

Newsletter for friends of  
Coatesville VA Medical Center

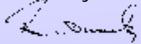
Fall 2011

## Director's Message

I am pleased to present you with the Fall 2011 edition of Hilltopics. In it, we share exciting news including the start of our Housing First initiative, the success of our Medical Foster Home program, the start of construction of our world-class Hospice unit addition, the success story of a MOVE! Veteran, and some healthy living tips.

We are also looking forward to this year's Veterans WEEK Celebration. It promises to be better than ever! This year, Korean War Veterans will serve as parade Grand Marshals, and will be treated to a special day. We will have banquets, a flag raising ceremony, salutes, a day of beauty, a gospel concert, and so much more. All are welcome. Please join us in saluting our Nation's heroes.

Sincerely,



Gary W. Devansky, Director

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Next contact Jannie Cromleigh at 610-384-7711, extension 6230 to authenticate your account. Once you're all set up, you can view and manage your appointments, order medications, and communicate with your provider through secure messaging. Eventually, users will be able to obtain lab and test results.

## Medical Foster Home Program Selects Family Homes

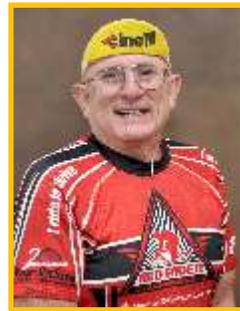
Four Veterans have found new, long-lasting homes through the recently introduced Medical Foster Home Program. Each Veteran was matched with a family or individual in the community, and he or she lives among them. Coatesville Veterans Affairs (VA) Medical Center oversees these homes in Chester, Delaware and Montgomery counties.



"This program gives our disabled or elderly Veterans the chance to have a home in the community," said Medical Center Director Gary W. Devansky, "Further, I see it as an opportunity for unique, once-in-a-lifetime friendships to form – truly, a place 'where heroes meet angels'."

A Medical Foster Home provides the Veteran with a private or semi-private bedroom, a flexible daily routine, the opportunity to make choices, 24-hour supervision, a permanent home, safeguards against abuse, and the possibility for pets. The family or individual provides some physical assistance and communicates with the medical center about the Veteran's health and well-being. VA health care professionals visit the home and provide the Veteran with health care as necessary. The family or individual who owns or rents the home is financially compensated.

To learn more about the program and to obtain a full list of requirements, please call Medical Foster Home Coordinator Ferlin Charles at 610-466-2273. You may also visit [www.coatesville.va.gov](http://www.coatesville.va.gov).



## MOVE! to Change Your Life!

Frank Morrone, a 66-year old Vietnam Veteran, was diagnosed with Type 2 Diabetes in 2009. "It was the best thing that ever happened to me," Morrone said. At 248 lbs., he knew he needed to lose weight, but he had kept putting it off. He was introduced to the VA's MOVE!@ Weight Management Program where he began watching his food intake and adding exercise to his life.

A friend turned him on to biking and now he is an avid cyclist. He says, "hills are tough, the sofa kills, and the bike is life". Two years later, Morrone is at a comfortable and healthy 208 lbs. Now, he wants to inspire other overweight Veterans to make the changes they need to make. Morrone is involved with Team Red Philly, a group that participates in American Diabetes Association events and will cycle in our Veterans WEEK Parade this year. You can check out the group at [www.meetup.com/TeamRedPhilly](http://www.meetup.com/TeamRedPhilly). To find out more about MOVE!, visit [www.move.va.gov](http://www.move.va.gov).

## Healthy Living

Health Promotion and Disease Prevention (HPDP) is aimed at improving Veterans' health by showing you how to take charge of it. The program gives you tools to make healthy life choices, reduce the risk of serious illnesses, avoid hospitalizations and generally improve your health. The nine healthy living messages are: Be physically active; eat wisely, be tobacco-free; limit alcohol; strive for a healthy weight; manage stress; be safe; get involved in your health care; and get recommended screenings and vaccines.

The program offers a healthy living seminar every Tuesday at 1pm in Building 2, Room 107. There is a monthly diabetes support group that meets the first Thursday of each month at 1pm in Building 2, Room 107. No registration is required. Additionally, there is a four-week diabetes group class available on an ongoing basis. For more information and to register, contact Lori Olson at 610-384-7711, extension 6231.

To take it one step further, sign up for MyHealthVet at [www.myhealth.va.gov](http://www.myhealth.va.gov).

## Housing First

The goal is to eliminate Veteran homelessness – nationally – by 2015. It is a big goal, because it is that important. Veterans do not belong on the streets. So, we are trying a new approach to help more Veterans.

“Between VA and non-VA transitional residential programs, there are hundreds of beds for homeless Veterans on Coatesville VA Medical Center's campus,” said Medical Center Director, Gary W. Devansky, “Social workers search the community for homeless Veterans every day, and we collaborate with community agencies regularly. We are pleased to add another program to our services for homeless Veterans, it's called Housing First.”



Through Housing First – which is a core strategy that the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness is using to end homelessness in America – homeless persons with substance use or mental health issues search for housing, all the while receiving supportive and treatment services. The emphasis is on housing. After housing is obtained, the focus is on treatment. In a traditional housing ready model, patients receive residential treatment for a significant period of time, and then housing.

Here are the basics as they pertain to Coatesville VA Medical Center. Homeless Veterans stay in a VA domiciliary for a short time and save competitive wages earned through a Compensated Work Therapy

(CWT) position. With social work case management support, he or she soon moves on to community employment and housing, leaving open domiciliary beds for *more* Veterans.

Housing is not concentrated in any one geographic area. Opportunities are plentiful throughout Chester, Delaware and Montgomery counties. VA social workers have been helping Veterans secure community housing for many years, so this part is already working well. In fact, through the Departments of Housing and Urban Development Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH) program – which supplements selected formerly homeless Veterans' rent payments – the need for VA homeless domiciliary beds has decreased.

“We began implementing the Housing First program in August, and Veterans who are participating are moving forward in recovery,” said Chief of Staff James Tischler, MD, “The VA social work case management services are key to that success. Each Veteran receives case management services *as long* as he or she needs it.”

This program will evolve with the promise of housing for Veterans at its heart.

## VA Hospice, the Best in Compassionate Care

On August 23, Coatesville Veterans Affairs (VA) Medical Center celebrated the commencement of construction of a world-class, Hospice for our Veterans. The 11,000 square foot, state-of-the-art addition will cost almost \$4.4 million. The new construction is slated to be complete in summer 2012.

The building will hold eight beds in eight private areas. Each area will have a private outdoor sitting area as well. A rolling bed can be brought outside so that Veterans and loved ones can spend time together in a private, peaceful setting. There will also be a large, common area with a kitchen, dining room and sitting room.

VA is dedicated to providing the ultimate compassionate care to our Veterans in their last days. The intent of the new design is to make this time with loved ones as comfortable, peaceful and meaningful as possible.

VISN 4 Network Director Michael Moreland, representatives for US Congressman Joe Pitts and PA Senator John Rafferty, veterans service organization representatives, medical center leadership and design and construction contractors attended.



## Veterans WEEK Line-Up

Wednesday,	11/2,	2pm	- Gospel Concert - All Faith Chapel
Thursday,	11/3,	1:30pm	- New Enrollee Orientation - Building 2, Room 107A
		12pm	- CLC Luncheon - Building 138, Dining Room
Friday,	11/4,	9:30am	- <b>PARADE</b>
		1pm	- Flag Raising Ceremony - Building 1 outside
		9:30am	- Radnor School Visit - Building 5, Great Hall
		7pm	- Karaoke Party - Building 5, Great Hall
Monday,	11/7	10:30am	- Women Veterans Luncheon, Building 5, Great Hall
Tuesday,	11/8	2pm	- Interfaith Service - All Faith Chapel
Wednesday,	11/9	2:30pm	- Flag Raising Ceremony - Building 138 outside
Thursday,	11/10	8am	- Day of Beauty
		5pm	- Banquet - Building 5, Great Hall
Friday,	11/11	10:45am	- Salute I - Veterans Park, Coatesville
			<i>Wreath laying sponsored by Military Order of the Purple Heart, Chapter 1777 and the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 287</i>
		2pm	- Salute II - Building 5, Great Hall

Veterans  
Week  
Celebration



## HILLTOPICS

Hilltopics is published quarterly for friends of Coatesville VA Medical Center. Please address suggestions, comments or story ideas to: Kathleen Pomorski, extension 4203 or [kathleen.pomorski@va.gov](mailto:kathleen.pomorski@va.gov). The editor reserves the right to make changes and/or edits. Layout/design/photography provided by CVAMC Medical Media Service.

