questions about other aspects of your VA medical care or want to learn more about enrolling in VA health services, please visit www.va.gov/health.



Room Service is Now Available for Detroit VA Patients!

Another step toward Excellence in Patient Care

- Room Service began in January for all Detroit VA patients.
- A menu is available in each new patient folder and additional menus are available at each nurses station
- Hours for ordering and delivery are 6:30 a.m. through 6:30 p.m. Breakfast selections may be ordered throughout the day!
- Dial MEALS or ext. 63257 to place an order! Your order will be delivered within 45 minutes or order placement.
- Healthy selections are available!



Social Work Month Marked with Open House

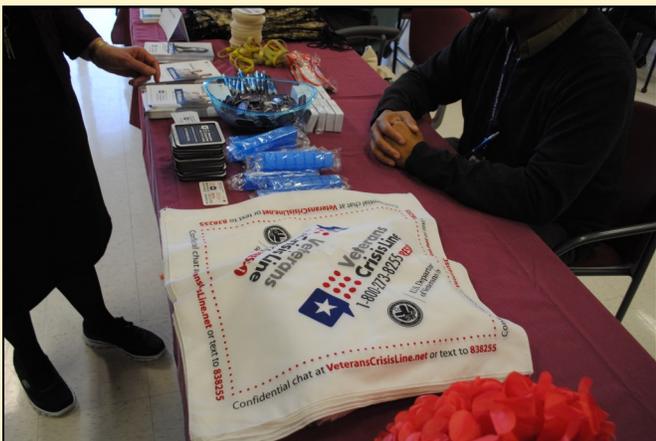
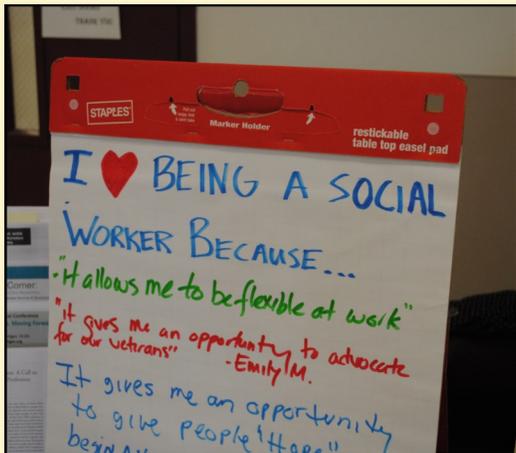
Many in the medical center, both employees and Veterans, helped pay tribute to social workers and all they do for the care of our Veterans, by stopping by the Social Work Open House on March 4th.

The program was held in the multi-purpose room on the first floor.

It was a chance for social workers in all areas to help Veterans learn about what's available to them in terms of counseling and care. Many programs were featured, including the MST program, the VJO program and the Veterans Crisis Line.

Social Workers here at the Detroit VA help Veterans and their families with problems associated with the stress of an illness. Social work services are provided on inpatient and outpatient basis.

The Social Work Service also educates and assists Veterans and their families with obtaining available resources within the VA system and in the community.



Detroit VA Healthcare System Reopens Facility Chapel Following Four Months of Renovations

A gathering place for both inpatient and outpatient Vets and their families, it was a great day in mid-March as many gathered to watch as leadership cut the ribbon on the newly renovated Detroit VA chapel.

“There were so many smiles as many watched us open those doors on our beloved chapel,” said Dr. Pamela Reeves, Medical Center Director. “The chapel plays a very important role in our health care model here in our facility.”

The Chaplain Service had been holding religious services in various temporary locations while the chapel was finished.

A new schedule for services will be issued soon. For information or to speak with one of our chaplains, please call (313) 576-3362.



VA CARES!

The Detroit VA Healthcare System volunteer program was founded this year, and it's become very popular with employees in all areas of the medical center!

Employees have a chance each quarter to make a difference in the community, in many different ways!

Teams of staff head out into the area to volunteer for a few hours during the day. There's a different theme each quarter.

In March, employees helped at the All Saints Soup Kitchen & Food Pantry, Detroit Rescue Mission and Focus Hope.

“We are a huge presence in this community, so it's fitting that our employees have a chance to give back,” said Dr. Pamela Reeves, Medical Center Director. “And, we also meet many Veterans along the way who can use our help.”

Employees can get more information on the program by emailing an inquiry to vhadetpublicaffairs@va.gov.

