

VA Palo Alto Health Care System 2011 Annual Report

This is my VA!

Director's Message

Welcome to our 2011 Annual Report! We have much to be proud of and many exciting plans as we continue on our Path to Excellence.

We have made great strides in our continuous improvement journey. VAPAHCS received the VHA Under Secretary for Health's Award in the Leadership Category for Systems Redesign at the VHA Improvement Forum in Las Vegas in September 2011. Our Office of Process Improvement trained over 300 employees in VA-TAMMCS process improvement tools and techniques and completed 10 Rapid Process Improvement Workshops. In 2012, all services will complete improvement projects using the VA-TAMMCS improvement framework.

Our Nursing Service has made great strides in their Magnet Journey. Formation of unit based, multi-disciplinary councils are underway. The professional practice model our staff nurses developed is being deployed across all sites. The Magnet Champions' meeting is collecting stories and recognizing our staff that demonstrate "Magnet Moments". Our goal is to apply for Magnet Designation before the end of 2012.

On our Baldrige journey, we received the VA Performance Achievement Award for our 2011 Carey Application and the Silver award level for our California Awards for Performance Excellence (CAPE) submission. But our goal in this journey has nothing to do with awards. It has everything to do with aligning the work all employees do every day with our mission and vision. With our feedback reports, we have identified gaps we need to fill. On that journey, we have made major improvements in our systems for addressing workforce and stakeholder issues in the formation of our new Veteran's Focus Council and in the implementation of a new Workforce Development Plan that includes forming a new Workforce Development Council. We are also devising a volunteer satisfaction tool to be administered this year.

Our Veteran and Family Advisory Council has grown from 8 to 11 participants and has now embedded Veteran and family members in numerous health care system committees.

Our number of CREW (Civility, Respect and Engagement in the Workplace) facilitators has increased to sixteen in 2012 with six CREW workgroups launched in 2011. Presently, six workgroups are in the CREW process, with a goal of 12 for 2012. The enthusiasm and dedication to the CREW program is a direct result of the positive experiences and feedback received after CREW implementation.

Our Integrated Ethics Program provides an infrastructure for fostering a positive, transparent and ethical health care system. In 2011, our Preventive Ethics subcommittee developed a Patient Safety website to encourage staff members to share their patient safety ideas to promote a safe and effective environment for our Veterans and staff.

All of our Path to Excellence Initiatives correlate with Secretary Shinseki's ICARE core values for VA. Our 2010-2012 VAPAHCS Strategic Plan is a wonderful roadmap of how we will achieve our goals. Please visit our VAPAHCS "Path to Excellence" Website at www.paloalto.va.gov/path2excellence to learn more about each of these important programs.

VAPAHCS is a dynamic health care system with unlimited opportunities for innovation and discovery. Our construction of new facilities on many of our sites, especially the Palo Alto and Menlo Park Divisions, has taxed the patience of many staff. But the improvements we will see over the next six years will be dramatic. They will occur gradually as we activate new buildings and open new parking lots and structures. Enjoy this journey. Thank you for all you do every day for our Veterans and each other.

Statistics

Financial Report

Appropriations FY 2011	\$834,509,723
General Appropriations	\$705,901,954
Specific Programs	\$128,607,769
Medical Care Collections	\$42,546,803
Construction & Equipment	\$29,687,607

Employees

Total Full-Time Employees	3,352
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Patients Treated

Unique Patients	63,884
Women Veterans	3,442
Outpatient visits	725,807
Bed Days of Care	221,012
Hospital Admissions	6,529
Total Admissions (<i>with residential programs</i>)	8,344
Nursing Home Beds	360
Total Operating Beds	813

Voluntary Service

Volunteers	2,880
Volunteer hours	313,168
Gifts and Donations	\$1,355,137
Volunteer Hourly Value	\$7,334,395

2011 List of Accomplishments

Excelling in Care

The VAPAHCS was the recipient of the 2011 California Awards for Performance Excellence (CAPE)[™] Eureka Silver Award. Based on the Baldrige Criteria, this award was presented to VAPAHCS following a 50-page application and a weeklong site visit. Brent Duggleby, Chair of CAPE[™] Council said “The accomplishments of our winners exemplify the superior performance and sustainability that is possible from California’s various industries. The winners at each one of these award levels demonstrate a passion for excellence that is driving them to achieve prominence in each of their sectors. Californians can take pride in the accomplishments of these world-class organizations.”

Most Wired

The Hospitals and Health Networks, a publication of the American Hospital Association, named VAPAHCS as one of the Nation’s Most Wired Hospitals. This is the 13th year the magazine has recognized hospitals and health systems for excellence in IT and the 6th time that VAPAHCS has received the award. AHA used a new analytic structure to stratify hospitals based on progress in adoption, implementation and use of information technology in four areas: infrastructure, business and administration management, clinical quality and safety, and care continuum. Only organizations whose responses reflect development across all four focus areas were designated Most Wired.

Performance Excellence

The VAPAHCS was presented the prestigious 2011 Performance Achievement Carey Award for its excellent performance in patient care, patient satisfaction, quality, safety, and business practices. The award recognizes VA organizations that have demonstrated noteworthy performance levels in seven areas: leadership; strategic planning; customer and market focus; measurement analysis and knowledge management; workforce resource focus; process management and results. The award adheres to the Malcolm Baldrige National Award criteria, a model that allows organizations to assess and compare their efforts toward achieving quality in customer service and satisfaction.

Defenders Lodge Groundbreaking

More than 350 Veterans, employees, volunteers and VIPs gathered to celebrate the Ground Breaking Ceremony for the new Defenders Lodge – a \$12.5 million facility that is being donated to the VAPAHCS by the Pentagon Federal Credit (PenFed) Foundation. Secretary Eric Shinseki, Congresswoman Anna Eshoo and Congressman Mike Honda were principal speakers. The new Defenders Lodge will be nearly twice the size of the current Hometel. It will be a high quality, warm and inviting environment, where our Nation’s heroes can stay free of charge. It will have 52 suites, providing up to 104 queen-size beds in a 34,076 sq ft building.

Homeless Programs

The VAPAHCS Domiciliary Service underwent its first Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) survey. Three Domiciliary Service outpatient homeless programs (Health Care for Homeless Veterans, Grant and Per Diem, and HUD VASH) and two Domiciliary Service residential treatment programs (First Step and the Homeless Veterans Rehabilitation Program) were surveyed. Both programs received a Three-Year Accreditation; a testament to the emphasis on safety and the exceptional clinical services provided by the Domiciliary Service’s multi-disciplinary staff.

Promoting Employee Health In Clinics

VAPAHCS received a \$10,000 grant from VHA to promote “Exercise In A Box” to advance Employee Health Promotion and Disease Prevention. The exercise boxes will be disseminated to Outpatient Clinics that don’t have fitness rooms to encourage employee health. Each employee will be provided with a small, easy to store box containing: a stress squeezer, a resistance band with an instruction/exercise guide, a pedometer, a jump rope and a seat balance disk.

Communications and Electronic Outreach

The VA Palo Alto HCS Construction Website won first place in a national VA Web competition, setting the VAPAHCS as a leader in Web communications: <http://www.paloalto.va.gov/construction.asp>. The extensive site easily guides the reader through more than 30 construction initiatives. Additionally, VAPAHCS excelled in Social Media outreach. With more than 8,000 fans in the first couple years, VAPAHCS had four times as many followers as the next highest VA. The facility was in the top ten for Twitter followers, too.

Construction

VAPAHCS is undergoing an unprecedented amount of construction and expansion to enhance health care for Veterans throughout our health care system. In 2011, VA reached a significant milestone in the effort to realign services from the Livermore Division to a new 150,000 SF Community Based Outpatient Center (CBOC) and 120-bed Community Living Center in French Camp, CA and a new 80,000 SF CBOC in Fremont, CA by completing the acquisition of land for the new facilities. Programming and design of the new facilities is actively underway and will continue through 2012.

Looking ahead into 2012, VAPAHCS will open a new, 80-bed Mental Health Center and Aquatic Therapy Center on the Palo Alto Division. Progress will continue on the Palo Alto Division with the start of construction for the Rehabilitation Center, which will be the new home of the Polytrauma and Blind Rehabilitation programs and a 600-stall parking structure. Please visit our VAPAHCS Construction Website for the latest information on these and many other exciting projects throughout our health care system <http://www.paloalto.va.gov/construction.asp>.

Commemorating VAPAHCS' History

VAPAHCS won the VHA Pinnacle Award for its efforts to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the Palo Alto Campus, through a book, 20-minute video and Website. The commemoration included the 75-year history of the Menlo Park and Livermore Divisions, as well as Palo Alto. To highlight the most important part of VA history, the Veterans we serve, we looked for Veterans with stories that provided an honest voice and connection between the important events of each of the decades and Veteran care.

Clinical Performance Measures

For FY 2011, VAPAHCS met or exceeded all nine categories of VA clinical measures (diabetes, ischemic heart, prevention, behavioral health screening, tobacco cessation, community acquired pneumonia, heart failure, acute myocardial infarction and surgical care improvement).

2011 Stand Down

More than 200 homeless Veterans gained access to dental care, legal aid, health care, counseling, housing and employment information and identification cards at the 2011 three-day South Bay Stand-Down in Boulder Creek hosted by the VAPAHCS. Essentials such as meals, clothing, shoes, sleeping bags, blankets and entertainment also were provided. The biggest draws were the legal and dental resources. Superior court judges heard veterans' misdemeanor charges and Veterans were able to work off community service hours.

Women Veterans' Health

VAPAHCS Women's Health Center launched an exciting new program called the Women's Wellness Workshop. The Workshop takes a "whole-body," collaborative, health-promoting approach to treatment, with the goals of improving patients' overall health and creating a sense of community among women veterans. The format of the workshop sessions emphasized interaction and discussion between health care providers and veterans rather than lectures alone. Additionally, the providers leading the sessions came from all disciplines of the medical field, including pharmacists, dietitians, psychologists and physicians, so that Veterans were provided with comprehensive information on how to improve their health.

Individual Awards

Ms. Lisa Freeman, Director, VAPAHCS, was named one of Silicon Valley's 2011 Women of Influence, by the Silicon Valley/San Jose Business Journal. She was featured in a special edition of the San Jose Mercury News, Oakland Tribune and Contra Costa Times as one of the Bay Area's most inspiring women – joining high-profile lawyers, venture capitalists, space scientists, technology pros and nonprofit executives.

Jon D. Fuller, MD, Deputy Associate Chief of Staff, Extended Care and Medical Director, Home Based Primary Care, received the 2011 Marsha Goodwin-Beck Interdisciplinary Awards for Excellence in Geriatric Leadership. The award recognized Dr. Fuller for his outstanding leadership in the interdisciplinary care of older Veterans at the local, regional and national levels.

Marylene Cloitre, PhD, a clinical psychologist who joined the National Center for PTSD was selected as the President of the International Society for Traumatic Stress Studies (ISTSS), an international, multidisciplinary professional organization with about 2,700 members. Dr. Cloitre was the founder and director of The Institute for Trauma and Stress at the NYU Child Study Center and the Cathy and Stephen Graham Professor of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry. Additionally, Eve Carlson, PhD, who also works at the NCPTSD at Menlo Park, was just elected to be the next President of the Society (beginning November 2011).

David M. Gaba, MD, anesthesiologist, was named the first-ever recipient of the Under Secretary for Health's Award for Excellence in Clinical Simulation Training, Education and Research. Dr. Gaba was recognized with the 2011 Excellence in Clinical Simulation Training, Education and Research Practice Award for his numerous contributions to the field of clinical simulation over the past two decades.

David Relman, MD, was elected to the Institute of Medicine of the National Academy of Sciences. According to the announcement, "Election to the IOM is considered one of the highest honors in the fields of health and medicine and recognizes individuals who have demonstrated outstanding professional achievement and commitment to service."

Alisa Krinsky, Supervisor Recreation Therapist, received the 2011 Distinguished Alumna Award from the College of Applied Sciences and Arts Hospitality, Recreation and Tourism Management from San Jose State University. Ms. Krinsky began her career at VAPAHCS in 1988, and was presented the award for her professional contributions to the field of Recreation Therapy during the past 22 years.

Alan M. Garber, MD, was appointed as the next Provost of Harvard University. His work as a physician and Associate Director of the VA Center for Health Care Evaluation made him a leader for both VA and the health care industry. His research focused on ways to improve health care quality and delivery, methods to assess the cost effectiveness and comparative value of health interventions.

Gregory Goodrich, PhD, Supervisory Research Psychologist and Optometric Research Fellowship Coordinator, received the "Tiresias" award from the International Society for Low Vision Research and Rehabilitation (ISLRR). The award was presented in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, during the 10th International Low Vision Conference. The award, the first time it was given, recognized Dr. Goodrich's major role in the development of the field of rehabilitation and research on visual impairment.

Crystal Smith-Spangler, MD, an internist at VAPAHCS, was presented the Junior Investigator Recognition Award from the Annals of Internal Medicine and the American College of Physicians (ACP). The honor is given to junior internal medicine physicians and investigators for original research and review articles published in Annals of Internal Medicine.

Amit Etkin, MD, was recognized by the National Institutes of Mental Health as one of 12 recipients of the Biobehavioral Research Awards for Innovative New Scientists—or BRAINS. This award program is designed to support the research and career development of outstanding early-stage scientists, giving them up to \$1.6 million over five years for innovative research aimed at critical knowledge gaps identified by the NIMH Strategic Plan.

Raj Joshi, Pharmacist and Commander, U.S. Navy Reserve, who was awarded the prestigious recognition of U.S. Navy Reserve Pharmacist of the year. Commander/Mr. Joshi, VAPAHCS chemotherapy pharmacist, recently returned from a 12-month deployment to Landstuhl Regional Medical Center, Germany. He has been deployed three times and served on a USNS Comfort Humanitarian Katrina Mission. He joined the VA in Nebraska in 1984, transferred to the Northern California Health Care System in 1989 and has been working at VAPAHCS since 2004.

Pamela Kum received the Alumni Volunteer Service Award of Merit from the Stanford Associates Board of Governors for her work at VAPAHCS' Geriatric Research, Education and Clinical Center (GRECC) from 2010-2011. The Award of Merit is given for exceptional volunteer service to Stanford University related to a specific achievement, while demonstrating initiative, thoroughness and enthusiasm.

VA Palo Alto Facilities

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VA MENLO PARK DIVISION
795 Willow Road
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