



NWI Messenger

For the week of September 6, 2010

Employee Email

EDITOR'S NOTE: To help reduce the volume of all-employee email that is disseminated for routine announcements from services and non-urgent information will be posted in the Daily Briefs and/or in our other products.

Last year during our employee focus groups, it was clearly noted that employees were inundated with too many routine informational all-employee messages.

Our goal is to reduce this message traffic, and provide a one-stop source to find information about educational courses, system information and other routine items in the Daily Brief which comes out once a day versus multiple emails from many different sources.

If you have a message that you feel needs to be sent to all staff that is not of an urgent nature, please send to the VHANWI DAILY BRIEF email. Public Affairs staff will incorporate into the Daily Brief and other applicable venues (digital media boards, *NWI Messenger* or the Intranet homepage).

Do encourage your staff to browse the Daily Briefs to find educational offerings and other general announcements. If you have staff who doesn't routinely have access or check their email, we encourage supervisors or managers to share appropriate information from the Daily Brief with the employees.

Thank you

Will Ackerman

VA NWIHCS Public Affairs Officer

Value Improvement Fair Stories Wanted

VA NWIHCS is wants your personal stories about serving Veterans to share at an upcoming value improvement fair. If you have any stories to share, send an e-mail to Teresa.Kaiser@va.gov or send through inter-department mail to Quality mailstop 03.

A sample story from Grand Island Pharmacy:

As a pharmacy tech in Grand Island, I get to know some of the Community Living Center (CLC) patients by seeing them in the hallways day to day. About three years ago, I noticed one of our elderly patients played pool pretty much daily and often alone. I started stopping by to say hi.

One day, we got to talking and he commented that he wished he had someone to play pool with. I immediately thought of my dad who recently retired. He also liked to play pool and had a lot of free time.

I set up the two to meet and they quickly became "pool buddies." The elderly patient stopped to tell me how happy he was that he had someone to talk to and they got along.

My dad is also a Veteran, so he enjoyed coming by and realized he knew some of our other patients. The two still play pool, although not as often, as the elderly patient is in his 90's and not feeling well at times.

My dad and I celebrated the patient's birthday with him in the Recreation Hall along with some other employees. The patient is a special man and I am happy I was able to brighten his stay with us.

CALENDAR

September

National Preparedness Month

Alcohol and Drug Addiction Recovery Month

Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month

Cholesterol Education Month

Prostate Health Month

6 Labor Day

5-11 Suicide Prevention Week

11 Patriot Day

17 POW/MIA Recognition Day

19-24 National Veterans Summer Sports Clinic

19-25 National Surgical Technologist Week

EDUCATIONAL CALENDAR

Employee Education

Building Leadership Skills

Oct. 5, 6; 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

VA NWIHCS, Lincoln Prairie Room.

Preregistration is required via employee education request at <http://vawww.visn23.med.va.gov/nwi/education/requests/edrequest.asp>.

Human Resources

Fact Finding and Evidence Files (for supervisors)

Sept. 8; 9 to 10 a.m.

VA NWIHCS Omaha Site 1;

VA NWIHCS, Lincoln CCTV;

VA NWIHCS, Grand Island Site 3;

All CBOCs Conference Room

Download Your MyHealthVet Personal Health Record

On Aug. 2, President Obama announced the “Blue Button” capability that allows Veterans to download their personal health information from their MyHealthVet account. Having control of this information enables Veterans to share the data with health care providers, caregivers, or other people they trust. Medical information can be downloaded by going to <http://www.myhealth.va.gov> and following the instruction at the top of the page.

New Regulations on PTSD Claims

VA published a final regulation July 13, that will make access to care and the claims process easier for Veterans seeking compensation for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). The changes will eliminate the requirement for a thorough investigation into the history of each applicant, and will

instead focus on the places, types, and circumstances of a Veteran’s service, and form a general profile based on those factors.

This new regulation will allow a larger number of cases to be processed more quickly, in addition to providing a more consistent set of standards in line with current medical science. This plan will affect all claims filed after July 13, as well as those filed before that had not yet received a final ruling. For more information, visit <http://www.va.gov>.

Healthcare Analytics Program

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln is offering classes in a Healthcare Analytics Certificate program. These classes are designed to train medical workers how to analyze data, develop connection for data, and explore opportunities for improvement. The cost per course is \$250, with associated textbook costs ranging from \$50 to \$125, depending on the course. As an employee of the VA NWIHCS, it is possible for tuition and book fees to

be waived with prior approval. These classes are only available over the Internet and can be registered for by going to <http://hacp.unl.edu/vaf>.

CPRS Cell Phone Helpline

Effective Sept. 2, a Computer Patient Records System (CPRS) cell phone Help Line will be available Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. For CPRS assistance at Omaha call the cell phone Help Line at (402) 210-0324.

CPRS problems at other times should be called to the VISN 23 Help Desk at ext. 4357 for assistance. The cell phone will be carried by the CPRS trainer to provide rapid response help for clinicians for urgent CPRS questions or problems and is not meant to be a substitute for CPRS training.

Employee Association Announcements

Root Beer Float Fundraiser

VA NWIHCS, Grand Island’s Employee Association will offer root beer floats in the main lobby Sept. 9 for \$1 and two non perishable food items. You will have your name entered into a drawing for a chance to win a \$50 gift card from one of two local supermarkets. All food items will be donated to the food pantry.

Aksarben River City Rodeo, Douglas County Fair

The Aksarben River City Rodeo kicks off Sept. 18 and ends Sept. 26. Activities will include concerts, rodeo, educational activities and more. Go to www.rivercityrodeo.com to find a list of dates and events.

Tickets at Work Employee Discounts

Tickets at Work is a service that offers discounts based on company of employment. If you are

interested in the discounts offered for VA employees, go to <https://www.ticketsatwork.com/tickets/account.php?sub=enroll> and enter VANE as your company code.

Lincoln Employee Association Sponsors Making Strides Against Breast Cancer

VA NWIHCS, Lincoln will have weekly drawings for raffles in the lobby across from physical therapy. Tickets will be \$2 each or three for \$5. Each dollar pledged through Making Strides against Breast Cancer will directly benefit American Cancer Society efforts.

A Making Strides against Breast Cancer Walk will take place Oct. 17 at Holmes Park. Contact **Betty Olson** at Lincoln ext. 6753 or e-mail Elizabeth.olson@va.gov if you would like to participate or if you have any raffle items to donate for the cause.

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://vaww.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 **Joe Fogarty** at (402) 995-3305.