

Newsletter for friends of
Coatesville VA Medical Center

Winter 2012

Director's Message

VA provides the highest quality health care possible, and our volunteers play a role in that. The human connection is essential to providing this level of care and our volunteers do so many things. They read to patients, or they simply offer friendship or a sympathetic ear.

April 15 through 21, we celebrate National Volunteer Week. Every year, we hold the annual luncheon to recognize the invaluable contributions of our volunteers. And, we continue to welcome the hearts and hands of a new generation of volunteers.

To learn more about our Voluntary Service, please stop by Building 5 during normal business hours or call 610-383-0228 to schedule a visit. Making an investment in our Nation's heroes is something you'll never regret.

Sincerely,



Gary W. Devansky, Director

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VA HEALTH CARE Defining EXCELLENCE in the 21st Century

Art as Inspiration

People are drawn to art because they see and appreciate the beauty in it. Creating art can be just as beautiful as the art itself. The American Art Therapy Association describes art therapy as using the creative process of making art to improve and enhance the physical, mental and emotional well-being of individuals of all ages.

Our Veterans are tapping into a creative brain that some did not even know they had. Through a partnership with Art Partners Studio, in Coatesville PA, every Monday, residents of our Community Living Center enjoy art as therapy. Projects vary, and recently, a water color and crayon project was based on Vincent Van Gogh's famous Starry Night.

The activity is coordinated by Recreation Therapy. The therapy helps Veterans to reduce stress, increase self-esteem and self-awareness, and achieve insight, among other benefits.



Defining Excellence in the 21st Century and Beyond

As a VA medical center, we are committed to defining excellence in the 21st Century. The Veterans Health Administration recently implemented a plan that will transform VA health care to be data-driven, team-based, continuously improving and patient-centered.

As part of this national initiative, Coatesville VAMC introduced Patient Aligned Care Teams or PACT, a new health care delivery model in 2010. Simply, the model puts the Veteran patient at the center of care, with an entire disciplinary team focusing on every aspect of it. The program emphasizes health promotion and disease prevention, and relies on the latest technologies for communication between Veterans and health care providers. At the end of 2011, 16,173 Veterans were receiving care through PACT. This shift represents the changing face of health care in modern times.

Honoring Volunteers

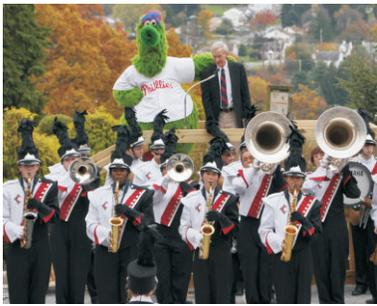
Volunteers and a guest are invited to the annual Volunteer Recognition Luncheon. It takes place on Sunday, April 22 at 1pm (seating begins at 12pm). An invitation is on its way to our registered volunteers. There is no charge for volunteers to attend, but each guest is charged \$15. For the first time, the luncheon will be served buffet style. Our Nutrition and Food Service is putting together a delicious selection including baked boneless chicken breast, baked tilapia, red potatoes, green beans, assorted salads, and cake and ice cream for dessert. To RSVP or if you have any questions, call Voluntary Service at 610-383-0228.

VA Transitioning to Electronic Funds Transfer Payments

Veterans who travel here to receive VA health care often receive beneficiary travel pay. It is currently paid in cash, paper checks or Electronic Funds Transfer or EFT (funds are deposited directly into a bank account). Over the next year, the VA will transition to EFT payments primarily, but cash will still be an option. If you are a Veteran who receives VA benefits payments, such as pension or service connection compensation, you are likely already receiving benefits payments through EFT. If you are not currently receiving beneficiary travel pay through EFT, we encourage you to fill out the application form now, so that you are ready when the transition is completed. Forms can be obtained at the Patient Funds Office, Building 9 Basement.

Volunteers bring beauty to life





Veterans Week
Celebration
2011



From Wednesday, November 2 through Friday, November 11, Veterans, employees and volunteers celebrated Veterans Week. It's an annual tradition of special events that employees plan to honor Veterans in recognition of Veteran's Day.



Committed to Continuous Improvement

The hospital's Customer Service Council collaborates regularly with Veterans to improve VA health care delivery. An identified issue had been no basement access to the Mental Health Clinic (Building 57) for people with disabilities. Though the hospital was meeting the Americans with Disabilities Act or ADA standards, the Council saw an opportunity for improvement.

The Council believed the project could cost thousands of dollars; that it would involve digging up the floor near the existing door to insert electronic sensors, or replacing it with an electronic sliding door and widening the hallway.

A new Council member, Officer Nadiyah Aquil-Vernon, a former Navy engineer, took a look and thought that – possibly – a sensor bar could be placed above the door with an activator on the wall. This would effectively open the door with enough room for persons with disabilities to maneuver through. The Facilities Engineering Service agreed that this would solve the issue, and a few days later, they completed the work.

The door has been in operation for almost two months, and Veterans' feedback is positive. Says Veteran and wheelchair user, Martha Pettaway, "Thank you! It's easy now, you don't have to do all this and all that, just come on in!"



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.



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.



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