



Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)  
VA MIDWEST HEALTH CARE NETWORK  
*Veterans Integrated Service Network (VISN) 23*  
Network Update  
July 2012  
[www.visn23.va.gov](http://www.visn23.va.gov)



### VA Encourages HIV Tests for All Veterans



The Department of Veterans Affairs is encouraging all Veterans to be tested for HIV at least once in their lives.

Some VA facilities offer HIV testing on a walk-in basis or through routine primary care appointments. Others offer testing as part of special health fairs. More information about the benefits of being tested is available at [www.hiv.va.gov](http://www.hiv.va.gov). It is estimated that 1.2 million people in the United States are living with HIV, and one out of five are unaware they are infected.

#### Should You Get Tested?

The VA recommends that voluntary HIV testing be provided to all patients who receive medical care--even for those Veterans who do not think that they have risk factors. That way, people who are infected will be diagnosed early and can get the most benefits from treatment.

Talk with your health care provider to learn more about HIV testing or log on at:  
[www.hiv.va.gov/index.asp](http://www.hiv.va.gov/index.asp)



### Joint VA/DOL Veterans Retraining Assistance Program Reaches Important Milestone

Congress passed, and the President has signed into law, the VOW to Hire Heroes Act of 2011. Included in this new law is the Veterans Retraining Assistance Program (VRAP). VRAP offers up to 12 months of training assistance to unemployed Veterans who:

- Are at least 35 but no more than 60 years old
- Are unemployed on the date of application
- Received an other than dishonorable discharge
- Are not be eligible for any other VA education benefit program (e.g.: the Post-9/11 GI Bill, Montgomery GI Bill, Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Assistance)
- Are not in receipt of VA compensation due to unemployability
- Are not enrolled in a federal or state job training program

#### High Demand Jobs

VRAP will provide training for programs of education that lead to a high demand occupation, as determined by the Department of Labor.

To learn more go to:

<http://benefits.va.gov/vow/education.htm>

## Skin Cancer – Learn the Facts



### Skin cancer — catch it early!

Skin cancer can be prevented and, if caught early, is highly curable. Detected early, skin cancer is almost 100 percent curable. Almost 50 percent of people who live to age 65 will develop at least one form of skin cancer. Take charge of your skin. Get regular checkups and take precautions when you are out in the sun. Remember to "Slip, Slap, and Slop."

- Slip on a long sleeve shirt.
- Slap on a hat
- Slop on some sunscreen

Veterans! Remember that skin cancer is the most common type of cancer occurring in the United States. It is also the most rapidly increasing cancer. Ask your VA doctor about your risks at your next appointment! For more information on skin cancer, [read the CDC website](http://www.cdc.gov) or log on at [www.va.gov/health/NewsFeatures/20120621a.asp](http://www.va.gov/health/NewsFeatures/20120621a.asp)

## GO RED for Women – Teaming Together to Fight Heart Disease in Women

Heart Disease is the No. 1 killer of women so VA and the American Heart Association have teamed up for "Go Red For Women". On the program's website Women Veterans can connect with other women Veterans who've had similar heart disease experiences in the Go Red Heart Match program. One tool available to women who have had experiences with heart disease is the Go Red Heart Match database. The Go Red Heart Match database allows women to create a profile, indicate their military status and connect with others who have had similar experiences. To learn more go to:

[www.goredforwomen.org/HeartMatch/default.aspx](http://www.goredforwomen.org/HeartMatch/default.aspx)



## VA Releases Financial Analysis on Future Proposals



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Veterans Integrated Service Network (VISN) 23 and VA Black Hills Health Care System released the financial analysis on the proposed reconfiguration of health care services in western South Dakota and parts of Nebraska and Wyoming.

The financial analysis was requested by the South Dakota and Nebraska Congressional delegations, Veterans Service Organizations and other stakeholders. To learn more log on at:

[www.blackhills.va.gov/VABlackHillsFuture/index.asp](http://www.blackhills.va.gov/VABlackHillsFuture/index.asp)



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## Announcements and Calendar of Events for July 2012

**July 11:** [VA Black Hills Health Care System](#) - **OEF/OIF/OND Veteran Outreach** from 9 a.m.-2 p.m. in Crites Hall on the campus of Chadron State College, 1000 Main St., Chadron, Neb. Veterans will be able to learn about VA health care eligibility questions, care coordination and resources/referral.

**July 11:** [St. Cloud VA Health Care System](#) - **Veterans Career Fair** from 11 a.m.-3 p.m. at the Earle Brown Heritage Center, 6155 Earle Browne Dr., Brooklyn Center, Minn.

**July 11:** [VA Black Hills Health Care System](#) - **Wyoming Veterans Commission - Veteran's Assistance** -- A representative from the Wyoming Veterans Commission will conduct community outreach meetings in Wyoming cities throughout July. The event will be held in Newcastle, Wyo., at the Weston County Courthouse, 1 W. Main from 10 a.m.-3 p.m.

**July 17:** [St. Cloud VA Health Care System](#) - **Veterans' Law Clinic** from 12-2 p.m. at the St. Cloud VA Medical Center, 4801 Veterans Dr., St. Cloud, Minn., Bldg T-100. Free legal consultation for Veterans on: Social Security Law, Housing, Child Support, Family Law, and Employment. Call 320.253.0138 or 1-800-622-7773 for an appt.

**July 18:** [VA Black Hills Health Care System](#) - **OEF/OIF/OND Veteran Outreach** from 1-4 p.m. at the Scottsbluff VA Clinic located at 1720 East Portal St., Scottsbluff, Neb. Veterans will be able to learn about VA health care eligibility questions, care coordination and resources/referral.

**July 20:** [St. Cloud VA Health Care System](#) - **Southwestern Minnesota Veterans' Law Clinic** from 12-2 p.m. at the Montevideo VA Clinic, 1025 North 13th St., Montevideo, Minn. Free legal consultation for Veterans on: Social Security Law, Housing, Child Support, Family Law, and Employment. Call 320.430.1051 for an appt.

**July 24:** [VA Black Hills Health Care System](#) - **OEF/OIF/OND Veteran Outreach** at the Pine Ridge VA Clinic, next to the Indian Health Service Hospital, Pine Ridge, S.D. Veterans will be able to learn about VA health care eligibility questions, care coordination and resources/referral.

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

Black Hills VA (HCS) - [www.blackhills.va.gov](http://www.blackhills.va.gov)  
Central Iowa VA HCS - [www.centraliowa.va.gov](http://www.centraliowa.va.gov)  
Fargo VA HCS - [www.fargo.va.gov](http://www.fargo.va.gov)  
Iowa City VA HCS - [www.iowacity.va.gov](http://www.iowacity.va.gov)  
Minneapolis VA HCS - [www.minneapolis.va.gov](http://www.minneapolis.va.gov)  
Nebraska Western Iowa VA HCS - [www.nebraska.va.gov](http://www.nebraska.va.gov)  
Sioux Falls VA HCS - [www.siouxfalls.va.gov](http://www.siouxfalls.va.gov)  
St. Cloud VA HCS - [www.stcloud.va.gov](http://www.stcloud.va.gov)  
VA Midwest Health Care Network - [www.visn23.va.gov](http://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](http://www.visn23.va.gov) or email [sharyl.schaepe@va.gov](mailto:sharyl.schaepe@va.gov)