

the link

FALL
2014



VA Nebraska-Western Iowa Health Care System



**4 CLINIC
OPENS AT
NEW LOCATION IN
BELLEVUE**

eye on nwi

Eileen Kingston, RN, MPA | Acting Director, VA NWIHCS

I was asked to fill some big shoes as acting director for VA NWIHCS after Dr. Marci Mylan left to return to her first love, clinical psychology.

Although I have served Veterans here since 1996 as the Associate Director for Patient Care/Nurse Executive, I have the privilege to serve in this new role until a permanent director is hired. My goal is to continue the legacy that Dr. Mylan left of leading this dedicated team of nearly 2,000 employees to provide exceptional health care to our Veterans.



Dr. Mylan summed up our mission perfectly in the story about her tenure on page 9 where she said, "it is a privilege to be a health care provider" at the VA, caring for Veterans every day.

There has been a lot of change in the VA in recent months, with a strong emphasis to ensure Veterans are scheduled for appointments in a timely manner, and to deliver high-quality health care. As Dr. Moncarm Fouche, our new associate chief of medicine at the Grand Island VA, said in his story on page 5, "we have to ... set ourselves apart from the community by delivering the greatest care possible" to our Veterans.

We also want to listen to our Veterans about where we can improve, which is why we held a town hall in August. Read about the feedback Veterans provided on page 6.

On behalf of all of us at VA NWIHCS, thank you for allowing us to serve you!

Eileen Kingston

**ACTING DIRECTOR
AND PUBLISHER**

Eileen Kingston, RN, MPA

PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER

Will Ackerman

THE LINK EDITORIAL STAFF

Editor | Will Ackerman

Photographer | Bruce Thiel

Designer | Becky Brown

Cover: Jim Ristow, President/CEO, Bellevue Chamber of Commerce; Dr. Timothy Longacre, physician, Bellevue VA Community-Based Outpatient Clinic; Bellevue Mayor Rita Sanders; Mr. Lowell Johnson, Veteran; and Marci Mylan, PhD, former director, VA NWIHCS, officially open the new Bellevue clinic Aug. 28.

Photo by Will Ackerman

“I like to do my best.
We owe it to the Veterans.”

Pat Bartels | Non-VA Care Program Support
Assistant, Lincoln VA



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Editor's note: Due to minimal staffing, The Link will be published quarterly until further notice. The next edition will be published Jan. 2015.

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CONTACT US

Have a story idea? Call the VA NWIHCS Public Affairs Office; Will Ackerman at 402-995-4719 or at 402-995-5547 or email vhanwipublicaffairs@va.gov.

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The Link online.



MEET

jason buckhold

Facility Contract Liaison | U.S. Army Veteran
OMAHA VA MEDICAL CENTER

How long have you been at VA NWIHCS?
"This is my first week (Aug. 28)."

What does your job entail?

"I primarily represent the director's office to standardize and keep the flavor the director sees for all of the community-based outpatient clinics."

What do you like best about your job?

"The close interaction with staff, and realizing no matter how great an organization is, the people are the greatest assets."

What do you like to do outside of work?

"I like to spend time with friends. I'm also an avid reader. My wife is a writer and editor. She runs things by me to get the man's perspective." 



VA OPENS

Bellevue Clinic in New Location

Will Ackerman | Public Affairs

Bellevue's VA Community-Based Outpatient Clinic staff celebrated the grand opening of its new home Aug. 28 at 2206 Longo Drive, Suite 102.

The clinic was relocated from the Ehrling Bergquist Clinic facility in June.

They weren't alone. More than 60 people joined in the celebration that packed the clinic's lobby, including Bellevue Mayor Rita Sanders, state Senators Sue Crawford and Tommy Garrett and other dignitaries. Many Veterans service organization representatives joined in the celebration.

A key improvement for the clinic is being more centrally located within Bellevue, which improves access for Veterans, said Dr. Timothy Longacre, the clinic's primary care physician. More than 2,000 Veterans receive care at the clinic.

The clinic has 12 exam rooms, two procedure rooms, four bariatric rooms and a laboratory to take blood and other samples. A new feature includes two optometry examination rooms.

Services offered at the clinic include general medicine, nutritional consultation and social work counseling.

Through the VA's telemedicine program – which uses streaming audio and video connections – patients have access to services through VA Nebraska-Western Iowa Health Care System's other facilities. Services include the VA's MOVE! Weight Management Program, audiology, dermatology, anesthesia and mental health counseling.

Future services include podiatry, minor surgical procedures, additional women's health services and a limited supply of prosthetic devices.

The clinic is designed "exactly the way we want to deliver medical care today," said Marci Mylan, PhD., former director, VA NWIHCS. "Medical care is a team sport, where there are a number of people who know the patient. This is critical to improving continuity of care," Mylan said.

Dr. Longacre said the "patients are the central focus of the care."

"I am really happy with the care I am getting," said Lowell Johnson. 

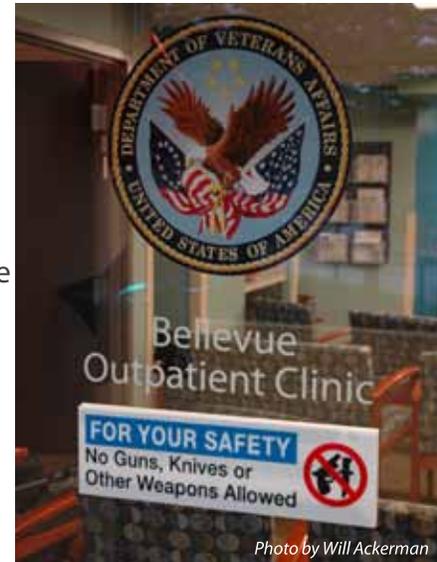


Photo by Will Ackerman

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Get news, information for patients and upcoming events

LEAD DOC AT GRAND ISLAND Calls Medicine His Life Mission

Will Ackerman | Public Affairs

Dr. Moncarm Fouche felt a calling to work in the medical field.

"Through delivering patient care, I feel like I am making a contribution, helping people out and providing good health care," said Fouche.

Dr. Fouche, an internal medicine specialist, serves Veterans as the Associate Chief of Medicine at the VA Nebraska-Western Iowa Health Care System Grand Island facility.

Formerly an active-duty physician in the U.S. Air Force at Offutt Air Force Base, Neb., Fouche joined the VA in June.

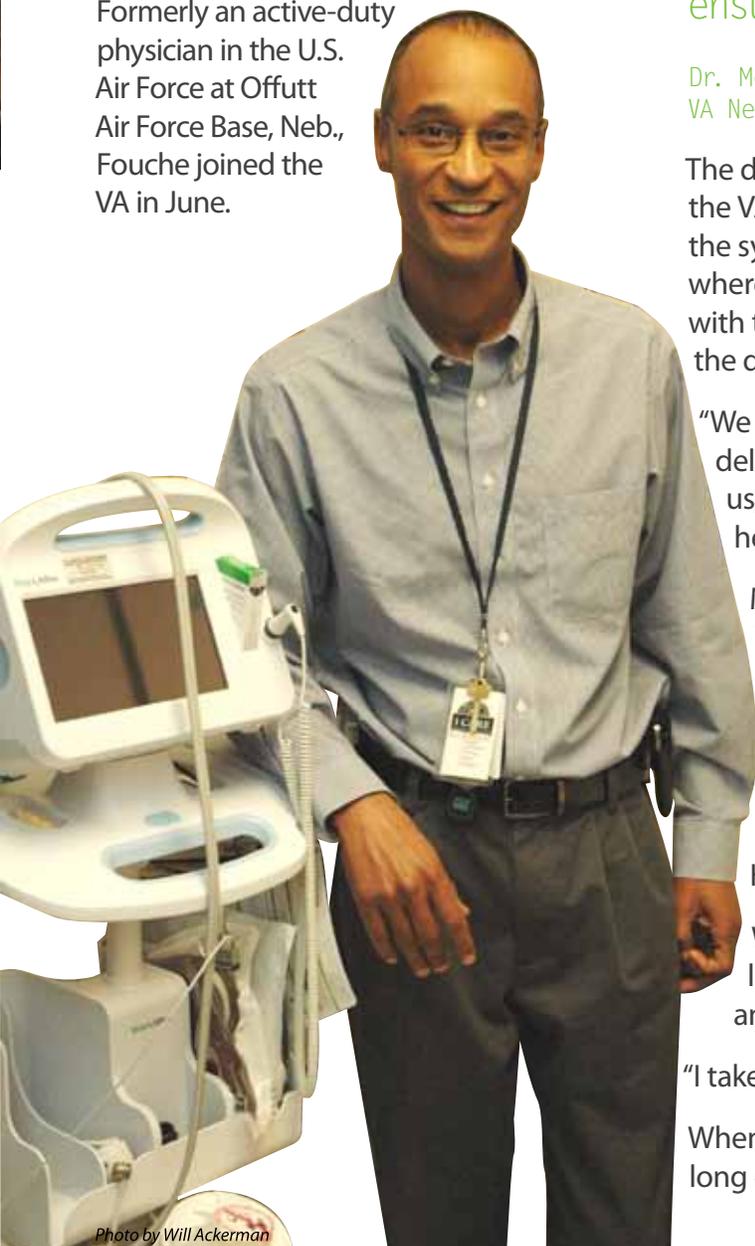


Photo by Will Ackerman

After serving three years in the U.S. Air Force, "I felt like I understood (Veterans) better because I'm a Vet," he said.

Although he currently doesn't provide direct patient care as an administrator, Fouche said his "practical experience" in the military helps him in leading practitioners as ACOM.

“My goal is to make sure we maximize the care we give to Veterans. I try to look at things from the big picture, research problems and solve them the best that I can. I want to ensure patients are happy and served well.”

Dr. Moncarm Fouche, Associate Chief of Medicine
VA Nebraska-Western Iowa Health Care System

The doctor said one of the most-important challenges facing the VA is retaining the Veterans currently receiving care within the system and attracting new enrollees. Veterans have choices where they receive their health care, and the VA has to compete with the private medical market. One of the ways to do that is by the dedicated staff interacting with Veterans.

"We have to work to set ourselves apart from the community by delivering the greatest care possible to attract Veterans to use us," Fouche said. "I see staff here engaged with Veterans," he said. "They are really dedicated and provide great care."

Many employees at Grand Island VA have family who are Veterans.

"I think maybe that they see their loved ones in the Vets who they serve," Fouche said.

Although Fouche is excited to help lead the Grand Island VA team, he sacrifices because his home is in Papillion, Neb. He drives to work Mondays and returns home Fridays.

When he's not at work during the week, he reads medical literature. When he's at home, he spends time with his girls and catches up on projects around the house.

"I take the girls shopping and we go to movies," Fouche said.

When asked his future goals, Fouche said, "I look forward to a long career in VA. I want this to be my last stop." 

town hall

QUESTIONS
& ANSWERS WITH

VA NWIHCS leadership held a town hall at the Lincoln VA Aug. 26. A summary and paraphrase of the questions and answers are below.

Do I need other insurance if I'm eligible for and using VA health care services?

If you are enrolled with the VA health care system, you can go to any VA for medical care and do not require additional insurance. However, if you have another payer source and use a non-VA emergency room, your insurance will be billed. The non-VA ER treatment is covered if the Veteran is at least 50-percent service connected and the medical issue is considered an emergency.

When Veterans send secure messages through My HealtheVet, why aren't they routinely saved to the Veterans' records?

There is some clinical judgment whether the message is routinely saved. Clinical staff will only save information pertinent to the Veteran's health care. If you want some content in your secure message saved into your electronic medical record, note that in your message.

I only get half the message when a voicemail is left on my cell phone about my medical appointments.

This sounds like the AudioCare system, which sends reminder calls to Veterans about their appointments. This has been shown to decrease the number of no-shows to appointments. You can opt out of receiving these calls, if you like.

How does one get approved for acupuncture for back problems?

Discuss this with your primary care provider to see if it's the best treatment option for you. Your provider can then enter a consult to our physician at the Omaha VA Medical Center who provides this service, or have the care provided in the community.

Media reports state the Veteran suicide rates are very high. What is VA doing to stem this trend?

VA tracks suicide rates in the local area. We have a variety of mental health services available across NWIHCS, such as general mental health, Post-Traumatic Stress care, substance-abuse care and polytrauma. Immediate response to any crisis that comes in is available at any of our sites of care. Once a Veteran is engaged with mental health, we consistently monitor suicidal and harmful thoughts and feelings and treat the Veteran appropriately.

Why does the Veteran receive two to three letters to get an appointment and we call the VA repeatedly, yet don't get an appointment until the third call? Why don't you just make the appointment at the time?

We previously scheduled appointments for far off into the future. This resulted in rescheduling due to providers' absences or changes in the patient's schedule. By not scheduling until closer to the time to be seen, there are fewer missed appointments.

However, scheduling appointments is also dependent upon the situation. If the appointment is for 90-plus days in the future, the Veteran's name is placed into a recall system. Veterans will receive a letter at the time they're due for an appointment.

How do you get a second opinion if you don't get a good answer the first time?

Your primary care provider can send a request for a second opinion. If you still don't agree with your provider, that can be sent up through the service line leadership for review. There might be some limitations as to where the second opinion can be obtained.

Will we be able to get all of our care in our local community for specialty clinics?

This is dependent upon the interpretation of the new Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act of 2014. We don't have guidance on the new law yet. Once we know the changes from the new law, we will communicate this through a variety of channels such as letters, emails, postings and the Internet.

THE EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP

Where and how do you qualify for a green insurance card and what is it for?

This is a fee identification card, which applies to a small number of Veterans. If you are hospitalized outside of the VA, you can file a claim. You should notify the VA as soon as possible by calling or having a family member call 402-995-3250.

What if you transfer your care from a private provider to the VA health care system and want to change back at some point?

Currently, non-VA care must be preauthorized and starts with a VA provider. We are in the process of hiring nurses within the business office to understand complex clinical problems and facilitate transition of care. VA can help you with transition of records.

What ways can Veterans enroll for VA health care benefits?

There are several methods where Veterans can enroll for VA health care. They can enroll online at <http://www.va.gov>, come into a VA facility to enroll or send in a completed VA Form 10-10EZ enrollment application through the mail to our business office. VA staff can assist the Veteran complete the application. We also do a lot of outreach to Veterans.

Is it still required for Veterans to see a VA doctor annually to maintain their disability benefits?

Veterans Benefit Administration (VBA) benefits are separate from your Veterans Health Administration (VHA) benefits. However, you do not have to have an exam annually to retain your VBA benefits. VHA would like you to have an annual exam to insure we're meeting your health care needs.

Why does it take two weeks to get prescriptions written by my private doctor from the VA pharmacy?

Medications issued by the VA need to be ordered by a VA physician. A VA provider must review your records from the private doctors first.

Why not establish a Veteran board of directors to oversee the different VA sites to ensure the Veterans at each are getting the care they need?

The Veteran advisory councils at our Omaha, Lincoln and Grand Island facilities serve in this capacity in a small way. They work with us to obtain direct feedback from Veterans to ensure we are delivering high-quality care and address complaints.

I have not received my new Veterans VA ID card? Will I?

The cards are being mailed incrementally from the Veterans Health Eligibility Center. About a quarter of the cards have been mailed out. The remaining are in the works. If you want to get a new picture card, you can do that at your local VA facility.

I've heard there are conflicts with the new ID cards and pharmacy kiosks.

Yes. We are working with the vendor to resolve those issues. You can enter your Social Security number into the kiosks as they have privacy screens. Volunteers and staff are available to assist, if necessary.

The VA's philosophy is to have the Veterans be part of their treatment team. When is this going to be initiated?

Our goal is to have Veteran-directed care. This is the foundation of the VA's Patient-Aligned Care Teams, where the patients are central to the decision-making process for their treatment options.

Is there a program to help reimburse Veterans for care they pay out of their pocket?

There is a non-VA payment program; however, it has a very complex set of rules. You can always submit a claim and have it adjudicated. You will receive a response and guidance on your appeal rights, if it is denied.

What should we do if we get bills for VA-authorized care?

Those bills should be forwarded to the non-VA care office at the Omaha VA Medical Center. If care is authorized by the VA, we are the sole-payer source. The private medical provider cannot bill you or your other insurance for the balance. 

Photo by Will Ackerman

Director Returns to Hands-On Clinical Care



Photo by Will Ackerman

Medical practitioners with years of experience often ascend to executive leadership roles. For many, this can result in giving up providing direct clinical care to patients.

Although it's only been just over two and a half years since Marci Mylan, PhD, relinquished direct patient care when she assumed the role of VA Nebraska-Western Iowa Health Care System director, she felt a call to return to delivering care as a clinical psychologist.

"It's hard not to love clinical care," Mylan said. "There's nothing like it."

Mylan is returning to her hometown, Minneapolis, to a VA community-based outpatient clinic to resume her practice as a clinical psychologist.

"I really missed it," she said.

“It’s hard not to love clinical care. There’s nothing like it, and I really missed it.”

Dr. Marci Mylan, Ph.D.
Former Director of VA Nebraska-Western Iowa Health Care System

However, Mylan said she is immensely proud of her time as director at VA NWIHCS.

"Nebraska-Western Iowa was a good organization when I arrived," she said. "NWI's strength is in its employees."

She said the sign of a strong organization is whether it thrives, regardless when leaders come and go.

"NWI has a lot of good leaders at all levels," Mylan said. "It will thrive because our staff are very confident in what they do."

One of the key structures she and the executive leadership team implemented during her tenure is a governance structure. This created an executive leadership board at the top and aligned myriad committees under a specific structure so everything the organization's leaders decide and accomplish filters upward, downward and sideways in a systematic process.

"The goal is to have key leaders within the organization at the table to make good decisions," Mylan said. "Governance also provides a clear way for a free exchange of ideas and involves a lot more people at all levels in the decision-making process."

Mylan said NWI was a good organization when she arrived and continues to excel. Some specific examples she cites include the data analytics team. She said having good data and understanding how to use it to drive improvement is interwoven into the fabric of VA decision-making.

"Our data analytics team is second to none," Mylan said. She gives credit to current Associate Director for Operations Denise Harrison, who leads the team, and the former NWIHCS director, Al Washko.

Clinical Care

Will Ackerman | Public Affairs

"They implemented a process to take data to drive improvement," she said.

Because of the success of the data model, Harrison works on a national Veterans Health Administration group to improve data use in decision-making.

NWI was also ahead of the curve with monitoring patient access and wait times. A group that included senior leadership, service line administrative officers and line staff regularly reviewed this information to identify potential delays in access, long before this became a national story in the press.

"This was a big focus for NWI," Mylan said. "They spent a lot of time thinking about access to care and getting people in in a timely manner."

She also credits "gifted leaders" at the CBOCs. During recent visits Mylan made to observe scheduling practices at the CBOCs within NWI, she said leaders "ensured Veterans had what they needed when they needed it."

"The leaders and schedulers at the clinics are such critical components to success to ensure Veterans receive timely care," Mylan said.

Integration of primary and mental health care is also a significant accomplishment at NWIHCS.

"This ensures we are treating the Veteran as a whole person," Mylan said.

Although she said it would be impossible to highlight every area that makes NWI a high performing organization, Mylan also mentioned that the VA Research Service at the Omaha VA Medical Center continues to do great work that affects the Veteran population. The Dental Clinic has made great strides with an increase in its services, specifically its maxillofacial reconstruction work.

Mylan said she will miss the NWI family. However, she said "it feels like the right decision" to return to clinical care as she starts to think about retirement in a few years.

“Everything we do in health care is taking care of people when they are vulnerable. It’s an enormous privilege to be a health care provider.”

Dr. Marci Mylan, Ph.D. 



.....

Darren Parks, RN, Omaha VA Medical Center Intensive Care Unit nurse manager, discusses staffing with Marci Mylan, PhD, former director, VA NWIHCS.

“You can come back, no matter where you are at.”

TRANSITION HOUSE GIVES RECOVERING VETERANS A 'HOME AWAY FROM HOME'

That's the message to Veterans fighting substance addiction from Don Rose, a U.S. Air Force Veteran.

He's preparing to graduate from the Transition House, better known as the TR House, at VA Nebraska-Western Iowa Health Care System's Grand Island facility.

Rose battled alcoholism since his military days in the early 1980s.

“(Drinking) was a major part of life every day in the era,” Rose said. “The atmosphere was that if you worked hard, you played hard.”

Alcoholism also runs in his family.

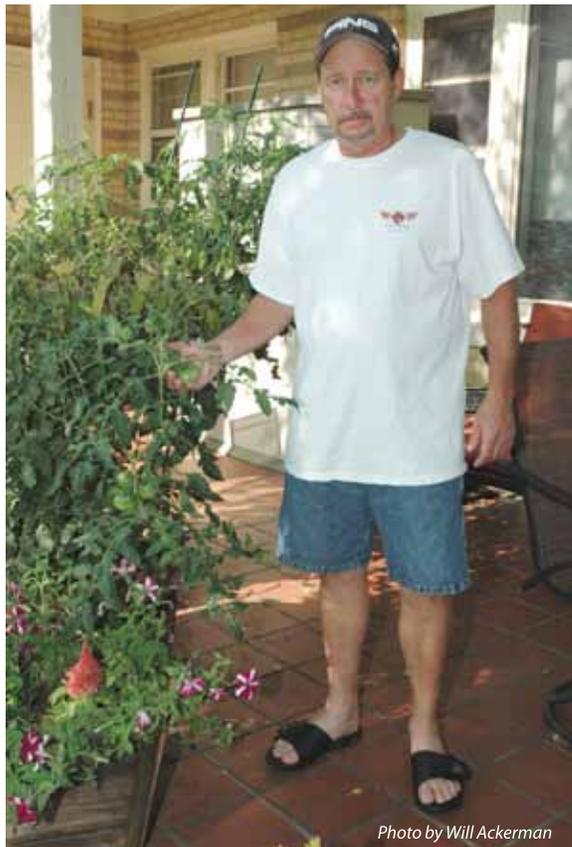


Photo by Will Ackerman



Courtesy Photo

After nine years in the military, Rose excelled, eventually becoming a general manager at an aviation company. However, his drinking had many negative impacts on his life. His three marriages ended in divorce.

“My life and the incredible things I've done were affected by alcohol.”

Don Rose | U.S. Air Force Veteran

He finally “couldn't handle it anymore” and sought help from the substance abuse prevention program staff at the Lincoln VA in 1993. He was sober for eight months, but then started drinking again. In 2007, he said “it was the start of really bad.” He was in a car accident after drinking, lost his license, couldn't hold a job and started having seizures.

Rose went through periods of treatment at the VA and civilian medical facilities and tried to handle his addiction alone for years. He was in treatment at the Grand Island residential substance abuse treatment program when a Veteran told him about the TR house.

(Continued on page 15)

Don Rose, U.S. Air Force Veteran, and resident of the Transition House at the Grand Island VA, shows off the tomato plant that he grew in the garden.

VA Delivers Homerun with Veteran APPRECIATION EVENT



Veterans and their families enjoyed a free evening at the Werner Park and learned about their VA benefits Aug. 18 at the Triple-AAA Omaha Storm Chasers game in Papillion, Neb.

VA Nebraska's-Western Iowa Health Care System staff hosted a Welcome Home/Veterans' Appreciation Event. The goal was to increase awareness about VA benefits and services.

VA staff helped Veterans and their families with information about programs that included women's health, My HealtheVet, home-based primary care and eligibility.

There were also about 50 vendors from the community that provide Veterans' services that included the Nebraska Department of Veterans Affairs, Veterans service organizations and local colleges and universities, according to Lori Wardlow, LCSW, administrative officer, returning Veterans program.

VA provided enrolled Veterans, military members and their immediate families free tickets to the baseball game. Wardlow said more than 400 people went through the information event. 📍



(Top) The Omaha Quilters Guild hand crafted Quilts of Valor for 32 Veterans, which were presented at the game. (Middle) Leah Meyer, University of Nebraska, Omaha, discusses college programs with Nathan Teetzel, U.S. Air Force Veteran, and his wife, Morgan. (Bottom Left) Earl Mitchell, retired U.S. Marine, learns about My HealtheVet from Jan Carlin, program coordinator. (Bottom Right) Shaunie Moseley, Voluntary Services specialist at the Lincoln VA, sings the national anthem at the Omaha Storm Chasers game.

Photos by Will Ackerman

Renovated Audiology Clinic Reopens at Grand Island CBOC

Will Ackerman | Public Affairs

Veterans who need audiology services in central Nebraska receive them at a renovated clinic at the VA Nebraska-Western Iowa Health Care System Grand Island Community-Based Outpatient Clinic. The clinic reopened in May.

The clinic staff includes one full-time audiologist and technician and two part-time audiologists.

Services include hearing tests, hearing aid adjustments and audiology brain stem response testing. The clinic does not administer compensation and benefits examinations.

Veterans who receive primary care through Grand Island, Holdrege and North Platte CBOCs have initial hearing tests administered at the clinic. Veterans who receive care at Holdrege and North Platte clinics have their hearing aids fitted and adjusted at those facilities through telemedicine, said Kris Loyd, Au. D, the clinic's lead audiologist.

Veterans must have a consult referral from their primary care provider. The clinic is open 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Mondays to Fridays. 

VA, OMAHA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Provide Students Work-Based Learning

Heidi Friedenbach

Omaha Public Schools Special Education Services and the Omaha VA have maintained a partnership for over 20 years. Students work in areas throughout the hospital including Environmental Management Services, Logistics, Safe Patient Handling, Primary Care, Employee Health and the Veterans Canteen Service. Their duties include sorting, cleaning, assembling supplies, copying, filing, stamping and stuffing envelopes, delivering, stocking closets and organizing.

Students also witness the sacrifices Veterans made for them and provide respect and service in return.

Some students have obtained jobs in the area in which they were trained at the Omaha VA Medical Center. Other students have received

recommendations from staff for positions within and outside of the VA system. This partnership makes a difference for the youth in the Omaha community.



Courtesy Photo

Donald Walton, Central High School student, sorts employee uniforms in the Omaha VA Medical Center Logistics clothing room. Juli Knoebel, North High School student, faces shelves in the Omaha VAMC Veterans Canteen Service Retail Store.

During the 2014/2015 school year, 25 students will participate in the Work-Based Learning Program at the VA medical center. If you have any jobs the student can assist with, contact Volunteer Services at Omaha ext. 3283 or heidi.friedenbach@ops.org, in Room B503A.



Courtesy Photo

How do you demonstrate THE VA CORE VALUES (ICARE)



THE VA CORE VALUES (ICARE)



By being friendly and taking care of the Veterans' needs in VA. Asking if I met their needs."

Veronica Kuhlmann, Pharmacist | Lincoln VA CBOC

Being honest with them about what they have. They deserve to be honest in how they are treated.

Jim Brown, M.D., Primary Care Physician
Lincoln VA CBOC



By showing Veterans respect when we deliver home telehealth and talking to people on the telephones.

Carla Bird, RN, Telehealth Nurse | Lincoln VA CBOC

By putting myself in the Veterans' position when I am seeing them for their care. I'm able to reflect having those values within myself and incorporating them into my medical practice."



Robert Hansen, Physician Assistant
Bellevue CBOC | Veteran U.S. Marines

EMPLOYEES HELP THROUGH FOOD DONATIONS

Will Ackerman | Public Affairs

Feds Feed Families is a national campaign led by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Since the campaign began in 2009, federal workers donated and collected 24.1 million pounds of food and other non-perishable items to support families across America. NWHCS employees successfully took up the challenge.

GRAND ISLAND: Collected 925.4 for the Generosidad Pantry through the Food Bank for the Heartland

HOLDREGE: Collected 424.7 pounds for the Phelps County Food Bank

LINCOLN: Goal: 750 pounds; Collected: 751 pounds, for The Food Bank of Lincoln, Inc.
Raffle Winners: Keith Heckenliable, executive lunch; Jill May, \$25 gift card to a national book chain

OMAHA: Collected 460 pounds, for the VA Pantry and The Food Bank for the Heartland
Raffle winners: Mary Carroll, executive car wash and a \$50 certificate for the Veterans Canteen Service 🍷



Photo by Will Ackerman

Becky Brown, Medical Media visual information specialist, Susan Bludorn, peer support specialist, Roger Hildedrandt, VA Food Pantry Volunteer and Francis Quevedo, Environmental Management Services administrative officer, display the 460 pounds of food collected from Omaha VA employees.

HELLO

June 1 to Aug. 31

Adejoke Agbaje, Pharmacy
Barry Athy, Nursing Executive
Todd Bailey, Human Resources
Leah Benson, Pharmacy
Melissa Benton, Nursing Executive
Heather Benzel, Quality Management
Kristy Bradford, Biomedical Engineering
David Brawner, Environmental Management Services
Holly Brezina, Surgery
John Broderick, Business Office
Wesley Brown, Finance
Daryl Brown, Environmental Management Services
David Bruce, Mental Health
Paul Chin, Pharmacy
Jessica Clark, Nursing Executive
Sadie Cordell, Mental Health
Adam Crabbe, Pharmacy
Joseph Davis, Laboratory
Meagan Doyle, Pharmacy
Kathleen Dylla, Primary Care and Speciality Medicine
Michael Edwards, Business Office
Amy Evans, Primary Care and Speciality Medicine
Rhonda Finch, Research
Kelsey Frichtl, Pharmacy
Evan Gahan, Pharmacy
Linda George, Nursing
Joni Gomez, Mental Health
Lynn Gunn, Nursing
Jaya Gupta, Primary Care and Speciality Medicine
John Haas, Imaging
Tina Hardin, Environmental Management Services
Eddie Harris, Nursing
Heather Hawley, Pharmacy
Roderick Height, Engineering
Brian Hirz, Research
Traci Hoatson, Primary Care and Speciality Medicine
Brittany Hoins, Surgery
Nicholas Hornig, Primary Care and Speciality Medicine
Angela Howard, Primary Care and Speciality Medicine
Claire Hunter, Primary Care and Speciality Medicine
George Hutfless, Primary Care and Speciality Medicine

Elizabeth Isleb, Pharmacy
Megan Jacobson, Pharmacy
Dawn James, Mental Health
Paul Johnson, Environmental Management Services
Siddiq Khan, Primary Care and Speciality Medicine
Kelci Kilthau, Surgery
Pauline Kunichika, Mental Health
John Lees, Primary Care and Speciality Medicine
Darrell Lewis, Nursing
Megan Lightfoot, Pharmacy
Mary Lockhart, Surgery
Johnathan Loftin, Environmental Management Services
Carrie Lutzen, Nursing
Patricia Manandik, Veterans Canteen Service
Shelby Manka, Veterans Canteen Service
Mariela Marius, Mental Health
Rachel Marquis, Mental Health
Howard Mitchell, Primary Care and Speciality Medicine
Amanda Montgomery, Mental Health
Barbara Moraczewski, Nursing
Rita Norris, Nursing
Jessica Novotny, Primary Care and Speciality Medicine
Daniel Olson, Laboratory
Robert Peniska, Environmental Management Services
Travis Peper, Business Office
Lonnie Phillips, Environmental Management Services
Linda Podany, Business Office
Jack Pollock, Primary Care and Speciality Medicine
Kathleen Praus, Social Work
Tina Reichert, Nursing
Harvey Renfrow, Environmental Management Services
Eric Rider, Environmental Management Services
Evan Robb, Pharmacy
Tianna Robinson, Engineering
Quincy Robinson, Supply, Processing and Distribution
Jenna Rodis, Mental Health
David Rutherford II, Social Work
Martin Saienni, Nursing
Mitchell Samuel, Environmental Management Services
Melissa Peacock, Engineering
Jeremiah Schnoor, Nursing

James Scott, Environmental Management Services
Terrence Smith, Mental Health
Lynn Smith, Nursing
Brandon Stewart, Environmental Management Services
Kevin Strahm, Surgery
Kimberly Stroup, Nursing
Mark Tims, Mental Health
Sara Urwiller, Mental Health
Thomas Vieth, Environmental Management Services
Elizabeth Villamayor, Business Office
Yvonne Wadas, Pharmacy
Gary Walker, Environmental Management Services
Michael Walsh, Environmental Management Services
Janelle Weber, Pharmacy
Alvin Wee, Surgery
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Kimberly Witt, Veterans Canteen Service
Barbara Yarber, Nursing
Salvatore Zieno, Surgery

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Eva Methe, Veterans Canteen Service
Laci Namken, Surgery
Jeffrey Ostwald, Mental Health
Maria Papageorgiou, Prosthetics
Cameron Pesek, Veterans Canteen Service
John Rohrer, Veterans Canteen Service
Christine Russell, Nursing
Scarlet Schwab, VA Police
Heather Shelley, Business Office
Fay Stephens, Nursing
Cynthia Stoehr, Nursing
Rachel Storey, Engineering
Randall Toothaker, Surgery
Sovida Tran, Laboratory
Nancy Vaughn, Nursing
Ross Venditte, VA Police
Jue Wang, Primary Care and Specialty Medicine
Dudley Whitson, Engineering

GOODBYE

Andrea Baker, Pharmacy
Curt Batcheller, Business Office
Matthew Beatty, Environmental Management Services
Kayli Bendlin, Pharmacy
Alphonso Benjamin, Environmental Management Services
Patrick Bent, Human Resources
Dlayna Brening, Lincoln Nursing Director
Shaylea Caris, Human Resources
Emily Carr, Pharmacy
Patrick Cunningham, Logistics
Michelle Daake, Nursing
Deborah Dahlke, Pharmacy
Harold Delasalas, Primary Care and Specialty Medicine
Shelly Dix, Nursing
Kathleen Dylla, Primary Care and Specialty Medicine
Irene Farnan, Nursing
Paul Ferrin, Engineering
Tara Forest, Business Office
Lindsey Halstead, Nursing
Nicholas Hornig, Nursing
Edward Horowitz, Primary Care and Specialty Medicine

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Cathy Blomquist, Nursing
Roger Brown, Engineering
Gail Dillon, Engineering
William Ellerbeck, Engineering
Irald Mahoney, Primary Care and Specialty Medicine
Merle McAlevy, Primary Care and Specialty Medicine
Regina Mitchell, Surgery
Sandra Nee, Nursing
Colleen Schamber, Business Office
Sherry Stroede, Finance
Joyce Lemburg-Taylor, Nursing
Balachandran Wariyar, Primary Care and Specialty Medicine
Dianne Zuroske, Nursing

(Transition House Continued from page 10)

The TR house is a nine-bed transitional residential facility for homeless Veterans. They must be in a VA recovery program and receive a homeless referral from their VA provider, said Kelly Arends, a readjustment counselor. If a homeless Veteran is not enrolled in the VA health care system, Arends will assist the Veteran through the eligibility and enrollment process.

The house has amenities including a kitchen, laundry, two-person bedrooms, a living room and a patio. Arends said residents are responsible for making their own meals, doing their laundry and keeping the house tidy.

"It's like living in a dorm," Arends said.

Veterans must also participate in recovery program meetings three to four times each week.

Arends assists residents with finding work. Veterans are expected to save 20 percent of their paychecks so they are ready to transition once they leave the house. The average Veteran stays eight to 12 months.

“We try to make it as close to a home as possible.”

Kelly Arends | Readjustment Counselor

Rose said the TR house and VA's recovery program "brought me back from the brink of death."

He said this program and the staff showed him that "you can come back, no matter where you are at."



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events WHAT'S GOING ON?

- Oct. 4 VA CoffeeHaus, Lincoln, Neb., VA
- Oct. 6 VA Pantry, Lincoln VA
Combined Federal Campaign begins
Veteran Exercise Class, Omaha VA
- Oct. 8 Veteran Exercise Class, Omaha VA
- Oct. 13 Columbus Day (federal holiday)
- Oct. 14 Walk-In Seasonal Flu Shot Clinics Begin
- Oct. 15 VA Pantry, Community Resource & Referral Center, Omaha
Veteran Exercise Class, Omaha VA
- Oct. 16 Veterans Benefit Fair, Grand Island, Neb., VA
- Oct. 16 Re-Creation: "40-Years of Entertainment" show, Lincoln VA
- Oct. 17 VA CoffeeHaus, Lincoln VA
- Oct. 20 Veteran Exercise Class, Omaha VA
- Oct. 22 Veteran Exercise Class, Omaha VA
- Oct. 26 Stand Down, Grand Island
- Oct. 27 – Nov. 2 National Veterans Creative Arts Festival, Milwaukee, Wisc.
Veteran Exercise Class, Omaha VA
- Oct. 28 Community Book Club, Lincoln VA
- Oct. 29 Veteran Exercise Class, Omaha VA
- Nov. 2 Daylight Saving Time ends
- Nov. 3 VA Pantry, Lincoln VA
Veteran Exercise Class, Omaha VA
- Nov. 5 VA Pantry, Community Resource & Referral Center, Omaha
Veteran Exercise Class, Omaha VA
- Nov. 10 Veterans Forum, Lincoln VA
Veteran Exercise Class, Omaha VA
- Nov. 11 Veterans Day (federal holiday)
- Nov. 12 Veteran Exercise Class, Omaha VA
- Nov. 17 Veteran Exercise Class, Omaha VA
- Nov. 19 VA Pantry, Community Resource & Referral Center, Omaha
Veteran Exercise Class, Omaha VA
- Nov. 20 Great American Smokeout
- Nov. 21 VA CoffeeHaus, Lincoln VA
- Nov. 22 Stand Down, Omaha, Neb.
- Nov. 24 Veteran Exercise Class, Omaha VA
- Nov. 26 Veteran Exercise Class, Omaha VA
- Nov. 27 Thanksgiving Day

For more information
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