



My HealtheVet Gains More Traction at CAVHCS

My HealtheVet (www.myhealth.va.gov) is VA's award-winning e-health website, which offers Veterans, active duty soldiers, their dependents and caregivers anywhere, anytime Internet access to VA health care information and services.

My HealtheVet is the VA's Personal Health Record. It helps Veterans partner with their healthcare team, and provides them opportunities and tools to make informed decisions.

In the past year, more features have been added that allow Veterans to view VA appointments and check lab results, and the most popular feature is still online prescription refills. However, that ranking may change as more Veterans grow accustomed to using the Secure Messaging feature.

"We've been assisting Veterans in signing up for My HealtheVet for quite some time," said Central Alabama Veterans Health Care System (CAVHCS) My HealtheVet Program Manager David Fanning. "But

recently, we've been able to talk about Secure Messaging being available and to a good number of our Veterans that one feature is worth making the trip to



CAVHCS My HealtheVet Program Manager, David Fanning helps a Veteran register during a recent Flu Shot Campaign Drive-Thru on CAVHCS' West Campus.

In-Person Authenticate (IPA) and sign up."

IPA is a process used as an additional safety and security measure to verify a My HealtheVet user's identity. Registered My HealtheVet users who are VA patients and have completed the IPA process are able to view the names of their VA prescriptions, access their personal VA Wellness Reminders, and communicate with their providers through Secure Messaging.

"Following the announcement that Secure Messaging was now available we've seen almost 10 percent of our Veterans (Veterans receiving healthcare from CAVHCS) sign up specifically to take advantage of that feature," said Fanning. "And, while it's true many of them are younger users who may be considered more likely to

Please see 'My HealtheVet'

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CAVHCS Takes Stock of Homeless Resources

Central Alabama Veterans Health Care System (CAVHCS) recently hosted a Homeless Veterans Resource Fair in its East Campus (Tuskegee) Building 90 Theater to unite Homeless Veterans with resources designed to prevent and eliminate Veteran Homelessness.

"Events like the Resource Fair and the Homeless Stand Down we held in September not only allow us to literally take a Homeless Veteran off the street," said Iva Davis, Chief, CAVHCS Social Work Service, "but, they raise awareness in the community about the resources we're able to bring to bear as we seek to realize our goal of eliminating Veteran Homelessness."

During the Resource Fair area Veterans gathered to obtain shelter referrals, benefit counseling, clothing and hygiene items, legal assistance, health care screenings, social work services, substance abuse counseling, mental health counseling, job counseling and enjoy spiritual and even some entertainment activities.

That same day CAVHCS hosted its 17th annual Community Homeless Assessment and Local Education Networking Group (CHALENG) meeting. The meeting, between CAVHCS and community entities providing homeless support, facilitates CAVHCS' annual CHALENG report to Washington which focuses on current homeless

perceptions, progress, needs and the degree of VA/community cooperation and collaboration.

"Having a Homeless Resource Fair the same day we have our annual CHALENG meeting just makes sense," said Davis. "It gives is another opportunity to assist Veterans."



Area Veterans were able to acquaint themselves with VA and community resources in CAVHCS' East Campus, Bldg. 90 theater during a recent Homeless Veterans Resource Fair. (VA photo by Eric Johnson)

CAVHCS All-Stars

Thank you for helping me get my hearing aids corrected. June 17th I received my hearing aids early in the morning and I have been in a different world ever since. I had thought I needed a new lawn mower for quite a while. As I was cutting the grass Friday the Riding Lawn Mower was running so good that it took me an amount of time before I realized that I didn't need a new lawn mower after all. I now realize that I can communicate with Veterans in need. Thanks again, *Sincerely, Forrest A., Valley, Ala.*

Miss Taylor is a very good nurse and a very special person. Please help me thank her for her invaluable assistance and care to the Veterans who come to the VA. Thank you for having such terrific people like her working at your facility. -- *Respectfully, Collin J., Columbus, Ga.*

I would like to compliment your staff for the outstanding care I have received over the past year. However, Dr. Sundaram has demonstrated exceptional diligence and foresight. Dr. Sundaram's enthusiastic approach, coupled with his great sense of responsibility are reflected in the amount of time he spends with you, as well as his ability to provide instructions, answer questions concerning medication and tests in laymen's terms. I am pleased with his open door policy, and his ability to get me appointments on short notice. I am certain that Dr. Sundaram's positive attitude has highlighted the remarkable service he renders upon himself and the Department of Veterans Affairs, CAVHCS Montgomery. -- *Sincerely, Arne L. S., Eufaula, Ala.*

As the wife of a veteran I wanted to take a moment to compliment one of your Social Workers. My husband Jerry's Social Worker, Justina Okeke at the Community Living Center was so very kind to Jerry and to me during his stay at the facility. My husband passed in September of last year and I want to tell her and everyone who assisted "Thank You Very Much!" We never know how much time we have and this lady must be commended for her care and service. -- *Thank you again, Nancy J.*

I would like to take the time to thank all the wonderful people of Building 129 in Tuskegee, from the Doctors to the people that keep this place spotless. I would like to name each and every one of you but I would feel bad missing a name and leaving someone out. Your kindness and care is what makes you all the best VA Hospital I have ever been in. I will never forget what you all have done for me. -- *Thank you all, Billy E. M., Jr.*

VA Safeguards Sensitive Information

Continuous Readiness in Information Security Program

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) treats the protection of Veteran and other sensitive information with the utmost care. Over the past decade, VA created an information protection program in response to both exposures and increasing cyber risks from all fronts, internal and external.

VA has now embarked on a cultural transformation with respect to protecting VA information. This transformation is akin to how healthcare accrediting bodies have shifted away from predictable audit schedules and pre-defined checklists toward longitudinal reviews of how policy is defined, supported, communicated, implemented, monitored and improved.

The VA Office of Information and Technology Continuous Readiness in Information Security Program (CRISP) is the new operating model for protecting VA sensitive information. CRISP is grounded in the VA I CARE core values of Integrity, Commitment and Excellence.

CRISP embodies an integrated approach to protecting sensitive information from inappropriate exposure or loss. Securing information is everyone's responsibility and that cohesive theme will become interwoven into the fabric of normal operations across VA.

CRISP applies to everyone who has a legitimate need for VA information. This includes, but is not limited to, VA employees, contractors, volunteers, medical students, residents, and affiliate organizations. Safeguarding sensitive information is everyone's responsibility.

For more information about CRISP and how to remain compliant, visit the program's website <http://www.vhaco.va.gov/CRISP/index.html>.



CRISP
Continuous Readiness in Information Security Program

The CAVHCS Salute

The CAVHCS Salute is produced by the Central Alabama Veterans Health Care (CAVHCS) Public Affairs Office. CAVHCS Salute is an unofficial, internal communications publication.



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Al Bloom

The CAVHCS Survey says...

What do you do to improve customer satisfaction, and is it a daily deed or something that's done occasionally?



**Karen Iverson,
Release of Information**

"I try to improve customer relationships every day by being honest and caring, and treating the customers the way I want to be treated."



**LaJaynees Singleton,
Nursing and Patient Care**

"First of all, I am always smiling because I believe our nations heroes should be greeted with a smile. On a daily basis I have an opportunity to ask a veteran "how may I help you" with a smile on my face."



**Carl E. Waver,
Patient Care,**

"I strive to satisfy the veterans needs; whether it be medication refills, timely referrals, or ensuring that they get meal tickets and travel pay."

'My HealtheVet'

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use the Internet to communicate with their healthcare providers, we're signing Veterans up for My HealtheVet and Secure Messaging from every demographic."

Launched nationwide in 2003, My HealtheVet is a free, online Personal Health Record that empowers Veterans to become informed partners in their health care. With My HealtheVet, America's Veterans can access trusted, secure, and current health and benefits information as well as record and store important health and military history information at their convenience. Registering and using My HealtheVet is easy and it's free! If you are a Veteran enrolled at a VA facility and have an *upgraded account, you may be able to view:

- Nine (9) Healthy Living Centers
- Disease + Conditions Centers
- Mental Health Information
- Trusted Health/Medical Information
- Info on VA Benefits & Services
- Local VA Events & Activities
- Personal Health Journals
- Vitals Tracking & Graphing
- Military Health History
- Activity/Food Journals

In addition, Veterans who receive their healthcare at a VA facility receive additional

features, like online refill of VA medications anytime, anywhere – as long as there is access to the Internet! All users who have a My HealtheVet account are able to view their self-entered information.

Additionally, on My HealtheVet, all your information comes together at the touch of the Blue Button. Using the Blue Button is a simple way to collect all this data into a single file that you can save, store and share as you like. Because this data has so much personal information in it, the site will remind you often to protect and safeguard it. You can choose a date range of a few months, years, or everything that is available.

Perhaps the greatest benefit of using My HealtheVet is that it assists Veterans to become an active partner in their health care. By working with their health care team and knowing their health conditions, Veterans can learn to make healthy choices and better manage their health.

Currently there is a video on the CAVHCS Facebook presence www.facebook.com/VACentralAlabama which walks you through the basic steps of signing up for a My HealtheVet account.



**Blue Button
Download
My Data**



Summer 'Fun in the Sun' Requires Caution

By: **MaryCatherine Porch, APRN**

Health Promotion/Disease Prevention Program Manager

As the 4th of July approaches I can't help thinking about all of the wonderful activities associated with being outdoors in the warm sunshine.

However, in order to stay safe there are a few things to keep in mind.

Exposure to UVA and UVB sunrays can cause sunburn, premature aging of the skin and most importantly, skin cancer. There are three types of skin cancer, namely, basal cell and squamous cell cancers and melanoma. Melanoma is the one that is the most dangerous. In order to protect skin from the dangerous rays of the sun follow these simple rules:

1. When your shadow is shorter than you are, stay in the shade as much as possible.
2. Wear sunglasses and a wide-brimmed hat to protect your eyes, ears and face.
3. Wear protective clothing.
4. Use sunscreen.

Choosing sunscreen can sometimes be confusing. There are two basic types, namely, physical blockers and chemical blockers. Physical blockers are made of titanium dioxide and zinc oxide. These *reflect* UV rays. They are not absorbed into the skin and do not wear off as quickly as chemical blockers. However, they generally wash off with water or sweating. Chemical blocking sunscreens absorb UV radiation. These tend to be more waterproof but all sunscreens can wash off.

Choose a sunscreen with at least a 30SPF rating and one that protects against both UVA and UVB rays. Apply the sunscreen at least 15 minutes before going into the sun and reapply at least every 2 hours. Apply more often if sweating or playing in water. Be sure to apply liberally using an ounce per area to ensure full coverage. When selecting a sunscreen for children, check labels and make sure the sunscreen is safe for use in children. More costly sunscreens are not necessarily better, and how the sunscreen is applied, either as cream, gel, stick, spray, etc. should be selected based on personal preference. Sunscreens are required to have a shelf life of three years. However, if you notice a change in the color or consistency of the sunscreen, it is best to discard it. Make sure that you do not use a sunscreen past the expiration date on the bottle.

Heat Exhaustion and Heat Stroke

Two other risks that are common in the summer are heat exhaustion and heat stroke. Infants, small children, those over 65 years of age and those with certain health conditions such as heart problems and high blood pressure are more susceptible.

Signs of heat exhaustion are profuse sweating, muscle cramps, tiredness, weakness, dizziness, headache, nausea and/or vomiting. Not all of these symptoms need to be present. If the person is healthy and able to take fluids, move him or her to a cool place and give fluids. If the

person has health problems, treat them the same but also seek medical attention.

Heat stroke is more severe. In this case the body temperature is 103 degrees Fahrenheit or higher. The skin is red, hot and dry. A person with heat stroke may have headache, dizziness, nausea, confusion or become unconscious. Heat stroke is a medical emergency. Cool the affected person as quickly as possible and seek medical attention quickly.

To prevent heat exhaustion or heat stroke, be sure to stay well hydrated. Drink 2-4 glasses of water every hour. Replace minerals and salt by drinking sports drinks or fruit juice. Stay in a cool place as much as possible. Those who have special health conditions such as

kidney problems, diabetes or take certain medications such as diuretics or fluid pills, need special instructions. They should get the advice of their health care team before spending time outdoors in excessive heat and sun.

As always, the Veterans Health Education Department on the Montgomery and Tuskegee campuses is here to assist you with more information on any of these subjects. You can also check out www.cdc.gov. Have fun in the sun and healthy living to YOU!!



A poster designed to look like a 'WANTED' poster. At the top, the word 'WANTED' is written in large, red, dripping letters. Below it, a horizontal line with a decorative arrow in the center separates the title from the text. The text reads: 'NON-PERISHABLE FOOD'. Below this, it says: 'Please drop your Donations at the Voluntary Service Office on the Tuskegee and Montgomery campuses'. To the right of this text is a photograph of a hand holding a metal can. Further to the right, the addresses are listed: 'Montgomery, Earl Hawkins at 4749' and 'Tuskegee, Bernard Green at 3433'. At the bottom, the slogan 'TOGETHER WE CAN END HUNGER' is written in large, bold letters, with 'Feds Feed Families Food Drive' underneath. A small circular logo with the word 'GIVE' is to the right of the slogan. At the very bottom, a banner reads 'July 2 - August 31, 2012'.

Veterans Provide PTSD Video Testimonials

In observance of June being PTSD Awareness Month, the Department of Veterans Affairs National Center for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) has begun a new online initiative, *AboutFace*, focused on helping Veterans recognize PTSD symptoms and motivating them to seek treatment.

“We must do all we can to help Veterans identify possible indicators that they may be suffering from PTSD,” said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki. “It requires a comprehensive, multi-faceted approach to be effective. We hope that this initiative, while just one aspect of our program, will play an important role in that effort.”

The *AboutFace* campaign introduces viewers to Veterans from all eras who have experienced PTSD and turned their lives around with treatment. Through personal videos, viewers will meet Veterans and hear how PTSD has affected them and their loved ones. Visitors will also learn the steps to take to gain control of their lives.

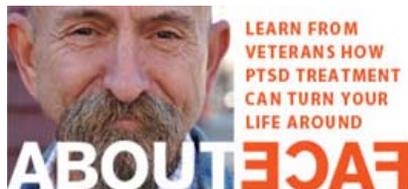
AboutFace, which is PTSD specific, was designed as a complementary campaign to VA's current *Make the Connection* (www.MakeTheConnection.net) campaign. *Make the Connection* uses personal testimonials to illustrate true stories of Veterans who faced life events, experiences, physical ailments, or psychological symptoms; reached out for support; and found ways to overcome their challenges.

“VA is committed to ensuring the men and women who bravely served our Nation can access the resources and services tailored for them that can lead to a more fulfilling life,” said Dr. Robert Petzel, VA's under secretary for health. “We

want Veterans to recognize themselves in these stories and to feel optimistic that they can overcome their challenges with proper treatment. We set aside this month of June to urge everyone to increase awareness of PTSD so those in need can get effective treatment that will enable them to lead productive, fulfilling and enjoyable lives.”

AboutFace launched in June in time to help bring attention to PTSD Awareness Month. It is located on the National Center for PTSD website, www.ptsd.va.gov. There viewers will watch as Veterans candidly describe how they knew they had PTSD; how PTSD affected the people they love; why they didn't get help right away; what finally caused them to seek treatment; what treatment is like and how treatment helps.

These campaigns are part of VA's overall mental health program. Last year, VA provided quality, specialty mental health services to 1.3 million Veterans. Since 2009, VA has increased the mental health care budget by 39 percent. Since 2007, VA has seen a 35 percent increase in the number of Veterans receiving mental health services, and a 41 percent increase in mental health staff. In April, as part of an ongoing review of mental health operations, Secretary Shinseki announced VA would add approximately 1,600 mental health clinicians as well as nearly 300 support staff to its existing workforce of 20,590 to help meet the increased demand for mental health services. The additional staff would include nurses, psychiatrists, psychologists and social workers.



PMDB Training a Requirement for 1300 CAVHCS Staff

By: George Howard

CAVHCS Education Specialist

The Prevention and Management of Disruptive Behavior (PMDB) program training requirements at Central Alabama Veterans Health Care System (CAVHCS) is currently specified in Memorandum No. 11-09-52, Dec 15, 2009, CRISIS INTERVENTION. This policy requires all new employees to have 8 hours of PMDB training at hiring and refresher training every two years thereafter. Roughly 1300 CAVHCS employees now require PMDB training.

Beginning in January 2011, CAVHCS adopted the National PMDB curriculum consisting of the following:

Level 1: A 1.5 hour stand-alone TMS course that provides an overview of PMDB concepts, intended for employee working in no/low risk areas within the healthcare system. Prerequisites: NONE.

Level 2: “Verbal De-Escalation”, includes all the information from Level 1 and adds hands on practice developing verbal skills to help solve problems and resolve situations. Intended for employees working in low to moderate risk areas. Prerequisites: NONE, 4 hours.

Level 3: “Personal Safety Skills”, includes limit setting, hands on practice including escaping from grabs, blocking kicks and strikes, uses weight-based techniques, not strength. Intended individuals working in moderate to high risk areas. Prerequisites: Level 2 training, 4 hours.

Level 4: “Therapeutic Containment,” teaches weight-based techniques combined with a team of at least three properly trained employees to immobilize/contain individuals who have lost control and are acting out in a threatening manner. Intended for employees who work or respond to situations in high risk areas. Prerequisites: Level 3 training, 4 hours.

To comply with the CAVHCS policy, all employees, both new and experienced, are currently required to be current through Level 3. Employees in high risk areas are required to take Level 4 training if capable.

Clinical staff and employees working in high risk areas have priority attendance through August 2012. **Supervisors will control enrollment of their employees. To determine training dates, follow the instructions below. Enrollment is limited to 24 participants per class, first come first served. Therefore please select primary and alternate dates and send employee names, dates and alternate dates to George.howard1@va.gov.** We hope to have TMS enrollment available within the next few weeks.

PMDB levels 2 and 3 are currently taught in Montgomery and Tuskegee at least twice a month. Level 4 is taught only in Tuskegee. Dates, locations and times for all class can be found in CAVHCS (not VISN 7!!) intranet home page. Click on “Education”, and open the PMDB listing where you'll find the hot links about half way down the program description page and select the location for training.



American Legion District 32, and CAVHCS Therapeutic Recreation Service, conducted the Third Annual Boston Butt Barbecue in early June in the East Campus' Bldg 120 Plaza.

(VA photo Eric Johnson)

2012 CALENDAR OF EVENTS VA OFFICE OF PUBLIC AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS							FEDERAL HOLIDAY
July 2012							
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	
1 • Medicare Anniversary (1968)	2 • U.S. Constitution Takes Effect (1788) • Civil Rights Act (1964) • Army Air Corps Established (1926)	3	4 • Independence Day 	5	6 • Air Force Cross Created (1960)	7	
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	
Alzheimer's Awareness Week (July 6 - 12) · National Therapeutic Recreation Week (July 8 - 14)							
15	16	17	18	19	20 • Ramadan Begins (July 20-Aug. 18)	21 • Veterans Administration Created (1930)	
22	23	24	25	26 • Armed Forces Unified (Department of Defense Created 1947)	27 • Korean War Armistice (1953)	28 • World War I Begins (1914)	
29	30	31			• Bioterrorism/ Disaster Education and Awareness Month	• UV Safety Month 	

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.