



Newsletter for friends of
Coatesville VA Medical Center

Spring 2012

Director's Message

As a nation, we face uncertain times. Many people are out of work, including Veterans. Nationally, the unemployment rate is 8.2 percent and among Veterans, it is 7.8 percent. This spring, Coatesville VA Medical Center partnered with Pennsylvania Career link to hold our third annual Veterans Career Fair. It was a success, with approximately 300 Veterans and 60 employers participating.

All year, Work Restoration works with employers to match up job opportunities with qualified Veterans.

Veterans searching for work, and employers searching for dedicated, hard-working employees should contact Work Restoration. Call 610-384-7711 extension 5287 for more information.

Sincerely,



Gary W. Devansky, Director

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Secretary Eric K. Shinseki Visits Coatesville VA Medical Center



Ending Veteran homelessness and making mental health care accessible for every Veteran are among Secretary Shinseki's top goals. Coatesville Veterans Affairs Medical Center is known as a place where homeless Veterans rebuild their lives. Additionally, the hospital specializes in providing mental health care. Naturally, the discussions during his visit revolved around these relevant and important topics.

"I applaud what you're doing," the Secretary said after he learned about the hospital's recently implemented Housing First model of care, an initiative that he believes in. Through this transformational model, homeless Veterans immediately focus on obtaining – with case management support – community-based, permanent housing and employment.

Chief of Staff Dr. James F. Tischler discussed a comprehensive approach to delivering mental health care. The combination of traditional, emerging and unique methods support the robust, specialized inpatient and outpatient care we offer. Programs such as Medical Foster Home help forge new ground in community-based living.

Secretary Shinseki saw some of this in action through a tour of our nationally recognized Post Traumatic Stress Disorder Residential Treatment Program. There, he visited with Veterans who are learning how to live satisfying, happy lives with post traumatic stress disorder. "I am 62. I want to live the next 20 years happy, and that's why I am here," Vietnam Veteran Yahya Abdullah-Aziz explained as he participated in Art Therapy.



The Secretary visited the Mary E. Walker House, an on campus VA Grant & Per Diem program run by the Philadelphia Veterans Multi-Service & Education Center. Through a special use agreement, the program uses a VA building to offer transitional residential care to homeless women Veterans, many of whom suffer with substance use disorders or military sexual trauma, or both. Having opened in 2005 and improved many lives since then, the program may become a national model.

Secretary Shinseki's visit reinforced our purpose as VA health care professionals. We are here to help our nation's heroes. We are committed to continuous improvement, and we must adapt and explore new therapies, better medications, and proven care models. Secretary Shinseki said it well, "All we know for sure is that we'll do our best".

On April 12, Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki visited Coatesville Veterans Affairs Medical Center as part of a mid-Atlantic tour including stops in Philadelphia, PA; Wilmington, DE; and Fort Dix, NJ. Serving as the seventh Secretary of the Department, Secretary Shinseki is a Retired U.S. Army General who served as Army Chief of Staff for four years.



Welcome Home Celebration 2012

Of the six Welcome Home Celebrations that Coatesville VA Medical Center has held, four of them were held on our grounds. This year, the celebration was part of the Brandywine Health Foundation's 40th annual Strawberry Festival. The extravaganza supports the Coatesville Youth Initiative, Coatesville Rotary Club, Thorndale Volunteer Fire Company, Brandywine YMCA and Coatesville Public Library.

As always, the purpose of the celebration was to welcome home and thank Iraq and Afghanistan War Veterans, and provide VA health care and benefits information. This year, these Veterans and their families were treated to free ice cream, and all era Veterans were invited to enter a raffle to win donated Phillies tickets.



Hosting the celebration through this venue enabled VA health care professionals to connect with Veterans who were not enrolled for VA health care, too. Hundreds of Veterans, their spouses, sons, daughters, sisters, brothers and children visited the tent. Many left with more knowledge about VA health care than they came with. Most importantly, they left with information needed to pursue enrollment.

"We were very excited to be a part of this community event," said OEF/OIF/OND Program Manager Stacey Castel, "We received an overwhelming positive response and we could not have asked for a better event."

As a festival sponsor, Coatesville VA Medical Center was able to support the local community, making this year's Welcome Home Celebration truly special and memorable. Veterans, thank you for your service. Volunteers and committee members, thank you for putting it all together. Brandywine Health Foundation, thank you for the opportunity.

Vietnam Traveling Wall Coming to Coatesville

We are preparing to host the Vietnam Traveling Wall this November for our Veterans Week activities. The Vietnam Traveling Wall, also known as 'The Wall That Heals,' is a half-size replica of the original Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall in Washington, D.C. It will be arriving at the athletic field on November 5 and depart November 13, 2012.



Thank You, Volunteers!

On Sunday, April 22, Coatesville VA Medical Center held the annual Volunteer Recognition Luncheon for almost 200 volunteers. The Veterans Canteen Service whipped up a delicious menu including baked boneless chicken breast, baked tilapia, red potatoes, green beans, assorted salads, and cake and ice cream for dessert. Carla Dixon was presented with the Hazel Harnish Award for Volunteering Excellence.



Join us on Facebook

Status Update: Coatesville VA Medical Center is now on Facebook. Check it out at www.facebook.com/coatesvillevamc. You can get up-to-the-minute information about the medical center and your healthcare. We are very excited about this additional way to communicate with Veterans, volunteers, employees and friends. You can also register for email updates through our Website at www.coatesville.va.gov.



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.

On an Average Day*

- 701 Prescriptions Filled
 - 3721 Inpatient Medication Doses Given
 - 949 Clinic Appointments Completed (main campus and Springfield and Spring City CBOC locations)
 - 277 Phone Calls Handled by Call Center Staff
 - 144 Routine Police Patrols Run
 - 50 Complete Blood Count Samples Collected
 - 1339 Hospital Meals Served
- *Fiscal Year 2011 Data



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. The editor reserves the right to make changes and/or edits. Layout/design/photography provided by CVAMC Medical Media Service.



VA HEALTH CARE Defining EXCELLENCE in the 21st Century