

Know Your VA

NEW VETERAN
ORIENTATION
HANDBOOK



ATLANTA VA MEDICAL CENTER

1670 CLAIMONT ROAD | DECATUR, GEORGIA 30033 | 404.321.6111

WELCOME TO THE ATLANTA VA MEDICAL CENTER



3.	Welcome
4.	Leadership Biographies
5.	Letter from the Director
6.	Mission, Vision, Promise & Values
7.	New Enrollee Checklist
8.	Eligibility and Benefits
10.	Driving Directions
11.	Introductions to our CBOCs
12.	Map of main Medical Center
13.	Austell CBOC
14.	Blairsville CBOC & Carrollton Clinic
15.	Decatur Clinic, East Point Clinic and Ft. McPherson Clinic
16.	Lawrenceville CBOC & Newnan CBOC
17.	Oakwood CBOC & Rome Outreach Clinic
18.	Stockbridge CBOC
19.	PACT Team
20.	Non-VA Care & FEE Basis
21.	Telephone Care & Appointments
22.	History of VA
25.	Ancillary Services
26.	Dental Care
27.	Mental Health Services
28.	Social Work
29.	Inpatient Care Services
30.	OIF/OEF/OND
31.	Prosthetics, Sensory Aids & Women's Health
32.	Veterans Experience Office
33.	Emergency Care
35.	Medications
36.	Pharmacy
37.	Co-Managed Care/Dual Care
38.	My HealtheVet
40.	Disability Compensation Benefits
41.	Healthy Living
45.	CLC Resident Rights & Responsibilities
46.	Participation in Treatment Decisions
47.	Complaints & Compliments
48.	Homeless Veterans
49.	Laboratory
50.	Domiciliary
51.	Chaplain Service & Telemedicine
52.	Advanced Directives
54.	Phone Directory
55.	Client Advisory Council
56.	Notes





Dear Veteran,

Welcome to the Atlanta VA Medical Center and our Community Based Outreach Clinics. It is our honor to serve our nation's heroes. We are focused on providing high quality and compassionate health care to our Veterans.

Today's VA is transforming into an organization that defines Excellence in the 21st Century! Our mission is to provide value by delivering health care that is Veteran-centered, data-driven, team-based, continuously improving and population based.

Veteran-centered care focuses on the whole person rather than the condition or disease. It establishes a partnership among the primary care team, Veteran patients, and their Families or caregivers.

This handbook was prepared to inform you about our services. It is hoped that the information will make it easier for you to participate in our healthcare system. If you have any questions that are not addressed in this book, please ask a member of our healthcare team using the directory at the end of this booklet.

Sincerely,

Leslie Wiggins

MS. LESLIE WIGGINS

Medical Center Director



Ms. Leslie B. Wiggins assumed duties as the new Director of the Atlanta VA Medical Center on May 20, 2013. Ms. Wiggins oversees the delivery of health care to more than 89,000 Veterans via a workforce of more than 2,900 employees, and an operating budget of more than \$500 million. She has a proven track record as an exceptional health care leader and former VA Deputy Assistant Secretary (DAS) for Labor-Management Relations with outstanding qualifications and skills, demonstrated management ability to lead complex organizations, motivate employees, manage resources and work successfully with widely varied stakeholder groups. Ms. Wiggins began her career with the VA in 1993. Prior to her current appointment, she served VA in many capacities, including Nurse Executive, Medical Center Quality Manager and her most recent role as Medical Center Associate Director (Chief Operating Officer) at the Detroit VA Medical Center.

MR. ROBERT EVANS, M.D.IV., TH.M., M.A., B.C.C.

Assistant Medical Center Director



Mr. Robert Evans was appointed Assistant Director of the Atlanta VA Medical Center, Decatur, Georgia in November 2014. Previously, Mr. Evans served as the Atlanta VAMC Acting Assistant Director and Chief, Chaplain Service. Before coming to Atlanta in 2013, he was the Chief, Chaplain Service for the Aleda E. Lutz VA Medical Center in Saginaw, Michigan. Prior to joining the Department of Veterans Affairs, Mr. Evans served a 25 year career with the United States Navy.

MR. THOMAS GRACE, MBA/MHA

Associate Medical Center Director



Mr. Thomas Grace, MBA/MHA, was appointed Associate Director of the Atlanta Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Decatur, Georgia, in July 2012. Previously, Mr. Grace served as Atlanta VAMC Assistant Director, Acting Associate Director, and Acting Director. Before coming to Atlanta in 2009, he was the Chief, Systems Analysis and Management Section for the Central Texas Veterans Healthcare System. Mr. Grace began his VA career as a Graduate Health Administration Training Program resident at the Asheville VA Medical Center in July 1994.

DAVID BOWER, MD

Chief of Staff



David Bower, MD assumed the duties of Chief of Staff September 15, 2000. He previously served as Acting Chief of Staff and Director of Medical Intensive Care. Dr. Bower is also the Clinical Director for the VISN 7 Acute Care Sub-council and Associate Dean for Clinical Affairs-VA Assistant Professor of Medicine, Division of Pulmonary and Critical Care Medicine, Department of Medicine, Emory University School of Medicine. As Chief of Staff, Dr. Bower serves as professional colleague, supervisor and leader of the professional medical staff and is responsible for coordinating medical activities within the Medical Center. As a member of the hospital's executive team, Dr. Bower is intricately involved in developing and implementing the organization's operations and strategic goals.

MS. SANDY LEAKE, MSN, RN

Associate Director for Nursing/ Patient Care Services



Ms. Leake assumed the duties of Associate Director for Nursing/Patient Care Services (AD, N/PS) at the Atlanta VAMC in March 1998. Previously, she served in dual roles as Acting Chief Nurse Executive and Associate Director. She is ultimately responsible for nursing practice throughout the medical center and its associated clinics. As a member of the hospital's executive team, Ms. Leake exerts a substantial influence over the organization's operations and strategic goals. Organizationally, Ms. Leake is also directly responsible for Social Work, Nutrition and Food, Chaplain and Voluntary Services.



OUR MISSION

Honor America's Veterans by providing exceptional health care that improves their health and well-being.

OUR VISION

To be the benchmark of excellence and value in health care and benefits by providing exemplary services that are both patient & family-centered and evidence-based. This care will be delivered by engaged, collaborative teams in an integrated environment that supports learning, discovery and continuous improvement. It will emphasize prevention and population health and contribute to the Nation's well-being through education, research and service in national emergencies.

OUR 3 PROMISES

- To provide care second to none - the best care anywhere.
- To maintain and expand Veteran's healthcare services whenever possible
- To ensure that every Veteran will be personally satisfied with the care that they receive, based on the highest quality of outcome.

OUR CORE VALUES "I CARE"

INTEGRITY: Act with high moral principle. Adhere to the highest professional standards. Maintain the trust and confidence of all with whom I engage.

COMMITMENT: Work diligently to serve Veterans and other beneficiaries. Be driven by an earnest belief in VA's mission. Fulfill my individual responsibilities and organizational responsibilities.

ADVOCACY: Be truly Veteran-centric by identifying, fully considering, and appropriately advancing the interests of Veterans and other beneficiaries.

RESPECT: Treat all those I serve and with whom I work with dignity and respect. Show respect to earn it.

EXCELLENCE: Strive for the highest quality and continuous improvement. Be thoughtful and decisive in leadership, accountable for my actions, willing to admit mistakes, and rigorous in correcting them.



CHECKLIST FOR NEW ENROLLEES TO VA HEALTH CARE

Welcome to VA Health Care! We want to make it easy for you to get started. Use this checklist to make sure you have all the information you need.

- Find a VA health care facility nearest you
- Learn the name and telephone of your Patient Aligned Care Team (PACT), e.g., primary care provider, RN Care Manager, health associate or LPN, health clerk)
- Learn how to make and cancel (if necessary) appointments
- Learn how to transfer your medical records and prescriptions to VA
- Learn how to fill and refill prescriptions
- Learn how to use your VA telephone service
- Learn what to do in case of emergency
- Learn where to get care after hours
- Learn how to take an active role in your health care as a partner with your PACT
- Learn how to take care of your health
- Register for My HealtheVet to take full advantage of all its online features for Veterans

ELIGIBILITY AND BENEFITS

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is committed to informing Veterans about VA health care benefits and services, and publishes various publications to keep you up-to-date.

“Veterans’ Health Benefits Handbook”

VA is producing a personalized “Veterans Health Benefits Handbook” for each Veteran enrolled in the VA health care system. The purpose of the handbook is to provide a current and accurate description of VA health care benefits and services. Your handbook will be tailored specifically to you with personal identifying information and should be safeguarded as you would any other sensitive personal document.

The “Veterans Health Benefits Handbook” includes:

- Eligibility and health care benefits
- Contact information for your local facility
- Information regarding co-payment responsibilities
- Instructions on how to schedule appointments
- Guidelines to communicate treatment needs
- Patient rights
- Ways to obtain copies of medical records
- Other important information



You will receive your personalized handbook via U.S. mail; therefore, you should have a current address on file with VA. Handbooks are mailed based on Priority Group, beginning with Priority Group 1 and ending with Priority Group 8. To see when you might receive your handbook, go to http://www.va.gov/healthbenefits/vhbh/vhbh_distribution.asp.

“Veterans’ Health Benefits Guide” and “Health Care Benefits Overview”

VA also publishes the “Veterans Health Benefits Guide” designed to provide general information about the VA Medical Benefits Package, and the “Health Care Benefits Overview” designed to provide the information Veterans need to understand VA’s health care system, with answers to frequently asked questions about eligibility and benefits.

Both publications are available to you at all VA medical centers, and can be downloaded at <http://www.va.gov/healthbenefits/resources/epublications.asp>.

These publications are very helpful, and we encourage you to refer to them whenever you have questions about your eligibility for specific health care benefits. Additional assistance is available at the following resources:

- Your local VA health care facility’s Enrollment Office (Extension # 6455)
- www.va.gov/healthbenefits
- www.myhealth.va.gov

Summary of Priority Groups:

- Priority Group 1-3: 10%-100% service-connected, former Prisoner of War (POW), or Purple Heart recipient, no clinic co-pay (NOTE: Priority Groups 2-8 will have a medication co-payment unless it is for a service connected condition)
- Priority Group 4: catastrophically disabled or housebound receiving aid and attendance, no co-pay
- Priority Group 5: Not service connected or non-compensable service-connected, but below the MEANs test (income screening) thresholds or receiving VA pension benefits or eligible for Medicaid programs.
- The above groups have no co-payments for primary care & specialty clinics.
- Priority Group 6: WWI Veterans, special hazard exposure (Agent Orange, radiation, other); new theater of combat Vets, Persian Gulf War Veterans that served between certain dates. This group has no co-pays for special hazard or service-connected care, for other conditions and routine care there may be a co-pay.
- Priority Group 7 & 8: non-service connected Veterans with net income & assets below certain thresholds or above thresholds but agrees to pay copays.
- NOTE: There is a co-pay of \$15 for primary care & \$50 for specialty care clinics. If all your appointments are in one day there is only one co-pay.

Co-Payment Information

Co-payment depends on eligibility status or priority level. There will be no co-payments for appointments that are from a service connected condition.

When seen by a Provider/Doctor:

- Basic Care Services: \$15 per visit
- Specialty Care Services: \$50 per visit

(If all your appointments are in one day there is only one co-pay.)

Medications: (No co-payment for medication received due to a service connected condition.)

- Priority Group 1: No co-payment
- Priority Group 2 through 6: \$8 per 30 days or \$24 per 90 days
- Priority Group 7 and 8: \$9 per 30 days or \$27 per 90 days

Inpatient Services, Nursing Home (Community Living Center), Respite Care, Adult Day Health Care: dependent on Priority Group, please ask your Social Worker or Eligibility Clerk.



HOW VA HEALTH CARE WORKS FOR YOU

The Atlanta VA Medical Center consists of one VHA facility located at 1670 Clairmont Road, Decatur, Georgia. The medical center is a tertiary care facility which provides general medical, psychiatric and surgical services, has 405 authorized inpatient beds (273 hospital, 120 Community Living Center, and 12 Psychosocial Rehabilitation Treatment Program), and is classified as a Complexity Level 1A facility. It is a teaching hospital, providing a full range of patient care services, with state-of-the-art technology as well as education and research. Comprehensive health care is provided through emergency medicine, primary care, tertiary care, and long-term care in the areas of medicine, surgery, mental health, physical medicine and rehabilitation, neurology, oncology, dentistry, geriatrics, and extended care. The Atlanta VAMC is part of the VA Integrated Southeast Network (VISN 7), which includes facilities in Georgia, Alabama, and South Carolina. The Atlanta VAMC Community Living Center serves metro Atlanta and includes extended care rehabilitation, psycho-geriatric care, and general long term care. The facility also serves as a prosthetics treatment center, fabricating and supplying mechanical devices such as artificial limbs for patients within the states of Georgia, South Carolina and Alabama.

Location: 1670 Clairmont Road, Decatur, GA 30033
Phone & Fax: Phone: 404.321.6111 / Fax: 404.728.7733

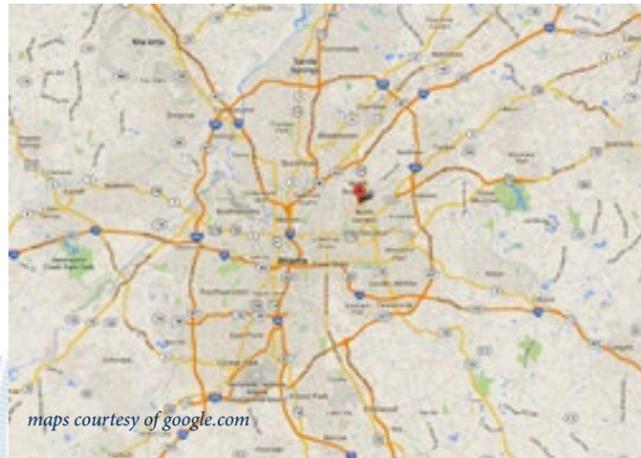
Driving Directions:

From the South and West (on I-85 North): Take I-85 North to the Clairmont Exit, exit 91. Turn right onto Clairmont Road (heading east). Continue on Clairmont Road for approximately 3.5 miles. The Atlanta VAMC is located on the right.

From the East: Take I-20 West to exit 67-B to I-285 North. From I-285, take exit 39-A, US-78 West (left) toward Decatur/Atlanta. After 4.2 miles, turn right onto Clairmont Road. The Atlanta VAMC is located 1.4 miles on the left.

From the North: Take I-285 East toward Greenville/Augusta. At exit 33-A, take I-85 South toward Atlanta. Take exit 91 onto Frontage Rd, stay left. Take the first right onto Clairmont Rd. The Atlanta VAMC is located 2 miles on the right.

Public Transportation: The Atlanta VAMC can be reached via MARTA bus route 19. For more information, please see the MARTA website*.



OUR COMMUNITY BASED OUTPATIENT CLINICS (CBOCS)

The Atlanta VAMC oversees seven VA Community-Based Outpatient Clinics (CBOCs) in Austell (Cobb County); Blairsville (Union County); East Point (South Fulton County); Lawrenceville (Gwinnett County); Newnan (Coweta County); Oakwood (Hall County); Stockbridge (Henry County); and in addition to an outpatient clinic in Decatur (Fulton County) and an outreach clinic in Rome, Georgia.

Carrollton CBOC/CLC- In 2009, a charitable non-profit organization, the Trinka Davis Foundation, donated \$20 million to acquire land, design and build a multi-specialty CBOC/CLC in Carrollton, Georgia. Completed in May 2012 and turned over to the VA in August 2012, this new combined specialty care outpatient clinic and community living center provides improved access to health care services to Veterans in Carroll, Haralson, Douglas and Paulding counties.

Choose a Facility

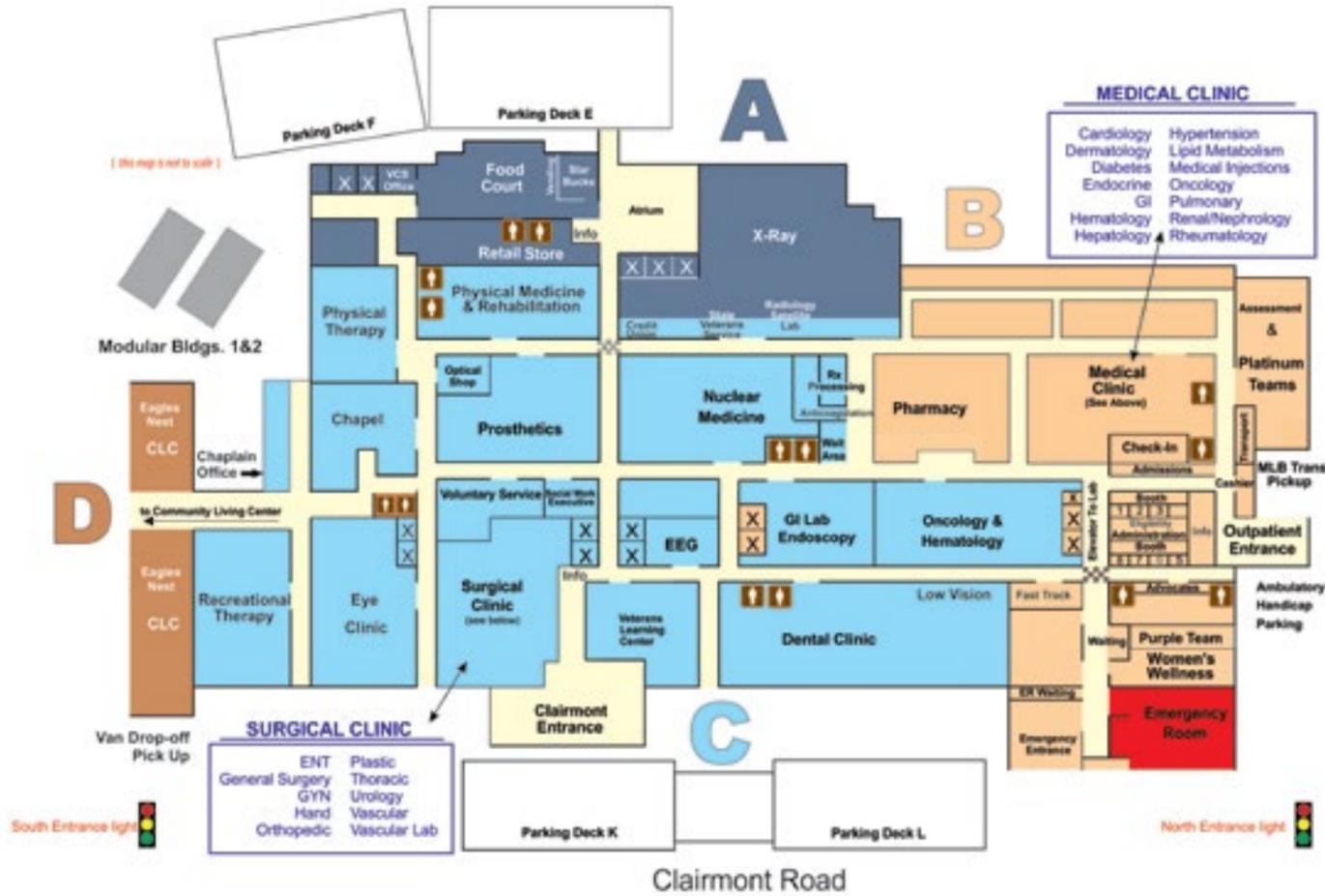
You can choose the facility that is most convenient for you. Once you choose a facility, go there for your care so you will get to know your provider and primary care team, and they will get to know you. Access to many of the available services is through your primary care provider and patient aligned care team (PACT)

Atlanta VA Medical Center:

Atlanta VA Medical Center – Main Facility (Decatur)
 404.321.6111
 1670 Clairmont Road, Decatur, GA 30033



ATLANTA VA MEDICAL CENTER - OVERVIEW



Gold Team

Hours: Mon, Tue, Thu, Fri, 7:30 am – 6 p.m., closed on Wednesdays and federal holidays

Location: Atlanta VA Medical Center, 2nd floor, 2B-103

Description of Services: Providing Preventive and Chronic Disease Management, OEF/OIF/OND, Social Work Services, Nutrition, PC Mental Health Integration, Scheduled/Unscheduled Appointments

Support Services: Pharmacy, Laboratory, Radiology, and other support services available within the Atlanta VA Medical Center

Telephone Number: 404.728.7248

Purple Team

Hours: Mon-Fri, 7:30 a.m. – 4 p.m., closed on federal holidays

Location: Atlanta VA Medical Center, 1st floor, 1B-117 & 1B-119

Short Description: Primary Care to Veterans

Description of Services: Providing Preventive and Chronic Disease Management, OEF/OIF/OND, Social Work Services, Nutrition, PC Mental Health Integration, Scheduled/Unscheduled Appointments

Support Services: Pharmacy, Laboratory, Radiology, and other support services available within the Atlanta VA Medical Center

Telephone Number: 404.321.6111 Ext. 5038

Women's Wellness Clinic

Hours: Mon-Fri, 7 a.m. - 4 p.m., closed on federal holidays

Location: Atlanta VA Medical Center, 1st floor, 1B-

Short Description: Primary Care to Women Veterans

Description of Services: Providing Preventive, Educational and Chronic Disease Management for Women Veterans, Nutritionist, PC Mental Health Integration, Scheduled/Unscheduled Appointments

Support Services: Pharmacy, Laboratory, Radiology, and other support services available within the Atlanta VA Medical Center

Telephone Number: 404.329.2222 Ext. 7559

Bronze Geri-PACT Clinic

Hours: Mon-Fri, 8 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Location: Building C, 11th Floor

Description of Services: Geriatric primary care/Special population PACT with geriatrics trained providers and staff to help address the needs of older veterans.

Telephone: 404.728.7663

OUTLYING PRIMARY CARE CLINICS

Austell CBOC



Location: 2041 Mesa Valley Way, Suite 184, Austell, GA 30082

Hours of Operation: Mon-Fri, 7 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Phone: 404.329.2222 Fax: 770.948.3276

Description of Services: Providing Preventive and Chronic Disease Management, OEF/OIF/OND, Social Work Services, Nutrition, PC Mental Health Integration, Scheduled/Unscheduled Appointments

Support Services: Laboratory, Radiology, and Pharmacy services within the Atlanta VA Medical Center

Blairsville CBOC



Location: 1294 Highway 515 East, Suite 100, Blairsville, GA 30512
Hours of Operation: Mon - Fri, 7:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.
Phone: 404.329.2222 **Fax:** 404.417.1595
Description of Services: Providing Preventive and Chronic Disease Management, OEF/OIF/OND, Social Work Services, Nutrition, PC Mental Health Integration, Scheduled/Unscheduled Appointments
Support Services: Phlebotomist/Laboratory, Radiology. No Pharmacy within CBOC but contracts have been established with local pharmacies

Carrollton Clinic (Trinka Davis Veterans Village, TDVV)



Location: 180 Martin Drive, Carrollton, GA 30117
Hours of Operation: Mon - Fri, 7:30 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Phone: 404.321.6111, Ext. 2156 or 2157
Description of Services: Provides primary care for Veterans, to include: Preventive, Educational and Chronic Disease Management, OEF/OIF, Nutritionist, PC Mental Health Integration, Scheduled/Unscheduled Appointments. Also includes Podiatry, Endocrinology (monthly clinic) and Rheumatology (monthly clinic)
Support Services: Phlebotomist/Laboratory, Radiology. No Pharmacy within CBOC but contracts have been established with local pharmacies

Decatur Clinic



Location: 755 Commerce Drive, 2nd Floor, Decatur, GA 30030
Hours of Operation: Mon - Fri, 7:30 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Lab Entrance: Mon - Fri, 7:30 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Phone: 404.417.5200 **Fax:** 404.417.5204
Description of Services: Provides primary care to Veterans, to include: Preventive, Educational and Chronic Disease Management, OEF/OIF/OND, Nutritionist, PC Mental Health Integration, Scheduled/Unscheduled Appointments
Support Services: Pharmacy, Laboratory, Radiology, and other support services available within the Atlanta VA Medical Center

East Point Clinic



Location: 1513 Cleveland Avenue, East Point, GA 30344
Hours of Operation: Mon - Thur, 8 a.m. - 4 p.m., Fri, 8 a.m. - Noon
Phone: 404.321.6111, Ext. 2222 **Fax:** 404.327.4948

Fort McPherson Clinic



Location: 1701 Hardee Avenue, Atlanta, GA 30310

...continued on next page

Hours of Operation: Mon - Thu, 8 a.m. - 4 p.m., Fri, 8 a.m. - Noon

Phone: 404.321.6111, Ext. 2222 **Fax:** 404.327.4948

Description of Services: Provides primary care to Veterans, to include: Preventive, Educational and Chronic Disease Management, OEF/OIF/OND, Nutritionist, PC Mental Health Integration, Scheduled/Unscheduled Appointments. Women's Center of Excellence providing gynecological appointments on Thursday and Friday morning, Cardiology Services every other Friday morning, and Psychiatry appointments on Thursday mornings
Support Services: Phlebotomist/Laboratory, Radiology. No Pharmacy within CBOC but contracts have been established with local pharmacies

Lawrenceville CBOC



Location: 455 Philip Boulevard, Suite 200, Lawrenceville, GA 30046

Hours of Operation: Mon-Thu, 7:30a.m. - 4 p.m., Fri, 7:30 a.m. - Noon

Phone: 404.329.2222 **Fax:** 404.417.1708

Description of Services: Providing Preventive, Educational and Chronic Disease Management, OEF/OIF/OND, Nutritionist, PC Mental Health Integration, Scheduled/Unscheduled Appointments

Support Services: Phlebotomist/Laboratory, Radiology. No Pharmacy within CBOC but contracts have been established with local pharmacies

Newnan CBOC



Location: 39-A Oak Hill Court, Newnan, GA 30265

Hours of Operation: Mon - Fri, 7:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Phone: 404.329.2222 **Fax:** 404.417.2910

Description of Services: Provides primary care to Veterans to include: Preventive, Educational and Chronic Disease Management, OEF/OIF/OND, Nutritionist, PC Mental Health Integration, Scheduled/Unscheduled Appointments

Support Services: Phlebotomist/Laboratory, Radiology. No Pharmacy within Clinic but contracts have been established with local pharmacies

Oakwood CBOC



Location: 4175 Tanners Creek Drive, Flowery Branch, GA 30542

Phone: 404.728-8210 **Fax:** 404.728.8229

Hours of Operation: Mon - Thu, 8 a.m. - 4 p.m., Fri, 8 a.m. - Noon

Description of Service: Provides primary care to Veterans to include: Preventive, Educational and Chronic Disease Management, OEF/OIF/OND, Nutritionist, PC Mental Health Integration, Scheduled/Unscheduled Appointments. Future: Podiatry

Support Services: Phlebotomist/Laboratory, Radiology. No Pharmacy within Clinic but contracts have been established with local pharmacies

Rome Outreach Clinic



Location: 30 Chateau Drive SE, Rome, GA 30161

Hours of Operation: Mon, Tue, Thu, Fri, 8 a.m. - 6 p.m., closed on Wed

Phone: 706.235.6581 **Fax:** 706.291.3753

Description of Service: Provides primary care to Veterans to include: Preventive, Educational and Chronic Disease Management, OEF/OIF/OND, Nutritionist, PC Mental Health Integration, Scheduled/Unscheduled Appointments

Support Services: Phlebotomist/Laboratory, Radiology. No Pharmacy within Clinic but contracts have been established with local pharmacies.

Stockbridge CBOC



Location: 175 Medical Boulevard, Stockbridge, GA 30281

Hours of Operation: Mon - Fri, 7:30 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Phone: 404.329.2222 **Fax:** 404.728.5096

Description of Service: Provides primary care to veterans to include: Preventive, Educational and Chronic Disease Management, OEF/OIF/OND, Nutritionist, PC Mental Health Integration, Scheduled/Unscheduled Appointments

Support Services: Phlebotomist/Laboratory, Radiology. No Pharmacy within CBOC but contracts have been established with local pharmacies.

GET ASSIGNED TO A PATIENT ALIGNED CARE TEAM (PACT)

Your PACT can take care of most of your health care needs or refer you for specialty care as needed.

You will be assigned a primary care provider—a physician, nurse practitioner, or physician’s assistant—who is part of a PACT teamlet. The PACT Teamlet includes an RN Care Manager, a clinical associate (LPN or medical assistant) and a clerical associate. The PACT teamlet staff are responsible for working with you to provide most of your care. Your PACT also includes pharmacists, social workers, dietitians, behavioral health specialists, and other health professionals, and support staff all focused on working with you around your health care and well-being.

The team will:

- Build a partnership with you to promote your health and well-being
- Provide or arrange for preventive health services, such as immunizations and screenings
- Give you medical care, and coordinate your care with other providers
- Educate you about healthy living habits, your health problems, and any treatment you may need and work with you to achieve the health care goals you choose



BE A PARTNER ON YOUR PACT TEAM!

I am a member of the _____ Team.

My PACT Primary Care Provider is: _____

My PACT RN Care Manager is: _____

My PACT social worker is: _____

My PACT clerk (PSA) is: _____

My PACT pharmacist is: _____

My PACT dietitian is: _____

Call your PACT clinic to:

- Get advice about your health concerns
- If you are feeling sick, please call your PACT clinic. The clinic will assess your medical needs and work with you to address them
- Please understand that if you “walk in” to a PACT clinic without a scheduled appointment, your condition will be evaluated and you will then be seen according to the severity of your medical situation

If You Need to See a Specialist

Your PACT provider will coordinate all care for you. If you need to see a specialist, your PACT provider will request a consult for you. Then the specialty care area will contact you about an appointment or the next step in your care. **If you have not heard from them in seven days, please call your PACT clinic.**

Many of our services are located at the main campus of the Atlanta VA Medical Center. If the VA is not able to provide the service, the request will then be evaluated for Non-VA Care out in the community (see next page for more information on Non-VA Care).

If You Live in More Than One Location or Travel a Lot

Once you are enrolled in VA health care, you are eligible for care at any VA facility.

We encourage you to receive the majority of your care through your preferred facility and your primary care provider.

If you travel a lot or live in more than one location, you may need to arrange for care at more than one VA facility. When you plan extended travel outside your usual VA care area, please give your PACT clinic and pharmacy:

1. Temporary address
2. Phone number
3. Start date
4. Expected date of return

Routine prescription refills can be sent to you at your temporary address. Be sure to allow time (approximately 2 weeks) for the refills to arrive at your temporary address by mail.

Non-VA Care/FEE Basis (Care provided outside of the VA)

In certain circumstances, your VA Medical Center may pay for care you receive from a non-VA provider. This can happen if the services you need are not available in VA. Steps for Non-VA care:

- Provider orders consult
- Consult is reviewed and comes back to your Primary Provider stating that care on the outside will be needed due to any of the reasons above
- Provider orders Non-VA Care consult
- The Non-VA Care consult is reviewed and is approved or disapproved

If approved, you will receive a letter of exactly what you are approved. It is usually for an evaluation and treatment plan only.

If disapproved, talk to your Provider about your plan of care.

Services provided by community vendors at VA expense must meet the VA's quality standards and must be authorized in advance. Please call the number below if you have any questions or concerns.

Information about payment for Non-VA services can be found at this VA website link:

<http://www.nonvacare.va.gov/veterans.asp>

IMPORTANT FOLLOW-UP INFORMATION: Health Records from the outside facility in which you received care will need forwarded to your VA Provider. This may require a release of information form to be completed and given to the outside facility. If you have questions or want to check on the status of your health records reaching your Provider please call:



HOW TO ACCESS VA HEALTH CARE

VA Telephone Care & Appointments

To make an appointment with your PACT team, get advice about your health concerns, cancel an appointment, or reschedule a routine primary care appointment you must call the Telephone Advice Program during normal business hours (Monday through Friday, 8am-4pm) at:

404.329.2222 or 1.800.224.4087

“PLEASE DON’T BE A “NO-SHOW”

Note: If you are unable to make it to your appointment, please call as far in advance as possible (preferably at least 24 hours). This will allow us to serve another Veteran's needs.

The advice line is staffed by registered nurses who will discuss your medical concern and work with you to determine the care you need. The registered nurse will document the telephone call in your electronic medical record and notify the appropriate medical provider. You will receive an automated telephone call to remind you of an upcoming clinic appointment. This helps reduce no-shows and improves access for all Veterans.

Utilize the on-line “secure messaging” function in My HealtheVet to inquire about non-emergent issues:

You can send specific questions concerning your medication, upcoming appointments, day to day health plan, etc. 24 hours a day and your clinic will respond to you through the on-line response or phone you if necessary to provide the answers and service you need.



VA HEALTH CARE SERVICES

A Brief History of the Veterans Health Administration (VHA)

Today's Veterans Health Administration (VHA) originated during the Civil War as the first federal hospitals and domiciliaries ever established for the nation's volunteer forces.

National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers (1865-1930)

The national homes were often called "soldiers' homes" or "military homes." Initially only soldiers and sailors who served with the Union forces — including U.S. Colored Troops — were eligible for admittance. The first National Home opened near Augusta, Maine on November 1, 1866.

Many programs and processes begun at the national homes continue at VHA today. They were the first to accept women Veterans for medical care and hospitalization beginning in 1923.



Eastern Branch National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers in Togus, Maine, 1891.

By 1929, the national homes had grown to 11 institutions that spanned the country. All of the national homes have operated continuously since they opened.



National Military Home Hospital in Dayton, Ohio, 1912.

Veterans Bureau (1921-1930)

On August 9, 1921, Congress created the Veterans Bureau by combining three World War I Veterans programs into one bureau.

World War I was the first fully mechanized war and soldiers exposed to mustard gas and other chemicals required specialized care. Tuberculosis and neuro-psychiatric hospitals opened to accommodate Veterans with respiratory or mental health problems.

Native Americans, on November 6, 1919, became eligible for full Veterans benefits, including health care. In 1924, Veterans' benefits were liberalized to cover disabilities that were not service-related. In 1928, admission to the National Homes was extended to women, National Guard, and militia Veterans.

Veterans Administration (1930-1989)

The second consolidation of federal Veterans programs took place on July 21, 1930 when President Herbert Hoover consolidated the Veterans Bureau with the National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers and Pension Bureau and re-designated it as the Veterans Administration.

General Frank Hines, Director of the Veterans Bureau since 1923, became the first Administrator of the VA. His tenure lasted 22 years and ended in 1945 when General Omar Bradley took the helm. In 1930, VA consisted of 45 hospitals. By 1945, the number had more than doubled to 97.

World War II ushered in a new era of expanded Veterans' benefits through the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944, commonly referred to as the "G.I. bill", which was signed into law on June 22, 1944. General Omar Bradley took the reins at VA in 1945 and steered its transformation into a modern organization. In 1946, the Department of Medicine and Surgery was established within VA. VA was able to recruit and retain top medical personnel by modifying the Civil Service system. The first women doctors were hired in 1946. When Bradley left in 1947, there were 125 VA hospitals.

Dr. Paul Magnuson, a VA orthopedic surgeon and Chief Medical Director, 1948-1951, led the charge to create an affiliation program with America's medical schools for medical research and training purposes. By 1948, 60 medical schools were affiliated with VA hospitals. Over the years, these collaborations resulted in groundbreaking advances in medicine, nursing, medical research, and prosthetics.

In the post-World War II period, 90 new and replacement Veterans hospitals were planned.

The first-ever successful human liver transplant operation took place at the Denver VA Medical Center in May 1963 under Dr. Thomas Starzl. In 1977, two VA doctors, Dr. Rosalyn Yalow (Bronx VAMC) and Dr. Andrew Schally (New Orleans VAMC) received the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine for their work in developing radioimmunoassay of peptide hormones. Many modern medical advances originated as trials or experiments in VA hospitals and now benefit patients of all types worldwide.

Department of Veterans Affairs (since 1989)

The VA was elevated to a Cabinet-level Executive Department by President Ronald Reagan in October 1988. The change took effect on March 15, 1989, when the Veterans Administration was renamed the Department of Veterans Affairs, but retained use of "VA" as its acronym.

The Department of Medicine and Surgery was re-designated as the Veterans Health Services and Research Administration and on May 7, 1991, the name was changed to the Veterans Health Administration (VHA).

The Veterans Health Administration (VHA) is the largest of three administrations that comprise the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. VHA's primary mission is to provide medical care and services to America's military Veterans.

VHA operates one of the largest health care systems in the world and provides training for a majority of America's medical, nursing, and allied health professionals. Roughly 60% of all medical residents obtain a portion of their training at VA hospitals and our medical research programs benefit society at-large.

Today's VHA continues to meet Veterans' changing medical, surgical, and quality of life needs. New programs provide treatment for traumatic brain injuries, post traumatic stress disorder, suicide prevention, women Veterans, and more.

VA opened outpatient clinics, established telemedicine, and other services to accommodate a diverse Veteran population and cultivates on-going medical research and innovation to improve the lives of America's patriots.

Today's VA!!

VA continues to place a high priority on providing excellent health care to men and women Veterans from all eras. VA provides a full spectrum of health care services, including health promotion, disease prevention, diagnosis, therapy, rehabilitation, and palliative care.

VA currently has 153 Medical Centers located across the United States that provide many kinds of treatment services, such as surgery, critical care, mental health care, orthopedics, pharmacy, radiology, and physical therapy. VA is proud to provide a team of highly qualified health care professionals dedicated to the health care needs of Veterans.

VA strives to ensure that Veterans have access to all needed services wherever they receive VA health care. This may be on-site during inpatient hospitalization, at one of the primary or specialty care clinics, at a Community Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC), in a Community Living Center, in a residential care facility, or in a Veteran's home. However, all services are not provided at every site where VA health care is provided. Sometimes Veterans need to travel to another VA facility or a contracted community care facility to obtain the needed service. If that is necessary for you, your VA provider will work with you to obtain these services.

Ancillary Services

VA health care providers often use ancillary services to help diagnose, and/or treat a Veteran's medical condition. These services include:

- Audiology (hearing)
- Blind Rehabilitation
- Chiropractic Clinic also called PM&RS Clinic
- Dentistry, Dental Clinic
- Diagnostic Laboratory
- Kinesiotherapy
- Nutrition and Food Service
- Nuclear Medicine (imaging)
- Orthotics
- Occupational Therapy Clinic
- Pharmacy
- Physical Therapy Inpatient
- Physical Therapy Outpatient
- Prosthetics (artificial limbs, equipment, devices)
- Outpatient Radiology (x-rays and imaging, including mammography) for x-rays 1, mammography scheduling: , nuclear medicine:
- Radiation Oncology
- Recreation Therapy
- Respiratory Therapy
 - Pulmonary Laboratory
 - Pulmonary Clinic
- Social Work (case management services, discharge planning, family/caregiver support, community liaison/resource development)
- Speech Therapy
- Spinal Cord Injury
- Telehealth Services
- Traumatic Brain Injury



Specialty Care Services

Specialty care services provide expert knowledge to optimize the treatment provided in unique or complicated courses of care. Specialty care providers focus on a particular area of care and have extensive training and education. VA medical and surgical specialty care services include:

- Anesthesiology
- Cardiology – Vascular Clinic (heart and blood circulation)

- Chaplain (spiritual support)
- Dermatology (call PACT provider)
- Diabetes and Endocrinology Clinic
- Eye Care (Optometry & Ophthalmology) Clinic
- Geriatric Care
- Gynecology
- Infectious Disease
- Nephrology Clinic (kidney)
- Neurology Clinic (nerves)
- Neuropsychology Clinic
- Pacemaker (heart)
- Pain Management (Call PACT provider; ask about our Pain School)
- Palliative Care Services
- Podiatry (feet)
- Pulmonary (lungs)
- Oncology Case Manager
- Transplantation (heart, lung, liver, etc.)
- Urology Clinic
- Wound Care Clinic



Dental Care

For more information about eligibility for VA dental benefits, contact VA at 1.877.222.8387 or www.va.gov/healtheligibility.

Eligibility for VA dental benefits is based on very specific guidelines and differs significantly from eligibility requirements for medical care. In some instances, VA may provide extensive dental care, while in other cases treatment may be limited. Eligibility for dental care include:

- Being service connected for a dental condition
- 100% service connected for any medical condition
- A former POW for 180 days or more
- Being discharged within the past 180 days under certain conditions
- Having a service connected condition that requires medication with side effects (determined by VA dental professional)
- Eligibility for outpatient dental care may differ from eligibility for inpatient dental care

Outpatient Dental Treatment

Dental benefits are provided by VA according to law. In some instances, VA is authorized to provide extensive dental care, while in other cases treatment may be limited by law. This Fact Sheet table describes dental eligibility criteria and contains information to assist Veterans in understanding their eligibility for VA dental care.

By law, the eligibility for Outpatient Dental Care is not the same as for most other VA medical benefits. It is categorized in classes. Those eligible for VA dental care under Class I, IIC, or IV are eligible for any necessary dental care to maintain or restore oral health and masticatory function, including repeat care. Other classes have time and/or service limitations.

*Note: Public Law 83 enacted June 16, 1955, amended Veterans' eligibility for outpatient dental services. As a result, any Veteran who received a dental award letter from VBA dated before 1955 in which VBA determined the dental conditions to be no compensable are no longer eligible for Class II outpatient dental treatment. Veterans

receiving hospital, nursing home, or domiciliary care will be provided dental services that are professionally determined by a VA dentist, in consultation with the referring physician, to be essential to the management of the patient's Medical condition under active treatment. For more information about eligibility for VA medical and dental benefits, contact VA at 1.877.222.8387, Monday through Friday between 8 a.m. and 8 p.m. Eastern time or www.va.gov/healthbenefits

*Must contact eligibility to see if you qualify for dental services. Once qualified you may call the Dental Clinic at:

Mental Health Services

VA places a high priority on providing mental health services for returning Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF), Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) and Operation New Dawn (OND) Veterans, as well as for those who served in prior eras.

VA provides specialty inpatient and outpatient mental health services at its medical centers and community-based outpatient clinics. In addition, readjustment counseling services are available for Veterans and their families at Vet Centers across the nation. Our goal is to support recovery and enable Veterans with mental health problems to live meaningful lives in their communities and achieve their full potential.

VA mental health services are available in specialty clinics, PACT clinics, nursing homes, and residential care facilities. Specialized programs, such as mental health intensive case management, day treatment centers, compensated work therapy programs, and psychosocial rehabilitation are provided for those with serious mental health problems.

VA is integrating mental health care into the primary care setting. Veterans may receive mental health care from their PACT or from a collaborating behavioral health provider based in the PACT clinic.

VA mental health services and programs include but not limited to:

- Alzheimer's and Related Dementia's Caregiver Support Group
- Geriatrics
- Greenhouse Program
- Homeless Veteran Programs
- Inpatient Care
- Mental Health Intensive Case Management
- Military Sexual Trauma
- Outpatient Mental Health Care
- Programs for Incarcerated Veterans
- Psychosocial Rehabilitation and Recovery Services
- Psychotherapy Programs: PTSD Support Groups, VA Partner Support Group, and more
- Mental Health Disaster Response/Post Deployment Activities (See PTSD)
- Residential Rehabilitation Treatment Programs
- Specialized PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder) Services & Support Group
- Substance Abuse Rehabilitation Therapy
- Suicide Programs Crisis Hotline: 1.800.273.8255
- Violence Prevention



Point of Contact for general information regarding Mental Health: For more information call: Ext 6026

Psychosocial Residential Rehabilitation Treatment Program (PRRTP)

- An in-house, structured environment
- Helping Veterans improve their lives through recovery from substance abuse and/or serious mental illness
- There are 30 beds designated for men and 6 for women
- Specific criteria must be met
- Veterans may apply directly or be referred from other programs

Health Promotion and Disease Prevention

Veterans receive clinical preventive services from their primary care providers. These services include immunizations to prevent disease, screening tests to detect disease at an early stage, and behavioral counseling to avoid or reduce risk factors for disease.

Veterans participate in health education programs to help them manage their health problems. They also participate in health promotion programs to learn healthy living skills.

- Be involved in your health care
- Be tobacco free
- Eat wisely
- Be physically active
- Strive for a healthy weight
- Limit alcohol consumption
- Get recommended screening tests and immunizations
- Manage stress
- Be safe



Care Management and Social Work Services

VA social workers are assigned to all patient treatment programs, including community-based outpatient clinics. They provide care coordination for Veteran needs such as case management services for Veterans at risk for homelessness, frail elderly, catastrophic illness or injury, and terminal illness. Social workers assure Veterans have appropriate care and needed services once they are discharged from an inpatient or outpatient treatment program. In addition to working with all eligible Veterans, social workers assist family members/caregivers to provide support needed to everyone involved.

Other services offered include:

- Homemaker Health Aide (HHA)
- Veteran Service Officer Contacts (VSO)
- Long Term Care Planning
- Compensated Work Therapy (CWT)
- Vocational Rehabilitation Therapy (VRT)
- Veteran Justice Outreach Program
- Lodging
- Home Based Primary Care (HBPC)



Caregiver Support

VA is implementing caregiver support initiatives across VA medical centers. A variety of caregiver support services may be available including support groups, caregiver resource fairs, and other education and training. Additional information for caregivers can be found at www.myhealth.va.gov under research health in the caregiver assistance healthy living center.

- Alzheimer's and Related Dementia's Caregiver Support Group
- VA Partner Support Group, and more



Family Caregivers Program

On May 5, 2010, Public Law 111-163, Caregivers and Veterans Omnibus Health Services Act of 2010 was signed into law. The purpose of the caregivers benefit program is to provide certain medical, travel, training, and financial benefits to caregivers of certain Veterans and Service members who were seriously injured during service on or after September 11, 2001. VA began accepting 10-10CG (Caregiver) applications on May 9, 2011. VA's Family Caregivers Program provides support and assistance to caregivers of post 9/11 Veterans and Service Members being medically discharged. Eligible primary Family Caregivers can receive a stipend, training, mental health services, travel, and lodging reimbursement and access to health insurance if they are not already under a health care plan. For more information, contact the Caregiver Support Coordinator in your local VA medical facility, visit www.caregiver.va.gov

Inpatient Care Services

VA inpatient care includes a full spectrum of services:

- Acute Care Inpatient Units
- Medical
- Surgical
- Psychiatric
- Dialysis acute treatment
- Intensive Care Units
- Medical
- Surgical
- Community Living Centers
- Residential Rehabilitation Treatment Programs
- Domiciliary
- Spinal Cord Injury Units
- Traumatic Brain Injury Units
- PolyTrauma Centers



Long Term Care

Long Term Care provides many services for Veterans who no longer require inpatient hospital care but need resources and support to help function at the highest level. The goals of care are to restore Veterans to maximum function, prevent further decline, maximize independence, and/or provide comfort when dying.

Institutional long-term care includes:

- VA Community Living Centers, which were formerly known as VA Nursing Home Care Units. Most VA Community Living Centers are located on or near the grounds of VA medical centers throughout the United States.

They serve Veterans of any age who:

- require post hospital short-term rehabilitation or skilled nursing services such intravenous therapy or wound care
- have chronic stable conditions including dementia
- need comfort and care at the end of life
- State Veterans Homes, which are owned and operated by the states. VA pays a portion of the construction costs and a per diem for eligible veterans. States set admission criteria.
- Contract Community Nursing Homes. VA contracts with privately owned community based nursing homes for nursing home care for eligible Veterans

The VA also provides long-term care through a spectrum of home and community-based services, generally to Veterans with chronic advanced disabling conditions. Services in the home may be provided directly by VA staff (**Home Based Primary Care or HBPC**), **through home tele-health (which is a monitor set up to enter data daily to a nurse that will review and forward to your PACT as necessary)**, or through community services purchased by VA. The services include home-based primary care, skilled home care, home hospice, homemaker home health aide services, respite, and adult day health care.

Lodging (Hoptel)

The Atlanta VA offers a lodging program that allows Veterans to stay overnight if they have to travel long distances or have multiple appointments on more than one day. It is a 24-bed unit that is on VA grounds. Please contact your social worker for more information.

Point of Contact:

If a lodging request is needed please call your PACT Social Worker.



Services for OIF/OEF/OND & Combat Veterans

Care Management and Social Work Service stations VA Liaisons at key Military Treatment Facilities (MTFs) to facilitate the transfer of ill and injured Service members from MTFs to VA health care facilities. Care Management and Social Work also provides care management services to Operation Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom (OEF/OIF) Service members and Veterans at each VA Medical Center to ensure their care is well coordinated as they transition to VA and the community. Care Managers partner with Mental Health, Voluntary Service, and Chaplain Service to provide resources for OEF/OIF families.

Point of Contact: 404.321.6111 Ext. 2097

Prosthetics & Sensory Aids

VA Prosthetics furnishes properly prescribed prosthetic equipment, sensory aids, and devices to Veterans in accordance with authorizing laws, regulations, and policies. Prosthetics serves as the pharmacy for assistive aids and as case manager for the prosthetic equipment needs of disabled Veterans.



Women's Health

VA is committed to meeting women Veterans' unique needs by delivering the highest quality health care, while offering the privacy, dignity, and sensitivity you deserve. Your local VA facility offers a variety of services, including:

- Health promotion (healthy living, nutrition and weight management, stop-smoking programs, etc.)
- Disease prevention (for example, osteoporosis and cancer screening)
- Primary care and women's gender-specific health care (mammograms, menopause evaluation and treatment, hormone replacement therapy, birth control, breast and gynecological care, maternity, and limited infertility services)
- Medical and surgical care services
- Emergency services, including having a nurse available to you by telephone 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- Mental health (management of depression, anxiety, and stress; adjustment from deployment; counseling and treatment for military sexual trauma; parenting and caregiver issues; counseling and treatment for violence and abuse; and substance use disorders)
- Special programs such as vocational rehabilitation, educational opportunities, Links to Job and Career Counseling, Services for Homeless Veterans
- Long-term care

Your local VA facility has a full-time Women Veterans Program Manager and a dedicated women's health care team who can help coordinate all the services and health care you may need.



Other Services Offered

- Patient Advocate Office: 404.321.6111 Ext. 2264

VETERANS EXPERIENCE OFFICE

- Patient Advocates -

We're here to help!

Atlanta VAMC
Room 1B152
404.321.6111
Extensions 3051, 2264 and 3992
Hours of Operation:
Monday - Friday
8:00 am - 4:00 pm

ROBERT BURTON Manager			
SHEREE THORNTON SUPERVISOR, PATIENT REPS	VANESSA WILLIAMS-WINDLEY SUPERVISOR, AMBASSADORS		
ELIZABETH COX-FULWOOD	PATRICK PITTS	PANDORA BROWN	JOHN GLENN
WILLIAM FORBES	ROBERT VALENTINE	JANELLE HUGHLEY	CHUCK GREEN

EMERGENCY CARE

In VA Facilities

If your VA facility has an emergency department and you live nearby, you should go there for emergency care. The Atlanta VA Medical Center has both an Emergency Department which consists of an Emergency Room as well as a Mental Health Emergency Room, which is open 24/7. There is also an Urgent Care Fast Track that is open from 0730 to midnight, 7 days a week, for urgent but non-emergent care.

Veterans presenting to the Emergency Department at the Atlanta VA Medical Center will be triaged (meaning to sort) and then seen in accordance to the severity of their symptoms, and not first come-first served basis. The staff utilizes the Emergency Severity Index (ESI) to evaluate both patient acuity and required resources, and that applies an algorithm which categorizes patients into five groups from 1 (most urgent) to 5 (least urgent).

In Non-VA Facilities

When it is not possible for you to go to a VA medical center, you should go to the nearest hospital that has an emergency room. If you are in an ambulance, the paramedics will usually take you to the closest emergency room.

If you have no other form of payment (no health insurance or Medicare/Medicaid coverage) you may be eligible for the Millennium Bill to cover emergency care until stable. Once you are stable, you must be transferred to a VA hospital or you will be responsible for payment.

What is emergency care?

A medical emergency is when you have an injury or illness that is so severe that without immediate treatment, you could become severely ill or even die.

How do I know if what is wrong with me is an emergency?

Your situation is an emergency if you believe your life or health is in danger. Use your best judgment.

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 the hospital staff should contact the nearest VA medical center as soon as possible, preferably within 72 hours of your emergency, so you are better aware of what services VA may or may not cover. Provide VA with information about your emergency and what services are being provided to you. Ask VA for guidance on what emergency charges may or may not be covered, so you can plan accordingly.

If the doctor wants to admit me to the hospital, must I obtain approval from the VA?

If the admission is an emergency-NO.



...continued from previous page

If the admission is not an emergency—YES. You, a friend, a family member, or someone from the non-VA hospital must call the closest VA medical center and speak to the Patient Transfer Coordinator or Inter-facility Transfer Coordinator. This must be done within 72 hours of your arrival at the emergency room. If a VA bed is available and if you can be safely transferred, you must be moved. If you refuse to be transferred, the VA will not pay for any further care.

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

This depends on your VA eligibility. VA may pay all, some, or none of the charges. Some highlights are listed in the next column.

For service-connected conditions, here are some of the criteria that must be met:

- Care or services were provided in a medical emergency, and
- VA or another federal facility were not feasibly available, and
- VA was notified within 72 hours of the admission.
- Ask your local VA Medical Center's Non-VA (Fee) Care Office for further eligibility guidance.

For non-service-connected conditions, here are some of the criteria that must be met:

- Veteran is enrolled in the VA Health Care System, and
- Veteran has received health care services from VA within the previous 24 months, and
- Veteran has no other health insurance coverage.
- Ask your local VA Medical Center's Non-VA (Fee) Care Office for further eligibility guidance. If you have no other form of payment ask about the Millennium Bill.

Will I have to pay for a portion of my emergency care?

You may have to pay for a portion of your emergency care, depending on the care you received. Your local VA medical center's patient eligibility/benefits counselor can explain these factors and how they affect your obligation to pay for part of your care. Be sure to ask about the Millennium Bill if you have no other form of payment.

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

Yes, it might. Your local VA medical center's patient eligibility/benefits counselor can explain your options.

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

Yes, it might. Your local VA medical center's patient eligibility/benefits counselor can explain your options.

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

Yes, but this coverage is very different. VA will only pay for emergency care outside the US if your emergency is related to a service-connected condition. Contact the VA Health Administration Center, Foreign Medical Program at 1(877) 345-8179. You can find more information on the Foreign Medical Program (FEP) at <http://www.va.gov/hac/forbeneficiaries/fmp>

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

No. Usually the jail is responsible for providing medical care.

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

File your claim with the nearest VA Medical Center quickly because time limits usually apply. For non-service-connected care, the time limit is 90 days. Again, consult your local VA Medical Center for more information.

Where can I get more information?

You can get more answers to your questions on the Health Administration Center Internet website at http://www.va.gov/healthbenefits/access/emergency_care.asp under Non-VA Care. You may also contact a patient eligibility/benefits counselor at your VA medical center for details about your situation.

Will the VA pay for emergency care if I have no other form of payment (insurance, Medicare, etc...)?

Possibly. This new benefit does not apply to all Veterans. To qualify, Veterans must be able to answer “yes” to the following:

Are you enrolled in VA health care?

- Have you been seen by a VA health care professional within the preceding 24 months?

And “no” to the following:

- Do you carry any form of health insurance or coverage, including Medicare, Medicaid or workers compensation?

You may also contact a patient eligibility/benefits counselor at your VA medical center for details about your situation. Point of Contact:

YOUR MEDICINES

VA Pharmacy Benefits

VA has excellent pharmacy benefits. You can get all medications and medical supplies your VA provider orders for you.

If you are transferring your prescriptions to VA, your VA providers may need to replace some of your medications with similar medications carried by the VA pharmacy. VA providers will work closely with your community provider to coordinate your care. You must bring information from your community provider that explains why the medication was prescribed, the name of the medication, and the dose.



By law, VA pharmacy cannot fill a prescription written by a non-VA provider. VA is not responsible to pay for medications filled at a private pharmacy.

If you have an outside Health Care Provider as well as a VA Health Care Provider you MUST work with each Health Care Provider to be sure that you receive the best care possible. Tips to follow:

- the VA MUST have copies of your private medical records before any medications will be prescribed.
- every time you see your VA Provider, you need to bring copies of the medication changes that have been made

...continued from previous page

- by your private provider.
- You MUST sign a Release of Information (ROI) to allow the VA staff to discuss your care and/or exchange written information with your private provider.
- You MUST try to keep ALL scheduled appointments at the VA, this is required for continued prescription renewals.

NOTE:

- Medications given to you by the VA may be different from that prescribed by your private provider. Some medications may not be available on the VA Drug Formulary and substitutions may be made and doses may be changed.
- The VA provider must make sure of the following:
 - that it is the best medication for you
 - that the medication is working
 - that the medication is not causing you any problems
 - that any important tests or blood work are done
- The VA is NOT responsible for new prescriptions written by your private provider between scheduled visits. The VA pharmacy does not accept telephone orders to fill prescriptions from your private provider. Be sure to bring the medical justification for the new prescription(s) from your private provider to your next VA appointment.

IMPORTANT: Your private provider and VA provider must both know your medical condition. Make sure BOTH providers are fully informed about your medical care for your safety. Don't forget to tell your VA Provider or pharmacist about any medications you get filled at a pharmacy other than the VA or any other medicine (like antacids, laxatives, pain medicine), herbal supplements or vitamins you purchase on your own.

Pharmacy Co-payments

Depending on your eligibility, you may need to pay a co-payment for medications. Depending on your finances, you may apply for free medications. You can get information about patient eligibility from the eligibility/benefits counselor at your local VA facility.

Automated Refill Line

An automated refill line is available for all Atlanta VAMC patients. Please call one of the following numbers —

- 404.235.3084 or 404.235.3087
- 1.800.370.8387

If you are using the automated refill line, all refills should be ordered at least ten days prior to when the refill is due to insure prompt processing and delivery time.

Refill by mail

Mail your refill prescription to:
Pharmacy Service (119)
1670 Clairmont Road
Decatur, GA 30033

Internet Refill

Prescriptions may also be filled online using VA's My HealtheVet program. You will need a user id and password to log in. If you do not have one, you can easily get one by creating your personal profile.

Drug Information: Please visit My HealtheVet for information about any prescription you may be taking.

CO-MANAGED CARE/DUAL CARE

We encourage you to receive all your medical care through the VA and have a single VA primary care provider who coordinates all aspects of your care. However, we are willing to work with your private doctors to provide and coordinate your health care. We call this Co-managed Care or Dual Care. It means that your VA and private providers will work together to provide safe, appropriate, and ethical medical care.

VA Policy

If you are seeking care, medications, or supplies from VA, you must enroll in VA health care and have a PACT provider who manages your care, even if some of your care is provided in the community.

Specialty services will be provided according to the local facility or Veterans Integrated Services Network (VISN) policy once you are enrolled in primary care.

VA Provider Responsibilities

Your VA provider has the final say about how the VA will meet your health care needs. Your VA provider is not required to write prescriptions or order tests for any health problem that the VA provider does not directly manage.

If your private doctor writes a prescription for a medicine that is not on the VA list of approved medicines, your VA provider may offer you another medicine that is very similar, safe, and effective for your condition. If you choose, you may want to talk to your private doctor before changing to the VA medicine.

Some medicines need special blood tests. **Your VA provider will not write prescriptions for any high-risk medicines unless you agree to have the tests done by the VA.** If you live far away or have difficulty traveling, you have the option of providing the written results from your private doctor's blood tests to your VA provider.

If you request a highly specialized medication, you must be seen by a VA provider competent in that specialty, or the prescribing clinician must communicate directly with a VA provider competent in that specialty, either verbally or in writing.

VA providers are under no obligation to follow a treatment or medication plan recommended by community physicians if they disagree with that plan or if that plan conflicts with national or local policies related to prescription of medications. VA providers will explain to you their reasons for changing or refusing a treatment or medication plan.

If you receive controlled substances on an ongoing basis, close monitoring is required by **one** designated provider. Dual care is avoided unless your community provider and VA provider both agree that this is in your best interest.

Patient Responsibilities

- You need to give your VA PACT provider the name, address, and telephone number of all your private doctors.
- Your VA PACT team may need your private doctor’s records, you may need to obtain copies yourself or go to the private doctor’s office and request they be sent. You also may have them faxed; ask your VA PACT clinic what number they should be faxed to.
- If you would like information from your VA medical record sent to your private doctor, you may need to sign a form allowing the VA to send the records. This form is called a Release of Information (ROI). Please provide enough time for this information to be sent.
- It is important to let your VA provider know about all medicines you’re taking, including prescriptions written by your private doctor, over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, supplements, and herbals.
- You need to tell your VA provider about any changes in your health, or changes in treatment or medicines made by your private doctor.
- Let your private provider know the above information to avoid any drug interactions or miscommunication in your health care.

Please feel free to talk further with your VA PACT provider about co-managed/dual care health benefits.

Please see “Your Medicines” section for more information.

MY HEALTHEVET

Website Features

My HealtheVet is a website created especially for Veterans. You can use it to:

- Email your VA provider for non-urgent health care questions and issues through secure messaging after becoming authenticated
- View your VA appointments
- View your lab reports and selected parts of your VA medical record
- Check on possible drug interactions for your medicines
- Decide who should have access to your personal health information—for example, family members, doctors, etc.
- Refill your VA prescriptions and get information about your medicines
- Create your own personal health journal
- Read VA news and feature stories
- Link to VA benefits and services



Michael Burton, MyHealtheVet manager, wants you to sign up TODAY!

Personal Health Journal

Your Personal Health Journal should fit your personal needs. You can use it to do any of these things:

- Keep track of all your providers
- Keep track of your military health information
- Record your personal health history
- Keep track of your own vital readings, such as blood pressure or blood sugar, and monitor them over time

- Keep a list of your medicines
- Record your physical activity or food intake each day
- Record your emergency contacts.

Getting Started is as easy as 1 - 2 - 3...

To take advantage of all the features of My HealtheVet, you need to register on the website and be authenticated in person at the VA. The authentication process protects your privacy and your personal health information. Here’s what to do:

1. Go to the website: <http://www.myhealth.va.gov>
2. REGISTER:

Anyone can register on My HealtheVet, including Veterans, their families, caregivers and others. As a Registered user, you can take advantage of the self-management features My HealtheVet offers. You can also use the VA Blue Button to print or download your information. Veterans registered as a “VA Patient” may get an Advanced My HealtheVet account. This account type gives you the ability to refill your VA Prescriptions online. It is simple to get started with My HealtheVet—all you have to do is register.

3. Click on the “Register Today” button and follow the instructions to register as a VA patient



Be sure to write down the following information. You will be asked this to gain access to your personal health care records in My HealtheVet.

MHV Username: _____

MHV Password: _____

4. Go back to the My HealtheVet home page
5. Click on the “In-Person Authentication” link
6. Watch the brief orientation video
7. Print out, complete, and sign the My HealtheVet Release of Information form (Form 10-5345a-MHV)
8. Bring the form and a photo ID (Veterans ID card or driver’s license) to the VA Release of Information Office Building 98, 3rd floor, room 3111 or 3113 or your clinic clerk.
9. The staff will verify who you are and complete the process.

DISABILITY COMPENSATION BENEFITS

What Is VA Disability Compensation?

Disability compensation is a tax-free benefit paid to a Veteran for disabilities caused or made worse by injuries or diseases that happened while on active duty, active duty training, or inactive duty training. Disability compensation is also paid to certain Veterans disabled from VA health care.

Who Is Eligible?

You may be eligible for disability compensation if you have a service-related disability and you were discharged under other than dishonorable conditions.

How Much Does VA Pay?

The amount of basic benefit paid ranges from \$123 to \$2,673 per month, depending on how disabled you are. You may be paid additional amounts, in certain instances, if:

- You have very severe disabilities or loss of limb(s)
- You have a spouse, child(ren), or dependent parent(s)
- You have a seriously disabled spouse

How Can You Apply?

Fill out VA Form 21-526, Veterans Application for Compensation and/or Pension. If you have any of the following materials, please attach them to your application:

Discharge or separation papers (DD214 or equivalent)
 Dependency records (marriage & children's birth certificates)
 Medical evidence (doctor & hospital reports)
 --OR--

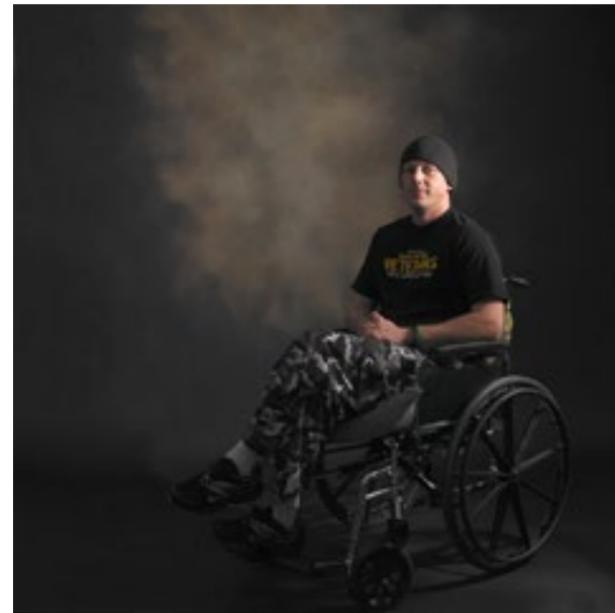
Apply online: <http://vabenefits.vba.va.gov/vonapp>.

Related Benefits:

Priority Medical Care
 Vocational Rehabilitation
 Clothing Allowance
 Grants for Specially Adapted Housing
 Automobile Grant and Adaptive Equipment
 Service-Disabled Veterans Insurance
 Federal Employment Preference
 State/Local Veterans Benefits
 Military Exchange and Commissary Privileges

Service Connection:

If you feel that you should be service-connected for a service related injury or illness, please contact your Veteran Service Officer in your area to discuss further action.



HEALTHY LIVING

Services to help you with: Healthy Living

We are committed to providing you the highest quality health care. We also want to help you take care of yourself. There has been a lot of research in recent years on the best ways to maintain health and well-being. The behaviors listed below are the ones that have the most impact on your health. Setting small, but specific goals can change your life and help you feel better.

For more information about these healthy living behaviors, check out the recommended websites, talk to your VA provider, and review the directory of VA health education programs and services in the next section. We'll be happy to help you.

For general guidelines on healthy living please visit: <http://www.prevention.va.gov/>

Eat Wisely

We all should eat a wide variety of foods to get the daily nutrients we need. The 2005 Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommend these amounts each day:

- Up to 4 servings of fruits
- Up to 5 servings of vegetables
- Up to 3 cups of low-fat dairy products
- Up to 6 ounces of protein foods such as lean meats, poultry, and fish, or 1 cup of cooked beans
- Up to 6 servings of whole grain breads and cold cereals, or 3 cups of cooked rice, pasta, or cereal
- Up to 3 tablespoons of oils, salad dressing, or margarine

For more information about healthy eating go to these websites:

2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans <http://www.health.gov/DietaryGuidelines/>
 My HealtheVet Healthy Living Centers <http://www.myhealth.va.gov>.

Point of Contact:

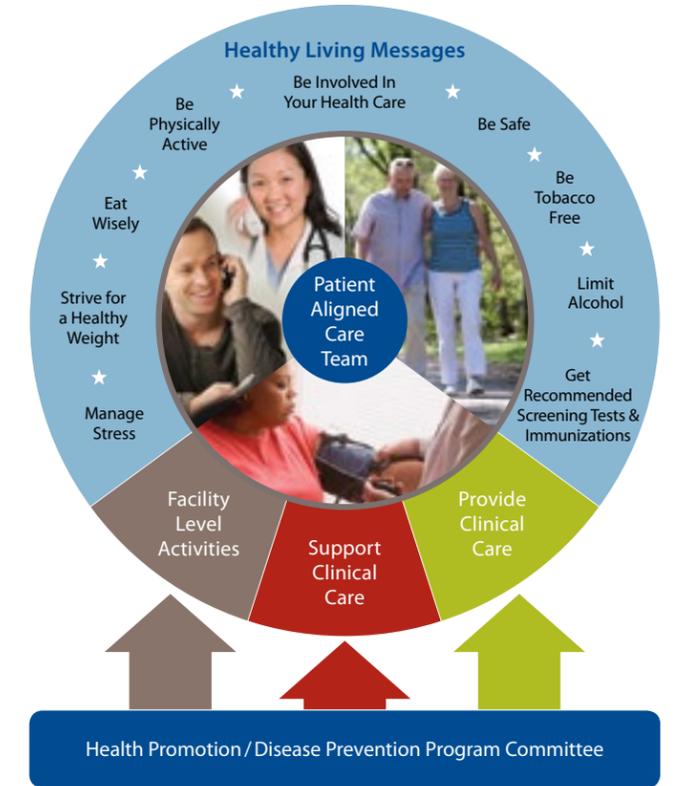
You can call your PACT clinic for an Outpatient Nutrition Appointment

Strive for a Healthy Weight

To find the weight range that is right for you, check your Body Mass Index (BMI). It measures body fat based on your height and weight. Move internet website for patients: <http://www.move.va.gov/>. To stay at a healthy weight, balance calories from what you eat and drink with calories you burn off by your activities. To prevent gradual weight gain over time, make small decreases in food and beverage calories and increase physical activity. Using a smaller plate may help.

For more information about weight management, go to: VA MOVE! Program website <http://www.move.va.gov/>

Facility Health Promotion and Disease Prevention (HPDP) Program



Be Physically Active: A Body in Motion will Stay in Motion

Pick an activity that's easy to fit into your life. Do at least 10 minutes of physical activity at a time. Choose aerobic activities that work for you. These make your heart beat faster and can make your heart, lungs, and blood vessels stronger and fit.

Also do strengthening activities which make your muscles do more work than usual. It is up to you, but it is better to spread your activity throughout the week. And remember, some physical activity is better than none!

Slowly build up the amount of time you spend doing physical activities. The more time you spend, the more health benefits you gain. If you are not physically active now, start small and work up to 30 minutes of moderate physical activity at least 5 days a week. Walking briskly, mowing the lawn, dancing, swimming, and bicycling are just a few examples of moderate aerobic activities.

Do muscle strengthening activities at least 2 days a week. Include all the major muscle groups—legs, hips, back, chest, stomach, shoulders, and arms.

For more information, go to the 2008 Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans at:
<http://www.health.gov/PAGuidelines/>

VA MOVE! program website <http://www.move.va.gov/>

Be Tobacco Free

Smoking and other tobacco products can increase your risk of cancer, heart disease, and other health problems. All adults should avoid tobacco products. If you smoke, talk to your doctor about quitting. If you are pregnant and smoke, quitting now will help you and your baby. Your doctor or nurse can help you, and you can also help yourself.

For tips on how to quit, go to: You Can Quit Smoking Now.
<http://www.smokefree.gov>.

For 24 hour on-line tobacco cessation counseling go to:

U Can Quit 2. <http://ucanquit2.org>.

To talk to someone about how to quit, call the National Quit line: 1-800-QUITNOW (784-8669).

For more quit-smoking resources, go to: <http://www.healthfinder.gov/>, and search for “smoking.”



Limit Alcohol

Adults should drink alcohol moderately, if at all. For men, this means no more than 2 drinks a day. For women, this means no more than 1 drink a day.

A standard drink is one 12-ounce bottle of beer or wine cooler, one 5-ounce glass of wine, or 1.5 ounces of 80-proof distilled spirits. If you are pregnant, do not drink any alcohol. If you are on medication, consult your physician.

Get Recommended Screening Tests and Immunizations

Talk to your provider about the preventive services you should have. The recommendations are based on your age and health status. They include immunizations and screening tests for potential health problems.

You can find a list of the recommended services for men and women at these websites:

Men: Stay Healthy at Any Age <http://www.ahrq.gov/ppip/healthymen.htm>

Women: Stay Healthy at Any Age <http://www.ahrq.gov/ppip/healthywom.htm>

Build a Support Network of Family and Friends

People who have strong ties to family and friends have higher levels of well-being than those without such support. These networks give you many benefits:

- A feeling of connection to other people
- The knowledge that other people consider you a friend
- The security of knowing you can help others and they will help you.



Be Safe!

Protect yourself from Sexually Transmitted Infections. The best way to fully protect yourself from STIs is to abstain from sex, but if you choose to be sexually active use a latex condom every time you have sex. If you have concerns about Sexually Transmitted Infections talk to your provider about testing and ways to protect yourself. For more information you can go to: http://www.healthfinder.gov/prevention/ViewTopic.asp?topicID=32&cnt=1&areaID=0*

Fall Prevention

Protect yourself from falls. Among older adults falls are the leading cause of injury and deaths and are the most common cause of nonfatal injuries and hospital admissions for trauma. To learn how to prevent falls you can look at these websites:

What You Can Do to Prevent Falls:

http://www.cdc.gov/HomeandRecreationalSafety/pubs/English/brochure_Eng_desktop-a.pdf*

http://www.patientsafety.gov/SafetyTopics/fallstoolkit/media/fall_prevention_at_home.pdf *

Healthfinder: Lower Your Risk of Falling <http://healthfinder.gov/prevention/ViewTool.aspx?toolId=39>

Prevent Motor Vehicle Crashes and Injury. Impaired driving is dangerous and causes more than half of all motor vehicle crashes. Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death in veterans in the early years after returning from deployment. Don't drive while under the influence of alcohol or drugs or ride with someone who is. Correctly use seat belts, car seats and helmets. For more information on safe driving you can look at:

<http://www.safedriving.va.gov/resources/driving.asp>

Questions and Answers on distracted driving: <http://www.distraction.gov/faq/>

Learn to Manage Stress

Most people have some stress in their lives. It's important to learn how to manage the stress in your life because stress contributes to your risk for health problems. You may not be able to remove stress from your life, but you can learn what stresses you and how to take care of yourself during periods of stress.

VA also has excellent programs to help you manage post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Talk to your provider about your concerns, and learn about the many ways VA can help you manage stress in your life.

Many VA facilities have health education programs and services to help you make healthy behaviors part of your daily life. Check out the directory of VA health education programs and services in the next section to see what's available for you.

Healthier Living with Chronic Conditions Class:

Empower yourself with knowledge by taking this six week class, one day per week for 2.5hrs, inquire if there is a co-pay for you.

Topics include:

- Using your mind to manage symptoms
- Making an action plan
- Feedback & problem solving
- Dealing with difficult emotions
- Pain & fatigue
- Nutrition
- Medications
- Communication
- Better breathing
- Fitness & exercise



PATIENT AND COMMUNITY LIVING CENTER RESIDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

We are honored that you have selected us to provide your health care. We want to improve your health and well-being. We will make your visit or stay as pleasant for you as possible.

As part of our service to you, other veterans and the Nation, we are committed to improving the quality of health care. We also train future health care professionals, conduct research, and support our country in times of national emergency.

In all these activities, our employees will respect and support your rights as a patient or resident of a Community Living Center (CLC). Your rights and responsibilities are outlined in this document. Please talk with your treatment team or a patient advocate if you have any questions or would like more information about your rights.



Nondiscrimination and Respect

- You will be treated with dignity, compassion, and respect as an individual. Your privacy will be protected. You will receive care in a safe environment. We will honor your personal and religious values and preferences.
- You or someone you choose has the right to keep and spend your money. You will receive an accounting of any funds VA holds for you.
- Treatment will respect your personal freedoms. In rare cases, medication or physical restraints may be used, if all other efforts to keep you or others free from harm have not worked.
- As an inpatient or CLC resident, you may wear your own clothes. You may keep personal items. This will depend on your medical condition.
- As an inpatient or CLC resident, you have the right to social interaction and regular exercise. You will have the opportunity for religious worship and spiritual support. You may decide whether to participate in these activities. You may decide whether or not to perform tasks in or for the Medical Center.
- As an inpatient or CLC resident, you have the right to communicate freely and privately. You may have or refuse visitors. You will have access to public telephones. You may participate in civic rights, such as voting and free speech.
- As a CLC resident, you can organize and take part in resident groups in the facility. Your family also can meet with the families of other residents.
- In order to provide a safe treatment environment for all patients or residents and staff, you are expected to respect other patients, residents, and staff and to follow the facility's rules. Avoid unsafe acts that place others at risk for accidents or injuries. Please immediately report any condition you believe to be unsafe.

Information Disclosure and Confidentiality

- You will receive information about the health benefits you can receive. The information will be provided in a way you can understand.
- You will receive information about the costs of your care, if any, before you are treated. You are responsible for paying your portion of any costs related to your care.
- Your medical record will be kept confidential. Information about you will not be released without your consent unless required by law (an example of this is State public health reporting). You have the right to information in your medical record and may request a copy of your medical records. This will be provided except in rare situations when your VA physician feels the information will be harmful to you. In that case, you have the right to discuss this with your VA provider.
- You will be informed of all outcomes of care, including any potential injuries. You will be informed about how to request compensation for any injuries.

Participation in Treatment Decisions

- You, and any persons you choose, will be involved in all decisions about your care. You will receive information you can understand about the benefits and risks of treatment. You will be given other options. You can agree to or refuse treatment. You will be told what is likely to happen to you if you refuse treatment. Refusing treatment will not affect your rights to future care, but you take responsibility for the possible results to your health.
- You have the right to be involved in all aspects of your care. This is important to you so you get the best possible results. Tell your provider about your current condition, medicines (including over-the-counter and herbals), and medical history. Also, share any other information that affects your health. Ask questions when you do not understand something about your care.
- You will be given, in writing, the name and title of the provider in charge of your care. As our partner in health care, you have the right to be involved in choosing your provider. You also have the right to know the names and titles of those who provide you care. This includes students, residents and trainees. Providers will properly introduce themselves when they take part in your care.
- You will be educated about your role and responsibilities as a patient or CLC resident. This includes your participation in decision-making and care at the end of life.
- If you believe you cannot follow the treatment plan, you have a responsibility to notify your provider or treatment team.
- You have the right to have your pain assessed and to receive treatment to manage your pain. You and your



treatment team will develop a pain management plan together. You should help the treatment team by telling them if you have pain and if the treatment is working.

- As an inpatient or CLC resident, you will receive any transportation needed for your treatment plan.
- You have the right to choose whether you will participate in any research project. Any research will be clearly identified. Potential risks of the research will be identified. There will be no pressure on you to participate.
- You will be included in resolving any ethical issues about your care. You may consult with the Medical Center's Ethics Consultation Service and/or other staff knowledgeable about health care ethics.

Complaints & Compliments

- We encourage you to seek help from your treatment team or a patient advocate if you have problems or complaints. You will receive information you can understand about the complaint process. You may complain verbally or in writing, without fear of retaliation.
- If you or the Medical Center believes that you have been neglected, abused or exploited, you will receive help.
- You may also provide written compliments for the facility and staff through the Patient Advocate Office.



You served your country, now let us serve you! Welcome the Atlanta VA Medical Center.

HOMELESS VETERANS

If you are a Veteran who has lost your home, VA can help you get back on your feet. Contact VA's National Call Center for Homeless Veterans at 1-877-4AID-VET (1.877.424.3838) to speak to a trained VA responder. The hotline and online chat are free and neither VA registration nor enrollment in VA healthcare is required to use either service.

When you call or join the online chat:

- You will be connected to a trained VA responder.
- The responder will ask a few questions to assess your needs.
- If you're a Veteran, you may be connected with the Homeless Program point of contact at the nearest VA facility.
- Contact information will be requested so staff may follow up.

VA offers these services, all available via 1-877-4AID-VET, to homeless Veterans and Veterans at risk of homelessness and their families:

Opportunities to return to employment

VA's Compensated Work Therapy (CWT) is comprised of three unique programs which assist homeless Veterans in returning to competitive employment: Sheltered Workshop, Transitional Work, and Supported Employment. Veterans in CWT are paid at least the federal or state minimum wage, whichever is higher.

The Homeless Veteran Supported Employment Program (HVSEP) provides vocational assistance, job development and placement, and ongoing supports to improve employment outcomes among homeless Veterans and Veterans at-risk of homelessness. Formerly homeless Veterans who have been trained as Vocational Rehabilitation Specialists (VRSs) provide these services.

Safe Housing

The Homeless Providers Grant and Per Diem Program provides grants and per diem payments (as funding is available) to help public and nonprofit organizations establish and operate supportive housing and service centers for homeless Veterans. Learn more about the Grant Per Diem Program.

HUD-VA Supportive Housing (VASH) Program is a joint effort between the Department of Housing and Urban Development and VA. HUD allocated nearly 38,000 "Housing Choice" Section 8 vouchers across the country. These vouchers allow Veterans and their families to live in market rate rental units while VA provides case management services. A housing subsidy is paid to the landlord on behalf of the participating Veteran. The Veteran then pays the difference between the actual rent charged by the landlord and the amount subsidized by the program. Learn more about the HUD-VASH Program.

The Acquired Property Sales for Homeless Providers Program makes all VA foreclosed properties available for sale to homeless provider organizations-at a 20 to 50 percent discount-to shelter homeless Veterans.

The Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) Program provides grants and technical assistance to community-based, nonprofit organizations to help Veterans and their families stay in their homes. Learn more about the SSVF program.

Health Care

VA's Health Care for Homeless Veterans (HCHV) Program offers outreach, exams, treatment, referrals, and case management to Veterans who are homeless and dealing with mental health issues, including substance use. At more than 135 HCHV sites, trained, caring VA specialists provide tools and support necessary for Veterans to get their lives on a better track. Call VA's toll-free hotline or visit the Health Care for Homeless Veterans (HCHV) Program page.

VA's Homeless Patient Aligned Care Teams (H-PACTs) Program provides a coordinated "medical home" specifically tailored to the needs of homeless Veterans that integrates clinical care with delivery of social services with enhanced access and community coordination. Implementation of this model is expected to address many of the health disparity and equity issues facing this population and result in reduced emergency department use and hospitalizations, improved chronic disease management, improved "housing readiness" with fewer Veterans returning to homelessness once housed. Homeless Patient Aligned Care Teams (H-PACTs) Program.

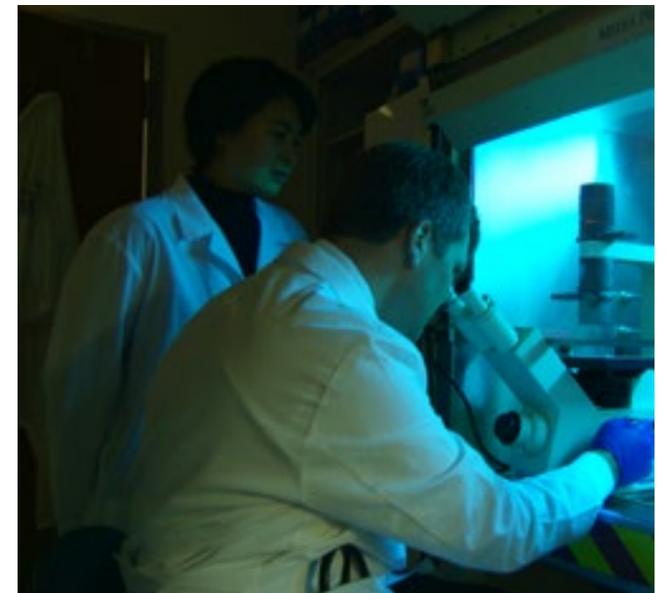
VA's Homeless Veterans Dental Program provides dental treatment for eligible Veterans in a number of programs: Domiciliary Residential Rehabilitation Treatment, VA Grant and Per Diem, Compensated Work Therapy/Transitional Residence, Healthcare for Homeless Veterans (contract bed), and Community Residential Care. VA is working to expand dental care to all eligible Veterans within this program. Homeless Veterans Dental Program.

Project CHALENG (Community Homelessness Assessment, Local Education and Networking Groups) brings together providers, advocates, and other concerned citizens to identify the needs of homeless Veterans and work to meet those needs through planning and cooperative action. This process has helped build thousands of relationships between VA and community agencies so that together they can better serve homeless Veterans. For more information on Project CHALENG, call VA's toll-free hotline or visit the Project CHALENG web page.

ATLANTA VAMC LABORATORY

The laboratory at the main VA campus is located within the VA hospital and features:

- Six major clinical departments including chemistry, microbiology, blood bank, hematology/coagulation, flow cytometry, comprehensive anatomic pathology/histology and cytology
- Three support departments: phlebotomy, specimen processing and lab administration/information systems.
- Pathology specialists who use state-of-the-art instrumentation to dissect tissue specimens, examine slides and identify cancer cells, among other pathologies
- Staffed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week by a professional staff of medical technicians, technologists, pathologists and pathology residents. Testing is performed around-the-clock as specimens arrive to minimize turnaround time.
- Specimen samples are drawn daily in the CBOCs and analyzed at the main campus laboratory



For questions regarding laboratory operations, test requirements and other technical questions, please call the main laboratory at 404.321.6111 Ext. 3048

DOMICILIARY: CARE FOR HOMELESS VETERANS

Many homeless Veterans face serious barriers, including substance abuse and mental health problems, as they make the transition back into the community. In order to address these barriers, the Atlanta VA Medical Center offers two new programs that provide a wide range of services for Veterans who are homeless or at risk of being homeless.



The Community Resource and Referral Center (CRRC) is an innovative community partnership where community organizations come to the CRRC to provide valuable information about their resources to Veterans. The Domiciliary Care for Homeless Veterans (DCHV) provides housing for homeless Veterans while they complete treatment programs. Both are located at Fort McPherson.

CRRC IS a collaborative center which provides centralized services, such as healthcare, housing, employment, benefits and education. Homelessness is often a consequence of multiple factors and Veterans benefit by having a one-stop shop to address those issues. Treatment at the DCHV is provided in a holistic, recovery-model-based manner, with particular emphasis on the development and implementation of an individualized treatment plan. The program goal is that Veterans

will be fully prepared to successfully become an independent, fully-functioning member of the community upon completion of the domiciliary program.

DCHV is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. For more information about the program, call 404.321.6111, Ext. 2268. The CRRC is open Monday – Friday from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

For more information, call 404.321.6111 Ext. 7436 or 4862.

CHAPLAIN SERVICE

Competent, kind, and respectful spiritual care is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. If you wish to contact your personal religious leader, we will help you schedule those visits. While under care at Atlanta VA Medical Center, the chapel is open for all to use. Religious or spiritual written material is available on request. Know that your Chaplain Service cares about you, your wellness, and ability to find inner spiritual strength to guide you from day to day. We look forward to serving you here at the Atlanta VA Medical Center. If you have any questions, suggestions, or wish to speak with a chaplain, please call 404.321.6111 Ext. 6870, or the operator (0) and we will respond as soon as possible.

Chaplain Services offers:

- Grief and loss care
- Group and Individual Pastoral Care & Counseling
- Care and support during emergencies
- Risk screening to identify things that may affect your recovery
- Help to understand and make decisions about tissue/organ donation
- Act as a third party when speaking with caregivers or family members
- Offer choices for outside resources, scheduling, and referrals
- Help with decision making or just listening as you work through problems or options
- Veteran, family, and staff support
- Dial-a-Prayer 404.321.6111 Ext. 4161
- Various Worship Opportunities



TELEMEDICINE

Telemedicine refers to remote care interactions between patients and providers via closed-circuit television at their nearest Community Based Outpatient Clinics (CBOC). For many Veterans who live a significant distance from the medical center, TeleMedicine is a viable option. Several applications such as TeleDerm, TeleMental Health and TeleRetinal Imaging give patients remote access to their health specialists through TeleMedicine appointments. Learn how to get your care closer to home by using TeleMedicine, speak to your Primary Care or Mental Health Care Provider.



WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT ADVANCED DIRECTIVES

As a VA patient you have a say in the health care you receive. When you are ill, your doctor should explain what treatments there are for your illness so that you can decide which one is best for you. But if you were too ill to understand your treatment choices or to tell your doctor what treatment you want:

- Who would you want to make decisions for you?
- What type of health care would you want?
- What health care wouldn't you want?

Questions like these may be hard to think about, but they're important. That's why VA wants you to know about a legal form you can complete. It's called an advance directive.

What is an advance directive?

An advance directive is a legal form that helps your doctors and family members understand your wishes about medical and mental health care. It can help them decide about treatments if you are too ill to decide for yourself. For example, if you are unconscious or too weak to talk. There are two types of advance directives: durable power of attorney for health care and living will.

What is a durable power of attorney for health care?

This form lets you name the person you trust to make health care decisions for you if you can't make them yourself—your "health care agent." He or she will have the legal right to make health care decisions for you. You can choose any adult to be your agent. It's best to choose someone you trust, who knows you well and who knows your values. You should make sure the person is willing to serve as your agent. If you don't choose an agent, your doctor will choose someone to make decisions for you in the following order: legal guardian (if you have one), spouse, adult child, parent, sibling, grandparent, grandchild, or a close friend. Your health care team, or a court, will make decisions for you in accordance with VA policy if none of the above is available.

What is a living will?

A living will is a legal form that states what kinds of treatments you would or wouldn't want if you become ill and can't decide for yourself. It can help your health care agent and your doctor make decisions the way you want them to. Writing down what kind of treatment you would or wouldn't want can help make it easier for those who are asked to make decisions for you. Talk with your family, your health care agent, and your doctor about your wishes so they won't have to wonder what you want and if they're doing the right thing. If you don't have a living will, decisions will be made for you based on what is known about you in general and about your values. That's why it's important to discuss your wishes with your loved ones, your doctors, and your health care team.

Must my health care agent always follow my living will?

Most of the time, yes. Your health care agent should try to respect your wishes. But it can be hard to imagine future health and say just what treatment you would want at that time, so sometimes your agent may have to interpret your wishes. In a VA advance directive, you can say if you want your agent to do just what your living will says, or if they may make the decision they think is best for you at that time, even if it isn't what you said you would want.

Should I have an advance directive?

Yes, it's a good idea to have one. An advance directive helps protect your right to make your own choices. It helps

make sure people respect your values and wishes if you can't speak for yourself. Your advance directive is used only when you aren't able to make decisions yourself.

How do I complete an advance directive?

Fill out VA Form 10-0137, "VA Advance Directive: Durable Power of Attorney and Living Will." Or use any valid state advance directive form. Talk to a health care professional at your local VA health care facility. This might be a social worker or your primary care doctor. Or talk to your spiritual advisor or attorney. Your VA health care team can make your advance directive part of your medical record.

Do I need to fill out a durable power of attorney and a living will?

No. Even though the VA form contains both, it's up to you whether you complete the durable power of attorney for health care, the living will, or both.

Can I change my advance directive?

Yes, you may change or cancel your advance directive at any time. In fact, you should review your advance directive periodically, especially if there is a change in your health, to make sure it's up to date. If you change it, be sure to tell your health care team and have them put it in your health record. Share your new directive with your family members and other loved ones.

VA Form 10-0137B - SEP 2011

YOUR RIGHTS REGARDING ADVANCE DIRECTIVES

Advance Directives. Advance directives are legal forms that state your preferences about your future medical and mental health care. If you become too ill to make decisions about your care, an advance directive can help your doctors and family members understand what you want.

It is up to you to decide if you want an advance directive. Your decision will not affect your access to health care or other VHA services.

There are two types of advance directives. In the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), the two types are in one form. You may complete neither, one, or both of the following:

Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care. In this type of advance directive, you name a person as your Health Care Agent who is to make health care decisions for you if you are not able to do so. Your Health Care Agent is the first person your health care team contacts for decisions about your care.

Living Will. In this type of advance directive, you state your preferences about treatments you want, or don't want, in different situations when you cannot make treatment decisions yourself. A living will helps your Health Care Agent or others know what treatments you would choose.

Your Rights:

- You have the right to accept or refuse any medical treatment.
- You have the right to complete a durable power of attorney for health care.
- You have the right to complete a living will.

Your Responsibilities:

- If you have an advance directive, it's important to give the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) a copy for your health record.
- If you'd like more information about advance directives, or help filling out the forms, please call your social worker to schedule an appointment.

VA FORM - SEP 2011 - 10-0137A



ATLANTA VA MEDICAL CENTER
404.321.6111
PHONE NUMBER EXTENSIONS



8th Floor.....	4340	GI Lab.....	7139
9th Floor.....	7122	Gold Team.....	404.329.2222
Admission Office.....	6456	Hematology/Oncology Clinic.....	7680
Ambulatory Care.....	6455	Hemodialysis Unit.....	7074
Audiology and Speech Pathology Clinic.....	3036	Homeless Program.....	7284
Austell CBOC.....	404.329.2222	Infectious Diseases (ID) Clinic.....	7748
Beneficiary Travel.....	4321	Information Security Officer.....	6795/7140/4048
Blairsville CBOC.....	404.329.2222	Inpatient 4th Floor.....	6890
Bronze Clinic.....	6700	Inpatient 7th Floor.....	7000
Cafeteria (Canteen Services).....	6800	Inpatient 8th Floor.....	7122
Cardiac Cath Lab.....	6190/7493	Inpatient 9th Floor.....	7001
Carrollton CBOC.....	404.329.2222	Inpatient 10th Floor.....	6952
Cardiology Clinic.....	6480/6510	Inpatient Pharmacy.....	6133
Cardiology Lab (for Procedures).....	6197	Interventional Radiology.....	2909
Cardiology Office.....	6190/6191	Laboratory.....	3048/2043
Caregiver Support Program.....	1429	Lawrenceville CBOC.....	404.329.2222
Cath Lab.....	6390/6387	Medical Intensive Care Unit (MICU/CCU).....	7020
Chapel.....	6870	Medical Media.....	6050
Clinical Studies Center (CSC).....	4934	Medical Records.....	6038
Community Living Center, 1st Floor (CLC).....	1444	Medical Specialty Clinic.....	6480
Community Living Center, 2nd Floor (CLC).....	7063	Mental Health Clinic.....	6026
Crisis Hot Line.....	800.273.8255	Mental Health Assessment Team (MHAT).....	2347
Dental Clinic.....	6400	Nephrology/Renal Section.....	7070
Decatur Clinic.....	5201, 5202, 5203	Neurology Clinic.....	3077
Dermatology Clinic.....	6380	Newnan CBOC.....	404.329.2222
Dialysis.....	7074	Neurology.....	5142
Director's Office.....	7601	Nuclear Medicine.....	6156
Echo Inpatient.....	6988/7490	Nutrition & Food Service.....	6821
Echo Outpatient.....	2304	Observation Unit.....	6195/2348/2466
ED Annex.....	7556	OEF/OIF/OND.....	2097
EEG Clinic.....	6537	Oakwood CBOC.....	404.329.2222
Eastpoint Clinic.....	1630	Occupational Therapy.....	6693
EKG.....	6535	Occupational Therapy, Carrollton.....	3130
Eligibility/Enrollment.....	6458	Oncology.....	7680
Emergency Department.....	7614	Optical Shop.....	5057
Endocrinology Clinic.....	6480	Patient Advocate Office.....	3051/2264
Endocrinology Section.....	2069	Palliative Care.....	4375
Engineering.....	6100	Patriot's Retail Store.....	404.728.7640
Engineering, After Hours.....	6090	Pharmacy Hotline.....	6641
Environmental Management Service (EMS).....	7577	Pharmacy (Outpatient).....	7690
Eye Clinic.....	6660	Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation (PM&R).....	6670
Fee Service.....	2138	Physical Therapy.....	6680
Fiscal.....	6320	Platinum Clinic.....	6664
Fort McPherson.....	4589	Podiatry Clinic.....	6600
Gastroenterology.....	6630	Podiatry Section.....	6519
Geriatrics and Extended Care.....	6746	Police.....	7641

Police Emergency.....	4911	Smoking Cessation.....	5398
Prosthetics Clinic.....	6560	Spinal Cord Injury Clinic.....	4380
Public Affairs Office.....	5385	Surgery Clinic.....	6600
Pulmonary Clinic.....	2086	Surgical Intensive Care Unit (SICU).....	6962
Purple Team.....	404.329.2222	Stockbridge CBOC.....	404.329.2209
Radiation (Oncology).....	6730	Substance Abuse Clinic.....	6900
Radiology (X-ray).....	6750	Telephone Advice Program.....	2222
Recreational Therapy Clinic.....	6528	Traumatic Brain Injury/Polytrauma Clinic.....	6517
Release of Information.....	6040	Urology.....	6600
Renal Clinic.....	6480	Vet Center: Atlanta.....	5910
Respiratory Therapy.....	6974	Vet Center: Lawrenceville.....	4195
Rheumatology Clinic.....	2074	Vet Center: Marietta.....	4954
Rome CBOC.....	404.329.2222	Veteran's Learning Center.....	4982
Safety Office.....	2752	Voluntary Services.....	7728
SleepClinic.....	6973/7822	Women Wellness Clinic.....	7559

**ATLANTA VA MEDICAL CENTER'S
CLIENT ADVISORY COUNCIL**

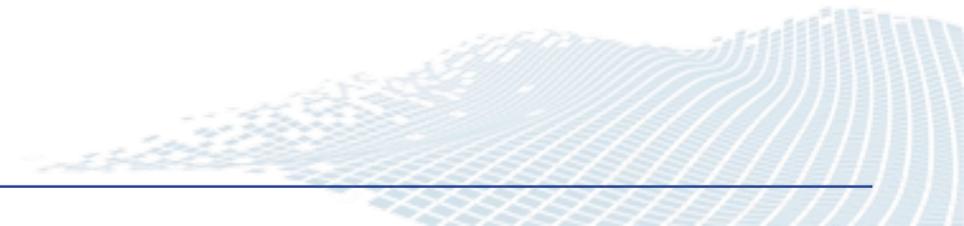
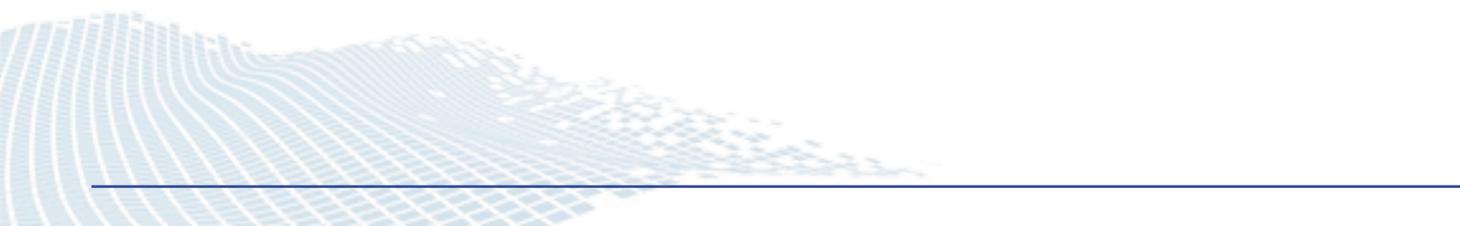




NOTES



NOTES

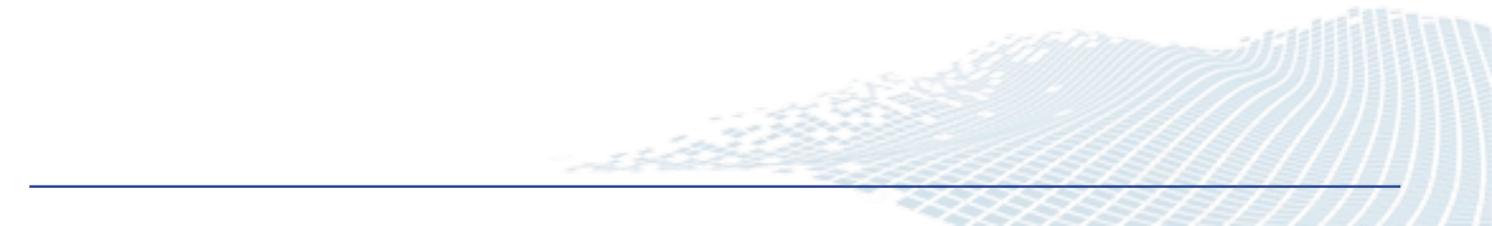
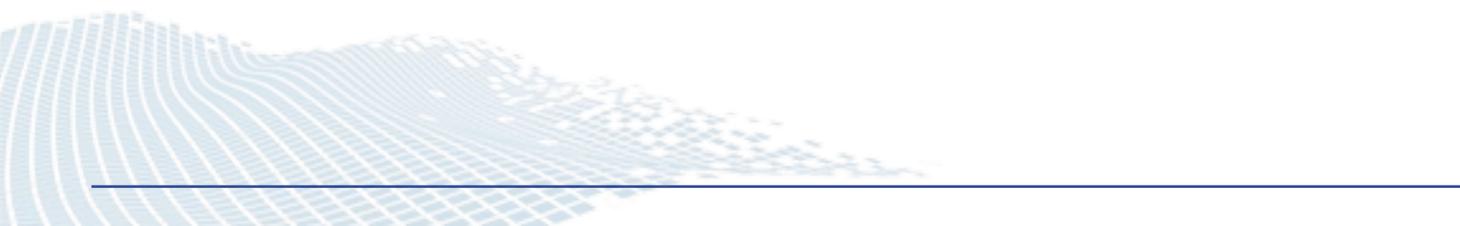




NOTES



NOTES





ATLANTA VA MEDICAL CENTER
1670 CLAIRMONT ROAD | DECATUR, GEORGIA 30033 | 404.321.6111