



VA Nebraska-Western Iowa Health Care System

PATIENT HANDBOOK

*What you need to know
while you are our guest*



VA
HEALTH
CARE

Defining
EXCELLENCE
in the 21st Century

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A word from the director.



On behalf of the employees of VA Nebraska-Western Iowa Health Care System (VA NWIHCS), thank you for your service to our country. We are honored to now serve you. Our goal is to provide exceptional health care that exceeds your expectations. This booklet provides information to begin your VA health care and wellness journey. In order for us to meet your unique needs and expectations, we encourage you to be a partner in your health care—with your providers and care team. Our employees welcome any chance to assist you as you navigate through our health care system.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Marci Mylan". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Marci Mylan, Ph.D.

Director, VA NWIHCS



VA CORE VALUES

Integrity
Commitment
Advocacy
Respect
Excellence

VA CORE CHARACTERISTICS

Trustworthy
Accessible
Quality
Innovative
Agile
Integrated

What should I expect at my first outpatient appointment?

PATIENT ALIGNED CARE TEAM (PACT)



During your first outpatient appointment at a VA Nebraska-Western Iowa Health Care System (VA NWIHCS) facility, you'll be assigned a primary care provider (PCP) who will oversee your health. Your provider may be a physician, nurse practitioner or physician assistant.

Each primary care provider is a part of a Patient Aligned Care Team (PACT) that centers around you – the expert on your needs. Your PACT will include your primary care provider, nurse, social worker, pharmacist and clerical support. These people make up the team that coordinates your health care. **(You must see your primary care provider at least once each year if you want to receive your prescriptions from the VA).**

PRIMARY CARE

A primary care provider is the person responsible for your overall health care and your medications. You'll be assigned to a PCP after your first visit to the Omaha VA Medical Center or to one of its community based outpatient clinics (CBOC). Each primary care provider is a part of a Patient Aligned Care Team (PACT).

WOMEN VETERANS PROGRAM

Nebraska has more than 11,000 women Veterans. Through the PACT system, VA provides women Veterans with gender-specific services such as breast and gynecological care, limited infertility services, maternity and newborn care. A Women Veterans Program Manager is available to answer questions specifically related to women's health care needs and access at VA NWIHCS.

Women Veterans Program Manager:
402-995-4906

RURAL VETERANS

To reduce driving time and increase access to care for rural Veterans, VA NWIHCS is leading the way in Telehealth. Using high-speed Internet and video conferencing technology, Veterans can visit a clinic close to home while seeing a provider hundreds of miles away.

Since 2000, VA NWIHCS has provided more than 21,000 Telehealth visits, and that number continues to grow. These visits include appointments via teleconferencing between Veterans and their care providers in Nutrition, Mental Health, Pharmacy, Oncology, Orthopedics and the MOVE! Weight Management Program.

Talk with a member of your PACT about opportunities for Telehealth appointments.

HOME-BASED PRIMARY CARE

For Veterans who find it hard to make it to clinic appointments due to physical or psychological limitations, they can be seen at home. The Home-Based Primary Care (HBPC) Team provides a team approach to care, similar to PACT, in the Veteran's home.

GOALS OF HBPC ARE TO:

- Maximize function and independence.
- Slow the advance of chronic diseases.
- Reduce the need for clinic and emergency room visits, hospitalizations and emergency room visits.
- Improve quality of life.
- Keep Veterans in their homes longer, reducing the need for nursing home care.
- Teach Veterans and caregivers ways to restore or maintain their independence.

CO-PAYS AND CHARGES

While there is no monthly premium required to access VA care, the Department of Veterans Affairs is required to charge Veterans in certain priority groups a co-payment for their outpatient visits and inpatient hospitalizations.

Whether or not you pay a co-payment is dependent on a number of factors including your enrollment priority group and your service-connected treatment. This is determined by a process called “means testing” and is done annually. If you are not charged co-payments for medications or your health care, or are charged a reduced inpatient co-payment rate, you need to update and report your financial information to VA each year to prevent your status from lapsing. Please make sure to complete your financial assessment prior to its expiration date.

More information about means testing can be obtained at: www.va.gov/healtheligibility or by calling 1-866-347-2352 or visit the eligibility department where you receive care.

EMERGENCY SERVICES

Emergency services are considered specialty care, assessing a \$50 co-pay.

INPATIENT CO-PAYMENTS

Inpatient co-pays change yearly and are based on priority group. In addition to the standard inpatient co-pay, a per diem will be assessed for each day of hospitalization.

LONG TERM CARE CO-PAYMENTS

Some Veterans receive co-pays for nursing home care, adult day care, and care in their home. Actual co-pay charges will vary from Veteran to Veteran depending on financial information submitted on VA Form 10-10EC.

NON-VA CARE CO-PAYMENTS

Veterans receiving VA authorized care, from non-VA providers, will be charged co-pays based on the same criteria as if the services were received in a VA medical center.

OUTPATIENT CO-PAYMENTS

Outpatient co-payments are based on a three-tiered system:

No Co-payment:

Services for which there is no co-payment assessed are publicly announced VA public health initiatives (e.g., health fairs), or an outpatient visit consisting solely of preventive screening and/or immunizations (for example: influenza immunization, pneumococcal immunization, tobacco screening).

Basic \$15 Co-payment

A basic outpatient visit is an event of care in a clinic that provides primary care, or in a clinic that is tightly associated with the larger interdisciplinary primary care team.

Specialty \$50 Co-payment

A specialty care outpatient visit is an event of care furnished in a clinic that does not provide primary care, and is usually only provided through a referral. Some examples of specialty care provided at a specialty care clinic are ambulatory surgery, audiology, cardiology, computerized axial tomography (CAT) scan, magnetic resonance imagery (MRI), nuclear medicine studies, optometry, radiology services requiring the immediate presence of a physician, and surgical consultative services.

PRESCRIPTION CO-PAYMENTS

By law, VA must charge Veterans a co-payment for their outpatient medications. Currently the co-pay is \$8 or \$9, per month, per prescription. Priority Groups 2-6 are charged the \$8 co-pay. There is a maximum charge of \$960 per year. Priority Groups 7 and 8 receive a \$9 co-pay with no yearly maximum.

- Non-service connected Veterans – required co-pay
- Service connected Veterans rated less than 50% - required co-pay
- Service connected Veterans rated 50% or greater – no co-pay
- Medications dispensed for service connected conditions – no co-pay
- Former POW's – no co-pay
- Veterans with income lower than the VA pension level – no co-pay
- Medication authorized under 38 U.S.C. 1710(e) for Vietnam era, herbicide exposed Veterans, radiation exposed Veterans, Persian Gulf War combat exposed Veterans – no co-pay
- Medication for treatment of sexual trauma as authorized under 38 U.S.C. 1720D – no co-pay
- Medication for treatment of cancer of the head and neck authorized under 38 U.S.C. 1720E – no co-pay
- Medications provided as part of a VA approved research project authorized by 38 U.S.C. 7303 – no co-pay
- Medications administered during treatment – no co-pay

CO-PAY QUESTIONS

Information regarding co-pays may be reviewed at www.va.gov/healtheligibility/costs or by calling The Health Resource Center at 1-866-347-2352.

AGENT CASHIER

The Agent Cashier is available to Veterans wishing to make co-payments or receive reimbursement for eligible travel.

Hours are 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday, unless otherwise posted.

Omaha: 402-995-3171

Grand Island: 308-382-3660 ext. 92124



TRANSITIONAL/ CO-MANAGED CARE

We encourage you to receive all your medical care through the VA and have a single VA primary care provider who coordinates all aspects of your care. However, if you choose to keep another provider outside of the VA system, we will work with your private doctors to coordinate your health care. We call this transitional or co-managed care. It means your VA and private doctors must work together to provide safe, clinically appropriate, and ethical medical care.

PATIENT RESPONSIBILITIES

You need to coordinate your care when you have more than one provider. Please tell both your VA provider and your private doctor that you want to have your care coordinated. Give your VA provider the name, address, and telephone number of all of your private doctors. You should also give your private doctors the same information about your VA provider.

All necessary records and documents from your private doctor should be sent to the VA. If you would like information from your VA medical record sent to your private doctor, you should contact the Release of Information office and sign a release form to have that done. For your safety, let your VA provider know about all medicines you're taking, including prescriptions written by your private doctor. Also include over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbal medications. You will also want to tell your private doctor about any medicines prescribed by your VA provider.

VA PROVIDER RESPONSIBILITIES

Your VA provider must have the final say about how the VA will meet your health care needs. Your VA provider does not have to re-write prescriptions or order tests for any health problem that the VA provider does not directly manage. If your private doctor writes a prescription for a medicine that is not on the VA list of approved medicines, your VA provider may offer you another medicine that is very similar, safe, and effective

for your condition. If you choose, you may want to talk to your private doctor before changing to the VA medicine.

Some medicines need special blood tests. Your VA provider may not write prescriptions for any high-risk medicines unless you agree to have the tests done by the VA. If you live far away or have difficulty traveling to the VA, you have the option of providing the written results from your private doctor's blood tests to your VA provider. If you request a highly specialized medication, you must be seen by a VA provider competent in that specialty, or the prescribing clinician must be in direct verbal or written contact, or acting on recommendations of a VA provider competent in that specialty. VA providers are under no obligation to follow a treatment or medication plan recommended by community physicians if they disagree with that plan or if the plan conflicts with national or local policies related to prescription of medications. A VA provider or pharmacist will explain his or her rationale for medication changes or why the medication will not be filled. If you receive controlled substances on an ongoing basis, close monitoring is required by one designated provider. The VA may provide these substances only if the VA is primarily responsible for and actively managing these medications.

VA POLICY

If you are seeking care, medications, or supplies from the VA, you must enroll in VA health care and have a primary care provider who manages your care, even if some of your care is provided in the community. If you receive medications through the VA, you will be required to see your VA provider at least annually. Specialty services will be provided according to the local facility or Veterans Integrated Services Network (VISN) policy once you are enrolled in primary care.

You need to tell your VA provider about any changes in your health, or changes in treatment or medicines made by your private doctor. You will also want to tell your private doctor about any changes made by your VA provider. You must pay any required VA co-payments.

Omaha Transitional/Co-Managed Care: 402-995-5738

Fax: 402-995-5995

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS VOLUNTEER TRANSPORTATION NETWORK

The Disabled American Veteran (DAV) Volunteer Transportation Network (VTN) provides transportation to Veterans in need of medical care at a VA facility. This program is available due to the willingness and availability of volunteer drivers.

To use these services, Veterans must be able to walk from their home to the vehicle, enter the vehicle unassisted, and walk from the vehicle to Omaha, Lincoln and Grand Island locations on their own. DAV cannot transport Veterans who use a wheelchair or oxygen. The need for DAV transport is based primarily on a Veteran's inability to pay for the cost of public transportation. Veterans are transported for scheduled appointments only.

Requests for transportation differ by site. Please contact the facility closest to your home to make arrangements for transportation. Transportation in additional counties may be available.

Grand Island DAV Coordinator: 308-382-3660 ext. 2189

Lincoln DAV Coordinator: 402-489-3802 ext. 7842

Omaha DAV Coordinator: 402-995-3453



PHARMACY

VA has excellent pharmacy benefits which allow you to get medications and medical supplies your VA provider orders for you.

If you are transferring your prescriptions to VA, your VA providers may need to replace some of your medications with similar medications on the VA formulary. The formulary lists all medications available for refill at the VA. VA providers will work closely with your community provider to coordinate your care.

You or your community provider can access the VA formulary at: www.pbm.va.gov

PRESCRIPTION FROM A PRIVATE DOCTOR

By law, VA pharmacy cannot fill a prescription written by a non-VA provider, without the information below.

VA is NOT responsible to pay for medications filled at a private pharmacy.

You must bring the following from your community provider when requesting a new prescription:

1. The most recent history and physical and office note
2. Lab and test results
3. The reason why the prescription was written
4. A copy of the prescription

PHARMACY CO-PAYMENTS

Depending on your eligibility, you may be charged a co-payment for medications. You may apply for free medications if you cannot afford the co-payment. See page 7 for more information about prescription co-pays. You can get information about patient eligibility from the benefits counselor at your local VA facility.

PHARMACY TELEPHONE CARE SYSTEM

This system is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. You can use it to:

- Check on a prescription
- Learn about your medicine
- Order refills for your medicines

You need a touch-tone telephone to use this service. Before you call, have your Social Security number and the VA prescription number printed on the bottle. The automated phone system will give you step-by-step instructions. This system also allows you to talk directly with someone in the VA pharmacy during business hours (8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday-Friday).

Pharmacy Telephone Care System: 1-855-560-1722

OUTPATIENT PHARMACY

The outpatient pharmacy provides new prescription orders, change prescription orders, and process emergent prescription orders. The outpatient pharmacy does not provide refill services. Refills are mailed to you from our consolidated mail order pharmacy. When your VA provider orders a new prescription, the outpatient pharmacist meets with you to explain the medication and answer any questions you may have.

New Prescriptions

You **MUST** check in with a pharmacist in the outpatient pharmacy if you intend on picking up a new medication. They will talk with you about any new medicine your provider orders for you. If you do not pick up a new medication from the pharmacy it will automatically be sent by mail. Mailed prescriptions usually take 14 days to arrive. Request refills 2-3 weeks before you need more medicine to allow time for your prescription to be refilled and mailed to you.

REQUEST REFILLS IN ANY OF THESE 4 WAYS:

1. PHONE

- Call 1-855-560-1722 using a touch-tone phone.
- Enter your Social Security Number, followed by (#).
- Select option 2

Press 1 - Refills

Enter the prescription number followed by the (#) sign

Press 2 – Status of Prescription

Enter the prescription number followed by the (#) sign

Press 8 – To Speak With Pharmacy Staff

(8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday-Friday)

2. MAIL

Mail your refill slip to the return address on your prescription label or the address provided below. Be sure to mail your refill slips as soon as you receive them to get your next refill before you run out of medication. Mailed prescriptions usually take 14 days to arrive after the request has been received by the VA pharmacy.

Omaha VA Pharmacy

4101 Woolworth Ave.
Omaha, NE 68105

Grand Island VA Pharmacy

2201 N. Broadwell Ave.
Grand Island, NE 68803

Lincoln VA Pharmacy

600 S. 70th St.
Lincoln, NE 68510

3. INTERNET

Enroll in My HealtheVet at the VA to use this feature, then log on to the website at www.myhealth.va.gov. Refer to page 25 of this handbook for instructions.

4. DROP BOX

Drop off your refill slip in the box outside the Pharmacy the day you receive your prescription. Your next refill will be mailed to you. Mailed prescriptions usually take 14 days to arrive.

When you get your refill, check the bottle to make sure these things are correct:

- Your name on the bottle
- The name of the medicine
- The color and shape of the medicine
- The amount you should take for each dose
- The directions you should follow for each dose.

If you need to stay on the medication, you will need a new prescription when your current prescription has no more refills. Contact your VA provider as soon as possible to have the new prescription ordered. It's a good idea to check your medicines before each visit with your provider to see how many refills are left, so you can ask for a new prescription of the medication at the visit.

Narcotics and certain controlled medications cannot be refilled. A new prescription is needed for each supply. Contact the pharmacy, or your PCP in your PACT to obtain these prescriptions.

APPOINTMENTS

Outpatient visits are pre-scheduled clinic appointments to see a care provider: pharmacist, a nurse or another PACT member. You should make every effort to keep your scheduled appointment. If you are unable to keep your appointment, call as soon as possible so we can fill that appointment with another patient waiting to be seen.

GET THE MOST FROM YOUR APPOINTMENT: Before Your Appointment

- Complete all the paperwork that was given to you.
- Think about what you want to know about your health and write down any questions you want to ask. List one or two of your most pressing concerns.
- Write down the answers to the following questions:
 - Describe the problem or symptoms. Where is it? When did it start?
 - Does anyone at home have the same problem?
 - What do you think is causing it? What have you tried? Did it work?
 - Do you have any pain? If so, where and what type of pain? How long does it last?
 - Have you recently begun a diet or started exercising? Have you lost weight?
- Be as accurate as possible. Do not exaggerate, understate or leave facts out.

The Day of Your Appointment

- Follow any instructions you are given especially if you are told not to eat or drink before your appointment.
- Bring your glucometer or any other items your provider tells you to bring to ALL your appointments. Bring a paper and pen to take notes.
- Bring a list of all of your medications, including any herbal supplements and nutritional supplements you may be taking. Include the name, strength or dose amount, number of pills you take each time and what time of day you take them.
- Bring your appointment letters.

- Wear clothing that is easy to take off and put on.
- Be on time and be sure to check in at least 30 minutes prior to your scheduled appointment time.
- Come early if you have lab work or other medical tests scheduled.
- Remember to bring or wear your glasses and/or hearing aid(s).

At the Appointment

- If you think you might have trouble understanding or hearing, consider bringing a relative or friend to help you ask questions.
- Repeat what the provider says to you in your own words to be sure you understand.
- Keep the conversation on track. Focus on the questions that matter to you.
- Tell the provider if you don't understand. It's okay to ask for a better explanation.

Closing the Visit

- What is the next step in your care? Let the provider know if you cannot or will not do what is suggested.
- Ask for written information about your medication(s), condition, illness and treatment.
- Make sure you know exactly how and when to take your medication(s).
- Make sure you know who to call if you have questions or concerns.

RETURN APPOINTMENTS

For return appointments, you will receive a letter to remind you that you are due to see your provider. Make sure we have your current address so you receive these letters. When you get this letter, call the scheduling line to make an appointment.

**Scheduling, 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday-Friday,
except federal holidays:**

402-346-8800, option 2 or

Toll Free: 1-800-451-5796, option 2

NAVIGATING YOUR CARE WHEN YOU HAVE QUESTIONS

If it might be a life, organ or limb-threatening emergency?

If you have chest pains, shortness of breath, tingling in a limb bleeding etc.

Call 9-1-1 or Go to the Nearest Emergency Department

Problem or Question

If you have a concern or problem that cannot wait until your next appointment or you want to leave a message for your provider.

During Business Hours

(Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.- 4 p.m.)

Call Your Patient Aligned Care Team (PACT):
See Page 29-30 for a Listing of Numbers

After Hours

(After 4 p.m. weekdays; weekends & holidays)

Call the Nurse VA Advice Line:
1-866-687-7382

Routine Services

Tasks that you need to do in order to receive services or care.

Chronic Care Help or Specialty Clinic

Call Your PACT:

Your PACT must make referrals when it's not an emergency.

See Page 29-30
for a Listing of Numbers

*Going to the Emergency
Department will not get you a
referral faster.*

Enroll in the VA

Go to the Eligibility Office:

Monday-Friday
8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
(except federal holidays) or

Call: 1-866-347-2352

Medication Refills

Need it Today?

Go to the Pharmacy:
You may get a partial dose

Can it Wait?

**Log on and Order Through
My HealtheVet:**
www.myhealth.va.gov

Call: See Page 10

Mail Your Refill:
See page 11

Appointments

Schedule, Re-schedule or Cancel an Appointment

**Call: 402-346-8800, option 2 or
1-800-451-5796 option 2**

OR

Log on to My HealtheVet:
www.myhealth.va.gov

CRISIS PREVENTION HOTLINE

Are you or someone you care about feeling helpless and/or hopeless? If you or a loved one is in distress or having thoughts about harming themselves, you can contact our Mental Health Clinic or the Veteran's Crisis Line.

Mental Health Clinic: 402-995-4944

Veterans Crisis Line: 1-800-273-TALK (8255), press 1 for Veterans

CHAPLAIN/PASTORAL CARE

Your spiritual well-being is regarded as an integral part of good health and complete health care. Whatever your religious tradition, hospital chaplains are available for pastoral counseling, spiritual guidance, and sacramental needs. Religious materials and communion are available upon request. Contact your health care team to arrange for assistance.

OMAHA

**Chapel and Chaplains' Offices,
East Wing of the First Floor**

Worship services for patients and visitors are held in the Chapel and can be viewed on Channel 5 in patient rooms.

Protestant Worship with Holy Communion:
Every Sunday at 9 a.m.

Catholic Mass:
Sundays, weekdays and Holy Days at 6:55 a.m.

GRAND ISLAND

**Chapel and Chaplains' Offices, Second Floor,
Northwest Side**

Protestant Worship: Sundays 9 a.m.

Catholic Mass: Saturdays 11 a.m.

INTEGRATED ETHICS COUNCIL

Patients and staff face difficult and potentially life-altering decisions every day. In the day-to-day business of health care, uncertainty or conflicts about values - that is, ethical concerns - inevitably arise. The Integrated Ethics Council is available for ethics consultations.

Integrated Ethics Hotline: 1-855-ETHICS8
(1-855-384-4278)

NURSE ADVICE LINE

A registered nurse is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week to talk with you about medical problems you are having.

- When you explain your symptoms or questions, the nurse will give you advice about your condition.
- The nurse will help determine the level of care needed based on the information you have given.
- Care recommendations may be advice on home remedies, scheduling an appointment, visiting an Emergency Department or calling 911.

**Call Your PACT, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday-Friday
Nurse VA, Monday-Friday After 4 p.m., holidays and weekends:**
1-866-687-7382

PATIENT ADVOCATE

VA Nebraska-Western Iowa Health Care System (VA NWIHCS) strives to provide you the best care possible in the most courteous and efficient manner, and we value your comments about your experiences. We always seek to improve our service to Veterans, and your comments can help us do that. Your Patient-Aligned Care Team (PACT) and other hospital staff are available to assist you with any questions, issues, or concerns you may have. If you run into a problem, talk with your PACT or ask to speak with the supervisor. (See pages 29-30 for a listing of numbers).

If you feel you need further assistance to make sure your concerns are addressed, ask to speak with the Patient Advocate. You may also contact the Patient Advocate if you wish to compliment a particular VA staff member. The Patient Advocate is available from 7 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday-Friday, except for federal holidays. Issues that arise during other times should be directed to the Service Level Patient Advocate in each clinic or department.

Grand Island: 308-389-5132

Lincoln: 402-489-3802 ext. 97933

Omaha: 402-995-3477

VETERANS BENEFITS COUNSELORS

A Veteran's benefits counselor can help you with information and assistance about Veterans benefits. You may call the regional office in your state or visit www.va.gov.

Veterans Benefits Counselors: 1-800-827-1000

VETERANS SERVICE OFFICER

When you come into the County Veterans Service Office you will be referred to a service officer for assistance. The County Veterans Service Officer has a compassionate understanding of the problems, which confront Veterans, widows, widowers, and children. The County Veterans Service Officer knows the extent, the meaning and the application of laws that have been passed by the U.S. Congress in the interests of Veterans and their dependents. They also know the rules and regulations adopted by the Department of Veterans Affairs to clarify and implement those laws. The County Veterans Service Officer will apply specialized knowledge in the best way suited to the needs of every individual Veteran or other beneficiary who comes to the office for assistance.

To Find a County Veterans Service Officer for Your Area, go to:

www.nacvso.org



THE OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

The Office of Inspector General (OIG) is an independent organization with the goal of minimizing fraud, waste, and abuse in VA programs, activities and functions. It is responsible for investigating criminal activity, waste, fraud, abuse, and mismanagement involving VA programs and operations, such as:

- Employee misconduct
- Patient abuse, or serious safety violations
- Theft from VA beneficiaries or misuse of government property
- False claims by beneficiaries, claimants, patients, employees, or contractors
- Systemic problems within VA programs or operations, or gross waste of funds or official time

As a patient, family member, community representative or employee of this health care system you have the right to notify the OIG regarding any acts of fraud, waste or abuse that it has not addressed. Anyone believing that he or she has pertinent and valid information about such matters that has not been addressed and/or resolved by the health care system or its management, is encouraged to notify the OIG at the Department of Health and Human Services.

VA Inspector General

P.O. Box 50410
Washington, DC 20091-0410

Toll Free, 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. ET (Monday-Friday, except federal holidays): 1-800-488-8244

Email: vaighotline@va.gov

THE JOINT COMMISSION

VA NWHCS is accredited by The Joint Commission, an organization dedicated to assuring that health care facilities provide safe, high quality care. You have the right to notify The Joint Commission regarding any quality of care or safety concern in the health care system that it has not addressed. Anyone believing he or she has valid information about such matters that has not been addressed and/or resolved by the health care system or its management is encouraged to notify The Joint Commission.

**Division of Accreditation Operations
Office of Quality Monitoring The Joint Commission**
One Renaissance Boulevard
Oakbrook Terrace, IL 60181

Phone: 1-800-994-6610

Fax: 1-630-792-5636

Email: complaint@jointcommission.org

VISITING HOURS

Visiting hours are based on the needs of the patient, and visitors are encouraged to discuss any special visiting needs with the unit's head nurse. Whenever possible and medically appropriate, the nurse will coordinate special visiting arrangements to meet patient and family needs. Talk to your nurse for the hours of the unit you would like to visit.

INTERNET & WI-FI ACCESS

Our website provides a lot of information to make it easier for Veterans to access updated and accurate information about our facilities and our programs.

Visit us at: www.nebraska.va.gov

WI-FI ACCESS AVAILABLE IN OMAHA

Connect to the Wi-Fi Service:

Set up your wireless card SSID: VA_WIFI, open your web browser and accept the terms and conditions to be connected.

Look for more information in the future about Wi-Fi service at other VA NWHCS facilities.

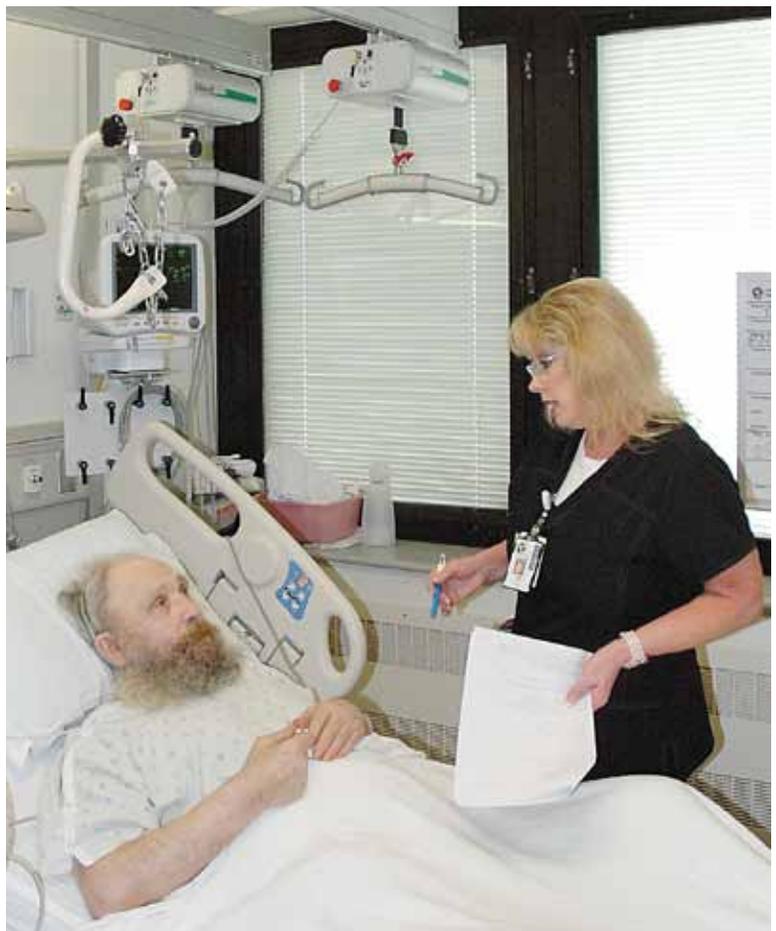
VALUABLES/MONEY

Please feel free to keep personal items in your room to help make your hospital stay more comfortable while you are an inpatient in Omaha. You are encouraged to send home or place in a secure storage area valuable items like jewelry or cameras. An inventory of your personal items will be done upon admission to the hospital. Money can be put into a patient's fund account for safekeeping at the agent cashier office. The agent cashier is located in room 1501 in Omaha. Ask your nurse for details.

At the Grand Island Community Living Center (CLC), you are asked not to keep any more than \$10 with you. All other money can be deposited with the agent cashier, located on the first floor in the main lobby. Ask your nurse for more details.

PARKING

Parking areas are designated for visitors, employees, volunteers, patients, service-connected Veterans, and the handicapped. Please obey the posted signs and ground painted symbols. Inpatients are requested to keep their cars at home. If this is not possible, VA Police should be notified. See page 26 for a listing of contacts.



DIETITIANS

If you have a chronic condition, a carefully planned diet can make a difference. With certain diseases, what you eat may reduce symptoms. In other cases, diet can improve health. For example, eating a heart-healthy diet can help lower high blood pressure; this reduces the risk of both heart attack and stroke. Even if someone does not have high blood pressure, eating a heart-healthy diet reduces the chance of heart disease in the future.

If you have a condition such as diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease, if you are underweight or overweight, or if you just want to learn to eat a more healthy diet, a registered dietitian can assist you with education and counseling. If you feel it's time to seek the assistance of a registered dietitian ask your health care provider for a referral, or call your local outpatient clinic and ask to speak to a dietitian.

HEALTH PROMOTION AND DISEASE PREVENTION

Health Promotion Disease Prevention (HPDP) is about helping you improve and take control of your health. By supplying you with the tools needed to make healthy life choices, you can reduce your risk of certain illnesses, avoid trips to the hospital, and generally feel better. You can also control and lessen the severity of conditions you may already have.

Prevention is the best medicine. Your health care team is very interested in your health and well being. Partner with us by staying up-to-date on your health care screening exams, tests and lab work. Together we can help ensure a better quality of life for you in the future. For more information on healthy living visit www.prevention.va.gov.

THE 9 HEALTHY LIVING MESSAGES

- Be Physically Active
- Eat Wisely
- Strive for a Healthy Weight
- Get Recommended Screening Tests & Immunizations
- Be Involved in Your Health Care
- Be Tobacco Free
- Limit Alcohol
- Manage Stress
- Be Safe

MOVE! WEIGHT MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

MOVE! Weight Management Program is a national VA weight management program designed to help Veterans lose weight, keep it off, and improve their health. The program is patient-centered, individualized, and emphasizes health and wellness through nutrition, physical activity, and behavior change. Veterans that participate have an appointment with a MOVE! provider to set individualized goals for weight loss that fit their lifestyle, receive a personalized report about their lifestyle habits, and are given a pedometer to track their steps once they have started participation in the MOVE! Program. Veterans will have regular follow-up and support in the form of phone calls, individual clinic visits, or group classes determined around your schedule. Talk with your provider before starting any weight loss program.

MOVE! Weight Management Program

Omaha: 402-995-3599

Bellevue, NE or Shenandoah, IA: 402-591-4506

Grand Island, Holdrege, or North Platte:
308-382-3660 ext. 92384

Lincoln: 402-489-3802 ext. 96571

Norfolk or O'Neill: 402-370-4576

ADVANCE DIRECTIVES

Advance directives are written instructions that tell your doctor what kind of care you would like to have if you are unable to speak for yourself. Two common types of advance directives are a living will and a power of attorney.

VA forms are available for you to prepare a living will or a power of attorney for health care. Your social worker can answer your questions and help you fill them out. If you already have an advance directive, please give a copy to one of your health care providers. It will be added to your medical record.

CAREGIVER SUPPORT PROGRAM

VA knows your focus as a family caregiver is taking care of the Veteran you love. It can be an incredibly demanding job, and we want you to know you don't have to do it alone. VA offers a number of services that can provide you with the support that's right for you. Whether you and the Veteran you care for could use some help at home or you just need someone to listen, we're here to support you.

Caregiver Support Line: 1-855-260-3274

www.caregiver.va.gov

COACHING INTO CARE

Coaching Into Care works with family members or friends who become aware of their Veteran's post-deployment difficulties and supports their efforts to find help for the Veteran.

This is a national clinical service providing information and help to Veterans and the loved ones who are concerned about them. By encouraging caregivers to seek help, Coaching into Care focuses on getting caregivers the help they need when they need it.

Coaching Into Care Line: 1-888-823-7458

SOCIAL WORKERS

Social workers are available through each of the programs and service lines throughout the VA NWHCS. Social workers are part of the PACT in programs within mental health, primary care, and extended care. In partnership with providers and Veterans, the focus of social work is to help Veterans address psychosocial factors with the goal of ensuring Veterans have seamless access to a broad range of services both in and outside of VA.

Social workers are available to assist with discharge planning, advance directives, long term care planning, caregiver support, and other issues related to illness, treatment and recovery. Social workers are available to ensure that Veterans have easy access to services within VA and information to access other services in the community like transportation, finances, Medicaid, and nursing home placement.

PALLIATIVE CARE

The Palliative Care Team is a specially trained group of health care professionals who work with Veterans and their families to provide comfort and compassionate care when a patient has a life-limiting illness. The goal is directed toward improving quality of life. The focus of palliative care is on the relief of symptoms as well as providing emotional and spiritual support for the patient and their families.

PATIENT AND NURSING HOME RESIDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Veterans Health Administration (VHA) is pleased you have selected us to provide your healthcare. We want to improve your health and well-being. We will make your visit or stay as pleasant for you as possible. As part of our service to you, to other veterans and to the Nation, we are committed to improving healthcare quality. We also train future healthcare professionals, conduct research, and support our country in times of national emergency. In all of these activities, our employees will respect and support your rights as a patient. Your basic rights and responsibilities are outlined in this document. Please talk with VA treatment team members or a patient advocate if you have any questions or would like more information about your rights.

I. RESPECT AND NONDISCRIMINATION

- You will be treated with dignity, compassion, and respect as an individual. Your privacy will be protected. You will receive care in a safe environment. We will seek to honor your personal and religious values.
- You or someone you choose has the right to keep and spend your money. You have the right to receive an accounting of any VA held funds.
- Treatment will respect your personal freedoms. In rare cases, the use of medication and physical restraints may be used if all other efforts to keep you or others free from harm have not worked.
- As an inpatient or nursing home resident, you may wear your own clothes. You may keep personal items. This will depend on your medical condition.
- As an inpatient or nursing home resident, you have the right to social interaction and regular exercise. You will have the opportunity for religious worship and spiritual support. You may decide whether to participate in these activities. You may decide whether or not to perform tasks in or for the Medical Center.

- As an inpatient or nursing home resident, you have the right to communicate freely and privately. You may have or refuse visitors. You will have access to public telephones. You may participate in civic rights, such as voting and free speech.
- As a nursing home resident, you can organize and take part in resident groups in the facility. Your family also can meet with the families of other residents.
- In order to provide a safe treatment environment for all patients or residents and staff, you are expected to respect other patients, residents and staff and to follow the facility's rules. Avoid unsafe acts that place others at risk for accidents or injuries. Please immediately report any condition you believe to be unsafe.

II. INFORMATION DISCLOSURE AND CONFIDENTIALITY

You will be given information about the health benefits you can receive. The information will be provided in a way you can understand.

- You will receive information about the costs of your care, if any, before you are treated. You are responsible for paying your portion of any costs associated with your care.
- Your medical record will be kept confidential. Information about you will not be released without your consent unless authorized by law (an example of this is State public health reporting). You have the right to information in your medical record and may request a copy of your medical records. This will be provided except in rare situations when your VA physician feels the information will be harmful to you. In that case, you have the right to have this discussed with you by your VA provider.
- You will be informed of all outcomes of care, including any potential injuries. You will be informed about how to request compensation for any injuries.

III. PARTICIPATION IN TREATMENT DECISIONS

You, and any persons you choose, will be involved in all decisions about your care. You will be given information you can understand about the benefits and risks of treatment. You will be given other options. You can agree to or refuse treatment. You will be told what is likely to happen to you if you refuse treatment. Refusing treatment will not affect your rights to future care but you take responsibility for the possible results to your health.

- Tell your provider about your current condition, medicines (including over-the-counter and herbals), and medical history. Also, share any other information that affects your health. You should ask questions when you do not understand something about your care. Being involved is very important for you to get the best possible results.

- You will be given, in writing, the name and title of the provider in charge of your care. As our partner in healthcare, you have the right to be involved in choosing your provider. You also have the right to know the names and titles of those who provide you care. This includes students, residents and trainees. Providers will properly introduce themselves when they take part in your care.

- You will be educated about your role and responsibilities as a patient or resident. This includes your participation in decision making and care at the end of life.

- If you believe you cannot follow the treatment plan, you have a responsibility to notify your provider or treatment team.

- You have the right to have your pain assessed and to receive treatment to manage your pain. You and your treatment team will develop a pain management plan together. You are expected to help the treatment team by telling them if you have pain and if the treatment is working.

- As an inpatient or nursing home resident, you will be provided any transportation necessary for your treatment plan.

- You have the right to choose whether you will participate in any research project. Any research will be clearly identified. Potential risks of the research will be identified and there will be no pressure on you to participate.

- You will be included in resolving any ethical issues about your care. You may consult with the Medical Center's Ethics Consultation Service and/or other staff knowledgeable about healthcare ethics.

- If you or the Medical Center believes that you have been neglected, abused or exploited, you will receive help.

IV. COMPLAINTS

You are encouraged and expected to seek help from your treatment team or a patient advocate if you have problems or complaints. You will be given understandable information about the complaint process. You may complain verbally or in writing, without fear of retaliation.

MENTAL HEALTH CARE SERVICES

The VA offers a variety of mental health care programs and services for Veterans. The programs help Veterans work toward a healthy and productive life. Services include inpatient and outpatient care for:

- Anxiety
- Case management
- Community living and wellness skills
- Couples and family therapy
- Depression
- Group therapy
- Homeless services
- Individual psychotherapy
- Medication management
- Military sexual trauma
- Psychological and neuropsychological testing
- Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
- Stress management
- Substance abuse programs
- Supportive therapy
- Tobacco cessation
- Vocational rehabilitation

Psychologists, psychiatrists, and social workers are available to help you with any mental health issues you may have. They can help you address issues such as coping with return to civilian life, PTSD, and problems with substance use. Talk with your primary care provider if you think you may benefit from these services.

MENTAL HEALTH INTENSIVE CASE MANAGEMENT (MHICM)

MHICM is a community-based program for Veterans with disabling mental health problems who live within a 40-mile radius of the Omaha VAMC. It could be considered an “outpatient clinic without walls.” The program provides mental health services to eligible Veterans in their homes and communities. The goal of the MHICM program is to support Veterans and their caregivers in meeting recovery goals and minimize demoralizing crises.

MHICM: 402-599-2191

OPERATIONS ENDURING FREEDOM, IRAQI FREEDOM, AND NEW DAWN

Operation Enduring Freedom/Operation Iraqi Freedom/Operation New Dawn (OEF/OIF/OND) returning combat Veterans are eligible for five years of free medical care starting on the date of their official discharge from active duty for any conditions related to their deployment. VA NWIHCS has a team assigned specifically to our newest group of Veterans to provide outreach, support, counseling, education, care coordination, information and referral regarding VA benefits and community resources.

OEF/OIF/OND: 402-995-4149

POLYTRAUMA SUPPORT CLINIC TEAM

The VA NWHCS Polytrauma Support Clinic Team exists to provide comprehensive evaluation for eligible Veterans who are known to have or possibly have suffered injury to more than one major body system in a single deployment related event. This team consists of a rehabilitation physician, neuropsychologist, speech language pathologist, physical therapist, occupational therapist, nurse case manager, social work case manager and program support assistant. After the evaluation, therapies or other specialty consultations may be offered to help enhance the Veteran's function.

SUBSTANCE USE DISORDERS PROGRAM

Substance Use Disorders Program (SUDP) are located at the Omaha, Lincoln and Grand Island facilities. This program includes primarily therapy groups, education, medication management, and individual therapy for Veterans struggling with addictive and substance abuse disorders. Level of care may include residential, partial hospitalization, outpatient, intensive outpatient, individual therapy and maintenance programs with both day and evening hours.

This is a voluntary program for Veterans with with alcohol or drug related charges and convictions, as well as those in drug court or those have other legal system involvement.

Grand Island SUDP: 308-382-3660 ext. 92293

Lincoln SUDP: 402-489-3802, ext 96619

Omaha SUDP: 402-995-4301

TOBACCO CESSATION

If you want or need assistance quitting tobacco VA NWHCS is here to help. We offer individual and group counseling and medications to help you succeed in your effort to quit. Tell your health care provider you need assistance quitting tobacco and they will offer you medications and counseling.

The State Tobacco Quitline is also available to all Veterans at 1-800-784-8669 or visit www.ucanquit.org.



AUDIOLOGY

The Audiology and Speech Pathology Departments provide comprehensive diagnostics and treatment to Veterans with hearing, speech, language, voice, and swallowing disorders. The goal is to provide consumer-focused audiology and speech pathology services to Veterans, which promotes independence and quality of life. We consider it our mission to achieve and maintain the highest quality of patient care using the latest in testing, fitting and verification technologies.

Services provided by licensed audiologists include diagnostic hearing evaluations, tinnitus assessment and management, hearing aid fittings, assistive listening device assessments and Compensation and Pension exams.

The Speech Pathology Division consists of licensed speech-language pathologists whose evaluations and treatments include head and neck cancer surgery patients, communication disorders, speech and language disorders and voice and swallowing disorders. Additionally, the Audiology and Speech Pathology Departments employ Telemedicine to provide many of these services to the community-based outpatient clinics.

Omaha Audiology: 402-995-3119

Omaha Speech Pathology: 402-995-3457

Grand Island Audiology: 308-382-3660 ext. 92378

Grand Island Speech Pathology:
308-382-3660 ext. 92023

Lincoln Audiology: 402-489-3802 ext. 96855

CAFETERIA/RETAIL STORE/ATM

The Patriot Store has gifts and personal items for sale. The store stocks a variety of merchandise that includes candy, snacks, bottled beverages, everyday toiletries, men's and women's clothing, postal stamps and a variety of gift items. The Patriot Café offers breakfast, hot lunch, deli sandwiches and a salad bar. Vending machines are available at various locations throughout each facility.

GRAND ISLAND

Patriot Café and Patriot Store, Main Lobby

Breakfast: 7:30 to 10 a.m.

Hot Lunch: 10:30 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Deli and Salad Bar: 10:30 to 2:30 p.m.

Patriot Store: 7:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., Monday-Friday
The main vending machine area, ATM and change machine are located on the first floor across the hall.

LINCOLN

Barber Shop, First Floor

9 a.m. to Noon, Monday-Friday

New in 2012: Patriot Café and Patriot Store, Ground Floor, Building 2

7 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday-Friday

OMAHA

Patriot Café and Patriot Store, Third Floor

Breakfast: 7 to 10 a.m.

Hot Lunch: 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Deli and Salad Bar: 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

The Patriot Store: 7 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday-Friday
Vending machines are available at various locations throughout the hospital. The main vending machine area is located on the third floor and is open 24 hours. A change machine is available in this area. The ATM is located on the third floor by the main elevators.

DENTAL

Dental Service supports the mission of VA through patient care, education, and research. The Dental Service provides oral health care including treatment of oral conditions that are detrimental to overall health, outpatient care, inpatient care and emergency care for relief of pain and acute infections. Determination on the status of dental benefits can be confirmed only through the eligibility clerk located in the Business Office at 402-995-4050, Grand Island at 308-389-3600 ext. 92167 or Lincoln at 402-489-3802 ext. 96255.

MEDICAL FOSTER HOME

When living at home becomes difficult, many Veterans would rather remain in a home-like setting instead of moving to a nursing home. In situations like this, the VA Medical Foster Home (MFH) team can help.

MFH is a voluntary care option. The team can help Veterans find a MFH that is warm and caring while meeting the VA's high standards of quality of care and safety. Veterans and their family members or other support people may tour homes before making a decision to enroll in the program.

The Veteran is responsible for the cost of the MFH. The cost may be paid using a combination of private income, Social Security, savings, VA pension, or county funding. Charges are based on care needs and financial resources. The Veteran and caregiver will sign a private care agreement that covers the care needed, the cost and outlines the rights and responsibilities of all parties.

Medical Foster Home Coordinator: 402-995-4241

MY HEALTHEVET

My HealtheVet is VA's award-winning online personal health record. It offers Veterans Internet access to VA health care. Launched nationwide in 2003, My HealtheVet is the gateway to web-based tools that empower Veterans to become active partners in their health care. With My HealtheVet, Veterans can access trusted, secure, and informed health and benefits information at their convenience.

Visit at: www.myhealth.va.gov

WEBSITE FEATURES

- Accurate health information you can trust
- Refill your VA prescriptions and get information about your medicines
- Create your own personal health journal
- Read VA news and feature stories
- Link to VA benefits and services

PERSONAL HEALTH RECORD

You can create and edit the features of the personal health record:

- Record a list of all your providers
- Self enter your military health information
- Record your personal health history
- Keep track of your own vital readings, such as blood pressure or blood sugar, and monitor them over time
- Self enter a list of your over-the-counter drugs or supplements and prescriptions from non-VA providers
- Record your physical activity or food intake in daily logs
- Record your emergency contacts

REGISTRATION AND AUTHENTICATION

To take advantage of all the features of My HealtheVet, you need to complete the registration on the website and complete an in-person authentication at the VA. This authentication process protects your privacy and secures your personal health information. *(continued on page 26)*

What other services does VA NWIHCS offer?

(My HealtheVet continued from page 25)

To complete the In-Person Authentication process:

1. Go to the website: www.myhealth.va.gov. You can use your home computer, a public computer (like at the public library) or a My HealtheVet computer located at your facility.
2. Click on the "Register today" button and complete the registration form. When you are in the section, "Relationship to the VA," be sure to click on VA Patient.
3. Return to the My HealtheVet home page.
4. Click on the "In-Person Authentication" link located in Quick Links.
5. Watch the brief orientation video.
6. Print out, complete and sign the My HealtheVet release of information form (Form 10-5345a-MHV). These forms are also available near the My HealtheVet computers located at the Omaha, Lincoln and Grand Island facilities.
7. Bring this form and a photo ID (Veterans ID card or driver's license) to one of the following Release of Information locations to process your in-person authentication: Omaha, Room 1201; Lincoln, Room 086; or Grand Island, Room SE117.
8. The staff will verify your information and complete the process of In-Person Authentication.

PATIENT EDUCATION RESOURCE CENTER (PERC)

Patient education is when information and skills are taught to improve or maintain health. Our staff have access to materials that support patient education. Throughout our facilities you will find several brochure racks that contain print material related to various medical conditions. You are welcome to take the materials for use. If you have questions regarding health education, please contact your primary care team.

PHYSICAL MEDICINE AND REHABILITATION SERVICES

Your doctor may refer you to Physical or Occupational Therapy. Physical Therapy involves evaluation and treatment of gross motor control, mobility, joint dysfunction, and pain management. Occupational Therapy focuses on the evaluation and treatment of fine motor control, as well as problems that might affect one's ability to perform activities of daily living.

Occupational Therapy is available at Grand Island and Omaha. Physical Therapy is available at Grand Island, Lincoln, and Omaha, Monday through Friday. Ask your provider if you have concerns you believe might be helped by consultation with one of these services.

PROSTHETICS AND SENSORY AIDES

The VA NWIHCS Prosthetic and Sensory Aides Service provides artificial limbs, wheelchairs, aids for the blind, hearing aids, glasses, computers, adaptive equipment for vehicles, modifications to make the home handicapped accessible, home oxygen, and other devices and services to return independence, mobility and dignity to the Veteran.

Grand Island: 308-382-3660 ext. 92469

Lincoln: 402-489-3802 ext. 96232

Omaha: 402-995-4707

RESEARCH

For more than 85 years, the VA Research and Development Program has focused on improving Veterans lives through health care research. The VA Research program is unique because of its focus on medical issues that affect our Veterans. The VA Research program has been identified as setting the standard in quality of care. If you are interested in volunteering for a research study you may contact the Clinical Research Unit in Omaha.

Omaha Clinical Research Unit: 402-995-4045

RELEASE OF INFORMATION

The confidentiality of your health information is important to us. This means that VA employees protect your health information and use or disclose it only as authorized by law. Your health information may be released to a third party such as your private doctor, employer, insurance company or social service agency as described in our Notice of Privacy Practices.

To initiate and authorize the release of your health information to a third party you will need to complete form 10-5345.

To request a copy for your own use, you will need to complete form 10-5345a.

FORMS ARE AVAILABLE BY:

1. Typing the number of the form in a search engine such as Google, Ask or Bing.
2. You can pick-up forms in the Release of Information Office (ROI):
 - ° Grand Island: Room SE117
 - ° Lincoln: Room 086
 - ° Omaha: Room 1201
 - ° CBOCs: Front desk
3. The ROI office can fax or mail a copy of the form to you.

VOLUNTEERS

The staff of VA NWIHCS is reinforced by many volunteers who contribute thousands of hours of valuable service to the facility and Veterans. Volunteers try to create a warm, caring environment to make our Veterans' visits as comfortable as possible. Volunteers provide clerical assistance, staff the information desk, transport Veterans to their appointments and procedures, sponsor evening, weekend and holiday recreation activities, and much more. Voluntary Services accepts donations and charitable giving.

Grand Island Voluntary Service:

308-389-3600 ext. 92146

Lincoln Voluntary Service:

402-489-3802 ext. 97938

Omaha Voluntary Service:

402-995-3283



What rules do I need to know when visiting a VA facility?

CELL PHONES, CAMERAS, VIDEO, TAPE RECORDERS

For reasons of patient privacy, the use of cameras, video equipment, tape recorders and the use of a cellular phone for recording of any kind is prohibited. The use of cellular phones in patient care areas at all VA NWHCS facilities is also prohibited. Cellular phone usage is limited to non-patient care areas. Please silence your cell phones during appointments and classes.

FIRE/DISASTER DRILLS

For the protection of patients and staff, each facility has its own fire and disaster plan. If you discover a fire, tell a staff member right away. If you are in an area that needs to be evacuated, follow the instructions from the staff. Exit signs show the location of emergency exits. Fire alarms are near each exit.

PARKING

Parking areas are designated for visitors, employees, volunteers, patients, service-connected Veterans, and the handicapped. Please obey the posted signs and ground painted symbols. Inpatients are requested to keep their cars at home. If this is not possible, VA Police should be notified. Parking for VA outpatients and visitors is free of charge at all of our facilities. VA Police enforce all regulations and will issue warnings and tickets to drivers who violate the rules.

VA POLICE

The Omaha, Grand Island and Lincoln facilities have VA Police on duty 24 hours a day for your care and protection. If you need assistance, or your family or friends need an escort to their car, contact the VA Police.

Grand Island VA Police: 308-389-5198

Lincoln VA Police: 402-489-3802 ext. 96640

Omaha VA Police: 402-995-3202

PROHIBITED ITEMS

Patients are not allowed to have alcoholic beverages, unauthorized controlled substances, firearms, ammunition, knives, pepper spray (mace), stun guns, tasers, any other type of weapons, lighter fluid, non-safety matches or straight edge razors. If a patient has any of these items, they need to immediately inform VA staff, or send the items home with a friend or family member. Latex balloons are prohibited inside the facilities.

SMOKING

Staff, visitors, volunteers, and patients may not smoke anywhere indoors or near any exits or entrances. Electronic cigarettes are prohibited inside the facilities as well. Please be considerate of nonsmokers and only smoke in designated areas. VA Police may issue tickets if the smoking policy is not obeyed. Smoking shelters are available in Lincoln, Grand Island and Omaha.

ZERO TOLERANCE

To maintain a safe environment for patients, staff, visitors, and volunteers, our facilities have a zero tolerance for violence. Behavior that is disruptive, threatening or violent may result in police action and possible restrictions being placed on future VA health care visits.

GRAND ISLAND

(866) 580-1810 OR (308) 382-3660

When dialing the extension, dial 9 first.

Please listen to the options.

Ambulatory Care	866-580-1810 or 308-382-3660
Option 2	Appointments
Option 4	Health Care Concerns
Audiology	2378
Billing	866-347-2352
Community Programs	2044
Community Living Center	
North	2442
South	2155
Compensation and Pension/Omaha	
.....	800-451-5796 ext. 3215
DAV Travel	2189
Dental	2255
Diabetes Nurse	2686
Eligibility	2483/2167
Eye	2406
Fax for Outpatient Clinics	308-385-2738
Home Based Primary Care	2107
Home Oxygen	2426
Lodging/Hoptel	2153
Mental Health	2134
MOVE! Weight Management Program	2384
Nutrition	2207/2440
Occupational Therapy	2204/2280
Patient Advocate	2132
Pharmacy Questions	
.....	866-580-1810 or 308-382-3660, Option 1
Physical Therapy	2122
Prosthetics	2152
Public Affairs	402-995-4719/5547
Radiology	2282
Release of Information	2151
Respiratory Therapy	2333
Speech	2023

Substance Abuse Residential Rehabilitation Treatment Program (SARRTP)

.....	2331
Travel/Van Rides	2153
VA Police	2198
Veteran Benefits/VBA	800-827-1000
Voluntary Service	2146
Women Veterans Program	402-995-4906

LINCOLN

(866) 851-6052 OR (402) 489-3802

When dialing the extension, dial 9 first.

Please listen to the options.

Ambulatory Care Appointments	402-486-7801
Billing	866-347-2352
Eligibility	6255
Compensation and Pension/Omaha	
.....	800-451-5796 ext. 3215
Dental	6675
DAV Travel (Local)	7842
Homeless Program	6804
Fee Basis/Non-VA Care Unit	6264
Lodging/Hoptel	7815
Mental Health	7823
MOVE! Weight Management Program	6571
Nutrition	6581
Patient Advocate	7933
Pharmacy	6504
Physical Therapy	6656
Prosthetics	6232
Public Affairs	402-995-4719/5547
Release of Information	7884/7880
Scheduling	7801
SUDP	7823
Travel/Van Rides	866-580-1810 ext 2153
VA Police	6640
Women Veterans Program	402-995-4906
Veteran Benefits/VBA	800-827-1000

Frequently Used Phone Numbers

OMAHA

402-346-8800 OR (800) 451-5796

Dial 9 before entering an extension.

Please listen to the options.

Direct Dial 402-995-XXXX (extensions below)

Ambulatory Care Clinics

Orange/Eye	3216
Green/Surgery	4068
Gold	4065
Silver	5713
Primary Care Appointment	3076
Anticoagulation	4608
Audiology/Speech	3119
Billing	866-347-2352
Compensation and Pension	3215
DAV Travel	3453
Dental	3306
Dialysis	4125
Diabetes Class	4900/4870/5827
Eligibility/Registration	3240/4050
Emergency Room	4043
Geriatrics Department	4803
Home Based Primary Care	3782
Homeless Program	5574
Inpatient Wards	
5E	3526/3527
6E	3800
7E	3905
Intensive Care Unit (ICU)	5151
10E.....	4209
Lodging/Hoptel	4458/3260
Medical Evaluation Unit	3806
Mental Health	4944
Mental Health Intensive Case Management (MHICM)	
.....	402-599-2194
MOVE! Weight Management Program	3776
Nutrition	4080
OEF/OIF/OND Patient Advocate	4714

Patient Advocate	3477
Patient Travel	4458/3260
Pharmacy	4903
Physical Therapy	3661
Prosthetics	3660
Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) Clinic ...	3488
Public Affairs	4719/5547
Recovery Center	4550
Release of Information	402-599-2150
Substance Abuse Residential Rehabilitation Treatment Program (SARRTP)	4301
Surgery Evaluation Unit	3688
VA Police	3202
Veteran Benefits/VBA	800-827-1000
Voluntary Service	3283
Women Veterans Program	4906

FACILITY LOCATIONS:

Omaha VA Medical Center

4101 Woolworth Ave.
Omaha, NE 68105
402-346-8800

Lincoln CBOC

600 S. 70th St.
Lincoln, NE 68510
402-489-3802

Bellevue CBOC

2501 Capehart Rd.
Bellevue, NE 68113
402-591-4500

Norfolk CBOC

710 S 13th, Ste. 1200
Norfolk, NE 68701
402-370-4570

Grand Island CBOC and Community Living Center

2201 N. Broadwell Ave.
Grand Island, NE 68803
308-382-3660

North Platte CBOC

600 E. Francis St., Ste. 3
North Platte, NE 69101
308-532-6906

Holdrege CBOC

1118 Burlington St.
Holdrege, NE 68949
308-995-3760

O'Neill CBOC

555 East John Street
O'Neill, NE 68763
402-336-2982

Shenandoah CBOC

512 S. Fremont St.
Shenandoah, IA 51601
712-246-0092

Q. I contact the VA and I ask to speak with my primary care provider (PCP). I either never get a phone call back or it takes several days to get a return call. How can I talk with my primary care provider?

Usually when you call the VA, you are connected to the nurse line where you can leave a message regarding your question or concern for your PCP. If the PCP is with patients, they usually will not call until they are done. Another option is to contact your PACT RN for your provider or use the secure messaging function in My HealtheVet. You may be able to get the answer from the PACT RN instead of waiting to get a response back from your PCP. Your PACT RN is a great resource and can answer your questions.

Q. How do I find out who my PACT RN is?

Your PACT RN is your link between you and your PCP. You can find out who your PACT RN is by going to the clinic you are assigned to and asking the staff who your PACT RN is. You will be given his or her direct office number. You may be able to get the answer from the PACT RN instead of waiting to get a response back from your PCP.

Q. I asked my PCP to refill my medications at my last visit, but I am not sure this was done. Also, I am service-connected for some of my medications and I want to make sure I am not going to be charged for those.

If you are concerned about medication refills, start by talking to your provider or PACT RN. If you still feel in doubt, stop by or call the VA Pharmacy to resolve any issues related to refills or payments.

Q. I met with my PCP and I was told I would be notified of the results of my lab work, I have yet to hear from anyone.

This is a great time to get to know who your PACT RN is. It is the responsibility of the PACT to make sure you are informed and a PACT RN can give you those results and discuss what the next step should be. Usually a "next step" letter is mailed following primary care appointments but the Veteran can always contact their PACT RN for those results too.

Q. I was told I was being referred to _____ clinic for further treatment/assessment. I have never received an appointment time.

Your PACT can help you get specialty appointments. All consults to specialty services originate from the primary care doctor. It is important to call your PACT RN if you have not been notified when your appointment has been scheduled.

Q. I live in Lincoln but I want to have my PCP in Omaha. Will I get the full travel pay to Omaha?

No, you are paid mileage from your home to the nearest VA facility. Since, VA offers PCP care at the Lincoln CBOC you will only receive travel pay to the Lincoln CBOC.

Q. I would like to change PCPs.

There is a form you will need to complete and return to the VA for processing. It can take up to 90 days to take effect. Once you have made the change we ask that you stay with that PCP for one year prior to placing another request to change PCPs.

Q. Will VA refer me to a community provider for services/treatment?

If there is a service the VA does not offer, (i.e., chiropractic services, pre-natal services, etc.) you will be sent to a community provider at VA's expense. The VA will not pay retroactively for services, (i.e., a Veteran seeks chiropractor services for six months and then sends the bill to the VA). VA has to refer the Veteran in order for VA to pay the bill.

Q. I had to go to the local ER over the weekend and I need to know if the VA will pay for that visit.

All bills for community services need to be processed through the Non-VA Care office. There is no guarantee of VA payment but with proper documentation (it was charted that VA was contacted prior to going to the ER) or in the ER (VA was full or unable to handle the situation, i.e., trauma) payment may be approved.

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