

The Eagle

Newsletter for Veterans, employees, volunteers, and friends of
Coatesville VA Medical Center



Summer 2012

Protect the ones you love: get your flu shot this year.

Influenza or 'the flu' is a serious disease that can lead to hospitalization and sometimes death. Even very healthy people can get sick from the flu and spread it to others. You can protect yourself, your loved ones and patients by getting vaccinated. Beginning in September, free flu shots will be available for all Veterans, employees and volunteers.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, annual flu deaths range from a low of 3,000 to a high of about 49,000 people. During a regular flu season, about 90 percent of those deaths occur in people 65 years and older.

Each year, experts from Food and Drug Administration (FDA), World Health Organization (WHO), U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and other institutions study virus samples collected from around the world. They identify the influenza viruses that are the most likely to cause illness during the upcoming flu season so that people can be protected against them through vaccination.

The 2012-2013 flu vaccine will protect against the three influenza viruses that research indicates will be most common during the season. This includes



an influenza A (H1N1) virus, an influenza A (H3N2) virus, and an influenza B virus.

Over the last 50 years, seasonal flu vaccines have had very good safety track records. Over the years, hundreds of millions of Americans have received seasonal flu vaccines. Millions of people have also safely received the 2009 H1N1 flu vaccine. The most common side effects following flu vaccinations are mild. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) closely monitor for any signs that flu vaccines are causing unexpected adverse events and work with state and local health officials to investigate any unusual events.

The walk-in flu clinic is now open. Check www.coatesville.va.gov for times and locations.

Dear Veterans, employees, volunteers and friends,

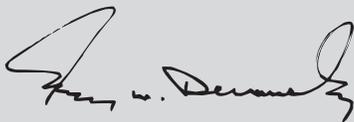
I am pleased to present to you our first issue of the Eagle for an expanded audience. In the past, we have produced the Eagle for employees and Hilltopics for Veterans, volunteers and friends. In an effort to improve our communications, we have decided to combine the two newsletters into one, quarterly publication.

Please take a look at some of the main topics of this new edition. The cover story is about the importance of getting your flu shot. Also covered is the Department of Veterans Affairs initiative to hire more mental health professionals. And, there is a story about a special visitor the medical center hosted in June. In most issues, there will be health information along with eligibility and enrollment information.

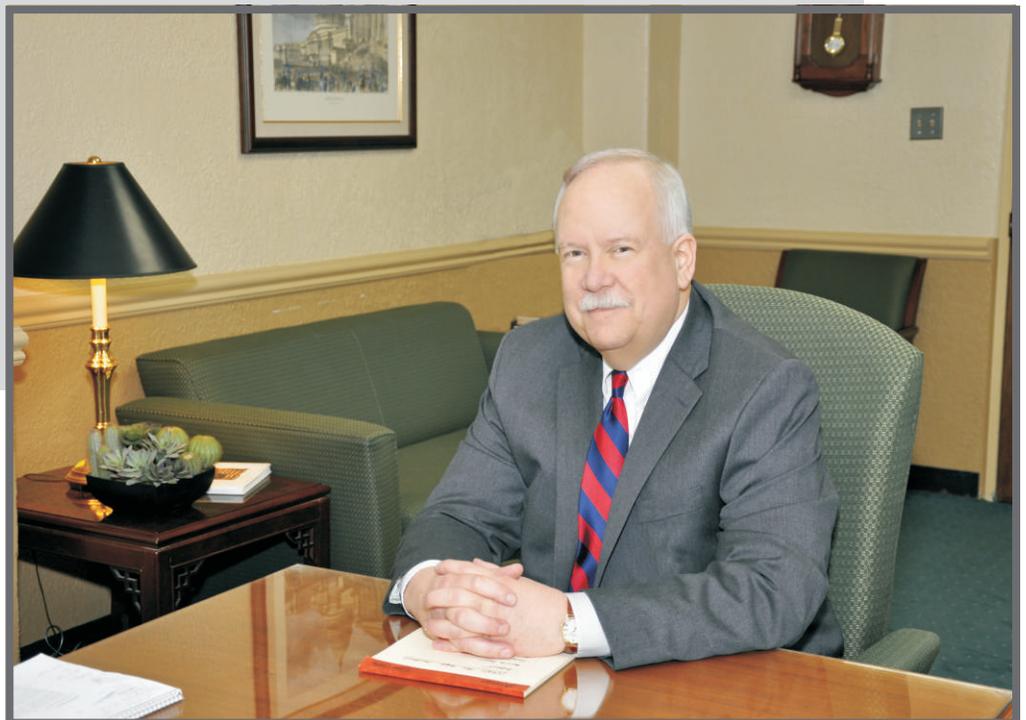
If you have any story ideas or news to share, please contact Kathleen Pomorski, newsletter editor, at 610-383-0203 or kathleen.pomorski@va.gov.

I hope that you enjoy the format and all of the added information that it brings you.

Sincerely,



Gary W. Devansky
Director



Coatesville VA Medical Center Tailors Plan to Expand Mental Health Staff

This June, Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki announced the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) would add approximately 1,600 mental health clinicians as well as nearly 300 support staff to its existing workforce. Coatesville VA Medical Center has added 22 total positions, including 19 clinicians and 3 support personnel. At this time, 21 of those positions have been filled.

Nationally, VA has an existing workforce of 20,696 mental health staff that includes nurses, psychiatrists, psychologists, and social workers. After the local hiring is complete, a total of 295 VA mental health clinicians and support staff will support Veterans who reside in Coatesville, Pennsylvania and the surrounding area.

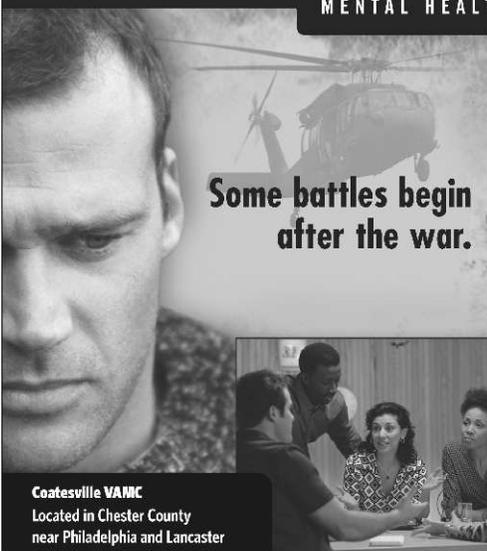
With each additional mental health care provider, a facility could potentially reach hundreds more Veterans battling mental illness. New providers will join a team that is already actively treating Veterans through individualized care, readjustment counseling, and immediate crisis services. Additional staff members also afford opportunities to look long-term and expand into cutting edge Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) research and to explore alternative therapies.

Secretary Shinseki noted that “as the tide of war recedes, we have the opportunity, and the responsibility, to anticipate the needs of returning Veterans.”

VA anticipates the majority of mental health clinicians and support staff will be hired within approximately six months and the most hard-to-fill positions filled by the end of the second quarter of FY 2013. To speed the hiring process, VA developed the Mental Health Hiring Initiative to improve marketing, recruitment, and hiring efforts for mental health professionals so that the new 1,600 mental health providers can be hired as quickly as possible. The initiative is an aggressive, multi-

faceted, sustained national marketing and outreach campaign that includes targeted recruitment of mental health providers willing to take positions in rural and highly rural markets, as well as throughout the nation to serve all VA medical centers and community clinics.

“Mental health services must be closely aligned with Veterans' needs and fully integrated with health care facility operations,” said VA Under Secretary for Health Dr. Robert Petzel. “Improving access to mental health services will help support the current and future Veterans who depend on VA for these vital services.”



MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

Join VA's mental health care team and support America's heroes.

When you join VA, you become part of a leading mental health care team helping today's Veterans readjust to life after combat. As part of our team, you'll treat patients struggling with PTSD, traumatic brain injuries, and more. Plus, you'll work where innovation is encouraged, and scientific evidence directs our practice.

VA is now hiring psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers, psychiatric nurses, and mental health care professionals of all disciplines. Apply today!

- Interdisciplinary care team model of practice
- Practice based on care needs, not insurance
- Diverse professional opportunities: clinical, leadership, education, research, and policy development
- 13 to 26 days annual paid vacation
- 13 sick days and 10 holidays
- One license/50 states
- Stable health and retirement benefits
- Exceptional education support opportunities (subject to funding availability)

Hiring Veterans and non-Veterans



Department of Veterans Affairs
An Equal Opportunity Employer

Apply for Coatesville VAMC
Jobs at USAJOBS.gov, search Coatesville, PA.
Call 610-384-7711 ext 4234 for more information.

Apply today at
www.VAcareers.va.gov/MHP
or call 610-384-7711

This advertisement appeared in the Philadelphia Inquirer this spring.

Last year, VA provided quality, specialty mental health services to 1.3 million Veterans. Since 2009, VA has increased the mental health care budget by 39 percent. Since 2007, VA has seen a 35 percent increase in the number of Veterans receiving mental health services, and a 41 percent increase in mental health staff.

Coatesville VA Medical Center will host the Vietnam Traveling Wall also known as *The Wall that Heals*, from November 7 through 11, Veteran's Day.

Vietnam Traveling Wall

On Veterans Day 1996, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund unveiled a half-scale replica of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C., designed to travel to communities throughout the United States. Since its dedication, *The Wall that Heals* has visited more than 350 cities and towns throughout the nation, spreading the memorial's healing legacy to millions.

Bringing the Wall home to communities throughout our country allows the souls enshrined on the memorial to exist once more among family and friends in the peace and comfort of familiar surroundings. The traveling exhibit allows the many thousands of Veterans who have

been unable to cope with the prospect of facing the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C. to find the strength and courage do so within their own communities, thus allowing the healing process to begin.

"We are so very honored to host the Vietnam Traveling Wall," said Director Gary W. Devansky, "What a special way to pay tribute to Veterans, especially those of the Vietnam era."

Veterans, employees, volunteers, community members, veteran service organizations, elected officials – all are invited to visit the Wall. It will be open 24 hours a day from November 7 through 11. Many special events are planned, and those details will be posted at www.coatesville.va.gov.



**THE WALL
THAT HEALS**

Additionally, at Coatesville VA Medical Center, we have a long-standing tradition of hosting Veterans WEEK. The special celebrations will coincide with the hosting of the Wall and include a parade, gospel concert, luncheons and other events. This year's events will take place from November 1 through November 12.

Phillies Player Hunter Pence Visits Veterans and David's Drive 831

"I would not be able to play Phillies baseball if it wasn't for you," Philadelphia Phillies right fielder Hunter Pence told a captivated group of approximately 100 people on Thursday, July 19, weeks before he was traded to the San Francisco Giants. Veterans participating in residential treatment programs at Coatesville VA Medical Center, and David's Drive 831 members, a charity that supports Veterans, enjoyed a picnic and some ball play with Pence.

Pence visited Coatesville VA Medical Center as part of Popchips' Game Changers Program, a national campaign where 15 professional athletes from across North America gave back to their local communities this June and July. Sports stars including Hunter Pence, Ray Rice, Tim Lincecum, Baron Davis and Hope Solo each hosted an event for their community's winning charity. Pence selected David's Drive 831 out of the top five Philadelphia-based organizations with the most votes.

Pence said that being part of something bigger than oneself means a lot to him. David's Drive 831 is a charity named for David Turner, Jr., a Coatesville VA Medical Center employee who passed away suddenly in 2009. The charity honors Veterans receiving care at Coatesville VA Medical Center through collecting and donating to them essential items, including time. Local community organizations and businesses provide a tremendous support.



The Turner family spoke to the group as well. David Turner, Jr.'s younger sister Samantha said, "David would have absolutely loved this. He was a huge Phillies fan." Some Veterans got to play ball with Pence, and everyone in attendance was able to get an autograph and a photograph with Pence. Afterward, a deluxe picnic meal was served – hamburgers, hotdogs, barbeque chicken and pasta salad – for all.

In the end, it is all about our nation's Veterans. Without them, events like this would not be possible. As Pence said, "Your life is on the line for us. Thank you for what you do."

Feds Feed Families

As part of the first annual Feds Feed Families campaign, Coatesville VA Medical Center employees donated 1,500 pounds of food. The non-perishable items have been donated to local food cupboards.



Flu Clinic

Beginning September 10, the flu shot will be available to Veterans, employees and volunteers. Please visit www.coatesville.va.gov for times and locations.

Friend Us

Coatesville VA Medical Center is on Facebook. Visit us at www.facebook.com/Coatesvillevamc and hit "like". You can also get email updates by registering at www.coatesville.va.gov.

Magnet Update

The Midsummer Magnet Symposium was held in July. More than 50 staff members attended to learn about Lancaster General Hospital's journey to Magnet Excellence, and about Coatesville VAMC's new nursing model.

Toast to Your Future!

If you want to improve your public speaking and interpersonal skills, and learn leadership skills, check out the Coatesville VA Medical Center Toastmasters Club. It meets the first and third Thursday of every month at 4:30pm in Building 38, Room 224. It is open to employees and the community.

Combined Federal Campaign

From September 1 through December 15, Coatesville VA Medical Center will support the Combined Federal Campaign which facilitates the process for Federal employees to donate money to charities each year. Employees can make individual donations or participate in a host of activities aimed at raising funds.

Veterans Court Graduation

On August 9, two Veterans participating in Chester County Veteran's Treatment Court completed the program. Veterans Justice Outreach Coordinator Diana Zinnie helped connect the Veterans with VA health care and services. Pennsylvania Supreme Court Justice Seamus McCaffery presided over the event. Congressman Jim Gerlach (R-PA) and Congressman Pat Meehan (PA-R) attended the event.

New Community Living Center

A new, world-class 4-story 140,000 square-foot, 120-bed Community Living Center opened on July 31 at the Southeastern Veterans' Center, a Pennsylvania state Veteran's home. The Honorable Tom Corbett, Governor of Pennsylvania spoke at a ribbon-cutting ceremony. Our Spring City community based outpatient clinic is located on Southeastern's campus.

Hitting the Mark

This summer, VA's Long Term Care Institute conducted its yearly visit to evaluate our Community Living Center units. The surveyors noted that the friendly staff knew the Veterans well, and appreciated the lovely murals on the unit as well as the many Veteran-centric activities offered including therapeutic horse riding.

Hospice Celebrates 7 Years

This June marked the seventh year that the Hospice Unit has been operating. During that time, the staff has cared for almost 500 Veterans. Staff spend time assuring that every Veteran is comfortable and at peace as they approach death. Just as importantly, they support the family by explaining what to expect and how they can help the Veteran to be more comfortable.

Selected as Training Site

Coatesville VA Medical Center has been selected as a Veterans Health Administration (VHA) training site for the Resuscitation Education Initiative or REI. It is a VHA program to standardize, document, track and monitor the provision of Advanced Cardiac Life Support, Basic Life Support and Advanced Trauma Life Support. A goal of the program is to expand the number of VA health care professionals who are certified which will improve the quality of patient care.



Kayaking for Vets

Team River Runner or TRR is a volunteer-run therapeutic kayaking program for Veterans with a chapter at Coatesville VA Medical Center. For more information or to get involved, please contact Lewis McCullough at 610-384-7711, extension 5091.

Every Veteran is encouraged to check on his or her eligibility by calling VA eligibility and enrolment professionals at 610-384-7711 extension 5008 or 5034. You can also go to www.va.gov/healtheligibility/application.

There are many ways that a Veteran can qualify for VA health care regardless of income or assets. Some circumstances that may qualify you include:

- Veterans who are former Prisoners of War
- Veterans awarded a Purple Heart medal
- Veterans awarded the Medal of Honor
- Veterans with a disabling injury, disorder or disease that permanently prevents them from being able to care for themselves
- Veterans with personal circumstances such as loss of a job, sudden decrease in income or increase in out-of-pocket expenses
- Vietnam Veterans with in country experience between 1962 and 1975
- New combat Veterans (including activated Reservists and members of the National Guard) serving in a theater of combat operations after 11/11/1998.

Save Time and Get Healthy with MyHealthVet

Did you know that from the comfort of your own home, you can reorder prescriptions, view lab and test results, and communicate securely with your provider? All of this can be done through the MyHealthVet Website. MyHealthVet will not only help you proactively manage your health, but you will save time as you are doing it. It is simple to get started. Visit www.myhealth.va.gov to begin enrollment. Next, contact Jannie Cromleigh at 610-384-7711 extension 6230 or visit her in Building 2, room 130 to finish the process.



How physical activity works



No, this is not another article about why you should be active. This information tells you how exercise works to keep you healthier.

The concept to understand is called overload. And according to the

government's Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans, overload is the physical stress placed on your body when your physical activity is greater in amount or intensity than usual.

The body responds and adapts to these stresses (say, a Zumba class). For example, aerobic activity places stress on your heart and lungs and muscles.

Your lungs are required to move air and the heart pumps more blood and delivers it to working muscles. This increase in demand increases the efficiency of your lungs, heart, your entire circulatory system, and not your muscles.

Muscle-strengthening exercise overloads muscles and bones in the same way – making them stronger.

Also tied to the idea of overload is the principle of progression. Once you reach a certain fitness level, you progress to higher levels of physical activity by continued overload and adaptation. These small and progressive changes help your body adapt to the additional stresses while minimizing your risk of injury.

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Reporting Aboard

Welcome new employees from May, June and July:

Sean Anderson
 Frankie Anthony
 Connie Belden
 Julia Carrozza
 Timothy Chisholm
 Joanna Dyer
 Carlos Edwards
 Collins Eubanks
 Erik Fernitz
 Charles Fitzpatrick
 Dean Greenlee
 Patrick Harple
 Phillip Kasitz
 John McCormack
 Melissa McIlroy
 James Nelson
 Aashini Patel
 Jennifer Rowbottom
 Thomas Sincavage
 Jason Snyder
 Jodie Smith
 Clare Zhang
 Bettina Twyman-Henry
 John Wenger
 Kim Young
 Clare Zhang

In Service

Congratulations employees who reached career milestones in May, June and July:

40 Years
 Carolyn Miller
 Ramona Taylor
35 Years
 Henrietta Artis
 Victoria Coszella
 Dennis Brown
 Carolyn Grzenda
 Marcella Vaughn
30 Years:
 Deborah Albright
 Margaret Folks
 Thomas Freeland
 Thomas Martin
 Linda Spanakos
25 Years
 Julia Canonica
 Deborah Doria
 John Foster
 Denise Holmes
 Charles Johnson
 Kevin Mayros
 Laurie Shannon-Bailey
 Joseph Storz
 George Squire
 Pamela Toppi

20 Years
 Mark Barnett
 Elva Johnson
 Bambi Parks-Tate
 Mary Pearson
 Yvonne Ray
 Charles Wilcox
15 Years
 Frank Angelini
 Yolanda Motley
 Elaine Palla
 James Rogers
 Mark Scheutte
10 Years
 John Alexander
 Sammie Eugene Brown
 Dennis Coleman
 Timothy Creekmur
 Paul Donaher
 Thomas Fadigan
 Elizabeth Harvey
 Sandy Hennigan
 Frederick Kinsey
 Daniel Segarra

Best Wishes

Congratulations to employees who retired in May, June and July:

Angela Bailey 35 years
 Lawrence Brown 32 years
 Cynthia Daniel 43 years
 Laurie David 25 years
 Jack Enco 24 years
 Jeffrey Fitzsimons 36 years
 Stanley Greenard 27 years
 Ethel Johnson 41 years
 Robin Rudolph 37 years
 Diana Stumm 37 years

News

Recreation Therapist Angela Campbell married Steve Robus on July 20. The happy couple honey-mooned in Hawaii.

Program Support Assistant Rose Gazzo-Langford became certified as a registered nurse assessment coordinator in June.

GEMS Coordinator Scott McNally's son, Vince, recently completed the Life Back on Track Relay, a 1,000 mile relay to benefit the Kevin Dare Foundation. The foundation provides scholarships to college athletes who get injured or become ill and can no longer compete.

Joe Galazin, staff assistant to the director, and his wife, Kristen welcomed new baby Gabriel on May 23. Congratulations to the family.

Biomedical Engineer of the Year

Biomedical Engineer Kimberly Sekiya was selected by VA's Office of Technology Management as the 2012 VA Biomedical Engineer of the Year. She is one of two biomedical engineers who is being recognized for contributions to VA health care at the local, regional and national levels; membership and contribution to professional organizations; continuing education; and civic and humanitarian activities.

America's Most Beautiful Bike Ride

Readjustment Therapist Laura Fahringer completed a 100-mile bike ride in Lake Tahoe on June 3 in honor another VA employee. Known as America's Most Beautiful Bike Ride, the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society hosts the 'Team in Training' event to raise awareness and funds. Team In Training is the largest endurance sports training program in the world. They have trained over a half million runners, walkers, triathletes, cyclists and hikers while raising more than \$1.2 billion to fund lifesaving cancer research. Many VA employees and AFGE Local 310, made donations to support Laura's ride.

The Eagle is published quarterly. Please address suggestions, comments, or story ideas to: Kathleen Pomorski X4203 or kathleen.pomorski@va.gov. The editor reserves the right to make changes and/or edits to any submission chosen for publication. Layout/design/photography completed by CVAMC Medical Media Department.