



Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)
VA MIDWEST HEALTH CARE NETWORK
Veterans Integrated Service Network (VISN) 23
Network Update
November 2010
www.visn23.va.gov



Get Vaccinated against the Flu

- All enrolled Veterans are encouraged to be vaccinated against the flu.
- All VISN 23 VA facilities are expected to have ample supply of flu vaccine this flu season.

Final shipment of flu vaccine is scheduled to be delivered to local facilities by November 30 or sooner.

Protect yourself, your family, and those around you:

- [Get vaccinated against flu.](#)
- Know the [symptoms of flu.](#)
- Cover your cough and sneezes.
- [Clean your hands.](#)
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Clean and disinfect shared surfaces like faucets, light switches, and handles on doors and cabinets often.
- Don't enter the home of a sick person, if you are not needed for the person's care or support.
- Avoid getting too close to a sick person. When possible, remain at least three feet away.

**For more information call the VISN 23 toll free "Flu information and Education Line" at
1-888-686-0479**

LEXINGTON + SARATOGA + YORKTOWN
BARBARY WARS + LAKE ERIE + NEW ORLEANS
MONTEREY + VERA CRUZ + BULL RUN + SHILOH
ANTIETAM + CHANCELLORSVILLE + GETTYSBURG
INDIAN WARS + SANTIAGO + MANILA
BELLEAU WOOD + MEUSE - ARGONNE + MIDWAY
GUADALCANAL + ANZIO + BATTLE OF THE ATLANTIC
NORMANDY + ARDENNES - ALSACE + IWO JIMA
BERLIN AIR LIFT + PUSAN + INCHON + SEOUL
GULF OF TONKIN + ROLLING THUNDER + DAK TO
KHE SANH + TET OFFENSIVE + COLD WAR
GRENADA + PANAMA + GULF WAR I + BOSNIA
SOMALIA + KOSOVO + TORA BORA + KANDAHAR
FALLUJAH + SADR CITY + BASRA

HONORING ALL WHO SERVED

Veterans Day



November 11, 2010



Today, we stand tall as a nation because the men and women of our armed forces are resolved to bring peace to a troubled world. Today, we open our doors to their homecoming, and we console the families of our countrymen who will never again hear the chimes of freedom ringing out on Veterans Day. On this Veterans Day let us celebrate the humble men and women who understand the call of duty, the meaning of honor and values of this nation. We thank the families and friends of those who support our brothers and sisters when they serve and we extend our personal gratitude to each and every one of you - for remembering that those who serve do not do so for glory, or power, or wealth. They serve to preserve our way of life. We thank them for their service - past and present, and we honor them with our commitment to serve and by always remembering the sacrifices made.

HBO Documentary *WARTORN* to air on November 11

Local VA medical centers are preparing to respond to inquiries following the airing of the HBO documentary, *WARTORN 1861-2010*. The featured special, scheduled to air on November 11, brings urgent attention to the invisible wounds of war. Producers report on personal stories of American soldiers whose lives and psyches were torn asunder by the horrors of battle and PTSD. The documentary chronicles the lingering effects of combat stress and post-traumatic stress on military personnel and their families throughout American history, from the Civil War through today's conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan. The film is very powerful and portrays how paralyzing and life-shattering PTSD can be. It does not, however, discuss treatments or hope for recovery. This is where we come in. We are preparing for increased inquiries and want to be sure you have information needed to assist Veterans who may contact you as a result of the documentary. Information on symptoms of PTSD, available treatment options, and a lists of contacts Veterans or advocates can call is posted on all of our VA medical center websites. **PTSD: There is hope. VA can help.** Visit our [PTSD Page](#) at www.visn23.va.gov for more information

VA Mental Health Resources Available on My HealtheVet

Considering Professional Help is an online tool using real experiences from Veterans. There are five common concerns that may stop Veterans from getting help for their mental health. This tool helps Veterans identify concerns. It provides new ways of thinking. This tool shows Veterans and families what to look for and where to find help. They will learn the benefits of getting mental health support from doctors, social workers, mental health staff, clergy, or other counselors. Responses are confidential. You do not need to be registered with My HealtheVet to use this tool. **To access this tool, go to the [Mental Health](#) section of My HealtheVet.**

The Veterans Health Administration (VHA) administers the largest integrated mental health care system in the United States. Veterans can access a wide range of mental health services through residential treatment programs, integrated primary care clinics, community-based outpatient clinics, and Vet Centers. If you are interested in learning more about the common mental health issues facing Veterans and their families, and the various programs and services that VA offers to help address them, please visit www.mentalhealth.va.gov.

My HealtheVet In-Person Authentication (IPA) Process

Join the many Veterans who have an upgraded My HealtheVet account. All it takes it completion of an In-Person Authentication (IPA) process. As a security measure, IPA is a process used to verify a My HealtheVet user's identity. *This Upgraded Account allows VA patients to:*

- Order VA refill medications by their medication names – not just the Rx numbers
- View your personalized VA Wellness Reminders
- Participate in Secure Messaging to allow patients to communicate with their health care team through My HealtheVet when available

Before In Person Authentication can occur, several requirements must be met:

- The user needs to be marked as a **VA Patient** when registering in My HealtheVet

RELATIONSHIP TO THE VA
Tell us about yourself. (Check all that apply. *At least one is required.)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> VA Patient	<input type="checkbox"/> Veteran Advocate/Family Member/Friend
<input type="checkbox"/> Veteran	<input type="checkbox"/> VA Employee
<input type="checkbox"/> Health Care Provider	<input type="checkbox"/> Other

- The user needs to view one of the four [My HealtheVet Videos](#) (either the 4 or 8 minute version)
- The user will need to read and sign the [VA Release Form](#) (PDF)
- The user will need to present a form of government issued photo identification to a qualified VA staff member at their VA facility to be physically proofed.





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Serving Those Returning From Combat

The Network takes a proactive approach on outreach to returning service members. As of September 30, 2010, the Network enrolled a total of 42,398 returning service members. Of those, 24,576 received outpatient services; 1,007 were treated as inpatients; and 16,815 chose to enroll only. If you would like to discuss ideas on how we can better serve those returning from combat, please contact the OEF/OIF Coordinator at your local VA Medical Center. The following tables show the number of Combat Veterans enrolled in this Network and where they are receiving care.

Combat Veterans Enrolled in VISN 23 Cumulative thru September 30, 2010				
Location	National Guard	Reserve	Active Duty	Totals
Black Hills	1072	48	1466	2586
Central Iowa	1822	308	1066	2586
Fargo	2676	209	997	3882
Iowa City	2646	625	808	4079
Minneapolis	7356	4434	2598	14388
NE/W Iowa	2920	1282	1680	5882
St. Cloud	2537	352	1534	4423
Sioux Falls	1343	207	2412	3962
VISN Total	22372	7465	12561	42398

Combat Veterans Care in VISN 23 Cumulative thru September 30, 2010				
Location	Outpatient	Inpatient	Enrolled	Total
Black Hills	2165	282	139	2586
Central Iowa	1908	26	1262	2586
Fargo	1691	23	2169	3882
Iowa City	3093	50	936	4079
Minneapolis	4806	273	9309	14388
NE/W Iowa	3394	49	2439	5882
St. Cloud	4231	158	34	4423
Sioux Falls	3288	146	528	3962
VISN Totals	24576	1007	16815	42398



Do you know a homeless Veteran?

Help spread the word - VA has founded a National Call Center for Veterans who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless, that provides free, 24/7 access to trained counselors. Call 1-877-4AID VET (1-877-424-3838) or Chat Live 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

For More information, call the Network Office at (612) 725-1968 or
Log on at www.visn23.va.gov or email sharyl.schaepe@va.gov

Calendar of Events – November and December 2010

November 8, 19 and 23 – (Fargo VAMC) In recognition of National Caregiver Support Month (November) the Fargo VAMC is hosting the following presentations in the University of North Dakota (UND) auditorium located on the Fargo VAMC campus. The public is invited to attend. For more information contact Margaret “Peggy” Wheelden at 701-239-3724

- November 8, 3:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. - The Caregiver Experience, presented by Char Feldman, RN;
- November 19, 1:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m., : Caregiving and Planning for the Future, presented by: Susan Johnson-Drenth, JD, CELA Elder Care Attorney;
- November 23, 1:30 to 2:30 p.m. Caring through the Holidays, presented by: Kendra Binger, Regional Care Consultant for the Alzheimer’s Association.

South Dakota CBOC Flu shot clinics:

- November 9 from 8:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. at the *Aberdeen, South Dakota CBOC*
- November 10 & 17 from 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. at the *Wagner, South Dakota CBOC*
- November 17 from 8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. at the *Spirit Lake, Iowa CBOC*

November 11 - Veteran Day

St. Cloud, Minnesota

Veterans Day Program - *St. Cloud VAMC* will host a formal program on campus to commemorate Veterans Day on November 11. The program will be held in the VA Medical Center auditorium at 1:30 p.m. The event is sponsored by the St. Cloud MetroVets, and is open to the public. For more information contact Patricia Aljets, Voluntary Service Director, at 320-255-6480, x 6669.

Fargo, North Dakota

Veterans Day Program – *Fargo VAMC*, in conjunction with the Jon Greeley, AMVETS, Post #7, Fargo, ND, will hold a Veterans Day Program on Thursday, November 11, 2010, at 2:00 p.m. in the Third Floor Auditorium of the Medical Center. The public is invited.

Sioux Falls, South Dakota

Veterans Day Program – *Sioux Falls Chamber of Commerce Military and Veterans Affairs Committee* will host the Sioux Falls Community Veterans Day Program at 10:30 a.m.

Quarterly Service of Remembrance – *Sioux Falls VA Medical Center Chaplains* will host the quarterly service of remembrance on November 11 at 1:30 p.m. at the medical center

Minneapolis, Minnesota

Veterans Day Statewide Event - Inver Grove Heights Community Center (10 a.m.)

November 18 OEF/OIF Outreach Event (St. Cloud VAMC) - St. Cloud VAMC OEF/OIF Program Office hosts a presentation titled “Reconnecting as a Family: a Presentation on Ways Families Can Stay Connected Before, During, and After Deployment.” The presentation features James McAuley, a Licensed Associate Marriage and Family Therapist in private practice, Veteran, and member of the Central MN Warrior to Citizen Initiative, and Rebekah Miller, a Veteran and mental health practitioner with the Neighborhood Involvement Program in the Twin Cities. The presentation is scheduled for 6:00 p.m. and will be held in the St. Cloud Public Library’s Mississippi Room. For more information contact the Mike Mynczywor, OEF/OIF Program Coordinator, at (320) 255-6480, x6546.

November 18 (Sioux Falls VAMC) “Kick Your Butts Off” Walk to commemorate the Great American Smokeout 11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. Employees, Veterans, volunteers, and visitors are invited. Veterans Canteen Service is furnishing bottled water and a healthy snack.



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November 19 – (Minneapolis VAHCS) VA Caregiver Program at Minneapolis VA HCS with speakers and information booths (1-4 p.m.) Event is open to Veterans and their caregivers.

November 19 – (VA Black Hills Health Care System) – VA BHHCS will host a Women Veterans Appreciation Luncheon on Friday November 19, 2010 from 11:00am -2:00pm at the American Legion, 818 E St Patrick Street in Rapid City, SD. The event is open to all Women Veterans and is designed to recognize their contribution to our nation's military and to provide an opportunity to meet and network with other Women Veterans. This year's program will include a presentation about the Women Air Force Service Pilots (WASP). Ola "Millie" Mildred Rexroat from the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, South Dakota was the only Native American woman in the WASP and will be present at the luncheon. The luncheon is an annual event brought to Women Veterans by the Women Veterans Health Care Advisory Committee at the VA Black Hills Health Care System. There is no charge to attend the luncheon, however registration is requested. Please contact Doreen Hughes at the Rapid City VA Clinic at 605-490-7698 by Tuesday, November 16, 2010 to register or for more information about the event.

November 29 & 30 and December 1 (Sioux Falls VAMC) - American Legion Auxiliary Gift Shop for Hospitalized Veterans Hospitalized Veterans pick out gifts, at no cost, for members of their families. Auxilians also pay for these gifts to be shipped.

December 16 (Sioux Fall VAMC) American Legion Auxiliary of SD Holiday Party for hospitalized Veterans, 2:00 p.m. During this program, participants and winners of the National Creative Arts competition will be recognized.

December 16 (Sioux Falls VAMC) Annual Volunteer Holiday Party 11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. followed by holiday party for hospitalized Veterans, sponsored by area Veterans Service Organizations, at 2:00 p.m.

Nov 30 and Dec 1 (St. Cloud VAMC) American Legion Auxiliary Gift Shop - American Legion Auxiliary hosts the annual Gift Shop for residential Veterans. Veterans can select a gift for themselves, spouse, children and/or parents. Set-up for volunteers is scheduled for Nov 29, with distribution to Veterans on Nov 30 and Dec 1. For more information contact Patricia Aljets, Voluntary Services Director, at 320-255-6480, x6669