



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



It's Everyone's Job to Care for Women Veterans



[Clothesline Project Video](#)

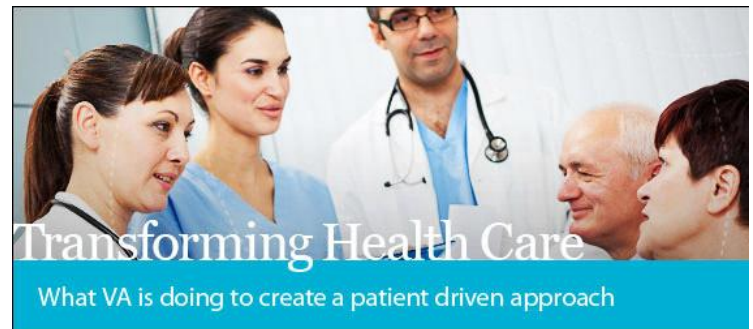
Length
3:12

If you are looking for information to share with women Veterans, VA has a great selection of materials at your fingertips.

Women Veterans Health Care produces a host of outreach materials offering background on women's health at the VA. These materials include [brochures](#), [videos](#), [health outreach campaigns](#), and [research publications and reports](#).

Women Veterans Health Care is leading a VA-wide culture change campaign to deliver the message: "It's everyone's job to care for women Veterans." [Learn more](#) and download resources at:

<http://www.womenshealth.va.gov/WOMENSHEALTH/publications.asp>



The mission of the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) is to "honor America's Veterans by providing exceptional health care that improves their health and well-being."

A critical challenge lies in the fact that the medical model in the United States is focused on disease care, which is an essential aspect of optimizing health and well-being, but is incomplete.

Dr. Tracy Gaudet, Director of VA's Office of Patient Centered Care and Cultural Transformation, believes the future of VA health care will require that we ask the Veteran, "How can we help you live your life fully?"

She believes that "Veterans committed their lives, health and well being to mission success in defense of our country. Now we can help them be mission ready for their lives, optimizing their health in service of what matters to them. We will identify success when Veterans achieve outcomes they never even imagined possible."

A Personalized, Proactive, Patient Driven Approach

Dr. Gaudet explains this is why the VHA is embarking on a transformation of health care, to drive the current model that is primarily, "find it, fix it" disease care, to a personalized, proactive approach, driven by the individual needs of the Veteran. To learn more about VA Patient Centered Care go to:

<http://www.va.gov/health/newsfeatures/20120827a.asp>

Fargo VA Employees Create Honor Tables



Crystal Nemar, a Registered Nurse and Iraq Veteran inspired her fellow employees to create three 'Honor Tables' to pay tribute to Veterans who pass away while receiving care at the Fargo VA medical center. Now, when a Veteran passes away at the Fargo VA medical center an Honor Table is placed outside the room of the departed Veteran, and remains in place until the family and patient have left the room. "It is all about showing honor and respect to our Veterans," said Nemar. To read about Fargo VA Health Care System's Honor Tables go to:

http://www.visn23.va.gov/visn23/articles/honor_tables.asp

Judith Johnson-Mekota appointed Acting Director at Minneapolis



On September 9, 2012, Ms. Judith Johnson-Mekota, Deputy Network Director for VISN 23, will begin serving as the Acting Director for the Minneapolis VA Health Care System. We thank Mr. Barry Sharp for serving as the Acting Director for the Minneapolis VA HCS since January 2012. Mr. Sharp returns to Iowa City, Iowa where he will resume his duties as the Director for the Iowa City VA Health Care System. Recruitment for a Director for the Minneapolis VA Health Care System continues.

Are You Prepared For an Emergency?



September is National Preparedness Month, reminding us this month of things we should review every month. If you're a Veteran receiving VA health care, do you have enough medication if your current supply ran out and you couldn't get to the drug store or your VA medical center? Be prepared for an emergency. Make a check list of things you need. In addition to your prescriptions be sure to:

- Stock up on other expendable health supplies
- Have a backup plan for others around you who need care
- Remember to keep a list of medications and other important health documents ready for you to go
- Have emergency phone numbers at your fingertips – Doctor - VA Hospital - Ambulance?
- Stock up on plenty of food and water
- Put Ready.gov in your web browser's Favorites. They have a vast library of information (in 13 languages!). Print it out. Tape it on the fridge. You never know when you may need it.

Women's PTSD Retreat



The specialized Post Traumatic Stress Disorder Outpatient Treatment Program (PCT) of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Black Hills Health Care System is hosting its semi-annual women's PTSD retreat October 19-21, 2012. The retreat will be held at the Fort Meade Campus. The semi-annual weekend retreat, beginning at 12pm on October 19th, is for women Veterans of all eras diagnosed with PTSD and family members (wives, significant others, mothers, adult daughters, etc) of male Veterans diagnosed with PTSD.

Pre registration is a must – call the PCT Program at 720-7449 or 1-800-743-1070, extension 7449.



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Announcements and Calendar of Events for September 2012

September 4 & 18: [St. Cloud VA Health Care System](#) - **Veterans' Law Clinic** from Noon-2 p.m. (CDT) at the St. Cloud VA Medical Center Bldg T-100, 4801 Veterans Dr., St. Cloud, 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.

September 6: [VA Black Hills Health Care System](#) - **OEF/OIF/OND Veteran Outreach** at the Pine Ridge Veterans Building in Pine Ridge, S.D. from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. (MDT) Veterans will be able to learn about VA health care eligibility questions, care coordination and resources/referral.

September 9: [St. Cloud VA Health Care System](#) - **Veterans Crisis Resource Information Group** from 9-10 a.m. (CST) in the Building 8 auditorium at the St. Cloud VA Health Care System, 4801 Veterans Dr., St. Cloud, Minn.

September 10-14: [Fargo VA Health Care System](#) - **Events planned to highlight Suicide Prevention month** during the month of September, there will be various activities occurring at the Fargo VA to bring awareness and education about Suicide Prevention. All Veterans and their families are invited to attend any of these free and informative events. No registration is needed. [View the events schedule here.](#)

September 12: [St. Cloud VA Health Care System](#) - **Suicide Prevention Awareness Month Presentation: "Suicide Punchline"** from 9-10 a.m. (CST) in the Building 8 auditorium at the St. Cloud VA Health Care System, 4801 Veterans Dr., St. Cloud, Minn. Join solo performer Jennifer Tudor as she cross-examines her ghosts, knocks 'em dead at cocktail parties, and enters dioramas of the afterlife. In Suicide Punchline surviving is the opposite of solving.

September 18: [St. Cloud VA Health Care System](#) - **Flu Shots** from 9 a.m.-2 p.m. (CST) at the Montevideo VA Outpatient Clinic, 1025 North 13th St., Montevideo, Minn.

September 19: [Minneapolis VA Health Care System](#) - **Recovery Skills Group** These drop-in educational sessions will provide information about substance use and addiction, as well as strategies to use when you're ready to make a change! The new skills group was developed after Veterans were surveyed regarding what types of information/skills might be helpful to them in their recovery from addictions. We developed these skills classes from information received from Veterans. Veterans are encouraged to participate in as many sessions as they find helpful or needed. [Learn more here including times and locations.](#)

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

VA Black Hills HCS - www.blackhills.va.gov
VA Central Iowa HCS - www.centraliowa.va.gov
Fargo VA HCS - www.fargo.va.gov
Iowa City VA HCS - www.iowacity.va.gov
Minneapolis VA HCS - www.minneapolis.va.gov

VA Nebraska W. Iowa HCS - www.nebraska.va.gov
Sioux Falls VA HCS - www.siouxfalls.va.gov
St. Cloud VA HCS - www.stcloud.va.gov
VISN 23 - 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