



Department of
Veterans Affairs
VA BUTLER HEALTHCARE
325 New Castle Rd.
Butler, PA 16001

Story Release

For Immediate Release

May 06, 2010

“New VA Cranberry Township Clinic part of new Veteran-Centered Care”

(CRANBERRY TOWNSHIP, Pa.) – On May 7, 2010; VA Butler Healthcare will officially cut the ribbon and open the doors to its fifth VA Community Based Outpatient Clinic. Located in Cranberry Township, the clinic is centrally located for many Veterans living in Beaver, northern Allegheny and southern Butler Counties. It is part of the VA's growing commitment to increase services to all Veterans.

“It just extends our ability to care and centrally locates our services for the convenience of the Veteran,” said Dr. Ken Nowotny, associate chief of staff for VA Butler Healthcare outpatient clinics.

The Cranberry Township clinic, located in the township's business district, provides primary care, physical exams, weight management, smoking cessation counseling, routine laboratory work and outpatient behavioral health services. For those patients with more complex needs, the clinic has the ability to connect the Veteran with a psychiatrist at the main Butler facility via secure video conferencing.

Approximately 7,000 of the 17,000 Veterans served at the Butler VA are now receiving their care at community-based outpatient clinics. These clinics are located throughout Clarion, Mercer, Armstrong, Lawrence and Butler counties and provide many of the services needed for Veteran.

“We recognized that there is need for consistency by having dedicated staff coordinate all of the patient's care needs,” said Ginny Yelland, health systems specialist to the chief of staff. “We want to provide the same high quality of care to our Veteran no matter where they receive services in the VA Butler Healthcare system.”

VA Outpatient coordinator Jim Torok is seeing the role of outpatient clinics grow. “As part of our medical home model,” said Torok, “we want to provide Veterans all the services possible at each of the clinics. We can't provide everything at the moment but we do provide those services where there is the most need.”

It is a comprehensive approach,” said Dr. Nowotny. “These clinics offer a home-base for their care with options.” Such options include health education, specialty clinics, behavioral health or even social services support in addition to comprehensive primary care. “There is a misconception about the resources our clinics have and where services are offered. If a service can't be done from the VA Outpatient clinic it can be coordinated from there for the Veteran.”

The services can be coordinated through other VA facilities or be contracted with other agencies for the benefit of the Veteran. “It is part of our ability to treat each patient individually,” said Torok. “Our staff knows most of the Veterans they serve by name, and we all have a stake in their well being.”

“When we talk about transforming the VA into a model of care focused on the Veteran, the VA Outpatient Clinic is one excellent example of how we are doing just that,” said Michael E. Moreland, the network director, VA Healthcare VISN4. “We are reaching out to Veteran everywhere to improve healthcare and make that healthcare more accessible and convenient.”

Services are determined, in part, by Veteran participation in the VA Healthcare system. “It depends on how many Veterans use the system. The more Veterans that use the services here, the more services that will become available,” said Torok. “We are constantly re-evaluating and growing our clinics based on need.”

“Many Veterans don’t think of using the VA system because they mistakenly think it isn’t for them,” said Torok. “Some Veterans don’t even know they are eligible. Every Veteran is a hero and should be applying for the services they deserve. There are a lot of Veterans who think that if they use the Butler VA they are taking a spot from a combat Veteran. Every Veteran is encouraged to enroll.”

The Cranberry Township clinic is accepting new patients. Veterans interested in enrolling should call (724) 477-5011 or (800) 362-8262 extension 5011

VA Butler Healthcare is the provider of choice for over 17,000 Veteran throughout Armstrong, Butler, Clarion, Lawrence and Mercer counties; and parts of Ohio. With over 600 employees, VA Butler Healthcare provides primary care, specialty care, mental health and social supports services to our nation’s Veteran. For information about VA Butler Healthcare programs and services, log on to <http://www.butler.va.gov>. Media queries and requests should be directed to David Virag at (724)-285-2576 or David.Virag@va.gov.

###