



2021 ANNUAL REPORT



*Honoring America's Veterans With
Comprehensive, Quality Health Care Services*

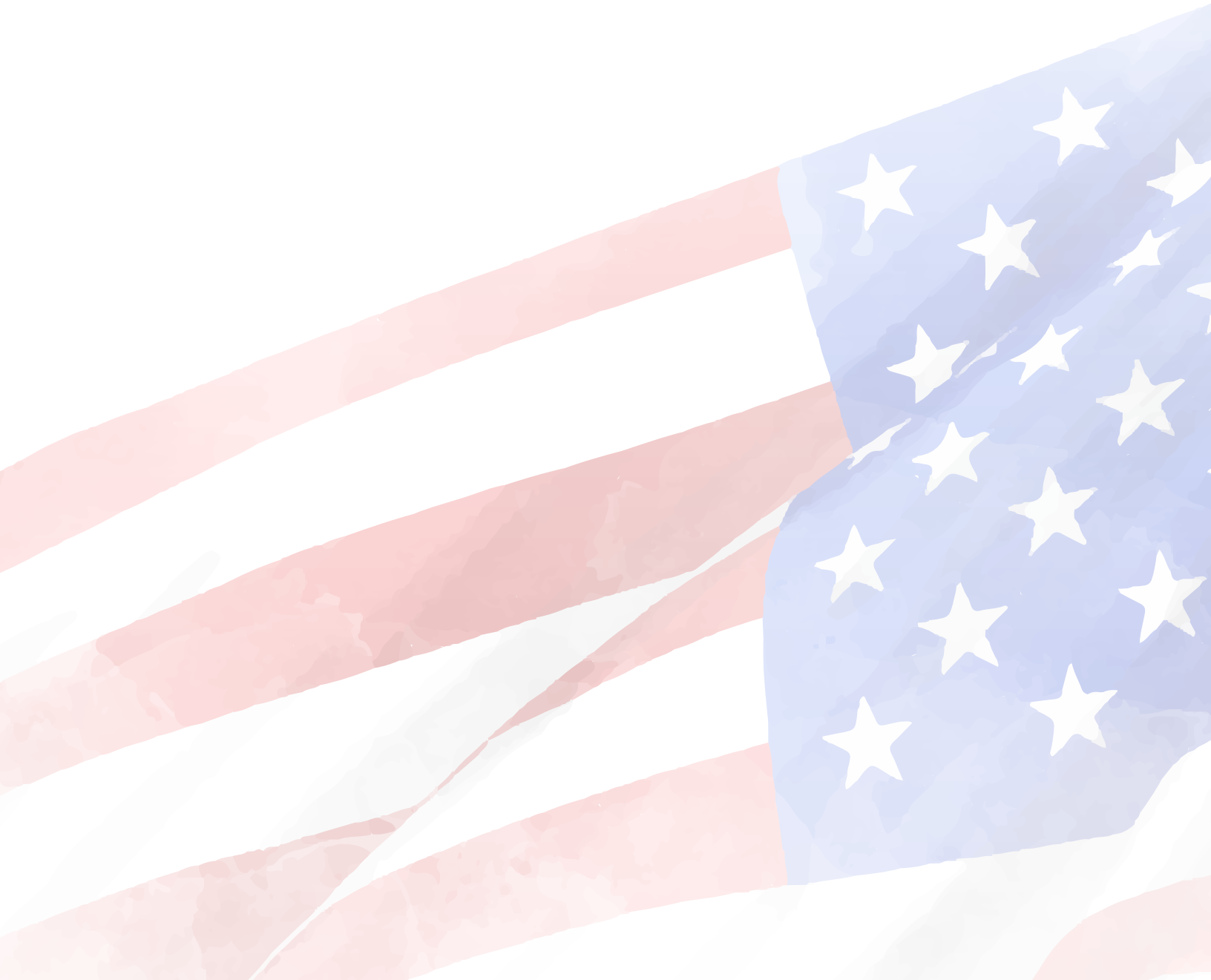
VA



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Veterans Health Administration
VA Midwest Health Care Network







Message From the Director

Robert P. McDivitt, FACHE

Welcome to the VA Midwest Health Care Network's Annual Report. In this 2021 report you will find a brief synopsis of each of the 8 health care systems in our network, the people that work there and the Veterans they serve. Our employees are dedicated to providing first class, expert, and compassionate health care to all Veterans.

2021 presented many challenges for our network, to include providing in person care and vaccinations. Through the hard work and dedication of our employees, we were successful in both. After a significant drop of in person appointments at the start of the pandemic, the network is back at over 80% of our pre-pandemic levels as well as a significant increase in tele-health appointments. As you will see in the report, we successfully vaccinated over 65% of our registered Veterans. Thanks to the Saves Lives Act passed by Congress and signed by President Biden, we were also able to provide vaccinations to a large number of Veterans, spouses, and caregivers that normally would not have access to VA services.

The VA Midwest HealthCare network is responsible for serving more than 400,000 enrolled Veterans residing in the states of Iowa, Minnesota, Nebraska, North Dakota and South Dakota and portions of Illinois, Kansas, Missouri, Wisconsin, and Wyoming.

We are part of the Veterans Health Administration (VHA), one of three administrations that fall under the Department of Veterans Affairs, along with the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) and the National Cemetery Administration (NCA).

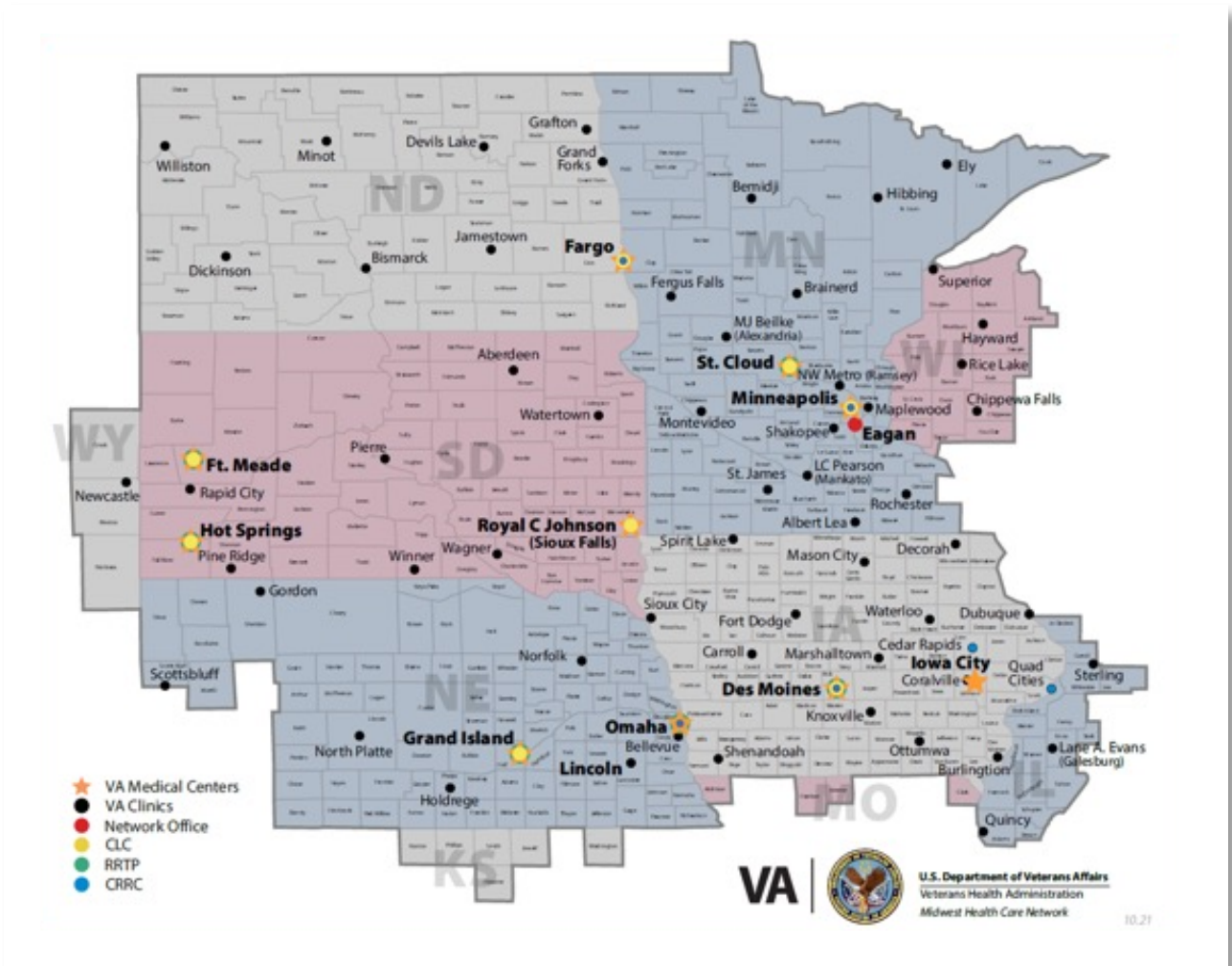
More than 15,000 VISN 23 employees are committed to delivering health care services through an integrated system of 10 hospitals, 63 community-based outpatient or outreach clinics, 8 community living centers and 4 domiciliary residential rehabilitation treatment programs. Our annual operating budget is in excess of \$3 billion, and we are committed to using those funds to deliver world class health care to the Veterans we serve.

If you have any questions, comments, or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact your local health care system or the network office directly.

Robert P. McDivitt, FACHE

Robert P. McDivitt, FACHE
Network Director





VISN 23 COVID 19 VACCINATIONS FOR FY 21

- Veterans: 144,402 (65.77% of enrolled Veterans in VISN 23)
- Employees: 15,731
- Saves Life Act (Non-enrolled Veterans, Spouses, Caregivers): 9,847

VISN 23 FY 21 VOLUNTEER CONTRIBUTIONS

- Total Volunteer Hours: 266,786
- Average Hours per Volunteer: 101.98
- Monetary Donations: \$1,032,897.61
- Activity Donations: \$5,166.58
- Items Donated: \$2,333,037.83
- Total Donations: \$3,371,102.02



VA BLACK HILLS HEALTH CARE SYSTEM

Fort Meade Campus
113 Comanche Road
Fort Meade, SD 57741
Phone: 605-347-2511, 800-743-1070

Hot Springs Campus
500 North 5th Street
Hot Springs, SD 57747
Phone: 605-745-2000, 800-764-5370
<https://www.blackhills.va.gov/>
<https://www.facebook.com/VABlackHills>

HCS Director
Sandra L. Horsman, MBM

Proudly serving America's heroes from five states and four Tribal Reservations.

VA BHHCS provides primary, surgical, mental health, Community Living Centers, and Residential Rehabilitation Treatment Program (RRTP) care. VA BHHCS consists of two medical centers located at Hot Springs, established in 1930, and Fort Meade, opened in 1946. There is a VA staffed Community Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC) located in Rapid City, South Dakota. Contract CBOCs located in Pierre and Winner, South Dakota, and Scottsbluff, Nebraska. VA BHHCS operates Outpatient Clinics in Pine Ridge, South Dakota, Gordon, Nebraska, and Newcastle, Wyoming. Compensated Work Therapy (CWT) programs are in Eagle Butte, and Pine Ridge, South Dakota, serving Veterans on the Standing Rock, Cheyenne River, Rosebud and Pine Ridge Indian Reservations. Transitional Residential Care units are located in Rapid City, Sturgis, and Hot Springs, South Dakota. VA BHHCS is fully accredited under the rigorous standards of the Joint Commission. The health care system has full accreditation from the College of American Pathologists (CAP), The Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF), and the Long-Term Care Institute (LTCI).

Community Based Outpatient Clinics:

Gordon, NE VA Clinic

300 East 8th Street
Gordon, NE 69343
Phone: 308-282-1442

Pierre VA Clinic

1615 North Harrison, Suite 20
Pierre, SD 57501
Phone: 605-945-5020

Rapid City VA Clinic

3625 5th Street
Rapid City, SD 57701
Phone: 605-718-1095

Newcastle VA Clinic

1124 Washington Blvd.
Newcastle, WY 57555
Phone: 307-746-4491

Scotts Bluff VA Clinic

601 S 5th Ave
Scottsbluff, NE 69361
Phone: 308-225-5330
Pine Ridge VA Clinic
Next to Dialysis Building
across from IHS Hospital
Pine Ridge, SD 57770
Phone: 605-867-2393 X 4033

Winner VA Clinic

660 West 2nd Street
Winner, SD 57580
Phone: 605-842-2443

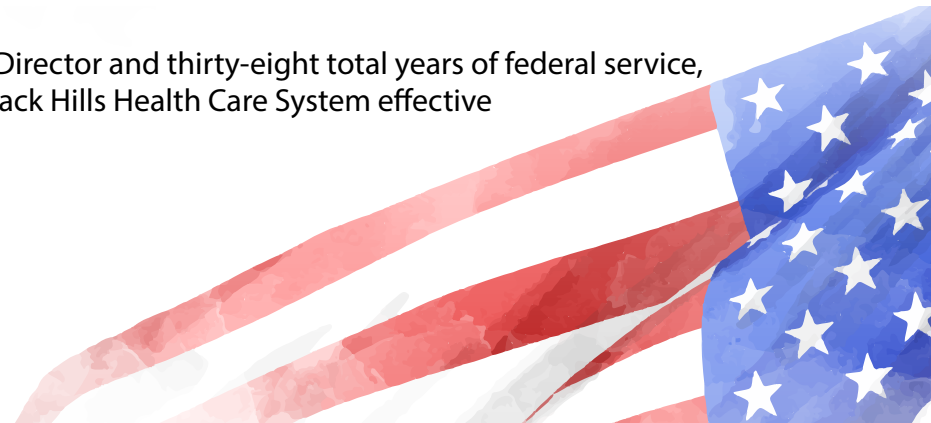




2021 BY THE NUMBERS

- Budget - \$ 324,671,618
- Total Number of employees – 1,175
- Total Number of Veteran Patients – 19,976
- Total Number of Outpatient Visits – 234,770
- Total Number of inpatient admissions – 1,525

FACILITY HIGHLIGHTS FOR 2021

- In July 2021, VA Black Hills broke ground with our partners GSA and Dream Design International on a 40,000 sq ft Rapid City Clinic. The new facility will provide Veterans with a patient centered, spacious, healing environment to receive their care. The clinic expects to see Veterans early in 2023.
 - In 2021, Phase II of a multi-staged building improvement project was completed. A complete redesign of Endoscopy Suites and small procedure rooms and a state-of-the-art Sterilized Processing area was opened.
 - Six Veteran Stand Downs with a total of 411 total people and 348 Veterans
 - Scottsbluff - 80 total, 76 Veterans
 - Standing Rock - 55 total, 55 Veterans
 - Rosebud - 33 total, 28 Veterans
 - Eagle Butte 49 total, 37 Veterans
 - Pine Ridge - 111 total, 81 Veterans
 - Rapid City - 83 total, 80 Veterans
 - Drive-through COVID-19 vaccine blitz days. More than 300 vaccines provided per day. Additionally, we provided a mobile vaccination clinic that traveled to rural areas throughout our region.
 - Three nursing managers were presented with a certificate of appreciation from the Under Secretary of Veteran Affairs for their exceptional health care that improved the health and well-being of Veterans. Their outstanding public service and commitment to the VA directly tied to VHA's response to the unprecedented size and scale of the COVID-19 pandemic.
 - The TECS program (Tele Eye Care Service) is a new and innovative service offered to Veterans in the Pierre and Scottsbluff clinics. TECS is a Veteran-centric eye care delivery model that is designed to screen patients for cataracts, macular degeneration, glaucoma, and diabetic retinopathy at their primary care home. The TECS program also aims to improve quality of life by providing eyeglasses for Veterans and improve access for eye care services in medically underserved rural areas.
 - After six years as the Medical Center Director and thirty-eight total years of federal service, Sandra L. Horsman retired from VA Black Hills Health Care System effective October 15, 2021.
- 



Dream Design International drawing of exterior for Rapid City VA Clinic. Planned opening in early 2023



July 2 groundbreaking for the Rapid City Community-Based Outpatient Clinic with U.S. Senator John Thune in attendance. VA is taking part in a pilot program to partner with GSA in this build-lease project.



New minor procedure room located in the multi-staged building improvement project



New endoscopy suite equipped with a dirty scope depository and a sterile scope receiving area.



State-of-the-art decontamination section of the sterile processing area.



VA partnered with the Mobile Vet Center to bring the one dose J&J vaccine to rural areas of Wyoming.



January 16, 2021
VA Black Hills Health Care System
VAX Blitz — 492 Vaccines Delivered



Certificate of Appreciation in response to COVID-19 Pandemic

- Micaela Rice
- Adrianna Lalicker
- Charity Baptista



Eddie Pina
Elroy LeMaster
Kenneth Higashi
Thomas Wenn

The Wall of Heroes induction ceremony held at Fort Meade campus in Sturgis, SD. Four amazing Veterans were honored at VA Black Hills Health Care System in August 2021



VA Black Hills outreach teams took to the streets to recognize Mental Health Awareness Month and remind Veterans they matter.



New Women Warriors display features a timeline of significant accomplishments of women Veterans throughout history.

Vietnam Memorial display features news articles and memorabilia including flags that were carried by Fort Meade inpatients along Constitution Ave. in Wash. D.C. during the 1982 parade to dedicate the Vietnam Wall Memorial.



9-11 20th Anniversary Commemoration event held at The Monument in Rapid City. Several guest speakers and dinner followed by a live concert for Veterans. Great partnership with Homeless, Mental Health, Chaplain Services, Public Affairs, Voluntary Services, the Vet Center, and Ellsworth AFB.



VA CENTRAL IOWA HEALTH CARE SYSTEM

VA Central Iowa Health Care System
3600-30th Street
Des Moines, IA 50310

Phone: 515-699-5999 or 800-294-8387
<https://www.centraliowa.va.gov/>
<https://www.facebook.com/VACentrallowa>

Gail Graham, BS, RHIA

Proudly serving Veterans since 1934.

VA Central Iowa Healthcare System has a vast health care team with great experience guided by the needs of the Veterans. VACIHCS provides healthcare at eight locations in Central Iowa and will soon open a ninth.

Current facilities include the Des Moines VA Medical Center and community-based outpatient clinics (CBOC) in Carroll, Des Moines, Fort Dodge, Knoxville, Marshalltown, and Mason City. The additional location will be a Primary Care Clinic located on the southside of Des Moines.

VACIHCS also has a mobile medical unit (Mobile clinic) that is used to expand health services in rural areas.

Community Based Outpatient Clinics:

Carroll VA Clinic

311 S Clark St, Suite 275
Carroll, IA 51401
Phone: 712-794-6780
Or 855-794-6780

Community Resource & Referral Center - Des Moines

1223 Center Street, Suite 17
Des Moines, IA 50309
Phone: 515-699-5637

Fort Dodge VA Clinic

2419 2nd Avenue N
Fort Dodge, IA 50501
Phone: 515-576-2235

Fort Dodge North VA Clinic Mental Health Services

102 N. 25th St
Fort Dodge, IA 50501
Phone: 515-576-2235
Or 877-578-8846 to reach
both clinics

Knoxville VA Clinic

1607 N. Lincoln Street
Knoxville, IA 50138
Phone: 641-828-5019
Or 800-816-8878

Marshalltown VA Clinic

101 Iowa Ave W
Marshalltown, IA 50158
Phone: 641-754-6700
Or 877-424-4404

Mason City VA Clinic

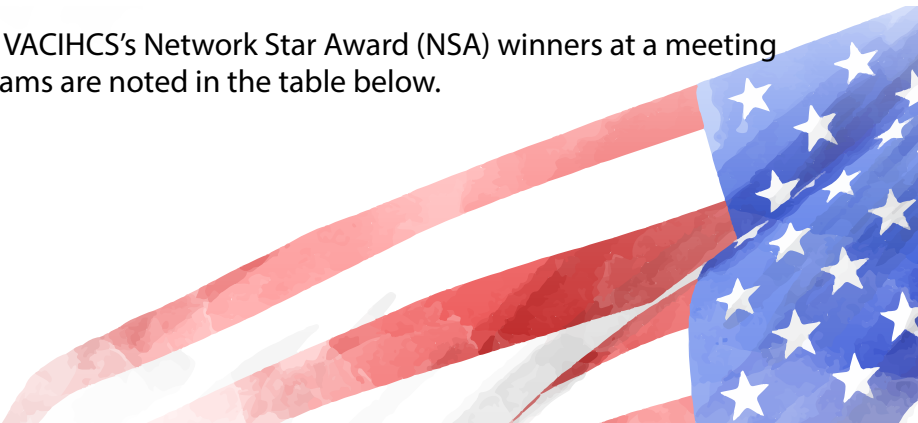
478 Tiffany Drive
Mason City, IA 50401
Phone: 641-494-5000
Or 800-351-4671



2021 BY THE NUMBERS

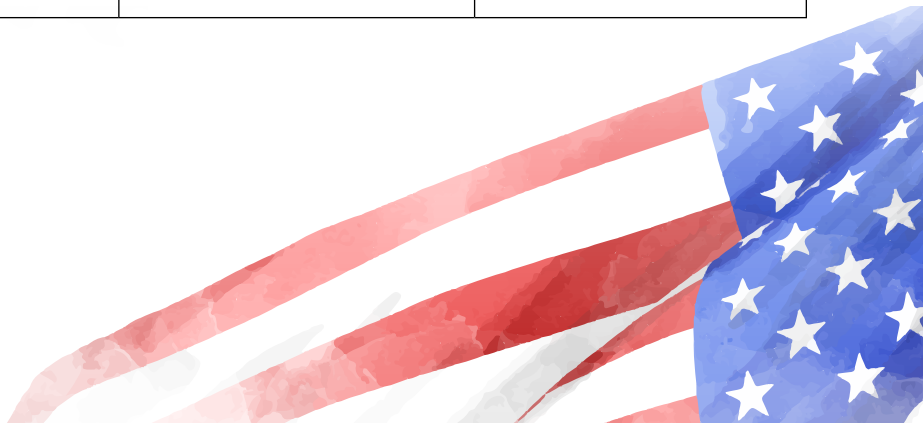
- Budget - \$ 418, 062, 540
- Total Number of employees – 1,543
- Total Number of Veteran Patients – 32,442
- Total Number of Outpatient Visits – 403,444
- Total Number of inpatient admissions – 2,701

FACILITY HIGHLIGHTS FOR 2021

- The VA Central Iowa Healthcare System is one of the leading health care systems serving Veterans with a wide range of health support and facility services. Health services include primary care, specialty care, mental health, rehab and extended care, surgery, and social programs/services. VHACIH is also a leader in COVID vaccine and treatment implementation across the facility through pharmacy leadership.
 - Teaching and education is part of VHACIH mission. There is an active graduated medical education program. The Des Moines facility is a teaching hospital with a wide range of services with technology, education, and research. VA Central Iowa Health Care System is also in the process of enhancing the research and development programs. This will create innovations that advance healthcare for Veterans and the nation.
 - Primary/Specialty Care are currently working toward continual improvement and efficiencies. They have added GYN services, neurology, infectious disease physician, and a sleep medicine ARNP.
 - VHACIH is establishing the Lung Precision Oncology Program (LPOP) that consists of screening and precision oncology trials.
 - The Mental Health ICC provides services to Veterans with a wide variety of mental health needs at our main facility in Des Moines and through CBOCs. Starting in FY22 Electroconvulsive Therapy (ECT) will be offered to Veterans.
 - Rehabilitation and Extended Care has expanded chiropractic care to CBOCs. They are currently working on opening a Cottage that will offer hospice services.
 - Pharmacy implemented COVID-19 vaccine to CBOCs, homeless outreach, Mobile Medical Unit outreach, drive-through events, and have organized evening/ weekend/ holiday events. Expanded medication delivery “Meds to Beds” to acute care, CLC, Hem/ONC infusion clinic, ER, and curb-side delivery.
 - Support VISN 23 Pharmacy Academic Detailing services within our facility offer provider education and training conducted virtually or face-to-face on strategic initiatives, formulary, and cost-savings measures.
 - The Network Director also recognized VACIHCS’s Network Star Award (NSA) winners at a meeting in August. Members of the winning teams are noted in the table below.
- 



TEAM	TEAM	TEAM	TEAM
PULMONARY EMBOLISM REDUCTION	REDUCING IN-HOSPITAL COMPLICATIONS	TELENEPHROLOGY	HOME CARE SYSTEMS REDESIGN
Steven Waisbren	Laura Coyle	Melissa Swee	Robert Meiches
Suzanne Secraw	Deb Graham	Angie Thumann	Melanie Kalvoda
Lori Barker	Angie Goodson	Marion Sanders	Linda Beem
Ioanna Apostolidou	Heather Frank	Katima Phisitkul	Roxanne McGee
Mark Klein	Jonalyn Mulcahy	George Bailey	Susan Schlueter
Misghina Abraha	Michelle Marotti	Nikki Neuzil	Matthew Larson
Aaron Porter	Connie Chrisman	Bharat Kumar	Leslie Huber
	Deb Repp Hankins	Amy MJ O'Shea	Savannah Lakose
	Suzanne Tovar	Masaaki Yamada	Jana Parsons
	Sonya Dunn	Bradley Dixon	Cheryl Cahill
			Kathleen Verhalen
			Carla Cahill
			Amanda Simone
			Laura Sterna
			Rosa Lundin
			Teri Blumke
			Lindsay Rhoades
			Shawna Clausen





December COVID shots
Dr. Angie Goodson, hospitalist, was one of the first at VACIHCS to receive the COVID vaccine Dec. 23, 2020.



September Drive Through Clinic

On Sept. 30 and Oct. 2, Veterans were invited to attend a Drive Through Flu Shot Clinic and Information Fair. More than 440 Veterans got a seasonal flu shot, received information or both. Information was focused on mental health, suicide prevention, intimate partner violence assistance program, benefits, women's health, caregiver support, vet center, whole health, recreation therapy, nutrition and more.



September Homeless Stand Down

The weekend of Sept. 17 to 19 VACIHCS took part in a Homeless Stand down on the Iowa State Capitol grounds. The event included collecting donated clothes the week prior and distributing them during the event. Veterans received coats, parkas, gloves, hats, boots, winter supplies, sleeping bags, blankets, haircuts, hygiene products, clothing, VA services, employment opportunities, housing assistance, pet care, food, and much more.



September STRIVE Class

VACIHCS held a community service project with Highland Park Community Church in Des Moines called 2021 Fall STRIVE Class in September 2021. The program is an eight-week employee career enhancement program developed exclusively by VA Central Iowa Health Care System and has earned a National VHA Spark-Seed-Spread Award.



September Recreational Therapy Outreach

In an effort designed to make Veterans around the state more aware of available opportunities, Recreation Therapy Outreach held a first-of-its-kind event in Knoxville where Veterans learned about the available resources and programs such as adapted bikes, yoga, tai chi, and art.



**Fargo VA Health Care System
Director, Dr. Breton M.
Weintraub MD, FACP**

FARGO VA HEALTH CARE SYSTEM

Fargo VA Health Care System
2101 Elm St. N.
Fargo, ND 58102

Phone: 701-239-3700 or 800-410-9723
<https://www.va.gov/fargo-health-care/>
<https://www.facebook.com/VAFargo>
<https://www.instagram.com/vafargo/?hl=en>

Honoring Veterans Since 1929

The Fargo VA Health Care System is a Joint Commission accredited medical/surgical hospital with 36 acute care beds, a 38 bed Community Living Center, Primary Care and Specialty Medicine Clinics, 10 Community Based Outpatient Clinics, and one Community Resource Referral Center. We oversee the provision of health care to more than 34,000 Veterans living in North Dakota, 17 counties in northwest Minnesota, and one northeast South Dakota county. We're affiliated with the University of North Dakota School of Medicine and Health Sciences, North Dakota State University, and several other institutions.

Community Based Outpatient Clinics:

Bemidji VA Clinic

1217 Anne Street NW
Bemidji, MN 56601-5113
218-755-6360

Bismarck VA Clinic

2700 State Street, Gateway
Mall, Suite F
Bismarck, ND 58503-0669
701-221-9152

Devils Lake VA Clinic

1031 7th Street Northeast
Devils Lake, ND 58301-2719
701-662-5801

Dickinson VA Clinic

766 Elks Drive, Suite 6H
Dickinson, ND 58601-2916
701-483-1850

Fergus Falls VA Clinic

1839 North Park Street
Fergus Falls, MN 56537-1247
218-739-1400

Grafton VA Clinic

1319 West 11th Street
Grafton, ND 58237-2141
701-352-4059

Grand Forks VA Clinic

3221 32nd Avenue South, Suite 700
Grand Forks, ND 58201-6075
701-335-4380

Jamestown VA Clinic

2430 20th Street Southwest, Suite 8
Jamestown, ND 58401-6201
701-952-4787

Minot VA Clinic

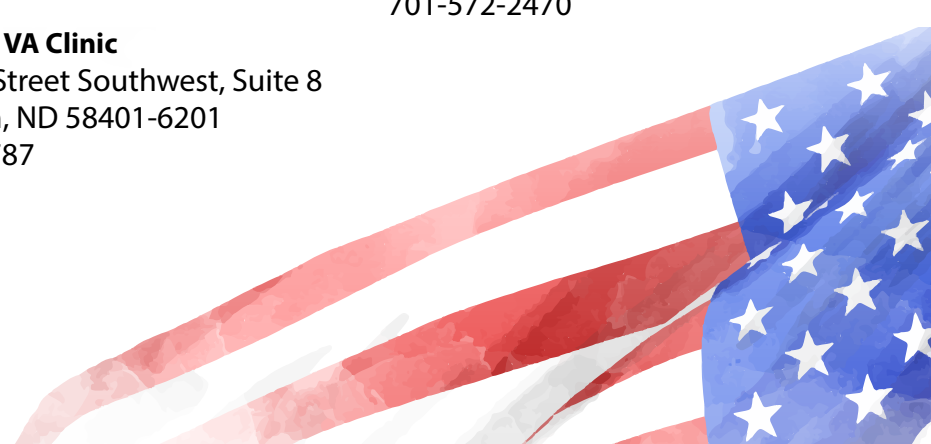
3400 South Broadway Street
Minot, ND 58701-1700
701-418-2600

**Community Resource & R
Referral Center - North Fargo**

721 1st Avenue North
Fargo, ND 58102-4903
701-461-7330

Williston VA Clinic

1542 16th Street West, Suite 300
Williston, ND 58801-3852
701-572-2470

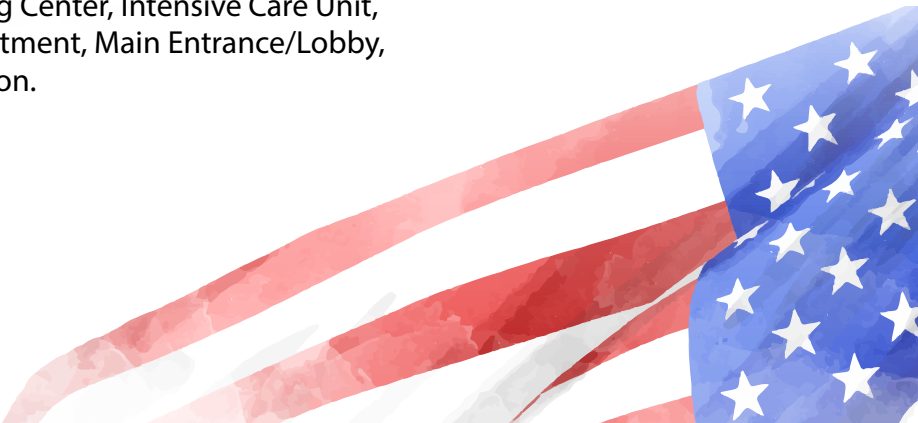




2021 BY THE NUMBERS

- Budget - \$ 431,050,771
- Total Number of employees – 1,195
- Total Number of Veteran Patients – 34,564
- Total Number of Outpatient Visits – 360,047
- Total Number of inpatient admissions – 1,640

FACILITY HIGHLIGHTS FOR 2021

- Over the last six years, the Fargo VA Health Care System has ranked in the top 10 in the nation for VA Best Places to Work Survey – four of those six years we've ranked in the top five.
 - 2021 - #4
 - 2020 - #9
 - 2019 - #4
 - 2018 - #8
 - 2017 - #4
 - 2016 - #4
 - In 2020, Fargo VA HCS won the National Excellence in Patient Experience Award for top in Patient Experience among all VA facilities of comparable complexity. The award is based on high performance in several categories, including patient experience and Veteran trust. Fargo VA's trust score was 92%.
 - Selected as a COVID-19 Moving Forward Lead Site to resume routine in-person services to Veterans during the pandemic. Among the first VAs in the nation to implement a phased approach while ensuring a safe environment. The lessons learned from Lead Sites such as Fargo helped inform other facilities how to reintroduce routine services.
 - Selected as one of three sites in VISN 23 as a High Reliability Organization flagship. HROs provide sustained high-quality, zero-harm healthcare to their patients on a long-term basis.
 - Fargo VA HCS approved as a priority for future VA Fisher House construction to provide temporary accommodations at no charge for the families and caregivers of veterans receiving care at the Fargo VA Medical Center.
 - Opened new Community Resource and Referral Center in downtown Fargo. In recent years, new CBOCs in Bemidji, Grafton, Minot, Williston, and Dickinson.
 - Emergency Department received Guardians of Excellence Award for maintaining Press Ganey scores at or above the 95th percentile for four straight quarters.
 - In recent years, new Community Living Center, Intensive Care Unit, Primary Care Clinic, Emergency Department, Main Entrance/Lobby, Ambulance Bay, and Imaging Expansion.
- 



Congratulations to Jamie Miller, Laura Noreen, and Kayla Posch from Nutrition and Food Services for being awarded the Veterans Health Administration National “HeRO” Award. The award recognizes employees who advance VA’s journey to High Reliability through actions that promote safe, reliable care. This team identified a way to improve the inpatient meal preparation process, enhancing the care we provide to our Veterans. Well done!



The Fargo VA Health Care System held its annual Feds Feed Families campaign, totaling 1,608.2 pounds donated to local food shelters!



Veterans in the Fargo VA Health Care System’s Medical Foster Home Program enjoying another day out on Detroit Lake yesterday courtesy of “Let’s Go Fishing”!



Over the last six years, the Fargo VA Health Care System has ranked in the top 10 in the nation for best places to work in VA – four of those six years we’ve ranked in the top five! Thank you to all our employees and Veterans who make this possible!

- 2021 - #4*
- 2020 - #9*
- 2019 - #4*
- 2018 - #8*
- 2017 - #4*
- 2016 - #4*



Fargo VFW Club, Post 762 donates \$10,000 to support the Veterans of the Fargo VA Health Care System! Donations were raised through their "Derby for the Vets" Pinewood Derby. Since 2013, the Derby for the Vets has raised over \$82,000 for the Fargo VA Health Care System!



A generous donation on behalf of the Veterans of Foreign Wars Auxiliary, Department of ND. As her President's Project, former President Joyce Weible chose Suicide Prevention and Awareness as her worthy cause. After being personally affected by the loss of a loved one, she led the VFWA Department of ND to raise over \$8,000 toward improving the Suicide Prevention and Awareness program's outreach capability.



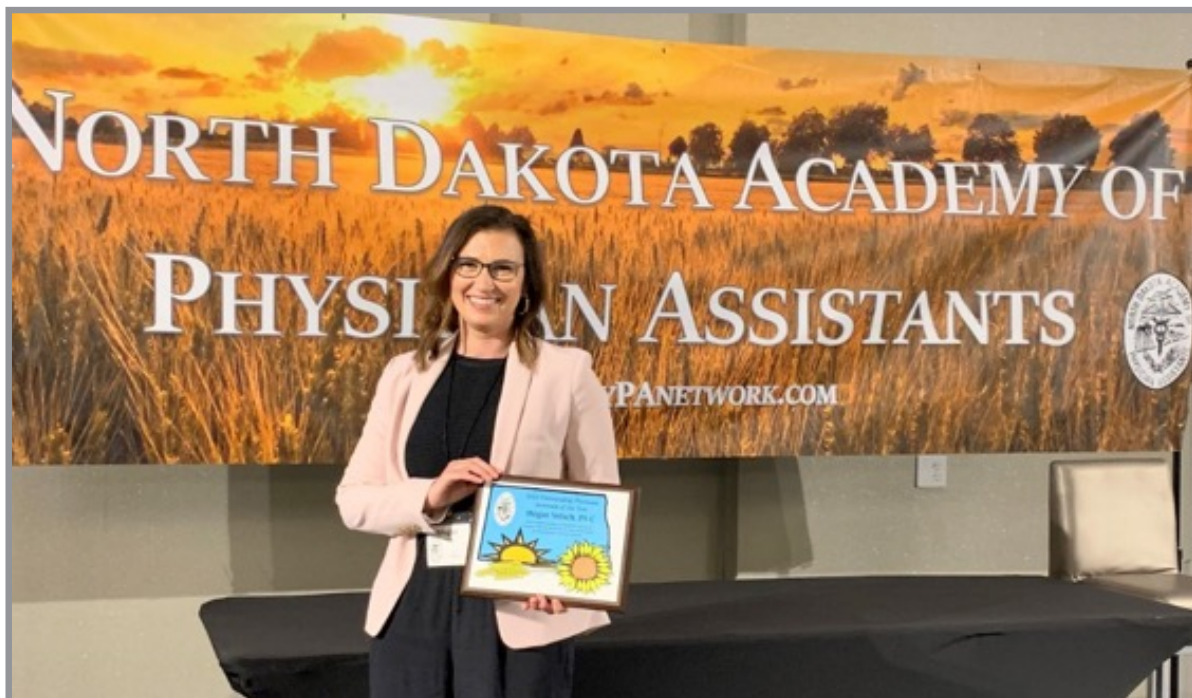
The Fargo VA Health Care System unveils its new Physical Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Speech, and Prosthetic Sensory Aids Service space during a ribbon cutting ceremony and open house at the Fargo VA Medical Center! This beautiful area is more than 11,000 square feet. The departments now residing in the new location are benefiting from a significant upgrade in space, allowing for several pieces of new equipment to continue the innovative care the Fargo VA Health Care System is known for. Well done and thank you to everyone who helped this \$3.5 million project come to fruition!



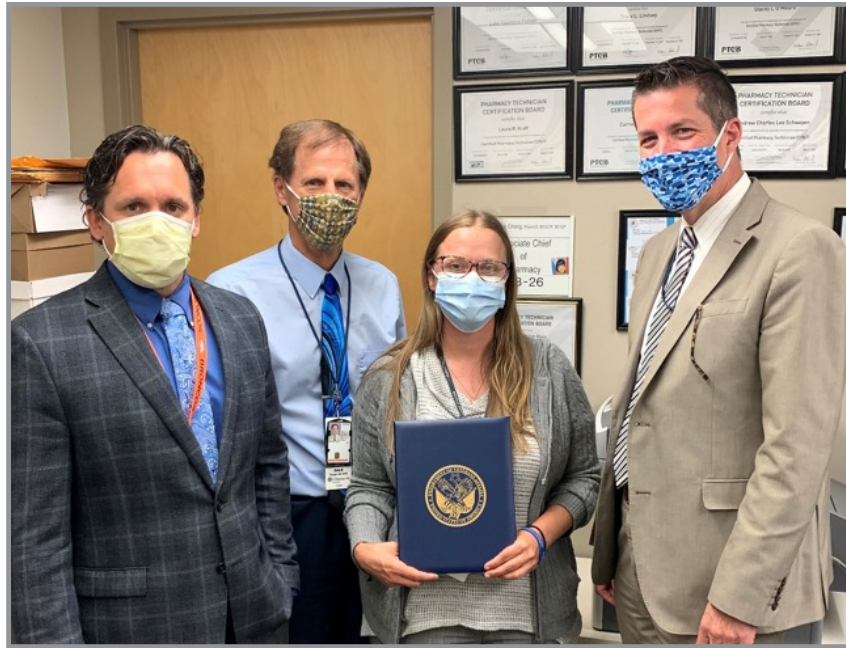
Fargo VA Health Care System staff supporting the "Step Up for PTSD Awareness Walk" in recognition of PTSD awareness!



Local community gathers at the Fargo VA for its VA2K in support of homeless Veterans! Our incredible community donated more than 1,300 grocery items!



Fargo VA's own Megan Vetsch recognized as PA of the Year by the North Dakota Academy of Physician Assistants!



Congratulations to Melissa Rohrich, PharmD, Fargo VA HCS Chief of Pharmacy, who received a commendation from Robert McDivitt, VA Midwest Health Care Network Director, for her efforts and accomplishments during the COVID-19 pandemic.

“From the beginning, your leadership and ability to adapt allowed VISN 23 to be ready when the first doses arrived. Your ingenuity and dedication in coordinating the vaccine distribution made VISN 23 one of the leaders in vaccinations across the nation.” – Robert McDivitt



Julianna Lindgren, Fargo VA Emergency Department Nurse Manager, received the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) Patriot Award for the support she provides her employee Payton Foertsch, Sergeant, North Dakota National Guard. The Patriot Award was created by ESGR to publicly recognize individuals who provide outstanding patriotic support and cooperation to their employees who have answered their nation's call to serve. “Thank you, Payton, for taking the time to nominate Julianna for this Patriot Award. We cannot do the ESGR mission without the service members taking the initiative to do these awards,” said ESGR State Chair, Mr. Delton Steele. “Julianna has been one of the greatest managers,” said Foertsch. “She’s very understanding and knows what we go through as part-time soldiers and having a civilian job. Thank you for being so understanding.” Fargo VA joins a cadre of Fortune 500 companies, state and federal agencies, and thousands of American employers in demonstrating support for our armed forces, added State Vice Chair, David Johnston. “By signing the Statement of Support, Fargo VA is sending a clear message to its employees that while they are serving their country, they do not have to worry about their civilian jobs.”



Congratulations to the following OUTSTANDING nurses who received our 2021 VA Secretary's Awards for Excellence in Nursing:

- Registered Nurse in an extended role: Molly Byrne*
- Registered Nurse in a staff role: Kayla Salber*
- Licensed Practical Nurse: Kortney Jorgensen*
- Nursing Assistant: Koltyn Klose*

The Fargo VA Health Care System presented its 2021 Dr. Byron D. Danielson Physician of the Year Award to Tze Shien Lo, MD and Paul Mariani, MD and its Non-Physician Provider of the Year Award to Margo Norton, PhD. Dr. Lo and Dr. Mariani are infectious disease physicians and Dr. Norton is a psychologist. The recipients of each award are selected based on their outstanding clinical dedication, strong commitment to excellence in patient care, compassionate attitude toward patients and families, focus on teamwork, and regularly going above the call of duty to serve Veterans.

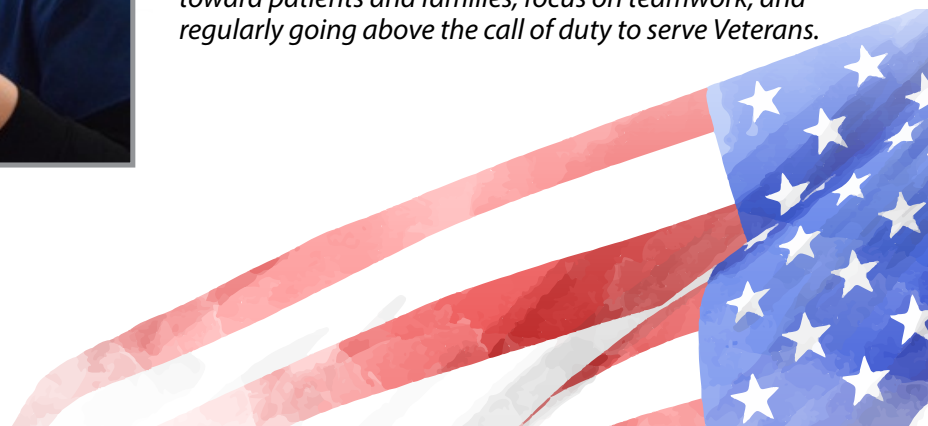


ON HIS 100TH BIRTHDAY, VETERAN KENNETH LARSON

received the second dose of his COVID-19 vaccine in Fergus Falls, MN! Staff from the Fergus Falls VA Clinic sang happy birthday and helped him celebrate with a birthday card and cupcakes. Kenneth maintains an active lifestyle, loves fishing and karaoke, and said the VA has been taking great care of him.



The Fargo VA Health Care System presented its 2021 Dr. Byron D. Danielson Physician of the Year Award to Tze Shien Lo, MD and Paul Mariani, MD and its Non-Physician Provider of the Year Award to Margo Norton, PhD. Dr. Lo and Dr. Mariani are infectious disease physicians and Dr. Norton is a psychologist. The recipients of each award are selected based on their outstanding clinical dedication, strong commitment to excellence in patient care, compassionate attitude toward patients and families, focus on teamwork, and regularly going above the call of duty to serve Veterans.





IOWA CITY VA HEALTH CARE SYSTEM

Iowa City VA Health Care System
601 Hwy 6 W
Iowa City, IA 52246

Phone: 319-338-0581 or 800-637-0128
iowacity.va.gov
<https://www.facebook.com/VAIowaCity>

HCS Director

Judith Johnson-Mekota, FACHE

Proudly serving Veterans since 1952

The Iowa City Veterans Affairs Health Care System (ICVAHCS) consists of a comprehensive Tertiary Care Level I VA Health Care System (VAHCS) and is affiliated with the University of Iowa's Carver College of Medicine for residencies and education. The system serves more than 50,000 Veterans residing in 50 counties spread throughout Eastern Iowa (33), Western Illinois (16), and Northern Missouri (one).

ICVAHCS operates 73 beds, including: 34 Medical, 24 Surgical, and 15 psychiatric. Additionally, the facility has seven operating rooms and a ten-bed medical/surgical intensive care unit. The ICVAHCS is one of only five VA regional kidney transplant centers and averages more than 30 transplants each year.

The Research Program at the Iowa City VA Health Care System (ICVAHCS) has been active for over 50 years and has consistently been one of the top VA facilities nationwide in terms of VA and non-VA research funding.

Community Based Outpatient Clinics:

Burlington VA Clinic

1000 N Roosevelt Ave, Suite 7
Burlington, IA 52601
Phone: 319-752-3722

Dubuque VA Clinic

2600 Dodge Street, Suite A1
Dubuque, IA 52003-7159
Phone: 563-588-5520

Quad Cities VA Clinic

2826 West Locust Street
Davenport, IA 52804-3354
Phone: 563-332-8528

Cedar Rapids VA Clinic

3500 Dalton Way
West Town Center Suite 300
Cedar Rapids, IA 52404-2564
Phone: 319-369-4340

Iowa City VA Clinic

400 South Clinton St.,
Iowa Federal Building
Iowa City, Iowa 52240-4105
Phone: 319-351-1110

Quincy VA Clinic

6020 Broadway Street
Quincy, IL 62305-7919
Phone: 217-224-3366

Coralville VA Clinic

520 10th Avenue, Suite 100
Coralville, IA 52241-1910
Phone: 319-358-2406

Lane A. Evans VA Clinic

310 Home Boulevard
Galesburg, IL 61401-7408
Phone: 309-343-0311

Sterling VA Clinic

406 Avenue C
Sterling, IL 61081-3407
Phone: 815-632-6200

Decorah VA Clinic

915 Short Street, Suite 163
Decorah, IA 52101-2412
Phone: 563-387-5840

Ottumwa VA Clinic

1020 North Quincy Avenue, Suite 1
Ottumwa, IA 52501-3821
Phone: 641-683-4300

Waterloo VA Clinic

945 Tower Park Drive
Waterloo, IA 50701-9098
Phone: 319-235-1230



2021 BY THE NUMBERS

- Budget - \$ 576,144,456
- Total Number of employees – 1,942
- Total Number of Veteran Patients – 52,708
- Total Number of Outpatient Visits – 607,865
- Total Number of inpatient admissions – 2,941

FACILITY HIGHLIGHTS FOR 2021

- Ottumwa VA Community Based Outpatient Clinic moved to a new location, adding dedicated women's health exam rooms, increased accommodation for primary care, mental health, pharmacy, physical therapy, audiology, podiatry, chiropractor services, and acupuncture.
- A new site of care was established in Burlington, Iowa with a micro-CBOC. Burlington was recognized as an area in need of services, as the nearest clinic was an hour away. The clinic has one PACT team, a mental health provider, and telehealth.
- ICVAHCS hosted ten large COVID-19 vaccination events in Spring 2021.
- Iowa City is part of the COVID Variant Testing effort for the VA, sequencing COVID samples to determine what sub-type of COVID is present and sharing information for epidemiology purposes.
- In February 2021 the ICVAHCS began using a Da Vinci Robotic System to assist in surgeries. Surgeries using the Da Vinci system are minimally invasive and have improved outcomes compared to traditional surgeries.
- In December 2020, the ICVAHCS implemented Contrast Enhanced Mammography, and in January 2021 implemented breast MRI. This has led to faster exam turnaround time, resulting in greater patient satisfaction and improved outcome metrics.





The first shipment of Moderna COVID-19 vaccines arrives at the Iowa City VA, December 21, 2021.



Pharmacist Kristi Dimke draws up a dose of the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine for the first employee vaccination on December 22, 2021.



On January 5, 2021, Army Veteran Roger Gray became the first patient to receive the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine at the Iowa City VA.



The first employees at the ICVAHCS receive the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine on December 22, 2021. Juan Vega (above) has been the Housekeeper in the COVID-19 inpatient unit for the duration of the pandemic and was the first employee to receive his shot



Staff hold a meeting prior to a large Saturday vaccination event where 912 Veterans received a Moderna vaccine.



Staff hand out homemade Valentine's to Veterans as they leave a Saturday Vaccine Clinic on February 13, 2021.



A Veteran receives his first dose of the Moderna COVID-19 Vaccine at a vaccination event on Saturday, February 13, 2021.



As an employee engagement effort, staff wore red VA shirts on Fridays to show their commitment to serving Veterans.



Sailors from the USS Iowa submarine visit the ICVAHCS on a tour of Iowa.



The ICVAHCS Transplant Program celebrated their 500th transplant in April 2021.



Iowa City VA HCS opened a new location for the Ottumwa Community Based Outpatient Clinic in December 2020, holding a virtual ribbon cutting.



A new site of care was established with the Burlington micro-CBOC. The milestone was celebrated with an outdoor ribbon cutting ceremony and resource fair on June 1, 2021.



MINNEAPOLIS VA HEALTH CARE SYSTEM

Minneapolis VA Health Care System
One Veterans Drive
Minneapolis, MN 55417

Phone: 612-725-2000 or 866-414-5058
Web www.va.gov/minneapolis-health-care
Facebook www.facebook.com/VAMinneapolis
Twitter <https://twitter.com/VAMinneapolis>
Instagram www.instagram.com/vaminneapolis/

HCS Director
Patrick J. Kelly, FACHE

Proudly Serving Veterans since 1921

2021 was a tough year for our Veterans and staff. It brought us together in unified support and encouragement for colleagues, healthcare professionals, front line workers, families, friends, and the Veterans we serve. We had countless successes and losses. We shed tears of both sadness and joy. Being the sole source of comfort while holding a hand during the last moments of life. Reaching out and connecting with families to offer condolences and comfort even when struggling personally to find the words. "Teamwork" became our theme, and the staff continue to strengthen as a team even today.

Technology was pushed and developed at rapid speed to provide care and communication for Veterans, families, nurses, and doctors. We collaborated nationally to produce Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), shared best practices and innovations. Infrastructure and engineering modifications rolled out at lightning speed to accommodate the sick. Housekeeping and nutrition services rolled back their sleeves and donned PPE to serve and protect the most vulnerable. Staff selflessly volunteered to train healthcare delivery personnel for critical care, entrance screening and serving community nursing home facilities. On four different occasions we accepted Mission Assignments to support Minnesota health care facilities in serving Gopher State citizens.

Community Based Outpatient Clinics:

Albert Lea VA Clinic

1665 West Main St.
Albert Lea, MN 56007
Phone: 507-377-6051

Hayward VA Clinic

10369 State Highway 27
Hayward, WI 54843-2530
Phone: 715-934-5454

Maplewood VA Clinic

1725 Legacy Parkway, STE 100
Maplewood, MN 55109
Phone: 651-225-5420

Chippewa Valley VA Clinic

475 Chippewa Mall Drive
Suite 418
Chippewa Falls, WI 54729
Phone: 715-720-3780

Hibbing VA Clinic

990 West 41st Street Suite 5
Hibbing, MN 55746
Phone: 218-263-1400

Northwest Metro VA Clinic

7545 Veterans Drive
Ramsey, MN 55303
Phone: 612-467-1100

Ely VA Clinic

720 Miners Drive East
Ely, MN 55731
Phone: 218-365-0001

Lyle C. Pearson VA Clinic

1961 Premier Dr Suite 330
Mankato, MN 56001
Phone: 507-387-2939

Rice Lake VA Clinic
2700A College Drive
Rice Lake, WI 54868
Phone: 715-236-3355

Shakopee VA Clinic
1111 Shakopee Town Square
Shakopee, MN 55379
Phone: 952-445-4070

Twin Ports VA Clinic
3520 Tower Ave.
Superior, WI 54880
Phone: 715-398-2400

Rochester VA Clinic
3551 Commercial Drive
South West
Rochester, MN 55902-2876
Phone: 507-252-0885

St. James VA Clinic
1212 Heckman Court
St. James, MN 56081
Phone: 507-375-9670

2021 BY THE NUMBERS

- Budget - \$ 1,343,036,754
- Total Number of employees – 4,030
- Total Number of Veteran Patients – 110,739
- Total Number of Outpatient Visits – 1,081,867
- Total Number of inpatient admissions – 7,252

FACILITY HIGHLIGHTS FOR 2021

- Minneapolis VA frontline health care RN, Thera Witte, received the first COVID-19 vaccine in the state of Minnesota.
- A Minneapolis VA Health Care System (HCS) employee, Jennet Boese, received the Secretary Honor Award for Integrity, Commitment, Advocacy, Respect and Excellence (ICARE) for creating the Compassionate Contact Corps program, which provides companionship to Veterans experiencing social isolation during the COVID-19 pandemic. The award highlights and recognizes acts of service on behalf of Veterans across the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) that reflect VA's core values (ICARE). An employee or a group can receive the selective award; only two employees received the award in 2020.
- UNYQ, a leader in the field of 3D-printed personalized prosthetic wears, and the Department of Veterans Affairs, as represented by Minneapolis VA Health Care System (HCS), entered into a cooperative research and development agreement (CRADA) for 3D-printed prosthetics. The objective of the collaboration is to introduce personalized products addressing specific needs of persons with amputations within the Veterans community taking advantage of exponential technology like 3D-printing, generative design and app development. The Minneapolis VA research group participating in the CRADA previously invented the background technology which was licensed to UNYQ by the VA Technology Transfer Program (TTP) in Washington, DC.
- The Minneapolis VA Health Care System became one of two hubs to receive a \$4.5 million grant from the Veterans Health Administration. Two researchers from the University of Minnesota Medical School, who also practice at the Minneapolis VA Health Care System, join the Omaha VA Medical Center to lead the Upper Midwest VA Lung Cancer Screening and Research Network as part of a nationwide VA-funded Lung Cancer Research Program (LPOP). The \$4.5 million grant supports an expansion in lung cancer screenings and in lung cancer research among veterans.
- The Minneapolis VA Health Care System (VAHCS) and University of Minnesota celebrated their 75 years of academic affiliation with the announcement of a new Collaboratory aimed at improving nursing practice, education, and patient outcomes.



Veteran utilizing Assistant technology – Eye Gaze



Minneapolis VA frontline health care RN, Thera Witte, receives the first COVID-19 vaccine in the state of Minnesota.



COVID-19 Screening at entrance



Veteran Discharged after beating COVID-19



Dr. Glennon Park, Primary Care Physician; Ms. Wendy Young, Nurse Manager and Honorable Denis McDonough



Hybrid OR utilizing da Vinci Surgical System



Medical Staff utilizing IPAD technology



Assistant Technology for wound checks utilizing I Phone and camera



VA NEBRASKA-WESTERN IOWA HEALTH CARE SYSTEM

VA Nebraska-Western Iowa Health Care System
4101 Woolworth Avenue
Omaha, NE 68105

Phone: 402-346-8800 or 800-451-5796
<https://www.nebraska.va.gov/>
<https://www.facebook.com/NebraskalowaVA>
<https://twitter.com/vanwihcs>
<https://www.instagram.com/nebraskaiowava/>
<https://www.flickr.com/photos/182889810@N02>

HCS Director

Eileen Kingston, DNP, MPA, BSN, RN, NE-BC

Proudly Fulfilling America's Commitment to its Heroes since 1929:
"To care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow and orphan."

VA Nebraska-Western Iowa Health Care System continued to find innovative ways to provide care for Nebraska and Western Iowa throughout Fiscal Year 2021, despite the many challenges brought on by the ongoing Novel Coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic. This is encapsulated by the fact that VA NWIHCS improved its Overall Rating of Primary Care Provider, a key component of its Patient Experience FY21 Action Plan, by 10.5 percent (76.9 – FY20Q3 to 85.0 – FY21Q3) over four quarters. It was further seen by the fact that VA NWIHCS continued to utilize multidisciplinary and emergency management models in addressing the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, which allowed VA NWIHCS to seamlessly adjust its operations based upon the changing COVID environment, resulting in the greater continuation of Veteran care through face-to-face, telephone and virtual appointments. The success of the VA NWIHCS' efforts can be seen by the facts that it led VISN 23 in the unique patient growth (both in numbers and percentages) in 2020-21, and that it was selected by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs to be one of 37 sites nationally to receive the initial doses of the Pfizer Vaccine.

Community Based Outpatient Clinics:

Grand Island VA Medical Center

2201 North Broadwell Avenue
Grand Island, NE 68803-2153
308-382-3660

Bellevue VA Clinic

2206 Longo Drive
Suite 102
Bellevue, NE 68005-2977
402-591-4500

Holdrege VA Clinic

1118 Burlington Street
Holdrege, NE 68949-1705
308-995-3760

Lincoln VA Clinic

420 Victory Park Drive
Lincoln, NE 68510-2484
402-489-3802

Norfolk VA Clinic

3204 Raasch Drive
Norfolk, NE 68701-3455
402-370-4570

North Platte VA Clinic

North Platte Federal Building
300 East 3rd Street, Suite 302
North Platte, NE 69101
308-532-6906

Shenandoah VA Clinic

2043 A Avenue
Shenandoah, IA 51601-4505
712-246-0092

Community Resource Referral

Center – Omaha
825 Dorcus St., Suite 200
Omaha, NE 68108

2021 BY THE NUMBERS

- Budget - \$ 708,666,501
- Total Number of employees – 2,362
- Total Number of Veteran Patients – 65,420
- Total Number of Outpatient Visits – 685,556
- Total Number of inpatient admissions – 3,597

FACILITY HIGHLIGHTS FOR 2021

Expansion of Services

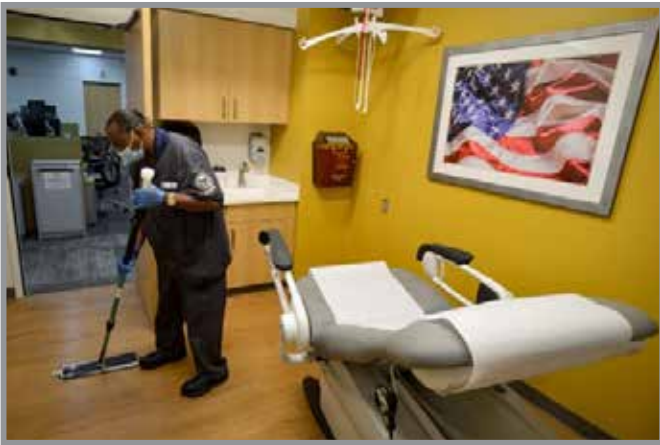
- VA NWIHCS marked the one-year anniversary of the opening of its new \$86 million Ambulatory Care Center in August. Since opening more than 6,600 area Veterans were seen by VA Nebraska-Western Iowa Health Care System providers, with multiple visits adding up to more than 12,200 Veteran appointments. Additionally, more than 1,200 area Women Veterans were seen in the new Women Veterans Health Clinic, and more than 1,800 surgical procedures were completed by the ACC Outpatient Surgical Services Department staff.
- VA NWIHCS opened a new 72,000 square foot “Super” Community-Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC) in Lincoln in March 2021. The new CBOC replaces the old VA medical facility that has served as the primary medical treatment location for Veterans in the Lincoln area since 1930. An additional new CBOC was built in Shenandoah, Iowa, while the North Platte CBOC moved into newly-refurbished space within the Federal Building in North Platte.
- VA NWIHCS partnered with CHI Health to construct a new Veterans Community Living Center (CLC) at the CHI Health Midlands Hospital in Papillion, Nebraska. It is believed to be one of the first times the VA has partnered with a local medical health care system to lease space within a private hospital to develop and operate a Veterans CLC. When completed in 2022, the CLC will offer significantly improved access to Eastern Nebraska and Western Iowa Veterans through a 30,000-square foot, 34-bed facility designed to provide short-stay rehabilitation, skilled-nursing care, and memory care.
- VA NWIHCS opened an Express Care Clinic at the Omaha VAMC to provide an option for Veterans to access care for minor illnesses within the VA System. The clinic is open evenings and Saturdays and resulted in a 36 percent reduction in lower acuity Emergency Department (ED) visits, leading to a \$1.98M ED cost avoidance and the addition of 43 new Veterans into the VA Health Care system. The Express Care Clinic offers monoclonal infusions for Veterans diagnosed with COVID, COVID vaccine, and flu shots. VA NWIHCS is set to open a second location in Lincoln during 2022.
- The new Omaha Fisher House also celebrated its one-year anniversary in September. Since its opening, the house has provided a “home away from home” for more than 250 Veteran families, free of charge.

COVID-19 Response

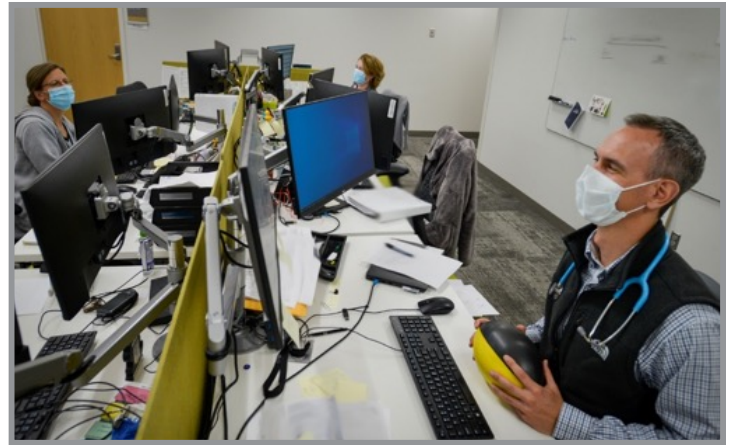
- The Omaha VA Medical Center was selected as one of 37 VA sites to receive initial doses of the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine in December.
- In December, VANWIHCS became the first VA medical facility to receive a waiver to transport the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine to provide shots to Veterans residing at the Veterans Community Living Center in Grand Island.
- VA Nebraska-Western Iowa Health Care System partnered with the Nebraska National Guard to set up COVID-19 vaccination sites at local Army National Guard readiness centers in Norfolk, Kearney, Beatrice and Omaha. This innovative partnership and other similar VA-civic organization collaborations allowed thousands of rural area Veterans to receive the vaccine in early 2021 and led to VA NWIHCS becoming a national leader in Rural and Highly Rural Veteran vaccinations.

Operational/Innovation Excellence

- During 2021 monthly reporting of Patient Safety Events improved from an average of 79 to 90, and close call reports increased from 24 to 37. This was a result of a new VA NWIHCS patient safety incident reporting system effort initiated in FY 2021.
- Safety SAIL metrics by quintile and by comparison with other Medical Centers were utilized to quickly identify subtle changes in performance and implement strategies to drive improvement, resulting in an improvement from the 5th Quintile in FY 20 Q3 to 3rd Quintile in FY 20 Q4. VANWIHCS ended FY 2021 in the 2nd Quintile.
- VA NWIHCS started a Clinical Documentation Analyst program where 4 RNs and a Coder focus on assuring a complete and accurate medical record. Their efforts resulted in raising the Case Mix Index (CMI) from 1.23 in FY20 to 1.34 in FY21, thus increasing potential VERA Impact from \$121,827 in FY19, to \$1,541,781 in FY20, and improving on FY20 to \$2,078,001 in FY21.
- Members of the VA NWIHCS Alternative Dispute Resolution Team were named national winners of the Ninth Annual Secretary's Diversity and Inclusion Excellence Awards Team – Workplace ADR Program.
- VA NWIHCS initiated an Office of Academic Affiliates Grant Funded Nurse Residency Program. The Post-Baccalaureate Nurse Residency Program bears many similarities to the Medical Rotation Model. Nurses rotate through different specialties to gain experience in each area. NWIHCS retained all five of the first program participants.
- VA NWIHCS Research Service added six Merit Review projects during 2021, including two Career Development Awards for a total of 26. Four new investigators were funded, and 3 new investigators are pending funding. Merit funding totaled \$4,480,314 for FY21, an increase of 7 percent over FY20, which represents a doubling over the last four years.
- Due to COVID, Whole Health utilized phone and Video Conferencing to see Veterans. From January 2020 through September 2021, VVC and phone encounters increased from 182 to 1034.



A member of the VA Nebraska-Western Iowa Health Care System Environmental Management Services team cleans a clinic in the new Ambulatory Care Center on the Omaha VA Medical Center (Photo by Kevin Hynes)



Members of the Omaha VA Ambulatory Care Center staff joke while working in the new \$86 million facility that celebrated its one-year anniversary in August 2021. (Photo by Kevin Hynes)



Jose Novoa and Julia Berry celebrate Novoa's becoming one of the first three members of VA Nebraska-Western Iowa Health Care System to receive the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine in December 2021. (Photo by Kevin Hynes)



Members of the Lincoln VA "Super" Community-Based Out-patient Clinic Pharmacy Team move supplies and equipment into their new facility in March 2021. The Lincoln VA team was charged with moving out of the old medical facility, which had been in operation since 1930, and into the newly completed CBOC over the course of a single weekend to ensure minimal impact to their Veteran patients. (Photo by Kevin Hynes).



Amy Bravo, a clinical nursing assistant in the Omaha VA Medical Center Intensive Care Unit, received the quarterly "Bee Award" in June 2021. She was presented the award by Dr. Eileen Kingston, Acting VA NWHCS Director, Tysa Ferguson, Acting Associate Director for Patient Care, and Jessica Wolters, Associate Chief Nurse – Procedural Care (Photo by Kevin Hynes).



Three Omaha VA Medical Center Volunteers celebrate their becoming some of the first VA volunteers to receive the COVID-19 vaccine in January 2021. (Photo by Kevin Hynes)



Members of the North Platte VA Community-Based Outpatient Clinic pose for a photo in their new facility in February 2021. (Courtesy Photo).



B. Don Burman, former director of VA Nebraska-Western Iowa Health Care System, is given a hug by a member of the Omaha VA Medical Center staff prior to his retirement in May 2021. (Photo by Kevin Hynes)



A member of the VA Nebraska-Western Iowa Health Care System Police Department keeps a close eye on the campus of the Omaha VA Medical Center in May 2021. (Photo by Jeff Gates)



A U.S. Marine Corps Veteran is assisted by members of the VA Nebraska-Western Iowa Health Care System staff in raising the Marine Corps service colors during a July 21, 2021, dedication ceremony of the newly created U.S. Military Service Flag display in front of the Omaha VA Medical Center hospital. (Photo by Kevin Hynes)



B. Don Burman, then-director of VA Nebraska-Western Iowa Health Care System, poses with members of the VA NWIHCS Pharmacy Department staff as they receive the first shipment of the Pfizer COVID-19 Vaccine in Omaha, on December 15, 2020. (Photo by Kevin Hynes)



A member of the VA Nebraska-Western Iowa Health Care System's laboratory staff draw's blood from an area Veteran during National Laboratory Professionals Appreciation Week in April. (Photo by Kevin Hynes)



Members of VA Nebraska-Western Iowa Health Care System and other volunteers pose for a photo before the start of the Omaha "Out of the Darkness" Suicide Prevention Walk in September 2021. (Courtesy Photo)



From left, Air Force Veteran Jeff Fanning, Air Force Veteran Robert Evans, Army Veteran William Klumper, and Air Force Veteran and VA peer specialist Jeremiah Jones walking on a trail near the Omaha VA campus. The walk was one of many conducted by the VA Nebraska-Western Iowa Health Care System's Psychosocial Rehabilitation Recovery Center (PRRC), as they got Veterans up and moving through an innovative virtual walk across America program. (Photo by Kevin Hynes)



(From left) Colleen Vonderhaar, Omaha Fisher House manager, and Andrea Dorsey, an Elizabeth Dole Foundation Fellow, pose with some of the supplies Dorsey helped donate in September 2021. Dorsey, who was motivated to help area Veterans after watching news coverage from Afghanistan, helped raise funds through Facebook to purchase bottled water and packaged snacks for the Omaha Fisher House. She delivered the first of the donations to the home on Sept. 9, which coincidentally was the first anniversary of the opening of the Omaha Fisher House on the Omaha VA Medical Center Campus. (Photo by Kevin Hynes)



A Expectant Family poses for a photo during the VA Nebraska-Western Iowa Health Care System's first Baby Shower Drive Thru event in March 2021. The goal of this event was to share in the pregnant Veterans' joy, celebrate their new family member, show the VA's support, and provide pregnancy, postpartum and child education. (Courtesy Photo)



Five new nurses take a major step forward in their professional healthcare careers as they graduate from the VA Nebraska-Western Iowa Health Care System new one-year Post-Baccalaureate Registered Nurse Residency Program on July 13, 2021. All five nurses decided to take nursing position at the Omaha VA Medical Center. (Photo by Kevin Hynes)



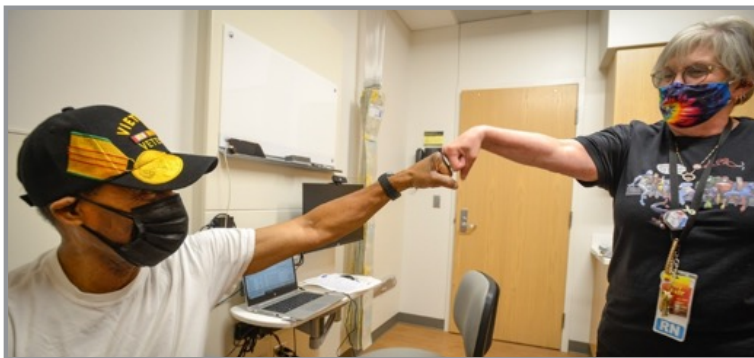
The newly installed "Memorial to the Fallen" faces the VA Nebraska-Western Iowa Health Care System Ambulatory Care Center and the Omaha VA Medical Center's new 100-foot flagpole in August 2021. (Photo by Kevin Hynes)



Lora Waechter, RN, care manager, and Katie Boston, RN, nurse manager from the Holdrege VA Community-Based Outpatient Clinic pose with Bob Dutton, United States Air Force Veteran who served in Vietnam, during a "Drive Up" COVID-19 clinic for Veterans to receive their 3rd dose of COVID-19 vaccine, Sept. 7, 2021. (Courtesy Photo)



A stained glass window that formerly hung in the Lincoln Community—Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC) chapel is reinstalled into the new Lincoln Super CBOC in March as a part of a display honoring the heritage of the former VA hospital and CBOC that had been in operation since 1930. (Photo by Kevin Hynes)



A Veteran celebrates with a VA Nebraska-Western Iowa Health Care System nurse after receiving his first COVID-19 Vaccine shot during a vaccination clinic at the VA NWIHCS' Ambulatory Care Center. (Photo by Kevin Hynes)



Veterans talk with VA Nebraska-Western Iowa Health Care System providers during a Veterans COVID-19 Vaccination Outreach Clinic held at the Nebraska Army National Guard readiness center in Norfolk, Nebraska. The collaborative effort between VA NWIHCS and the Nebraska National Guard was one of several outreach vaccination clinics held in early 2021 that allowed rural Veterans to receive the COVID-19 vaccine closer to home during the often-unpredictable winter weather. (Photo by Kevin Hynes)



SIoux FALLS VA HEALTH CARE SYSTEM

Sioux Falls VA Health Care System
2501 West 22nd Street
Sioux Falls, SD 57105

Phone: 605-336-3230 or 800-316-8387
<https://www.Siouxfalls.va.gov/>
<https://facebook.com/VASiouxFalls>
www.instagram.com/vasiouxfalls

HCS Director – Lisa J. Simoneau, FACHE, PMP

Proudly serving Veterans since 1949

During FY21 the Sioux Falls VA Healthcare System completed and began various facility improvement and construction projects. On October 13, 2020, the new 5th floor minor surgery center was activated. A \$5.0 million halls and walls project was completed and a new laboratory space was finished and opened on August 20, 2021. A new replacement MRI machine is in place and is operational. The projects in progress total \$31 million and include renovation of the tower for administration space, renovations to building 1 for a new auditorium, radiology department finishes, and a new mental health outpatient Building. The design for a 10-bed hospice cottage is 100% completed and will begin construction in late 2021. Upcoming projects include renovation of the 4th floor auditorium into a new prosthetics space, renovation of the old laboratory into a new sterile processing department, and a new space for pre-op and same day surgery.

The Sioux Falls VA Health Care System established a facility PHASER Program Team and signed the facility PHASER Participation Agreement with the PHASER Program Office. Team training began with the PHASER National Deployment Coordinator & Operations Lead. Sioux Falls also started to provide in person cardiology outreach to the Northern tier community-based outpatient clinics (CBOCs) and a cardiologist has been added to the staff at the Spirit Lake, Iowa CBOC. An expanded Caregiver Support program was initiated. There has also been the recent addition of a Patient Experience Officer and a High Reliability Organization program lead.

Community Based Outpatient Clinics:

Aberdeen VA Clinic
3307 10th Avenue Southwest
Aberdeen, SD 57401
605-229-3500

Spirit Lake VA Clinic
1850 Royal Avenue
Spirit Lake, IA 51360
712-336-6400

Wagner VA Clinic
400 West SD HWY 46
Wagner, SD 57380
605-384-2340

Sioux City VA Clinic
380 West Anchor Drive
Dakota Dunes, SD 57049
605-232-2890

Watertown VA Clinic
4 19th Street Northeast
Watertown, SD 57201
605-884-2420



2021 BY THE NUMBERS

- Budget - \$ 335,485,917
- Total Number of employees – 1,130
- Total Number of Veteran Patients – 27,812
- Total Number of Outpatient Visits – 300,765
- Total Number of inpatient admissions – 1,541

FACILITY HIGHLIGHTS FOR 2021

The Sioux Falls VA Health Care System has two Community Living Center (CLC) neighborhoods. Both underwent renovations in early 2021 as part of the “Halls and Walls” project, which updated the spaces and made them more functional and home-like for Veterans. CLC Compare is a rating system that compares CLC data against the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid (CMS) Nursing Home Compare benchmarks. The CLC received four- or five-star ratings the last six consecutive quarters. The CLC received a 5-star rating in Q1 of FY 2021.



December 1, 2021
*American Legion Auxiliary
Holiday Gift Shop*



April 15, 2021
*The SFVAHCS museum, on the first floor was
renovated with new permanent display cases.*



**Veterans Day,
November 11, 2021**
*Gifts for inpatient Veterans
delivered by Voluntary
Services and PAO*



August 11, 2021
*SFVAHCS participated in the
Annual Creative Arts Festival*



April 25, 2021
Construction on the new Mental Health Outpatient building



May 24, 2021
1st Annual Caregiver Support Summit held by SFVA Healthcare System Caregiver Support Program



June 30, 2021
American Legion Riders, Iowa Chapter, Le Mars Post 241 did a drive by for our CLC Veterans.



September 22, 2021
The first of 6 drive thru flu clinics being offered to Veterans at the SFVAHCS



August 18, 2021
SFVAHCS hosted the 19th Annual Show-n-Shine Car Show





ST. CLOUD HEALTH CARE SYSTEM

St. Cloud VA Health Care System,
4801 Veterans Drive, St. Cloud, MN 56303,

320-252-1670, 800-247-1739
<https://www.va.gov/st-cloud-health-care/>
<https://www.facebook.com/StCloudVAHCS>
<https://www.instagram.com/stcloudvahcs/>

HCS Director
Brent Thelen, PhD

Proudly Serving Veterans since 1924

The St. Cloud VA Health Care System is one of 18 health care systems leading the way as the VHA transforms the nation's largest integrated health care system into a high reliability organization (HRO) and is also a VHA Center of Excellence for Connected Care. The COVID-19 pandemic created new challenges and the St. Cloud VA team innovated several approaches to ensure their Veterans continued to receive the right care, at the right time, and in the right place. In meeting these challenges the St. Cloud VA continues to transform the way health care is delivered to Veterans.

Community Based Outpatient Clinics:

Brainerd VA Clinic
722 NW 7th Street
Brainerd, MN 56401
Phone: 218-855-1115

Montevideo VA Clinic
1025 North 13th Street
Montevideo, MN 56265
Phone: 320-269-2222

Max J. Beilke VA Clinic
515 22nd Avenue East
Alexandria, MN 56308
Phone: 320-759-2640



2021 BY THE NUMBERS

- Budget - \$ 485,083,137
- Total number of employees - 1,758
- Total number of Veteran Patients - 38,132
- Total number of Outpatient Visits - 431,324
- Total number of Inpatient Admissions - 1,525

FACILITY HIGHLIGHTS FOR 2021

- Opened an expanded Optometry Clinic. At 5,200 square feet in size overall clinic space was doubled from the previous clinic. The new Optometry clinic has 14 exam rooms, 3 pretest rooms, a medication storage room, a new dilation space, office space along with the lobby and reception area. In comparison, the old Optometry Clinic had 5 exam rooms, a cramped waiting area and limited office space.
- Opened a new Primary Care Clinic (PACT 5) focused on women's health. Featuring four exam rooms with bathrooms, a procedure room and support and storage space, the newly renovated clinic area was designed to meet the needs of Women Veterans and PACT 5 will provide women's health services 5 days a week. One day a week is reserved for female appointments only; the rest of the week both female and male patients are scheduled. This separate but shared space arrangement allows us to use the clinic space to its fullest capacity and best serve our Veteran population.
- As part of the VA Midwest Health Care Network's COVID-19 response plan, St. Cloud VA received 100 CLC Veterans transferred from the Minneapolis VAMC, freeing up critical acute care space at the Minneapolis VAMC.
- Completed a project to finish 8,250 square feet in the basement of the Residential Dining Facility in Bldg. 118. The addition of food storage spaces and an elevator and new locker rooms for Nutrition and Food Service employees will ease the burden of transferring goods from one building to another and locate all food service operations into one building.



The St. Cloud VA Health Care System received its first shipment of Moderna COVID-19 vaccine on Dec. 22, 2020, following the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's Emergency Use Authorization for this vaccine.



Using a phased COVID-19 vaccine distribution plan, the St. Cloud VA first offered vaccines to Veterans in long-term care facilities and to VA health care workers. On Jan. 11, we began to offer vaccine to outpatient Veterans who are at high risk of severe illness and death from COVID-19 and those 85 years of age and older. Most outpatient Veterans received their first and second doses at a centralized vaccine point in the auditorium (Bldg. 8). This scene from January 19, 2021 shows the six vaccination stations, Veterans awaiting their vaccine, and those who are waiting for the 15-minute observation period to end.



Normand Falcon, a resident in the Community Living Center at the St. Cloud VA Medical Center receives his second dose of the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine on Jan. 19, 2021. Crystal Demoss, Associate Nurse Manager in CLC Unit 49-2, provided the vaccine. Within the phased vaccine distribution plan, the St. Cloud VA first offered vaccines to Veterans in long-term care facilities and to VA health care workers. On Jan. 11, we began to offer vaccine to outpatient Veterans who are at high risk of severe illness and death from COVID-19 and those 85 years of age and older.



During a visit to the St. Cloud VAMC Secretary of Veterans Affairs Denis McDonough adds a personal note to the staff huddle board in the Optometry Clinic at the St. Cloud VA Medical Center during a visit on May 19, 2021. The St. Cloud VA is a lead site for the Veterans Health Administration's journey to high reliability in health care. High reliability means fewer accidents or events of harm, despite operating in a complex, high-risk environment. In reaching towards the goal of zero harm and an unmatched patient experience, staff huddle boards are used daily to identify, report, and elevate patient safety concerns, and to identify and track improvement efforts at the team level.



Crystal DeMoss, Associate Nurse Manager of Community Living Center Unit 49-2, provides the first Moderna COVID-19 vaccine to Korean War Veteran Curtis Sannerud at the same time as St. Cloud VA Nursing Assistant and Veteran Dan Willems receives his vaccine at the St. Cloud VA Medical Center on Dec. 22, 2020. Danielle Johnson, Associate Nurse Manager of Unit 49-1 in which Willems works, provided the vaccine to Willems. The St. Cloud VA was one of 113 VA Medical Centers across the country to receive the first limited supply of the Moderna COVID-19 Vaccine and first distributed it to long-term care residents and high-risk VA employees.



On July 10, the St. Cloud VA outreach team was able to finally stretch their legs after a pause due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Team members Anna and Amy were invited by VFW Post 4118 Commander Terry Bullock to attend the "Salute to the Military" parade honoring the 75th anniversary of the end of World War II, part of the Hinckley Corn and Clover Festival. The outreach team specializes in providing personalized, on-the-spot VHA enrollment counseling to groups of Veterans seeking to enroll for health care benefits.



Veteran James Entringer, American Legion Post #95 in Glencoe, MN picks up Suicide Prevention Yard signs from Jinae Plumhoff and Laura Kunstleben from the Suicide Prevention Team on Aug. 24, 2021. Through this yard sign effort, the team was able to distribute over 2,000 yards signs across Minnesota, far surpassing the initial goal of distributing 1,000 signs.



The Optometry staff cut the ribbon for the newly expanded Optometry Clinic on March 9, 2021 at the St. Cloud VA Medical Center. Featuring 5,200 square feet, the new clinic is twice the size of the previous clinic, and has 14 exam rooms, 3 pretest rooms, a medication storage room, a dilation space and a new lobby and reception area.



To support the saving of lives by promoting the Veterans Crisis Line over 2,000-yard signs were distributed to Veterans and supporters throughout Central Minnesota during September's Suicide Prevention and Awareness Month. Over 2,000-yard signs were distributed, far surpassing the initial goal of distributing 1,000 signs.



Crystal Thesing, Primary and Specialty Medicine Associate Nurse Administrator; Cheryl Thieschafer, Associate Director; Breta Monroe, Nurse Executive; Dr. Lisa Benson, Primary and Specialty Medicine Director; Dr. Brent Thelen, Medical Center Director; Sherry Kenny, Administrative Officer for Primary and Specialty Medicine; and Amber Willert, Women Veterans Program Manager, cut the ribbon on Sept. 13 to mark the acceptance of the new PACT 5 Clinic in Bldg. 4, Room 160. Featuring four exam rooms with bathrooms, a procedure room and support and storage space, the newly renovated clinic area was designed to meet the needs of Women Veterans and PACT 5 will provide women's health services 5 days a week. One day a week is reserved for female appointments only; the rest of the week both female and male patients are scheduled. This separate but shared space arrangement allows us to use the clinic space to its fullest capacity and best serve our Veteran population.



A construction project to build a new parking ramp began on Feb. 1, 2021, and construction is well underway as of Oct. 5, 2021. The 254-space ramp adds an addition 200 parking spaces on the east side of the main drive at the St. cloud VAMC. Fully accessible, the ramp will have two levels and it is not a sloped style ramp; instead, it will have two flat parking levels. It will be equipped with elevators and a heated entrance shelter.



Brainerd VA Clinic in Brainerd, MN



Montevideo VA Clinic in Montevideo, MN



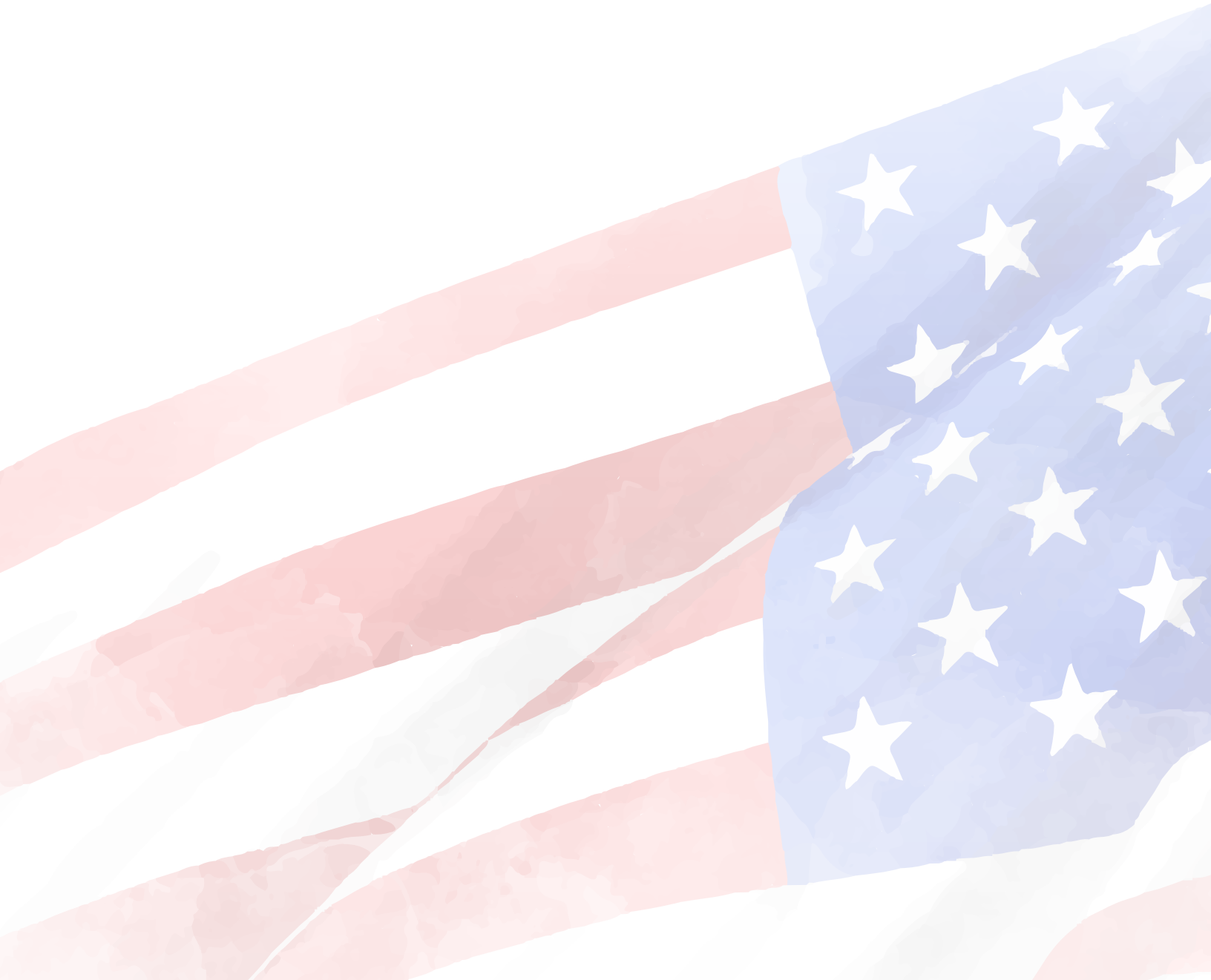
Max J. Beilke VA Clinic in Alexandria, MN



A 2021 contract award of a 10-year lease will result in a new, larger facility for the Max J. Beilke VA Clinic in Alexandria, Minnesota. The VA Clinic, currently located at 515 22nd Avenue East in Alexandria, will move to a new location at 410 30th Avenue East in the summer of 2022. The new location is an existing building that will be renovated. The new location increases the operating size of the clinic from 9,915 square feet to 14, 833 square feet. The additional space will enable expanded services in audiology, telehealth and mental health.



St. Cloud VA Medical Center in St. Cloud, MN





U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

REACH OUT

NEW SUICIDE PREVENTION CAMPAIGN



Suicide is a national, public health issue that affects all Americans, including Veterans, their families, and their friends. The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) works to increase understanding about Veteran suicide prevention and the resources available to Veterans and their supporters and VA stakeholders and partners.

Reach Out is a new awareness campaign, which will launch at the beginning of Suicide Prevention Month on September 1. Reach Out will replace the current campaign, *Be There*.

WHY REACH OUT?

Life challenges can build up. When not addressed, these can lead to isolation, financial hardship, relationship issues, and other challenges that can increase risk for suicidal crises.

This campaign concept is rooted in the idea that during life changes, Veterans can practice upstream mental well-being and get support, and—in turn—supporters and stakeholders can be empowered to help Veterans going through a life challenge or tough time.

VA will leverage a variety of tactics and channels to:

- Expand each audience's knowledge surrounding Veteran suicide while stressing that there is hope and suicide is preventable
- Educate audiences on the warning signs of a crisis, available resources, and ways to support a Veteran loved one, and underscore that talking about suicide does not make somebody want to die by suicide
- Equip stakeholders with the tools and resources needed to proactively provide support, and emphasize you don't have to be an expert to talk with a Veteran about suicide

Messaging will also be focused on the role of Veteran supporters and VA stakeholders and partners in proactively reaching out to Veterans during life challenges.

WHAT CAN STAKEHOLDERS AND PARTNERS EXPECT?

A toolkit, with social media posts, blog/newsletter content, web banners, virtual backgrounds, and other materials, will be provided to share across networks. A new campaign website with resources and downloadable materials is also being developed.

REACH OUT MESSAGING

LEAVING A JOB

ENDING A RELATIONSHIP

LEARNING TO PARENT

Big life moments can be really intense. Veterans don't have to go through the hard stuff alone, they can take a moment to reach out and ask for help.

