



CAVHCS Vets with Diabetes get new Glucometers, more

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Diabetes Management and Education

More than 2,000 Veterans recently traveled to CAVHCS' Tuskegee and Montgomery Campuses to receive new Glucose meters, meter training, influenza and/or pneumonia vaccinations and to have their retinal photo completed.

New glucose meters are going to be used in VISN 7, and CAVHCS' Diabetes and Education Management Department assisted in the task of training veterans on how to safely use the new meters. On the Tuskegee Campus more than 1100 veterans received their new glucose meters at the training during the week of October 19-2 Tuskegee's Building 90 Theater.

An additional 1,415 meters were also distributed on the Montgomery Campus along with more than 350 vaccines and over 150 retinal photos. Diabetes educational materials were distributed to

all veterans, along with information about diabetes services was discussed.

The Freestyle Freedom meter does not require coding, and requires a very small blood sample. The meter also allows alternate site testing, but veterans were encouraged to use their fingertips unless discussed with their providers – because of the restrictions involved with this type of testing.

Training was provided in group settings, which provided an opportunity

for hands on participation. Patients and significant others were provided with opportunities to ask questions. Patients with special needs like foot care, vision loss and Tele-health were identified and scheduled for care.

CAVHCS' Diabetes and Education Management Department attributes the tremendous veteran turnout and the overall success of the program with the extraordinary teamwork exhibited by all involved. A very special thanks to Ms Brown PSA, Ms Lawrence LPN, Ms. Taylor RN, Fredrick Harris LPN, Crystal Bey LPN, Ms. Rayford-Outsey, Ms. Latimore CRNP, Gwen Kelly volunteer, Carry Durham work study, Coren Dubose and Stanley Jackson in housekeeping, Voluntary Services for snacks, pharmacy, Dr. Norvel, Dr. Newcomb, Ms. Kate McLean, Dr. McNeal, the Business Office, IT, Primary Care, Patient Education, Eye Clinic, Nursing, Recreation, Engineering, Canteen, Surgical Service, Security, support of our Quadrad and to Mr. Struchtemeyer for his belief in patient-centered care.



In response to a VISN-wide change in the type of glucose meters being used, more than 2,000 Veterans recently traveled to CAVHCS' Tuskegee and Montgomery Campuses to receive new meters, meter training, influenza and/or pneumonia vaccinations and to have their retinal photos completed.

CAVHCS hosts Breast Cancer Awareness Walks



CAVHCS Women's Wellness Program sponsored two Breast Cancer Awareness Walks (one on the Tuskegee Campus and another on the Montgomery Campus) to educate staff and Veterans in observance of Breast Cancer Awareness Month.

Attendees at both programs received educational materials and the benefit of perspective offered by a cancer survivor.

Next - the CAVHCS Women's Wellness Program will sponsor a Women Veterans Program to celebrate Veterans Day. The celebration is scheduled for the morning of November 6, in Tuskegee's Staff Training Room from 7:30 am until noon.



CAVHCS Photo Gallery

Photos by Eric Johnson



This year's Bucket Brigade competition - held in conjunction with Fire Prevention Awareness Week - was won by Social Work Services.



A check was recently presented to CAVHCS Community Living Center by members of VFW Post 5404, Auburn, Ala. to fund the purchase of a new television in the day room.



CAVHCS employees recently began receiving the H1N1 vaccination during Mass Employee Immunizations - in keeping with CDC prioritization guidance of the initial supplies of the vaccine.

CAVHCS All-Stars

Dear Dr. Booth, I am writing to thank you. As you know, Phil has suffered from chronic pain since his injury almost 20 years ago. Over the years we have tried everything including two major back surgeries, lots of therapy, exercise programs, chiropractic help, lots of drugs and even acupuncture. Pain is his real disability, not the wheelchair.

This is the first program that has actually helped. He looks the best I have seen him in years. I also could not get over how good all the guys looked compared to what I saw that first week. I don't think that my husband believed that anything other than more drugs could relieve his pain. However, by participating in your multi-faceted program that included mind, body, and spirit he now believes that if he can learn to use the skills he developed in your program at home, his pain level will stay down and his activity level will increase. Words cannot really express how grateful I feel for the hope you have given to me and my husband. Thanks for all you do to help these suffering veterans overcome pain issues that keep them from living the quality of life we all deserve. -- *In appreciation, LuAnn B. Montgomery*

Dear Director: I commend Mr. Stanford Barnes, Pharmacy Technician in the Tuskegee Pharmacy. Mr. Barnes answered the phone when I called after being out of medication for nearly three weeks. He indicated to me the medication would be mailed to me almost two weeks later. When I related my plight to him, he immediately told me he would expedite a partial supply of the medication to me. True to his word, I received my medication partial within a few days. I can survive without the medication with a minimum adverse effects, but I was getting worried having gone so long. If you can reward Mr. Barnes in any way, I feel he should receive any accolades you can heap on him. I am sure he is a stellar employee in many other ways as well. Thank you for your time. -- *Sincerely, Paul S. F., Jr., PhD Denver, CO*

Sir: In the course of my 26 year USAF career, I've had plenty of opportunities to have my blood drawn. Today Lindsay Osborne provided me with the most pain-free care that I've EVER experienced! Please commend her for the care she takes with her patients. It is greatly appreciated. -- *Sincerely, James R. W. Montgomery*

The CAVHCS Salute



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CAVHCS hosts Drive-thru Seasonal Flu Clinics

CAVHCS conducted Drive -Thru Clinics at its Tuskegee and Montgomery Medical Centers, as well as their Columbus, Ga. Community Based Outpatient Clinic and Dothan, Ala. Mental Health Clinic - October 31 from 9 am – until 2 pm. However, the H1N1 vaccine was unavailable to Veterans.

“We have been providing the Seasonal Flu vaccine to veterans in all clinical settings since September 1,” said Ms. Laundrena LaPradd-Bradley, CAVHCS’ 2009 Flu Campaign Champion before the Drive-thrus were conducted. “So, we were able to provide Seasonal Flu vaccine to all Veterans who attend our Drive -Thru clinics. However, we weren’t able to provide the H1N1 vaccine while supplies remain limited.”

“We’ve been educating Veterans and staff on the benefits of getting the Seasonal Flu vaccine for decades,” said Dr. William Hill, CAVHCS Occupational Health.

“And, those benefits to our immune systems remain crucial.

“We’re immunizing our health care personnel with the limited supply we have currently on hand – much like other hospitals who have received initial supplies of the H1N1 vaccine,” said Hill. “We will eventually be able to provide the vaccine to a widening group of Veterans, when supplies increase.”

Once CAVHCS begins providing H1N1 to Veterans the issuance of the vaccine will be provided in a targeted, prioritization of - pregnant women; persons who live with or provide care for infants aged under 6 months (e.g., parents, siblings, and daycare providers); and health care and emergency medical services personnel who have direct contact with patients or infectious material.

For some Veterans the question is not when the H1N1 vaccine will be available, but will all Veterans need to be vaccinated when supplies of the vaccine increase?

“That question makes getting the Seasonal Flu vaccine that much more important,” said LaPradd-Bradley. “In the short-term, as supplies increase, only a targeted group of Veterans will be able to receive the H1N1 vaccine. However, the prioritizations for Seasonal Flu and H1N1 are not the same. So especially this year, Veterans should be sure to come in and get their Seasonal Flu shot. While they’re here we’ll be able



CAVHCS recently conducted Drive-Thru Clinics at its Tuskegee and Montgomery Medical Centers, as well as the Columbus, Ga. Community Based Outpatient Clinic and the Dothan, Ala. Mental Health Clinic to ensure an expanded availability of the Seasonal Flu vaccine to Veterans.

to review their records and advise them about future vaccination.”



VA to invest Millions in Renewable Energy, Conservation

As part of a clean-energy transformation, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is targeting nearly one-quarter of its \$1.4 billion in funds from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act to investments in clean energy generation and energy conservation.

“These investments help spur new energy savings and, at the same time, reduce our environmental footprint,” Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki said. “The President is leading us in a new direction away from our dependence on foreign oil and the destabilizing effects of a changing climate. Since hospitals use such large amounts of energy, we need to step up our efforts to transition to clean-energy technologies.”

VA will direct more than \$68 million to renewable sources, including solar, wind and geothermal energy and has dedicated nearly \$238 million toward retrofitting existing buildings to use energy and water more efficiently.

To use energy and water more efficiently, facilities are replacing or upgrading windows and roofs; upgrading lighting to more efficient types; automating lighting controls and energy management systems; installing low-flow faucets and toilets and other water-conserving equipment; installing variable-volume air handling units; and enhancing boiler control systems and tune-ups.

“These measures, identified through regularly scheduled energy audits, facility condition assessments, and ongoing monitoring by energy engineers and other staff, are important steps in ‘greening’ VA,” Shinseki added. “In conjunction with the investments in clean energy generation and other green projects that VA is making through its Department-level Green Management Program,

these retrofits are key steps in reducing VA’s environmental footprint.”

Overall, the Administration has targeted more than \$60 billion in funds from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act to clean-energy investments.



A plumber from R.J. Diamond (Doraville, Ga.) installs one of the waterless urinals to be installed in CAVHCS facilities. The projected savings of the 30 urinals to be installed in Tuskegee equal \$438,000 in water bill savings and 1,200,000 gallons of water consumption savings.

Four New Judges Will Speed Veterans' Appeals

Secretary Announces Expansion of Veterans Appeals Board

Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki announced the addition of four new Veterans Law Judges to the Board of Veterans' Appeals (BVA), which will enable the board to increase the number of cases being decided.

"Veterans have earned the right to prompt, exhaustive and professional review of their claims for benefits," Secretary Shinseki said. "This expansion of BVA will enable Veterans to receive more expeditious decisions on their appeals."

BVA is an appeals body to which Veterans, their dependents or their survivors can go when they are not satisfied with decisions about claims for benefits administered by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). BVA reviews decisions on benefit claims made by local VA offices and issues decisions on appeals. The board currently has 60 Veterans Law Judges.

These law judges are attorneys experienced in Veterans law and in reviewing benefit claims. They are the only ones who can issue BVA decisions. Staff attorneys,

also trained in Veterans law, review the facts of each appeal and assist the board members.

In fiscal year 2008, the board decided 43,757 appeals and handled 48,804 cases in fiscal year 2009. Most of the cases involve claims for disability compensation and pensions.

"We must foster a responsive approach when we consider Veterans," Shinseki said. "Reducing the backlog of benefits decisions and waiting times are essential to providing our Veterans and their families with the service they deserve."

VA provides a pamphlet entitled, How Do I Appeal, to anyone who is not satisfied with the results of a benefits claim that was decided by a VA regional office, medical center or another local VA office. The pamphlet explains the steps involved in filing an appeal. For more information about BVA or to download a copy of the pamphlet, visit www.va.gov/vbs/bva

Pharmacy 'Among the Best'

Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki announced J.D. Power and Associates, a firm specializing in consumer surveys, has given VA pharmacies some of the highest customer satisfaction scores in a national sampling of pharmacy customers.

"Veterans are our clients. Providing the highest quality pharmacy services is an essential part of delivering health care to our nation's heroes," said Secretary Shinseki. "As we transform VA and move forward, we will make certain that our approach in delivering health care is, first and foremost, Veteran-centric."

J.D. Power and Associates surveyed about 12,000 pharmacy customers who use pharmacy retailers, including independent and mail-out pharmacies, chain drug stores, mass merchandisers and supermarkets. VA received an "Among the Best" ranking for the mail order category, the same overall ranking as Kaiser Permanente Pharmacy and Prescriptions Solutions.

Among the factors examined in the J.D. Power and Associates 2009 National Pharmacy Study were pharmacy environment, price and value of prescription drugs, experience with online ordering and mail delivery, and experience with pharmacist and non-pharmacist staff.

VA operates seven mail-out pharmacies, known officially as consolidated mail outpatient pharmacies. These facilities support VA's health care mission through advanced automated production technologies to dispense and mail prescriptions to eligible Veterans. In 2008, VA provided approximately 126 million outpatient prescriptions to more than 4.4 million patients.

In addition to supporting VA health care facilities, the mail-out pharmacies also support the Civilian Health and Medical Program for VA and the Naval Medical Center in San Diego. To see the full survey results, visit www.jdpower.com/healthcare/articles/2009-National-Pharmacy-Study.

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CAVHCS Laboratory CAP Certified

CAVHCS Pathology & Laboratory Medicine Services has been awarded an accreditation by the College of American Pathologists (CAP) based on the results of a recent onsite inspection.

The laboratory's director was advised of this national recognition and congratulated for the, "excellence of the services being provided." CAVHCS Pathology & Laboratory Medicine Services is one of 7,000 CAP-accredited laboratories nationwide.

The CAP Laboratory Accreditation Program, begun in the early 1980s, is recognized by the federal government as being equal to or more stringent than the government's own inspection program.

During the CAP accreditation process inspectors examine the laboratory's records and quality control of preceding two years. CAP inspectors also examine the entire staff's qualifications, the laboratory's equipment, facilities, safety program and records, as well as the overall management of the laboratory. This stringent inspection program is designed to specifically ensure the highest standard for all laboratory patients.



2009 Federal Benefits Open Season Facts, Resources

The 2009 Federal Benefits Open Season is coming! Open Season runs from November 9 through December 14, 2009. What is Open Season? This is the time for you to think about your health, dental, vision, and tax-saving needs and to make changes to or enroll in one of the Programs. The programs that participate in the annual Open Season are the: Federal Employees Health Benefits Program (FEHBP), Federal Employees Dental and Vision Insurance Program (FEDVIP), and Federal Flexible Spending Account Program (FSAFEDS).

Why should you care? This is the time to make elections you usually can't make any other time of the year. All health or dental or vision plans are not alike. Open Season is about exercising your right of choice. Failure to consider your health plan choices could leave you without the healthcare services or supplies you need or with a premium you can't afford; dental and/or vision coverage can fill in the gaps of any coverage you now have or pay for services you now don't get; and a flexible spending account lets you save money and pay less tax.

FEDVIP

- * Your coverage will continue into retirement automatically, without a five year enrollment requirement, if you retire on an immediate annuity;
- * Participating dental and vision providers may be different from your health plan's providers;
- * You can cancel your coverage only during Open Season or deployment to active military duty;
- * FEDVIP always pays benefits secondarily to your FEHBP insurance;
- * You can submit copays and deductibles to your FSA account.

FSAFEDS

- * There are three accounts from which to choose - a dependent care account, a health care account, and a limited expense health care account;

- * Participating lowers your taxable income;
- * You can pay for your FEHB and FEDVIP copays and deductibles.
- * Not open to retirees.

How much do these Programs cost?

You can find the 2010 health insurance rates at www.opm.gov/insure/health/rates/indindex.asp

You can find 2010 dental rates at www.opm.gov/insure/dental/rates/index.asp

You can find 2010 vision rates at www.opm.gov/insure/vision/rates/index.asp

For FSAFEDS go to <http://www.fsafeds.com> to see how much you may contribute.

Where can you go for more detail on the choices available to you? For FEHBP information go to www.opm.gov/insure/health the 2010 Guide to Federal Benefits, or the 2010 Plan brochures.

For FEDVIP go to www.opm.gov/insure/dental/index.asp or www.opm.gov/insure/vision/index.asp for the 2010 Guide to Federal Benefits, or the 2010 Plan brochures.

For FSAFEDS go to www.fsafeds.com call 1-877-372-3337, the 2010 Guide to Federal Benefits or the FSAFEDS Program Brochure.

How do you make an Open Season election?

For FEHB, use the Health Benefits Election form (SF 2809) or use an online self-service system; the Human Resources Office of your agency can help you.

For dental or vision under FEDVIP, go to www.benefeds.com or call 1-877-888-3337.

For flexible spending accounts under FSAFEDS, go to www.fsafeds.com or call 1-877-372-3337.

Additional details can be found at www.opm.gov/insure or contact CAVHCS Human Resources Office for information.



VA engages Social Media, new Forms of Communication

Who would have thought the Government could be considered cool? Okay, so maybe being considered cool isn't realistic, but the VA is using methods of communications that are cool – or at least in-step with what's cool!

The method; the use of social media, is because that's where an important target audience congregates. Facebook boasts more than 250 million active users, while 88 percent of Twitter users are 34 years old or younger.

Now you can. **VA Careers** has established a presence on both Facebook and Twitter. Our Facebook page features videos, links, advertisements, and the ability to have a digital conversation with those people we most want to talk to – the potential VA prospect. The Twitter presence allows us to instantly update our followers.

Most employees are not able to visit these sites at work, but VA prospects and even Veterans do frequent them. The sites are intended to engage with prospects and drive them to <http://www.facebook.com/VAcareers> or <http://twitter.com/VAcareers> to apply. That's why it's more essential than ever that your career openings are posted on www.VAcareers.va.gov.

If you do have access, check out the sites. Become a fan or a follower. Spread the word and also send people to www.centralalabama.va.gov. While there, they'll see links to the VA's presence on YouTube (<http://www.youtube.com/user/VeteransHealthAdmin>). That's right – the VA is on YouTube, and eventually CAVHCS will be too!



Have you seen the new look of CAVHCS' new Tuskegee/Montgomery shuttle? It's very bright so it's hard to miss. Used to promote the VA's recruitment message, the signage is an example of the VA's approach to utilize new means of communication.

The 60th Annual Veterans Day Parade will be conducted Thursday, November 5, 3 pm. The parade route begins near Vetegee Field and proceeds past the official viewing stand next to the CAVHCS Community Living Center. Parade participants include drill teams, marching bands and civic groups from throughout Macon County. This years's Grand Marshall is scheduled to be State of Alabama Department of Veterans Affairs Commissioner, Clyde Marsh, U.S. Navy Adm. (Ret.) .



November

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	
	<p>2</p> <p>Medical-Surgical Nurses Week National Health Information and Technology Week Allied Health Professions Week - www.asahp.org National Diabetes Education Week - www.aadenet.org</p>	<p>3</p> <p>Nurses Week</p>	<p>4</p> <p>Veterans Day Parade Tuskegee Campus</p>	<p>6</p> <p>Women Veterans Program Tuskegee STR 8 am - Noon</p>	<p>7</p>		
<p>8</p>	<p>9</p> <p>U.S. Marine Corps Established (1775)</p>	<p>12</p> <p>National Radiologic Technology Week www.asrt.org</p>	<p>Veterans Day Observance Montgomery Campus</p>	<p>20</p> <p>Lung Cancer Awareness Week</p>	<p>21</p> <p>world diabetes day www.worlddiabetesday.org</p>		
	<p>Perioperative Nurse Week</p>	<p>22</p>	<p>23</p>	<p>24</p>	<p>25</p> <p>NATIONAL GREAT AMERICAN SMOKEOUT</p>	<p>27</p>	<p>28</p> <p>Happy Thanksgiving!</p>
<p>29</p> <p>Computer Security Day</p>	<p>30</p>	<p>American Diabetes Month - www.diabetes.org Epilepsy Awareness Month - www.epilepsyfoundation.org National Alzheimer's Disease Month - www.alz.org National American Indian Heritage Month - www.indians.org National Hospice Month - www.nahc.org National Pancreatic Cancer Awareness Month - www.pancan.org</p>					

The CAVHCS Community Calendar is not intended to be an all-inclusive, official calendar. It is intended rather to provide a medium for CAVHCS Salute to share upcoming events.

If you would like to add a CAVHCS event please email details directly to alan.bloom@va.gov. Submissions are not guaranteed to be published. Editorial considerations will be made for propriety, promptness and print space.