



Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)
VA MIDWEST HEALTH CARE NETWORK
Veterans Integrated Service Network (VISN) 23
Network Update
April 2012
www.visn23.va.gov



Want to 'Kick' the Habit



The bad news: About 440,000 Americans die each year from tobacco-related illnesses.

The good news: Over three million Americans successfully quit smoking each year, and the Department of Veterans Affairs wants you to be one of them.

VA Medical Centers across the Network have tobacco cessation support programs for Veterans who want to 'kick' the habit. These programs are designed to guide the Veteran through lessons that can be accessed online or in person, including information about preparing to quit, tips on your quit day, overcoming roadblocks, getting used to life as a tobacco-free person, and supportive strategies to help you remain abstinent.

If you or someone you know wants to 'kick' the habit, contact your VA primary care provider to learn what programs are available near you.



[VA for Vets](http://vaforvets.va.gov) facilitates the reintegration, retention and hiring of Veteran employees at the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). We offer career-search tools for Veterans seeking employment at VA, career development services for our existing Veterans, and coaching and reintegration support for military service members. VA for Vets is your gateway to a rewarding career serving our nation's Veterans.

Today, VA is more committed than ever to helping Veterans thrive. [VA for Vets](http://vaforvets.va.gov) works to turn this vision into reality by offering Veterans the tools they need to launch or advance their civilian careers at VA.

We offer:

- The most thorough military skills translation and career matching services for Veterans seeking employment.
- Professional development and deployment lifecycle support for current Veteran and Military Service Member employees.
- Online training and personalized services for the supervisors, HR professionals, hiring managers and coworkers who work with our Veteran employees each and every day.

Come see how [VA for Vets](http://vaforvets.va.gov) is connecting Veterans to the information, tools and resources they need to succeed.

Read more at: <http://vaforvets.va.gov/Pages/default.aspx>

Fargo VA HCS Clothesline Project



In honor of Sexual Assault Awareness Month, the Fargo VA is sponsoring a [“Clothesline Project”](#) to increase awareness on the topic of Military Sexual Trauma on April 5 & 6. Veterans decorate and display t-shirts that represent their personal story of how military sexual trauma has affected their lives. During the event, Veterans will get the opportunity to decorate and display t-shirts that represent their personal story of how military sexual trauma has affected their lives. Read more at http://www.fargo.va.gov/features/The_Clothesline_Project.asp

Make the Connection



In November VA introduced [Make the Connection](#), a new website launched by VA to help Veterans recognize they are not alone in their experience. If you have not logged on, we encourage you to [Make the Connection](#) today. Learn how other Vets have overcome challenges, reached positive outcomes for treatment and recovery, and found paths to fulfilling lives.

www.MakeTheConnection.net Veterans can select stories by sex, branch of service, era of service, and combat. *Make the Connection* features numerous Veterans who have shared their experiences, challenges, and triumphs. It

offers a place where Veterans and their families can view the candid, personal testimonials of other Veterans who have dealt with and are working through a variety of common life experiences, day-to-day symptoms, and mental health conditions. The Web site also connects Veterans and their family members with services and resources that may help them live more fulfilling lives. Learn more at <http://maketheconnection.net/>

VA Draft Scientific Integrity Policy

What is the Draft VA Scientific Integrity Policy?

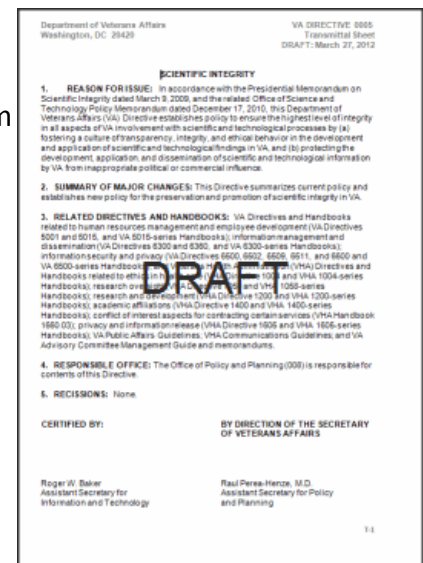
At the direction of the President, the Department of Veterans Affairs and other federal agencies have drafted policies to foster a culture of transparency, integrity, and ethical behavior and to protect researchers from inappropriate influence in the development and application of scientific and technological findings. A draft version of [VA's Scientific Integrity Policy](#) ([PDF](#) / [MS Word](#)) is now available for public comment.

How do I submit comments?

Written comments may be submitted:

- Online at <http://www.Regulations.gov>
- By Mail or Hand-Delivery to
 - Director, Regulations Management (02REG)
 - Department of Veterans Affairs
 - 810 Vermont Avenue, NW, Room 106B
 - Washington, DC 20420
- By Fax to (202) 273-9026

Comments should indicate that they are submitted in response to “*VA Draft Scientific Integrity Policy Draft VA Directive 0005: Scientific Integrity.*” All comments received will be available for public inspection in the Office of Regulation Policy and Management, Room 1063B, between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday-Friday (except holidays). To schedule an appointment please call (202) 461-4902.





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OPERATIONS ENDURING FREEDOM & IRAQI FREEDOM



WELCOME
HOME



YOU SERVED US, NOW LET US SERVE YOU

Welcome Home!

On behalf of the employees and volunteers throughout the VA Midwest Health Care Network, “thank you” for the service you have given to our country. Now that you are home, you are probably trying to decide what your next steps will be. Whether those steps bring you to school, to work or to settling into a new home, we encourage you to use the VA services along the way.

In just one visit you will be able to see what our doctors, social service providers and caring staff can do for you. It would be our honor to serve you. We hope to see you soon.

It is very important to note that **you have five years from your date of discharge to receive free health care** for any condition that may be related to combat service. After the five years, access to VA health care services may depend on military history factors, and/or household income. Co-payment status may depend on whether your illness or injury is found to be [service-connected](#).

For more information on how you can access VA health care services contact the Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom (OEF/OIF) Coordinator at the nearest VA medical facility.

The OEF/OIF Program offers transition assistance, case management and outreach services to all veterans who have served in combat since November 11, 1998 in their transition to civilian life.

Announcements and Calendar of Events for March – April 2011

April 3: [VA Black Hills Health Care System](#) - Wyoming Veterans Commission community outreach meeting, from 10 a.m. - 3 p.m. (MDT) at the Crook County Courthouse, 309 Cleveland St., Sundance, Wyo. A representative from the Wyoming Veterans Commission will be available to meet with Veterans and their family members who have questions about eligibility or need assistance in filing claims, obtaining benefits, training and education or medical treatment, are encouraged to attend.

April 6: [St. Cloud VA Health Care System](#) - Former Prisoner of War Recognition Ceremony, from 10 - 11: 30 a.m. (CDT) in Building 8, Auditorium, St. Cloud VA Health Care System, 4801 Veterans Dr., St. Cloud, Minn.

April 10: [VA Black Hills Health Care System](#) - Lusk Wyoming Public Forum, from 1 - 2:30 p.m. (MDT) at the Senior Citizens Center, 611 Sixth St., Lusk, Wyo. The VA Black Hills Health Care System will host a public forum to answer questions, gather feedback and discuss the VA proposal for the delivery of Veteran health care services in parts of South Dakota, Nebraska and Wyoming.

April 10: [VA Black Hills Health Care System](#) - **Wyoming Veterans Commission community outreach meeting**, from 10 a.m. - 3 p.m. (MDT) at the Weston County Courthouse, 1 West Main St., Newcastle, Wyo. A representative from the Wyoming Veterans Commission will conduct a community outreach meeting. Veterans and their family members who have questions about eligibility or need assistance in filing claims, obtaining benefits, training and education or medical treatment, are encouraged to attend.

April 20: [St. Cloud VA Health Care System](#) - **Southwestern Minnesota Veterans' Law Clinic**, from 12-2 p.m. (CDT) at the Montevideo VA Clinic, 1025 North 13th St., Montevideo, Minn. Free legal consultation for Veterans for: Social Security Law, Housing, Consumer, Child Support, Family Law, and Employment. No criminal law issues will be discussed. Please call 320.430.1051 to schedule an appointment.

April 24 - 26: [St. Cloud VA Health Care System](#) - **2012 Physically Disabled Veterans Turkey Hunt**. The St. Cloud VA Health Care System, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources and the Minnesota National Guard, Camp Ripley hold the 8th Annual Physically Disabled Veterans Turkey Hunt April 24-26, 2012, at Camp Ripley near Little Falls, Minn.

April 25: [Fargo VA Health Care System](#) - **Living Well Classes: Helping Veterans Manage Their Health**, at the Bemidji VA Clinic, 705 5th St. N.W. Suite B, Bemidji, Minn. Join us for the Chronic Disease Self-Management workshop. This workshop is designed to help participants develop the skills needed for improved management of your chronic health condition(s). The workshop consists of six weekly sessions and each session meets for 2.5 hours. Pre-registration is required so call 218.755.6360 today!

April 25: [VA Central Iowa Health Care System](#) - **Women Veterans Lunch and Learn**, from 11 a.m. - 12 p.m. (CDT) in Bldg. 1, Room 1632 of the VA Central Iowa Health Care System, 3600 30th St., Des Moines, Iowa. Come enjoy a light lunch and learn about a current health topic or trend. Come socialize with other female veterans and staff. For more information, please contact Michelle Finley, Women Veterans Coordinator at 515.699.5999 x5824.

May 18: [St. Cloud VA Health Care System](#) - **Southwestern Minnesota Veterans' Law Clinic** from Noon-2 p.m. at the Montevideo VA Clinic, 1025 North 13th St., Montevideo, Minn. Free legal consultation for Veterans for: Social Security Law, Housing, Consumer, Child Support, Family Law, and Employment. No criminal law issues will be discussed. Please call 320.430.1051 to schedule an appointment.

For more information about upcoming events, classes or weather alerts log on at:

Black Hills Health VA System (HCS) -	www.blackhills.va.gov
Central Iowa VA HCS-	www.centraliowa.va.gov
Fargo, ND VA Medical Center -	www.fargo.va.gov
Iowa City, Iowa VA Medical Center-	www.iowacity.va.gov
Minneapolis VA HCS -	www.minneapolis.va.gov
Nebraska Western Iowa VA HCS-	www.nebraska.va.gov
Sioux Falls VA Medical Center -	www.siouxfalls.va.gov
St. Cloud VA HCS -	www.stcloud.va.gov
VA Midwest Health Care Network	www.visn23.va.gov
HCS - Health Care System	
VA - Department of Veterans Affairs	

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