



NWV Messenger

For the week of April 26, 2010

Industry Forum in Lincoln Explores Enhanced Use Lease Opportunity

The Department of Veterans Affairs and Nebraska-Western Iowa Health Care System leadership hosted an industry forum at 10 p.m. April 28 at the Lincoln Community Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC) Auditorium to solicit interest of potential developers to partner with the VA for revitalization of the Lincoln CBOC.

Enhanced Use Lease is a process that allows VA to partner with the public or private sector to maximize returns from underutilized capital assets.

The industry forum will present different options that include a CBOC off-site and leasing the entire campus, or a CBOC off-site and leasing the bulk of the campus. A major capital lease application is currently being developed to secure a new outpatient clinic off site from the current campus that is closer to the Interstate 80 corridor. VA will retain ownership of the land, but will offer an enhanced use lease (EUL) and redevelopment opportunity for the buildings and vacant land to developers.

The options and other factors were discussed at a public town hall meeting April 28 at the Lincoln CBOC Auditorium after the potential developers were briefed on the scope of what we are looking to develop.

To ensure employees receive accurate information first-hand from VA NWIHCS leadership, this information was shared with employees who attended the Lincoln all-employee forum April 20, and will also be

provided at the Lincoln all-employee forum April 29 (8:30 to 9:30 a.m. in the auditorium).

Employees will continue to be provided with updates as this project reaches significant milestones. Employees may see information in the news media from various forums and possible VA engineering interviews, but should always feel free to contact the VA NWIHCS Public Affairs Office or Engineering Office in Lincoln for accurate information.

Level II Lockdown Drill to be Held at VA NWIHCS, Omaha

To ensure a safe and secure environment for employees and Veterans, the VA Police will conduct a lock-down drill April 30, from 2 to 3 p.m. at VA NWIHCS, Omaha in the main building.

During the drill all exterior doors except for the emergency room and main lobby entrances will be secured. Signs will be posted on all locked doors providing directions on how to gain access.

A 100-percent identification (ID) check will be in progress. Acceptable forms of ID are employee ID cards, student ID cards, vendor badge, and driver's licenses for Veterans or guests. No one will be denied access during this drill if proper identification is not presented. However, employees, students and contractors without proper identification will have to sign in, and the appropriate service chief will be notified.

VA Police will be posted at the main lobby and emergency room entrances as part of the drill. For more information, contact Capt. William Shirah at Omaha ext. 5250.

CALENDAR

April

- Alcohol Awareness Month*
- National Donate Life Month*
- Physical Wellness Month*
- Occupational Therapy Month*

May

- Asian-Pacific American Month*
- Older Americans Month*
- Mental Health Month*
- National Arthritis Month*

- 1 May Day
- 6 Nurses Day
- 6-12 Nurses Week
- 9-15 National Police Week
- 9-15 National Hospital Week
- 15 Peace Officer Memorial Day
- 15 Armed Forces Day
- 16-22 Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Week
- 31 Memorial Day

June

- Fireworks Safety Month*
- National Safety Month*
- 6 National Cancer Survivors Day
- 10-17 Nursing Assistant Week
- 14 Flag Day
- 14-20 National Men's Health Week
- 20 Fathers Day
- 21 Summer Begins

July

- UV Safety Month*
- Fireworks Safety Month*

VA Celebrates 85 Years of Discovery, Innovation, and Advancement

85 years of enriching the lives of Veterans and all Americans through top-notch medical research will be spotlighted April 26 to 30 when VA celebrates National VA Research Week

The community is invited to learn about VA's cutting-edge research program during Research Day, April 30, at VA NWHCS, Omaha. The VA NWHCS research team will offer tours of the research department beginning at 9:30 a.m. April 30. Tours will begin near the Education Conference Room.

More than 130 research studies are currently being performed at VA NWHCS, Omaha in areas including rheumatoid arthritis and Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disorder.

VA's research over 85 years has not only provided meaningful improvement of Veterans' lives through advancement of their health care, but also for Americans across the country. From

effective therapies for tuberculosis, to implantable cardiac pacemakers, to the first successful liver transplant, to the development of the nicotine patch and beyond, VA's trailblazing research accomplishments are a source of great pride to the Department and the Nation.

Volunteers Make a Big Difference

VA NWHCS volunteers make a huge impact on improving the well-being of Veterans. Their energy, compassion and commitment is inspiring and provides a priceless service to Veterans.

"Volunteers perform countless acts of service and are one of America's most valuable assets," said Al Washko, director of VA NWHCS. "During the past year, volunteers nationwide have continued to reach out to their neighbors both near and far, especially to the Veterans we care for and their families."

Volunteers at the Grand Island CBOC will be honored during an awards luncheon April 29 from 11:30 a.m. to 2

p.m. at the Holiday Inn in downtown Grand Island. Lincoln Volunteers were honored April 14 and Omaha volunteers April 20. The VA Canteen Service provided free cake and a beverage to all Omaha volunteers April 23.

More than 800 volunteers contributed 101,000 hours to VA NWHCS in fiscal year (FY) 2009, which is valued at more than \$2.1 million in labor costs. They assisted patients by augmenting staff in such settings as hospital wards, community living centers and outpatient clinics.

Many volunteers are Veterans themselves. Now they are serving again, reaching out to fellow Veterans. **Anthony Greco**, who has volunteered 40,012 over 55 years at VA NWHCS, Omaha, is this year's highest hours recipient. Mr. Greco is a Veteran of World War II, and began volunteering in 1955. **Nina Lanzen**, who has volunteered 23,512 over 26 years, is this year's second highest hours recipient.

If you want to learn more about volunteer opportunities at VA NWHCS can contact the Voluntary Services Office at Omaha ext. 3284.

2010 Spring All-Employee Forums

The NWHCS 2010 Spring All-Employee Forums continue through April 30 at all VA NWHCS locations. All employees are highly encouraged to attend one of the sessions.

Contact your supervisor to find out which session you are scheduled to attend. After contacting your supervisor to agree upon an attendance date, pre-registration is required through:

- Your TEMPO Unit Coordinator (TEMPO UC -under Employee Forum April 2010) or
- Calling or emailing Nancy Brock at Grand Island ext. 2352 or Sharon Fusco at Lincoln ext. 6717 (to pre-registrator of an employee from any site).

The forum program includes time for employees to complete the Veterans Health Administration and

VA NWHCS All Employee Surveys and a presentation on patient-centered-care.

The purpose of the All Employee Survey is to measure ongoing employee satisfaction, eliminate barriers to employee effectiveness, and to make VA an employer of choice.

The presentation on patient-centered-care includes information presented by a member of the VA NWHCS executive team along with a video recording of patients describing their health care experiences.

Forums are one hour long. Employees are asked to arrive 10 minutes early and to bring their employee survey code form with them from their supervisor.

There are incentives for completing the survey:

- If 80 percent of surveys are completed and returned, each employee will

receive two hours of authorized absence.

- If 85 percent of surveys are completed and returned, each employee will receive three hours of authorized absence.
- If 90 percent of surveys are completed and returned, each employee will receive a four-hour time off award

Forum Schedule

April 29

Lincoln CBOC—Auditorium,
8:30 to 9:30 a.m.

VA NWHCS, Omaha-Ed. Conf. Rm.,
1:30 to 2:30 p.m. and 3 to 4 p.m.

Norfolk CBOC—Conf. Rm.,
2 to 3 p.m.

April 30

VA NWHCS, Omaha-Ed. Conf. Rm.,
10:30 to 11:30 a.m.

Training Sessions for New ID Card System

A new identification card system will be coming to VA NWIHCS soon. The Grand Island CBOC had its equipment installed April 26; VA NWIHCS, Omaha will have the equipment installed May 3.

This is a national program, and all employees, contractors, providers, volunteers and affiliates will be required to either have a new employee ID card or flash pass. A flash pass is typically provided to vendors and contractors who do not require security clearances or access to our computers.

This is going to be implemented in two steps. The first step is issuing ID cards to new employees beginning May 10 for Grand Island and June 10 for

employees in Omaha and Lincoln. The second step is for existing employees. This is anticipated to take about 13 to 14 months to complete. Information on how the new cards will be issued will be provided soon.

There are specific roles for each department, they are:

Sponsor (at least one per department): The sponsor initiates the ID process and determines what access the individual needs and that they're in good standing. The sponsor completes and submits an electronic Form 0711, schedules the individual for an appointment to get the ID card and is responsible for re-initiating the process if a card is lost, stolen or no longer functioning. Sponsors will have software downloaded onto their computer to allow them access to the form.

Registrar (Police and HR): The registrar is the second stop in the process. The registrar, using two forms of personal identification, verifies employees are who they report to be. If a security clearance is required, they verify that the SAC has been completed and the NACI has been initiated (if required as a condition of employment).

At this point, the registrar will take the individual's photo and fingerprints from two fingers. Upon completion, the registrar finalizes their portion of the electronic Form 0711 and sends it to the issuer.

Issuer (Police and HR): This is the last stop for the applicant. The issuer will bring up the electronic form and electronic version of the individual's ID. The issuer will verify the individual matches the electronic photograph the registrar took. The issuer will then fingerprint the same two fingers the registrar used. Once the verification process has been completed, the issuer will then print the new ID card.

All sponsors, registrars and issuers are required to attend training to familiarize themselves with the new system and in preparation for issuing new ID cards.

Training is scheduled for:

May 3-(Omaha, Room B818)-8:30 to 9:30 a.m., introduction; 9:30 to 11 a.m., registrar training; 11 a.m. to noon, lunch; noon to 1:30 p.m., sponsor training; 1:30 to 3 p.m., issuer training.

May 4-(Omaha, Ed. Conf. Room)-9 to 10:30 a.m., make-up sponsor training; 12:30 to 2 p.m., make-up sponsor training (if needed).

Lincoln and other CBOC designees should attend an Omaha training session.

Omaha Fitness Center Temporarily Closed

The Omaha fitness center (located in Building A) is closed through May 3 due to construction of the front entrance ramp and modification to the flooring.

It will re-open May 4 to employees who have prox cards.

NCPS Cornerstone Gold Award Presented to VA NWIHCS

The National Center for Patient Safety (NCPS) has recognized VA NWIHCS with a Cornerstone Gold Award for 2009. The Gold Award is the highest honor bestowed by NCPS.

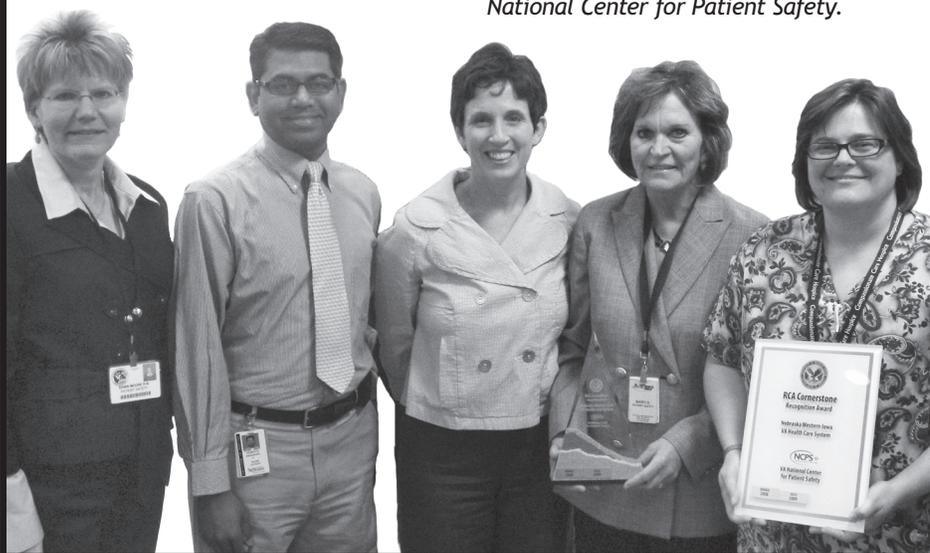
Only facilities that have significantly exceeded required standards for Root Cause Analysis (RCAs) focused on quality, timeliness and quantity are recognized with this award.

In 2009, only 20 (13 percent) of VA facilities received this honor. Three facilities in VISN 23 (VA Midwest

Health Care Network) received a Gold Award and only one other VISN (V9) in the country had three facilities recognized with a Gold Award.

During FY 2009, the time period considered for this award, the Patient Safety Managers were Lara Colton and Mary Elbert. The Patient Safety Team includes Ann Polich, Dawn Moore, Giri Andukuri and Mary Elbert.

Pictured (from left): Dawn Moore, Giri Andukuri, Ann Polich, Mary Elbert and Lara Colton display an award from the National Center for Patient Safety.



Library Renovation Project

The Medical Library at VA NWIHCS, Omaha is in the middle of a renovation project. The work is expected to be finished about June 1.

The library, which is located on the third floor, is receiving new paint, new carpeting and new furniture. Contractors will be moving furniture, including computer desks which will be relocated. During the project, space for studying and reading materials may be limited. The print collection is currently in bins.

The librarian and regular library services such as interlibrary loan will still be available. No significant impact to Pictel Site 2 is expected.

During this time, the library will not accept donated books or magazines. If you have materials to donate, contact Voluntary Services for assistance.

A separate project to design a patient education resource center (PERC) is also planned. This will offer patients a quiet area to access educational resource material. More information will be announced soon.

Preferred Design Team Selected for Design Work

A joint-venture contractor (Leo Daly/NBBJ) was selected March 26 as the preferred design team for a major construction project at VA NWIHCS, Omaha. The joint venture contractor now has the opportunity to negotiate with VA to be awarded as a contract to design the proposed replacement facility project.

President Barack Obama released his proposed FY 2011 federal budget Feb. 1. This budget includes a proposal for design funding for new medical

construction projects at VA NWIHCS, Omaha. The proposed budget includes \$56 million in planning funds.

The proposed funding for design of a major construction project at VA NWIHCS, Omaha recognizes the aging infrastructure issues that need to be addressed.

Construction Updates

Beginning April 26, the hallway exit just west of the chapel will be closed for about a week for ceiling repairs. The PET-CT (Positron Emission Tomography) site prep project will begin at the same time. This is a new and updated piece of equipment for the Radiology Department. The project is expected to last 270 days.

Remodeling of Building 6 continues with outside work in progress.

-Continued on page 3

DAISY Award Recognizing Nurses at VA NWIHCS, Omaha

Pam Florea, RN at VA NWIHCS, Omaha Primary Care Clinic, was named the DAISY Award recipient during a recognition event April 13.

Pam was nominated by a patient who wrote, "She has been with me when hope seemed far away. When others threw-up their hands she was there continuing to encourage me. She never gave me up and to this day continues to help me unconditionally. I know I can call on her at anytime and expect words of health and healing. She was there when I was sick beyond medical belief. She is a miracle sent from God. Thank you."

The DAISY Award honors the compassion and care bedside nurses perform every day. The DAISY Award was named after Patrick Barnes, who died of complications of an auto immune disease. Patrick's wife, Tena (Vice President of DAISY) attended the presentation.

These nurses were nominated for the DAISY Award:

Kuknomi Clarke, RN-Primary Care
Kelly Di Giorgio, RN-6 East
Bobby Dinkens, RN-7 East
Tobbie Elliff, LPN-Primary Care

Paul Fleming, RN-7 East.
Tracy Francois, LPN-Primary Care
Debbie Geibel, RN-ICU
Rob Hatridge, RN-Emergency Dept.
Jacque Hedrick, RN-6 East
Carrie Henderson, RN-6 East
Tony Hernandez, RN-ICU
Jane Hill, LPN-7 East
Michael Hurtado, RN-Cath. Lab
Denee Killion, RN-ICU
Andy Maasdam, RN-ICU
Shawna Manning, RN-6 East
Sarah Mathisen, RN-6 East
Dee Dee McCormick, RN-Admissions
Aaron Moore, RN-ICU
Sharan Moore-Bryson, LPN-Prim. Care
Irene Newquist, RN-ICU
Amy Olson, RN-ICU
Tony Onstott, RN-ICU
Misty Roomsburg, RN-6 East
Doug Soucy, RN-Surgical Clinic
John Urbanski, RN-ICU
Kathleen Vencalek, RN-7 East



Tena Barnes Carraher (Vice President of The DAISY Foundation), presented Pam Florea, RN with The DAISY Award.

-Construction continued from page 2

Contracting and Fiscal Services have moved to Building C. Landscaping on the north and west sides of the modular buildings has started and should be complete in late April.

The new south stairway to the Center Street sidewalk can now be used. One handrail is in place and the second is on order. Exercise caution and only use the sidewalk to access the crosswalk at 42nd Street.

News Roundup

Bellevue CBOC Celebrates One Year Anniversary.

The Bellevue Community-Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC) staff hosted an open house and one-year anniversary celebration April 21. Veterans and community members were encouraged to stop by and see what Veterans health care services are available, meet the staff and tour the clinic. Nebraska State Sen. **Scott Price** visited with staff and the 55th Medical Group leadership. He is the vice chairman of the Nebraska Unicameral Military and Veterans Affairs Committee.

VA NWIHCS Sets Green Goals, and Celebrates Earth Day

VA NWIHCS marked the 40th anniversary of Earth Day with a number of information booths at Omaha, Lincoln, and Grand Island facilities. According to the **Joan Bowen**, VA NWIHCS Green Environmental Management Systems (GEMS) Coordinator, the GEMS Committee has set the following goals for FY 2010 to ensure that we are doing our part to protect the environment: to reduce energy use by 3 percent; to reduce water use by three percent, and to ensure proper disposal of unused medications from patient care areas. For more information on the GEMS Program contact Joan Bowen, the GEMS Coordinator, at Omaha ext 4442.

Rural Veterans Learn About VA Health Care Services

A Veterans Interagency Outreach Open House was held March 26 and March 27 in Carson, Iowa and April 23 and 24 in McCook, Neb. The program

brings representatives from the following agencies to allow Veterans in rural communities to learn about VA benefits and to talk one-on-one with enrollment counselors: VA NWIHCS, VA Regional Office, Vet Centers, State (Nebraska or Iowa) Department of Veterans Affairs, and county Veterans service officers. For more information, call Cindy Niemack-Brown at Grand Island, ext. 2287.

Women Veterans Attend Focus Group in Omaha

About 15 women Veterans in the Omaha area attended a Women Veterans Focus Group at VA NWIHCS, Omaha March 30. The program was sponsored by VA NWIHCS and Veterans service offices in Douglas, Sarpy and Pottawattamie Counties.

The women Veterans program manager, women's health provider consultant, Operation Enduring Freedom/Operation Iraqi Freedom (OEF/OIF) Team and representatives from the county Veterans service offices were available to answer questions about VA health care. Additional programs are planned at other VA NWIHCS locations this year. For more information, call Cindy Niemack-Brown at Grand Island ext. 2287.

Veterans Attend Patient Forum in Lincoln

About two dozen people attended a patient forum April 6 at the Lincoln CBOC. Al Washko, VA NWIHCS Director, also presented attendees with an update about services and activities. Lincoln staff, patient advocates, public affairs, and others were available to answer questions.

Pamela Neujahr presented attendees with information about the Support And Family Education (SAFE) Program. SAFE provides education and emotional support for family members and friends of Veterans with mental illness. For more information contact Maggie Oldham at (402) 995-5547.

Hospice and Palliative Care Unit Opens in Grand Island

A new Hospice and Palliative Care Unit wing at the Grand Island Community Living Center (CLC) opened April 7. This grand opening served as an opportunity to educate Veterans, the public and the media

about VA's increasing focus on hospice and palliative care. The Hospice and Palliative Care Team is comprised of providers and staff to help Veterans spend their final days with dignity and comfort. For more information, call Grand Island ext. 2147.

Event Raised Awareness of Military Sexual Trauma

All NWIHCS locations hosted information booths and displays April 21 as part of Sexual Assault Awareness Month (April) to increase awareness of sexual assault and health care services available to address military sexual trauma (MST). About one in five women and one in 100 men told their primary provider they experienced sexual assault or repeated and threatening sexual harassment while in military service. Because more men than women are in the military, about equal numbers of men and women have reported MST. For VA NWIHCS, that is about 390 men and 340 women who have reported MST to their primary provider.

Treatment for mental and physical conditions related to MST is offered free of charge, with no co-pays. Veterans may be eligible for MST-related care even if they are not eligible for other VA care.

For more information contact Connie Logan at Omaha ext. 4944; Beverly Lindell at Lincoln ext. 6609 or 7823 and Lisa Barnes at Grand Island ext. 2134 or 2145.

This newsletter is for VA Nebraska-Western Iowa Health Care System (Grand Island, Lincoln, Omaha, Norfolk, Holdrege, North Platte, Bellevue, Nebraska and Shenandoah, Iowa). It is published weekly to provide employees, patients and visitors with information about VA programs and activities. This newsletter may be found on the Intranet at <http://vawww.visn23.med.va.gov/nwi/index.asp>. Submit news items through e-mail to G. POSTINGS in Vista or to VHANWI MESSENGER in Outlook by close of business each Tuesday.

For further information, call **Maggie Oldham** at (402) 995-5547.