



2011 ANNUAL REPORT



INTEGRITY



COMMITMENT



ADVOCACY



RESPECT



EXCELLENCE



ICARE

Department of Veterans Affairs



DEAR VETERANS, FELLOW EMPLOYEES, VOLUNTEERS AND FRIENDS OF VISN 4:

It is my great privilege to welcome you to VA Healthcare - VISN 4's 2011 annual report. As you'll learn in its pages, 2011 was filled with important accomplishments and significant achievements throughout our network. We also laid the foundation for a number of exciting, new programs that we're pleased to share with you.

In 2011, the Department of Veterans Affairs unveiled a new set of Core Values and Characteristics. VA's core values define who we are: our culture, our character, and how we will serve you. These core values are integrity, commitment, advocacy, respect and excellence. Together, their initials spell out "I CARE."

Here at VISN 4, we care deeply about maintaining and reaffirming your trust and confidence. We care about fulfilling all of our individual and organizational responsibilities. We care about advocating for our Nation's heroes. We care about showing and deserving dignity and respect. We care about providing the highest quality health care available anywhere and continuously improving our care and services. But most of all, we care about America's Veterans and their families.

Our characteristics define what we stand for. As a Department, we are trustworthy, accessible, obsessed with quality, innovative, agile and integrated. In VISN 4 we are committed to providing all of our care and services in this manner. Our Veterans have earned nothing less.



Stay up-to-date with the Director's travels throughout the network at www.visn4.va.gov/SiteVisits or scan the QR Code with a smartphone app.

In my travels across the network, I have seen these values and characteristics come magnificently to life. If you'd like to see VISN 4 through my eyes, you can check out photos of my travels at www.visn4.va.gov/SiteVisits or scan the QR Code below.

I commit to you that in 2012 I will remember, every day, the sacrifices our Veterans have made for all of us. I will lead by example, and challenge all VISN 4 employees to embrace VA's Values and Characteristics, constantly searching for ways to demonstrate their importance. I am determined that 2012 will be as successful as 2011 was.

All of us in VISN 4 are proud of our record. We're proud of our facilities. And we're very proud of the work we do, caring for the heroes who have defended America's freedom throughout the world. Thank you for your continued support.

Sincerely,

MICHAEL E. MORELAND, FACHE
NETWORK DIRECTOR



VISN 4
AT A GLANCE



Veterans served

318.5k

operating beds

2,320

2011

community-based outpatient clinics

44

\$2.44b

operating budget

10

medical centers

employees

13.1k

VISN 4 EAST

COATESVILLE VAMC

1400 Blackhorse Hill Road
Coatesville, PA 19320
1-800-290-6172
www.coatesville.va.gov

Operating Budget: \$189,587,000

Veterans Served: 18,861

Operating Beds: 475

Employees: 1,433

LEBANON VAMC

1700 South Lincoln Avenue
Lebanon, PA 17042
1-800-409-8771
www.lebanon.va.gov

Operating Budget: \$243,269,061

Veterans Served: 45,229

Operating Beds: 193

Employees: 1,384

PHILADELPHIA VAMC

3900 Woodland Avenue
Philadelphia, PA 19104
1-800-949-1001
www.philadelphia.va.gov

Operating Budget: \$467,478,108

Veterans Served: 57,641

Operating Beds: 383

Employees: 2,012



Find us on
www.facebook.com

facebook.com/CoatesvilleVAMC
facebook.com/VALebanon
facebook.com/PhiladelphiaVAMC
facebook.com/VAWilkesBarre
facebook.com/WilmingtonVAMC
facebook.com/VAAaltoona
facebook.com/VAButlerPA
facebook.com/VAClarksburg
facebook.com/VAMCEric
facebook.com/VAPHS

WILKES-BARRE VAMC

1111 East End Boulevard
Wilkes-Barre, PA 18711
1-877-928-2621
www.wilkes-barre.va.gov

Operating Budget: \$227,016,000

Veterans Served: 40,868

Operating Beds: 151

Employees: 1,162

WILMINGTON VAMC

1601 Kirkwood Highway
Wilmington, DE 19805
1-800-461-8262
www.wilmington.va.gov

Operating Budget: \$182,803,360

Veterans Served: 26,133

Operating Beds: 120

Employees: 897

VISN 4 WEST

JAMES E. VAN ZANDT VAMC

2907 Pleasant Valley Boulevard
Altoona, PA 16602
1-877-626-2500
www.altoona.va.gov

Operating Budget: \$121,328,000

Veterans Served: 24,948

Operating Beds: 68

Employees: 657

VA BUTLER HEALTHCARE

325 New Castle Road
Butler, PA 16001
1-800-362-8262
www.butler.va.gov

Operating Budget: \$108,083,000

Veterans Served: 18,424

Operating Beds: 163

Employees: 626

LOUIS A. JOHNSON VAMC

1 Medical Center Drive
Clarksburg, WV 26301
1-800-733-0512
www.clarksburg.va.gov

Operating Budget: \$135,000,000

Veterans Served: 22,157

Operating Beds: 100

Employees: 820

ERIE VAMC

135 East 38th Street Boulevard
Erie, PA 16504
1-800-274-8387
www.erie.va.gov

Operating Budget: \$123,167,000

Veterans Served: 22,468

Operating Beds: 65

Employees: 735

VA PITTSBURGH (VAPHS)

University Drive
Pittsburgh, PA 15240
1-866-482-7488
www.pittsburgh.va.gov

Operating Budget: \$525,431,000

Veterans Served: 64,636

Operating Beds: 583

Employees: 3,341



Check out a map of all VISN 4 facilities at www.visn4.va.gov/docs/VISN4FacilityMap.pdf or scan the QR Code with a smartphone app.



I CARE

Department of Veterans Affairs

VA's unique Core Values and Characteristics underscore our moral obligation to Veterans, their families, and other beneficiaries. **THEY ARE MORE THAN JUST WORDS.** They represent our promise to do our best every day to perform our crucial mission of caring for Veterans, family members, and other beneficiaries.

CORE VALUES: WHO WE ARE

Core Values describe an organization's culture and character, the foundation on which everything else is built. These values serve as a common bond between employees. They also influence our mission, strategy and day-to-day operations.

A VA EMPLOYEE'S PLEDGE TO VETERANS: BECAUSE I CARE, I WILL...

★ **I**NTTEGRITY

- Act with high moral principle.
- Adhere to the highest professional standards.
- Maintain the trust and confidence of all with whom I engage.

★ **C**OMMITMENT

- Work diligently to serve Veterans and other beneficiaries.
- Be driven by an earnest belief in VA's mission.
- Fulfill my individual responsibilities and organizational responsibilities.

★ **A**DVOCACY

- Be truly Veteran-centric by identifying, fully considering, and appropriately advancing the interests of Veterans and other beneficiaries.

★ **R**ESPECT

- Treat all those I serve and with whom I work with dignity and respect.
- Show respect to earn it.

★ **E**XCELLENCE

- Strive for the highest quality and continuous improvement.
- Be thoughtful and decisive in leadership, accountable for my actions, willing to admit mistakes, and rigorous in correcting them.



CORE CHARACTERISTICS

WHAT WE STAND FOR

Our Core Characteristics are what we strive to be as an organization. They are aspirational goals that we want everyone – VA employees, Veterans, and the American people – to associate with VA and with our workforce.



Read on to learn more about how VISN 4 exemplifies these characteristics each day.

Providing the highest standard of care and services; managing costs and being efficient stewards of resources; employees who are empowered, trusted by leaders, and respected for competence and dedication.

BETTER THAN THE BEST

CLINICAL PERFORMANCE MEASURES PROVE THAT VISN 4 HEALTH CARE IS NOT JUST FIRST-CLASS, IT'S WORLD-CLASS.

Competing is never easy—but when VISN 4 compared its ability to provide quality health care with the best hospitals in the United States, we equaled or exceeded our competition in every category.

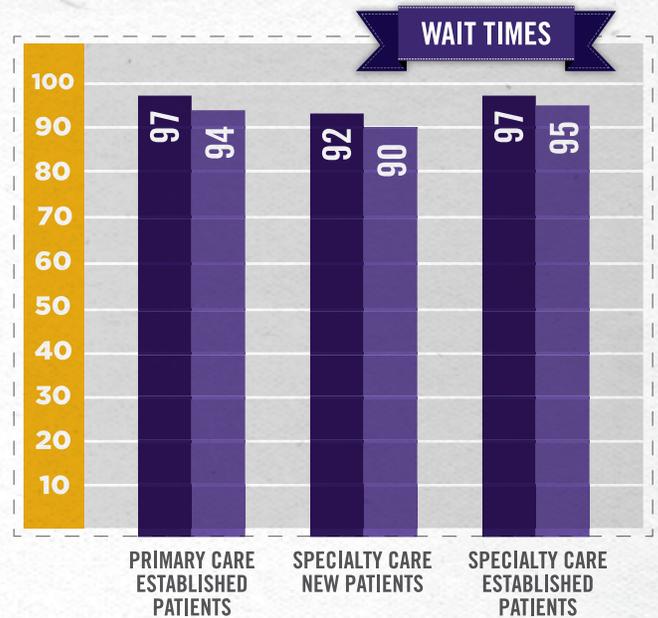
Using statistics collected from various sources, VISN 4 compared its performance metrics with the Nation's four finest health care facilities, as ranked in U.S. News and World Report's "Best Hospitals for 2010-11" survey. These hospitals included Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore; Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston; the Cleveland Clinic in Cleveland; and Ronald Reagan UCLA Medical Center in Los Angeles.

In every measure of health care quality, VISN 4 matched—and even surpassed—the achievements of these outstanding hospitals. VISN 4 also passed all of its VA clinical performance measures in fiscal year 2011, additional evidence that the health care we provide is exceptional in every way.

VISN 4 Director Michael Moreland and Chief Medical Officer Dr. David Macpherson participated in a satellite news media tour in the spring of 2011 to share this news with television viewers and radio listeners throughout Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Delaware and Southern New Jersey.

Moreland also spotlighted VISN 4's outstanding performance in a series of Public Service Announcements (PSAs), which also encouraged Servicemembers returning from Afghanistan and Iraq to sign up for VA health care benefits. Every Veteran who has returned from service in those two countries is entitled to cost-free medical care from VA for any condition related to service in the theater of war for five years after the date of their discharge or release from service. You can watch the PSAs

VISN 4
NATIONAL VA



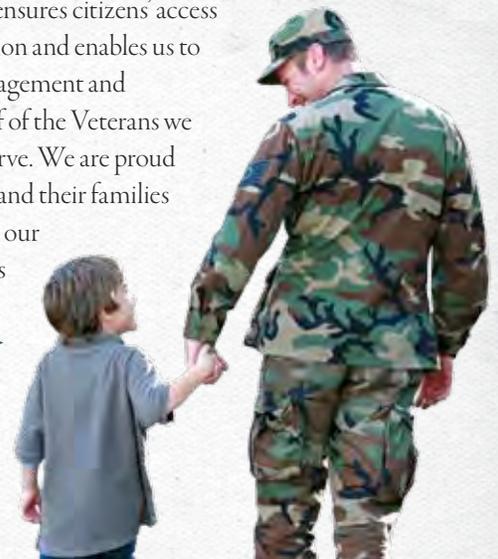
(which aired more than 3,500 times in approximately seven months) at www.visn4.va.gov/Videos.asp.

Although VA has been a nationwide leader in measuring and comparing quality outcomes within the Department itself since the late 1990s, a new focus on transparency and public reporting provided the impetus for VISN 4 to compare our network's health care with non-VA hospitals.

On his first day in office, President Barack Obama signed a memorandum to all Federal agencies directing them to break down barriers to transparency, participation, and collaboration between the Federal government and the people we serve.

Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki shares the President's viewpoint. Being an open government is "essential to our mission to transform VA into a Veteran-centric, results-oriented, and forward-looking organization," he says.

Moreland and Macpherson have followed the Secretary's lead. By sharing our data with stakeholders, VISN 4 helps meet the American public's demand that the work of its government be transparent. Such transparency not only allows comparisons of this kind, but also ensures citizens' access to public information and enables us to provide better engagement and advocacy on behalf of the Veterans we are privileged to serve. We are proud to make Veterans and their families aware that the care our network provides is not just first-class, it's world-class! ♦



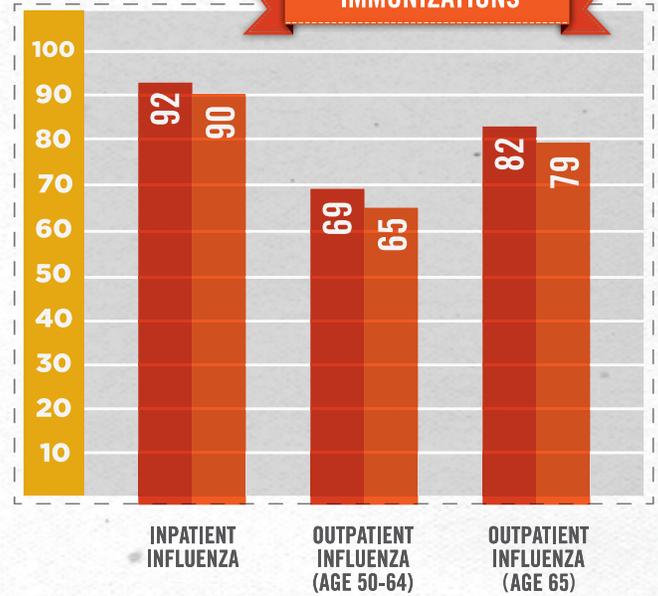
CLINICAL PERFORMANCE

FISCAL YEAR 2011



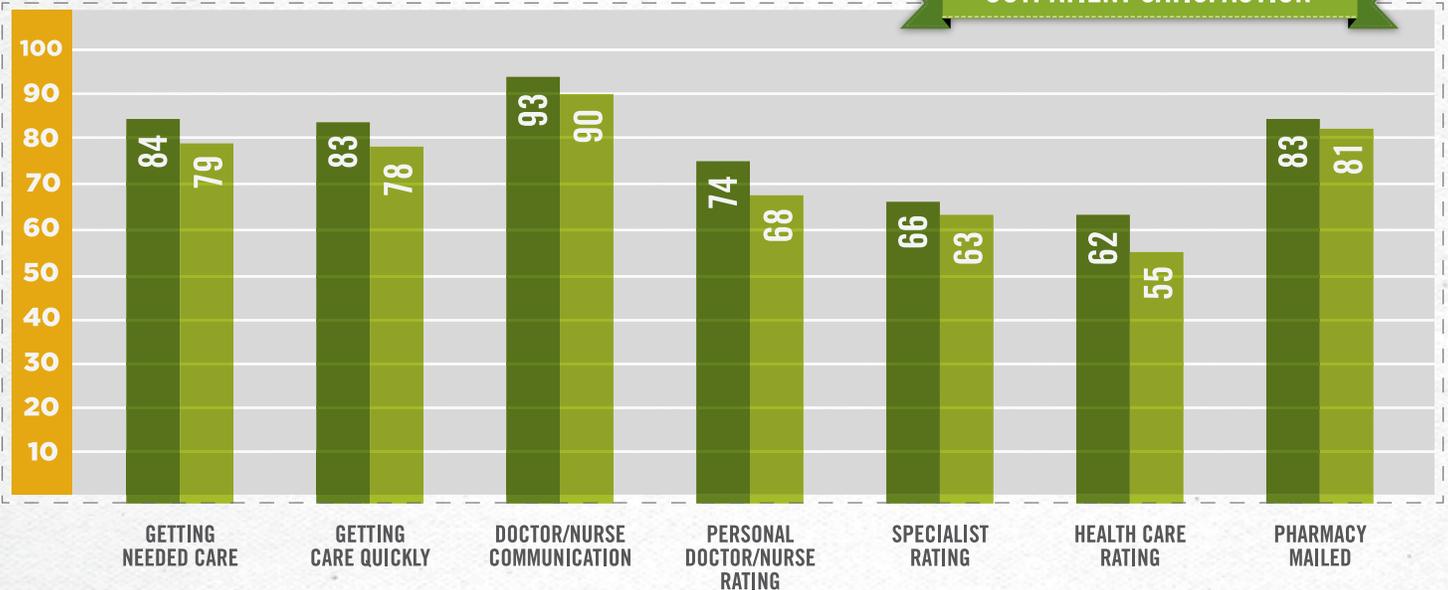
VISN 4 NATIONAL VA

IMMUNIZATIONS



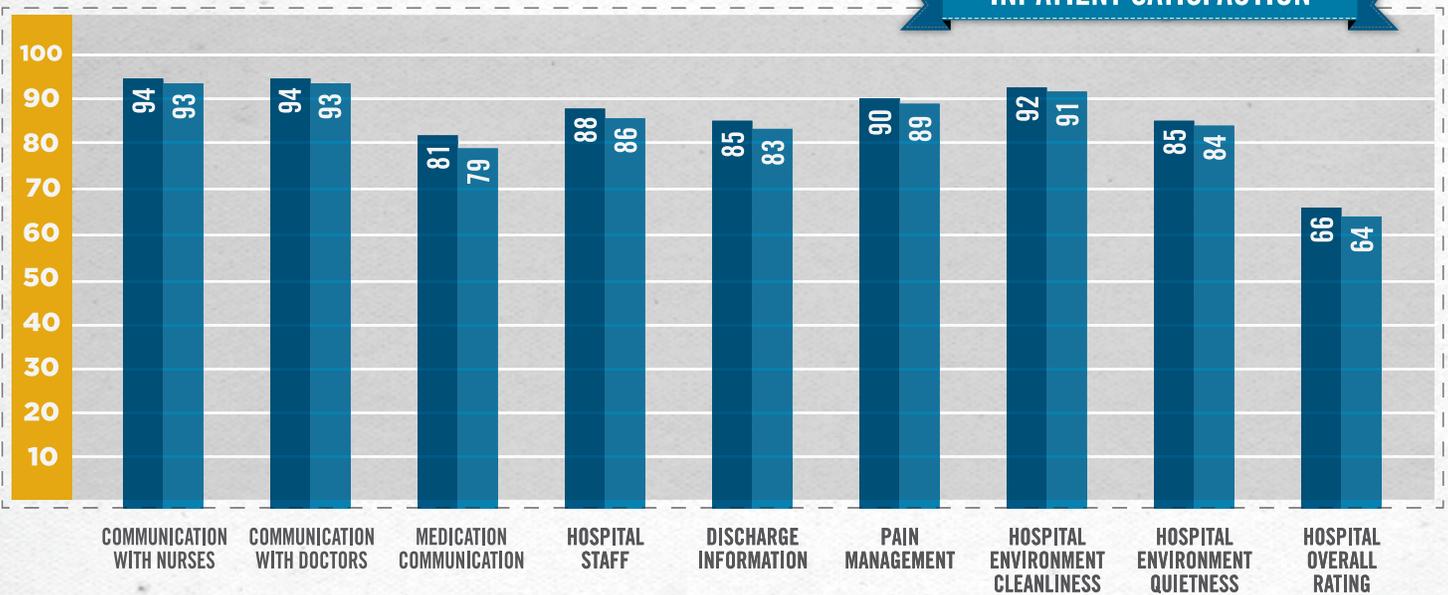
VISN 4 NATIONAL VA

OUTPATIENT SATISFACTION



VISN 4 NATIONAL VA

INPATIENT SATISFACTION



Providing useful and understandable programs; linking care and services across VA, throughout other Federal, state, and local agencies, and with other partners and Veterans services organizations.



Learn more about VISN 4's Veterans Justice Partnership at www.visn4.va.gov/veterans-justice or scan the QR Code with a smartphone app.

TURNING LIVES AROUND

MORE THAN 660 VETERANS HAVE BEEN SERVED BY THE VISN 4 VETERANS JUSTICE PARTNERSHIP, A UNIQUE COLLABORATION BETWEEN VA AND THE PENNSYLVANIA JUSTICE SYSTEM.

It's an all-too-familiar story. A Veteran returns home from war, having witnessed or experienced the horrors of conflict. Depressed or dealing with post-traumatic stress, some turn to drugs or alcohol to cope with intrusive memories or flashbacks. Sooner or later, the Veteran ends up in the criminal justice system, facing the possibility of jail time.

Most Veterans of previous wars had no choice—if they did the crime, they'd do the time. But many VISN 4 Veterans in trouble with the law now have an option: the Veterans Justice Outreach Partnership, a unique program that provides useful and understandable services with the aim of getting former Servicemembers the treatment they need as an alternative to incarceration.

The goal of the program is to keep Veterans out of jail and minimize their justice system involvement. Rebecca Hicks, Veterans Justice Outreach Specialist for the Philadelphia VA Medical Center, says, "We want to use treatment services rather than jail time to address Veterans' underlying mental health, medical and social needs."

Recently, VISN 4 Director Michael Moreland testified before the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee on this program. Moreland said that recent U.S. Department of Justice statistics indicate that 9.3 percent of those incarcerated are Veterans. These Veterans disproportionately suffer from mental health disorders. Three in five have substance dependency problems; almost one in three has a serious mental illness; and one in five is homeless. Seventy percent of incarcerated Veterans committed a non-violent crime.

All ten VA medical centers in VISN 4 have Veterans Justice Outreach Specialists like Hicks. These individuals work with local law enforcement personnel, corrections facilities, and the local



judicial system to provide needed services to eligible Veterans. Veterans in the program are provided with comprehensive supervision, treatment and review while they are on probation. Their offenses must meet certain criteria; defendants are ineligible if they are charged with certain serious offenses.

Treatment options may include case management, substance abuse treatment, mental health treatment and housing assistance. VA not only links these Veterans with care and services provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs, but also with services provided by other Federal, state and local agencies—and with other partners, including Veterans service organizations.

"What has been very rewarding is the willingness of VA to work with the courts," says Allegheny County Common Pleas Judge, The Honorable John A. Zottola. "Our common goal is to work with those who have served our country when they find themselves in an intersection with the criminal justice system."

VISN 4's program began two years ago, in 2009, soon after the establishment of the first Veterans Justice Outreach program at the Buffalo VA Medical Center in New York. At the end of 2011, there were 22 Veterans treatment courts throughout VISN 4, with 18 more in planning phases.

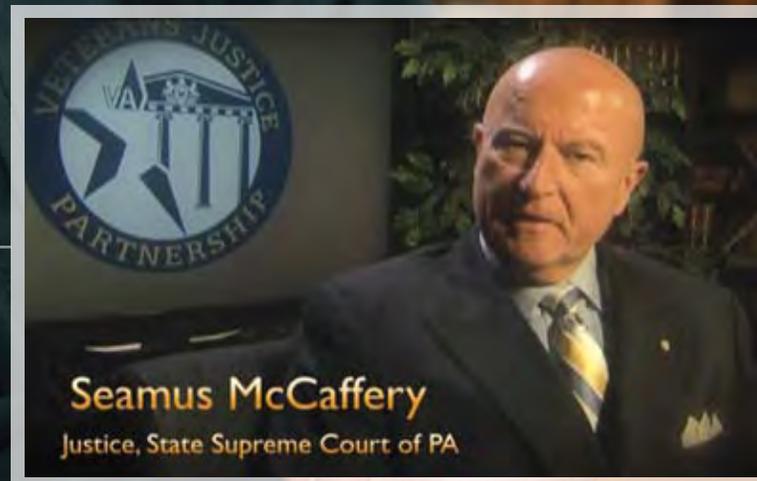
VISN 4 recently prepared a 30-second television public service announcement about the program for Pennsylvania television stations. It concludes: "Our Vets deserve the chance to turn their lives around. There's nothing more important." ♦



What has been very rewarding is the willingness of VA to work with the courts.

The Honorable John A. Zottola
Allegheny County Common Pleas Judge

PSA: The Honorable Seamus P. McCaffery, Pennsylvania Supreme Court Justice, joined Network Director Michael Moreland in a public service announcement to inform the community of – and increase enrollment of eligible Veterans into – this valuable program. The PSA aired more than a thousand times throughout the state during a six-month period. Both also participated in a corresponding satellite news media tour, which reached an estimated half a million people.





Learn more about the Games at www.visn4.va.gov/Vision-for-Excellence-NVWG.asp or scan the QR Code with a smartphone app.

I hope the participants got half as much joy as we did.

Richard Meritzer
Pittsburgh ADA Coordinator

AMERICA'S HEROES BECAME LEGENDS IN THE "CITY OF CHAMPIONS"

VA PITTSBURGH HEALTHCARE SYSTEM AND KEYSTONE PARALYZED VETERANS OF AMERICA PARTNER WITH THE CITY OF PITTSBURGH TO HOST THE 2011 NATIONAL VETERANS WHEELCHAIR GAMES.

In August 2011, more than 550 Veterans with physical injuries and disabilities competed in the 31st National Veterans Wheelchair Games in Pittsburgh. Veterans traveled from all over the United States, Great Britain and Puerto Rico to participate in the Games, whose motto was "Where Heroes Become Legends."

"This was a wonderful event for Pittsburgh," says Richard Meritzer, the city's coordinator of the Americans with Disabilities Act. "It allowed us to highlight the strides we have taken in making our city accessible for persons with disabilities."

VISN 4 went all-out in its efforts to make the 2011 Games the best ever. Athletes not only participated in events, they also socialized at "Midnight Chow" sessions; enjoyed a block party held in their honor; were honored at a Pittsburgh Pirate game; went on a river cruise and a fishing trip; and attended live music performances. A special card allowed them to dine at any restaurant in the Pittsburgh area they liked.

All ten VISN 4 facilities took part in a special athlete recruitment program designed to introduce wheelchair sports to Veterans across the network. Each facility had a single point of contact responsible for recruiting Veterans and raising funds to support them. As a result, 58 Veteran athletes from VISN 4 competed in the Games for the first time.

The Games addressed the need for the continued rehabilitation

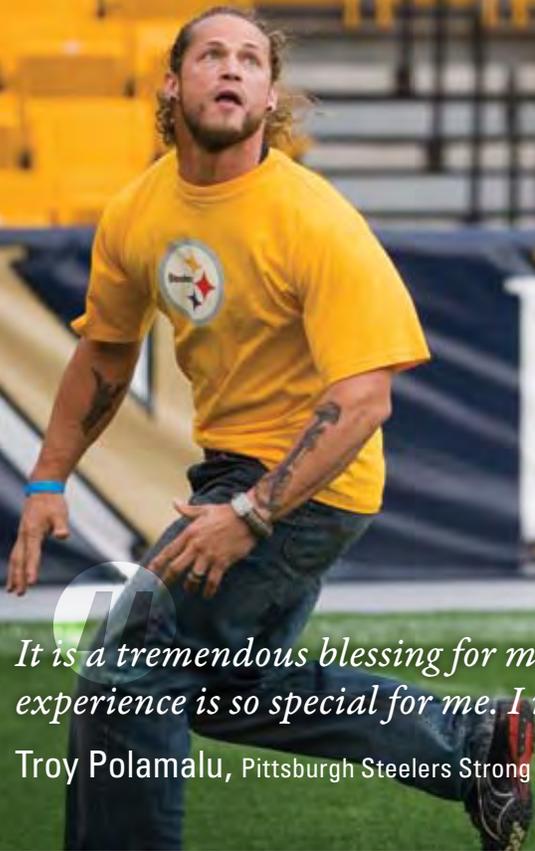
of Veterans with spinal cord injuries, multiple sclerosis, other neurological disorders, and amputations. Participants ranged in age from newly-injured soldiers from Afghanistan and Iraq to World War II Veterans. Their participation encouraged each of them to focus on their abilities instead of their disabilities.

One of the most important benefits of the Games was the mentoring that newly-injured Veterans received. They learned what it takes to move forward from their injuries from others who have already adjusted and now lead happy and successful lives.

To make the Games successful, VA Pittsburgh Healthcare System worked closely with numerous city officials, including Meritzer. He was instrumental in ensuring that all of the appropriate city departments were not only prepared for the large number of visiting wheelchair Veterans, but welcomed athletes with open arms.

"I saw city residents asking participants how they were doing in the Games. It was a terrific experience for the entire city, and for me personally," he recalls. ♦





It is a tremendous blessing for me to spend time with these Veterans. The whole experience is so special for me. I really and truly believe they are our real heroes.

Troy Polamalu, Pittsburgh Steelers Strong Safety



MEN (AND WOMEN) OF STEEL

HEROES OF THE BATTLEFIELD AND THE GRIDIRON MEET AT HEINZ FIELD FOR AN EVENING OF FUN, FOOTBALL AND FRIENDSHIP.

It might not have been the Super Bowl, the Rose Bowl or even Monday Night Football, but for a group of returning Servicemembers, the biggest football game of 2011 took place on a Tuesday in September.

On September 20, approximately 75 Veterans who receive their health care at VISN 4 facilities took part in the fourth annual Heroes at Heinz Field event, an evening of football and friendship at the home of the six-time Super Bowl champion Pittsburgh Steelers.

All Veterans in attendance had recently returned from combat in Iraq or Afghanistan. They were given an opportunity few Steelers fans have ever had: to walk on Heinz Field's famous grass surface, to try to kick a field goal through the stadium's goal posts, or to attempt to catch a pass with perennial all-Pro linebacker Troy Polamalu defending against them.

For one Veteran, though, the event was more about camaraderie than football.

"(Heroes at Heinz Field) wasn't really about football, though it's a game we all love," says Jeremy Feldbusch, an Army Veteran who was seriously injured in Iraq in 2003. "We all love the black and gold (the Steelers' colors) and we all love the red, white, and blue."

The event was also special for Feldbusch's father, Brace, who accompanied his son.

"It means so much that the Steelers took the extra time to be with him and with all the Veterans who were there, and to really talk to them," he explains.

"For a Servicemember who has recently returned home, life can be full of challenges," concludes Richard Bryan, VISN 4 transition patient advocate. "The wounds of war, both visible and invisible, can be overwhelming."

"Events like this offer brave men and women a respite from these challenges. The unique partnership between the Steelers and VISN 4 allows both organizations to do something out of the ordinary, and truly provide attendees with a 'hero's welcome.'" ♦

Shane Ott, VA Butler, and guest with James Harrison, outside linebacker



Anticipating and adapting to new challenges and requirements; continuously assessing the operating environment and devising solutions.



Total Homeless Funding for FY11:
More than \$32 million



VISN 4 Increase in Homeless Veteran Support Staff:
From 15.37 full-time employees in FY06 to 62.67 full-time employees in FY11

HANDS BUILD A HOUSE; HEARTS BUILD A HOME

VA PARTNERS WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT TO GIVE VETS A ROOF OVER THEIR HEADS.

“There is...no reason why a single Veteran is living on the streets of our country—this most powerful and wealthiest Nation in the world,” says Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki. “We intend to end homelessness among Veterans.”

Secretary Shinseki has set an ambitious goal for VA—to get all homeless Veterans off the streets, and keep others from becoming homeless, by 2014. The plan calls for marshaling the resources of government, business, and the private sector to prevent and reduce homelessness. VISN 4 is a leader in this effort.

“Nationally, VISN 4’s five-year plan to end homelessness has been recognized by VA as one of the four national models for all VISNs to emulate,” says Dr. Angela Keen, VISN 4’s mental health and homeless programs manager.

The Department of Housing and Urban Development and VA Supportive Housing Program (HUD-VASH) combines voucher rental assistance for homeless Veterans with case management and clinical services, which VISN 4 provides at its medical centers and community-based outpatient clinics. VISN 4’s HUD-VASH program has been extremely successful in getting Veterans off the

street and on their feet towards a better and more productive life.

Eligible homeless Veterans receive VA case management and supportive services to support stability and recovery from physical and mental health issues, substance use, and other problems stemming from homelessness. HUD provides “Housing Choice” Section 8 vouchers to assist with rent payment. VISN 4 received 1,480 vouchers for Veterans between fiscal years 2008 and 2011.

“Traditionally, Veterans with substance abuse problems were guided to address any substance abuse and mental health issues prior to being provided with housing options,” Keen continues. “We don’t do that anymore. We eliminate homelessness as soon as possible, and then wrap any necessary clinical services around the Veteran.”

Keen is proud of how VISN 4 has approached the challenge of eliminating homelessness. “We have local outreach workers throughout the network who work with local homeless providers at shelters, soup kitchens, even on the street, looking for homeless Veterans to educate and enroll for services,” she concludes. “You can’t get this job done from a desk; you have to hit the pavement.”

HOME SWEET HOME

WHEN FORMER MARINE SHEFFIELD DENSON REMEMBERS HIS TIME IN A HOMELESS SHELTER, TEARS WELL UP IN HIS EYES.

But the 55-year-old Munhall, Pa. resident found a hand up through the HUD-VASH program. Now, he is back on his feet and hopeful about his future, and the future of his five-year-old-daughter Lacy.

During a routine visit to VA Pittsburgh Healthcare System last September, he happened to run across Maria Marsico, a social worker he knew. Marsico had helped him out previously after finding him in a local homeless shelter.

“She looked me in the eye and knew right away I had a big problem,” Denson says. “I told her what was going on with me, and she said ‘I have a program that’s just right for you.’”



Marsico helped Denson enroll in HUD-VASH, and he moved into a home in October. Denson has no illusions where he would be without the assistance from HUD-VASH.

“VA also helped me to find a refrigerator, stove and some clothes for my daughter. Without them, my daughter would not have had a Christmas this year. The program really saved my life.”

Without VA's help I would be on the street, homeless, and I wouldn't have my daughter. Thanks to this program, we have a roof over our heads.

Sheffield Denson
Marine Veteran

COMING HOME: Veteran Sheffield Denson can now provide a forever home for his daughter thanks to a Section 8 voucher he received through the HUD-VASH program.

The guiding principles of behavioral health treatment are:

- **Self-direction**
- **Individualization**
- **Person-centered**
- **Empowerment**
- **Holistic**
- **Non-linear**
- **Strengths-based**
- **Peer support**
- **Respect**
- **Responsibility**
- **Hope**



HOPE FOR A NEW LIFE

LOCAL MENTAL HEALTH RECOVERY COORDINATORS PARTNER WITH VETERANS TO FORM A CULTURE OF RECOVERY.

A few years ago, Butch Ross’s trust issues, drug problem, and behavioral health challenges landed him in prison.

“I just didn’t know how to live a normal life out there,” says the 59-year-old Marine Veteran from Kittanning, Pa. But today, with the help of a Local Recovery Coordinator (LRC), Butch is out of jail and thriving.

LRCs make sure VISN 4 delivers the best and most effective behavioral health services for Veterans. While their actual responsibilities vary somewhat at each facility, they all serve as a resource for mental health issues; advise their medical center on better ways to deliver mental health services; work to decrease the stigma that surrounds mental illness in their communities; and improve Veterans’ quality of life by fostering a culture of recovery.

Based on the 2002 report of the President’s New Freedom Commission on Mental Health, VA defines a culture of recovery as a process of change through which individuals improve their health and wellness, live a self-directed life and strive to reach their full potential. In the recovery model of care, the patient takes a

more self-directed role in their recovery and care.

Most LRCs are mental health professionals, such as psychologists and licensed social workers. They treat Veteran patients on a one-to-one basis in addition to their other duties such as program management and consulting with inpatient behavioral health staff.

“LRCs are instrumental in providing a partnership of hope and recovery between Veterans and VA staff,” says VA Pittsburgh’s Anita Pasquale, local recovery coordinator and peer support program coordinator. “By inspiring hope, we promote choice and independence.”

“This program has made all the difference in my life and made me an all around better person,” Ross concludes. “I’ve been clean going on seven years now and given a chance to live a fuller life. This program taught me how to grow up.”

“For me, it was hard to ask for help when I didn’t know how to receive it. But VA put a lot of time and work in to make me see who I really am.” ♦

Veterans have shared that three key recovery components – hope, empowerment, and partnership – have helped them to reconnect with themselves, one another, and their communities. Through recovery, Veterans create greater meaning and change within their lives.

Lori Breen
Local Recovery Coordinator,
Philadelphia VAMC

Also shown:

Anita Pasquale (left)
Local Recovery Coordinator,
VA Pittsburgh Healthcare System

Mark Urich (right)
Local Recovery Coordinator,
VA Butler Healthcare



The programs VA offers have given me a good idea of how society works differently than how I was looking at it.

Butch Ross
Marine Veteran

RECOVERING: Veteran Butch Ross has taken responsibility for his role in his own recovery and is living a brand new life with help (and hope) from the mental health programs at VA.



CONSTRUCTING BETTER HEALTH CARE

HERE ARE JUST A FEW OF THE MANY CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS THAT HELPED REVITALIZE VISN 4 IN FISCAL YEAR 2011.

\$78m

Total spent on new construction

\$142m

Total spent on maintenance and upgrades

Philadelphia VA Medical Center Emergency Department

-  **Construction Start:** Jan. 2010
-  **Construction Cost:** \$6 million
-  **Move-in Dates:** Oct. 2010 and June 2011
-  **Square Footage:** 10,658

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- More patient privacy
- More room for family to stay with Veteran during treatment
- Examination rooms increased from eight to 20
- Safe patient handling equipment
- Behavioral health space
- Nurse call system with staff locator



Nurse Janene Mason with Veteran Charles Quinn in fast track patient care room



Acute side patient treatment rooms

Lebanon VA Medical Center Outpatient Pharmacy

-  **Construction Start:** November 2009
-  **Construction Cost:** \$2.5 million
-  **Move-in Date:** April 2011
-  **Square Footage:** 6,300

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- Improved efficiency and productivity
- Combined inpatient and outpatient pharmacies
- Uniquely-designed prescription pass thru system, that allows the pharmacy consults to be face-to-face, without sacrificing security



Veteran Horace Johnson picks up his prescription at the outpatient pharmacy from Sue Miller, staff pharmacist.



Pharmacy Tech Nayda Natal fills a prescription.



The new Ambulatory Care Center

-  **Construction Start:** May 2009
-  **Move-in Date:** Dec. 2011
-  **Construction Cost:** \$38.2 million
-  **Square Footage:** 117,000



Information Desk

VA Pittsburgh Healthcare System Ambulatory Care Center

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- Nineteen dental operatories featuring state-of-the-art equipment specially equipped for wheelchairs; front-side computer monitors allow the patient to see their x-rays and electronically sign release forms and other paperwork
- Heroes Hall waiting area
- Pharmacy featuring the latest in computerized and automatic equipment
- Outside courtyards for physical and occupational therapy
- Adult day care center including a dementia wing and physical training areas

CONSTRUCTING BETTER HEALTH CARE (CONTINUED)

Coatesville VA Medical Center Pharmacy

-  **Construction Start:** Sept. 2009
-  **Construction Cost:** \$2.3 million
-  **Move-in Date:** March 2011
-  **Square Footage:** 10,535

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- Larger and more centralized pharmacy area
- Enables four Veterans to be seen separately at one time
- Private area where pharmacy staff can educate Veterans about medication



Staff Pharmacist Amy Bieryla checks an expiration date on a medication stock bottle.



Pharmacy Technician Melinda Allen places medication into a verification tray prior to packaging for inpatient use.

Wilmington VA Medical Center Emergency Department

-  **Construction Start:** March 2010
-  **Construction Cost:** \$5.1 million
-  **Move-in Date:** July 2011
-  **Square Footage:** 9,995

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- Enhanced patient privacy
- Allows family members to be at the bedside
- Enlarged waiting room presents a calming, patient-centered atmosphere
- New space to treat the unique needs of female Veterans, including a private restroom
- Isolation area to facilitate the treatment of Veterans with a potentially-infectious disease
- Decontamination area, including specialized shower facilities, for disaster preparedness



Dr. Afroza Sultana (left) and nurse manager, Laura Selwood



Emergency Department entrance

Brenda Sprouse, women Veterans healthcare program manager, escorts Army Veteran and former resident Ronald Cable into his new room.



VA Butler Healthcare Community Living Center

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- More “homelike environment”
- All private rooms with private bathrooms
- Each room equipped with a flat-screen, wall-mounted TV, DVD player and refrigerator
- Overhead ceiling lifts extend into bathroom for safer transfers for staff and Veterans
- Multiple secured, covered patios for easy access to outdoor living space
- Large common areas utilized for recreational activities, such as Bingo or puzzles



Construction Start: June 2009



Move-in Date: Nov. 2011



Construction Cost: \$11.2 million



Square Footage: 31,299

From Left to Right: Sharon Parson, associate director of patient care services; Dr. David Macpherson, VISN 4 chief medical officer; Pam Bell, Navy Veteran; David Cord, VA Butler Healthcare’s Acting Director; Chester Pokusa, Army Veteran; Michael Moreland, VISN 4 director

Engaging and welcoming; facilitating use of entire array of services; positive and productive interactions.

THE TRIUMPH OF VISN 4 TELEHEALTH

VISN 4'S TELEHEALTH PROGRAMS ARE GROWING BY LEAPS AND BOUNDS.

Richard Harold Watts, an Air Force Veteran from Bernville, Pa., weighed 345 pounds in March 2011. He scheduled an evaluation for bariatric surgery to reduce the size of his stomach. Because his appointment was several months away, the 64-year-old Vietnam Veteran enrolled in the hospital's TeleMOVE program to lose weight in the meantime.

Richard was given a monitor, digital scale, pedometer, and literature on nutrition, exercise and how to change behaviors. He answered daily questions on the monitor, and entered his weight on a weekly basis. By July, he had lost 33 pounds, and decided he didn't need the surgery. By December, his weight was 279 pounds, and he continues to lose about seven pounds a month.

TeleMOVE is one of the newest programs in VISN 4's comprehensive array of TeleHealth services. TeleHealth makes care more accessible and convenient for Veterans, and can help them stay healthy. According to Elizabeth Helsel, VISN 4's TeleHealth program manager, the program is thriving.

"Hospital admissions for Veterans enrolled in TeleHealth programs were reduced by 34 percent in 2011," she says. "If Veterans using TeleHealth need to be admitted to the hospital, they only spend half as much time there as they did before."

According to Helsel, this is the result of TeleHealth coordinators working closely with the Veteran and their primary care team to provide education, reinforce healthy choices, and identify and treat health issues that may be developing before they worsen and require hospitalization. More than 17,500 patients throughout the network participated in one or more TeleHealth programs in fiscal year 2011. VISN 4 hopes to expand that number to 45,000 in 2012.

TeleHealth programs not only reduce the time Veterans need to spend in the hospital, they also increase access to VISN 4's services without requiring long drives for patients.

Another VISN-wide TeleHealth program introduced in 2011 is TeleDermatology. A network of computer monitors outfitted with high



Learn more about TeleHealth at www.visn4.va.gov/docs/telehealth.pdf or scan the QR Code with a smartphone app.

definition cameras was established throughout the VISN.

At the direction of the primary care doctor, a trained imager takes a picture of an area of concern on a Veteran's skin, and the images are then securely transmitted to a dermatologist for review and diagnosis.

Through this technology, providers are able to receive a diagnosis and treatment plan in only two days, as opposed to having to wait several weeks for a dermatology appointment at a distant site or in the community.

VA Pittsburgh Healthcare System shares its dermatology expertise with patients at Butler, and the Wilmington VA Medical Center works with Eric, Coatesville, Lebanon and remote areas of New Jersey and Delaware.

The Clarksburg VA Medical Center treats patients through "real time video" at both Altoona and Eric.

"TeleHealth is really serving a need for our Veterans with skin conditions, reducing both travel and waiting time," says Helsel. "Because many Veterans have concerns about their skin, and there are not enough dermatologists to go around, we plan to expand this program to help bridge that gap for Veterans across VISN 4."

TeleHealth programs also have a "hidden" benefit: communication with patients during emergencies. Last fall, for example, heavy rains threatened to overflow the banks of several rivers in east central Pennsylvania, including the Susquehanna. As the storm raged, both the Lebanon and Wilkes-Barre VAs identified Veterans in their TeleHealth programs who were in flood danger of having their homes flooded.

They called patients who needed to evacuate their homes and told them what to take with them. They also contacted others who might be ordered to evacuate in the future to reassure them that someone was looking after them and ready to provide assistance. The two facilities also worked together to make sure there was sufficient staff available to monitor all TeleHealth patients at both facilities, following VISN 4 emergency protocols. ◆

“We look at services our patients are required to drive long distances to receive, or that we’re sending Veterans to private providers for, or that we don’t have enough physicians to offer everywhere. Then we try to find innovative ways to use technology to provide those services,” says Helsel.

SHOWN HERE: Veteran Richard Watts and Mary Yoder, a TeleMOVE dietician.



There’s just so much potential in TeleHealth programs.

Elizabeth Helsel
VISN 4 TeleHealth Program Manager

Curiosity and initiative; encouraging creative contributions; seeking continuous improvement; adapting to remain at the forefront in knowledge, proficiency, and capability.



Construction Start: Oct. 2009
Construction Cost: \$16.9m
Move-In Date: Aug. 2011
Square Footage: 65,000
Employees: 450

SAVING MONEY TO IMPROVE CARE

LEBANON'S NEW PATIENT ACCOUNT CENTER WILL STREAMLINE VISN 4'S BILLING PROCESSES, INCREASE REVENUES, AND REDUCE COSTS.

One of VISN 4's most important behind-the-scenes functions is its billing and collection mission. If a Veteran receiving health care from the Department of Veterans Affairs has private health insurance that can pay for care that's not connected to his or her service-related disability, Congress authorizes VA to bill the insurer for some of the costs of that care.

As a result, the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) collects billions of dollars every year from private insurance companies. VHA's billing and collection accounting process is complex, involving many different health care and insurance providers. It's also relatively new, since VA only received authorization to bill insurance companies a few years ago.

A new era in the way VISN 4 handles patient accounts began in 2011 with the August opening of the North East Consolidated Patient Account Center (NECPAC) on the campus of the Lebanon VA Medical Center. The NECPAC is one of seven regional centers across the country whose mission is to improve collection rates and add accountability to VA's billing process.

Consolidated Patient Account Centers (CPACs), modeled on the approach used by other large health care providers, consolidate billing and collection functions into regional areas under a central management system. They are designed to make billing and collection more efficient and cost effective by using industry best practices; providing staff with intensive training and development

programs; and making use of performance measurement metrics.

VA's CPAC program began in 2006 in Asheville, N.C., with the creation of the Mid-Atlantic CPAC. The Asheville Center's success led Congress to mandate VHA to implement the CPAC model nationally. VHA anticipates that this initiative will generate \$1.7 billion in additional collections over 10 years, which can be used to expand the services our Nation's Veterans receive.

Lebanon, which "Sperling's BestPlaces" has called "the second least stressful city in the United States," was selected as a regional site based on several factors including the availability and condition of existing space owned by VA; the cost of construction at the location; the quality of life in the area; the area's cost of living; local labor market conditions; and the ability to recruit professional and technical staff to work at the location.

The brand new NECPAC will make VISN 4's billing more efficient, increase revenues, and provide cost savings that will be passed on to greater serve our Nation's Veterans.

Not all billing and collection functions will move to the new facility. Each VA medical center will continue to register new enrollees; conduct third-party insurance identification reviews; determine whether Veterans are eligible for VA care; and conduct means testing and reviews of levels of service-connected disabilities to decide whether co-payments are required for their care. ♦

What I like most about working at the new CPAC is our mission. We facilitate generating revenue that can be reinvested in VA, which directly benefits our Veterans.

Robert Moser

North East Consolidated Patient Account Center biller



BETTER DECISIONS THROUGH BETTER DATA

WHEN SECONDS COUNT, VISN 4'S NEW PATIENT MONITORING SYSTEM DELIVERS.

In operating rooms and intensive care units, doctors and nurses make life-and-death decisions about their patients' care every day. To make the best possible decisions, they need the best possible data. And there's no better place to get that data than right at a patient's bedside.

VISN 4 knows quality health care decision-making starts with quality data. That's why the network is implementing a new state-of-the-art bedside data collection system in all operating rooms and intensive care units. The system is called the Anesthesia Record Keeper/Clinical Information System, or ARK/CIS.

ARK/CIS allows physicians and nurses to treat patients in distress more quickly—and with greater certainty that the decisions they make will be the right ones. The system is putting VISN 4 at the forefront of safety in patient care.

According to VA Pittsburgh lead site coordinator and intensive care nurse Donald McCalla, ARK/CIS allows doctors and nurses to access information stored in VA's award-winning Computerized Patient Records System, while gathering a patient's vital signs automatically at the bedside. Whether a nurse needs to see a lab report, the medications a patient is taking, or notes

from a physician, the information he or she needs is right there.

ARK/CIS replaces many formerly handwritten records, thereby reducing recordkeeping and mathematical errors. Everything from treatment events to clinical assessments is available instantly to health care professionals at a terminal located at patients' bedsides.

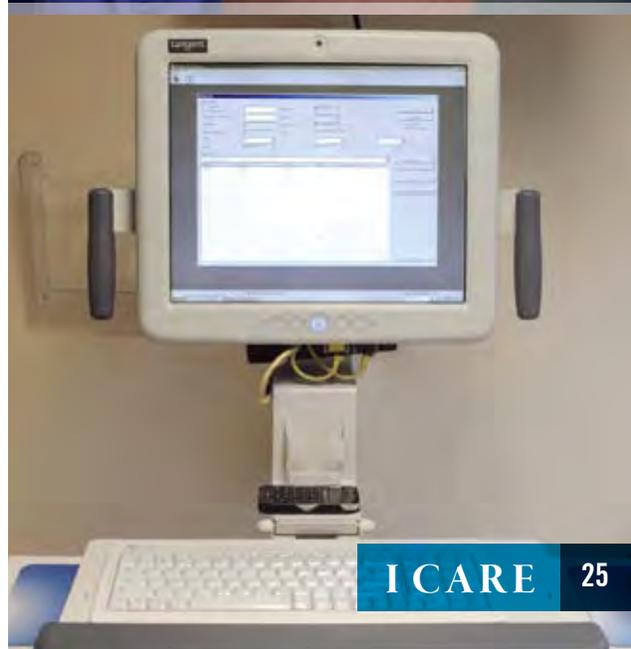
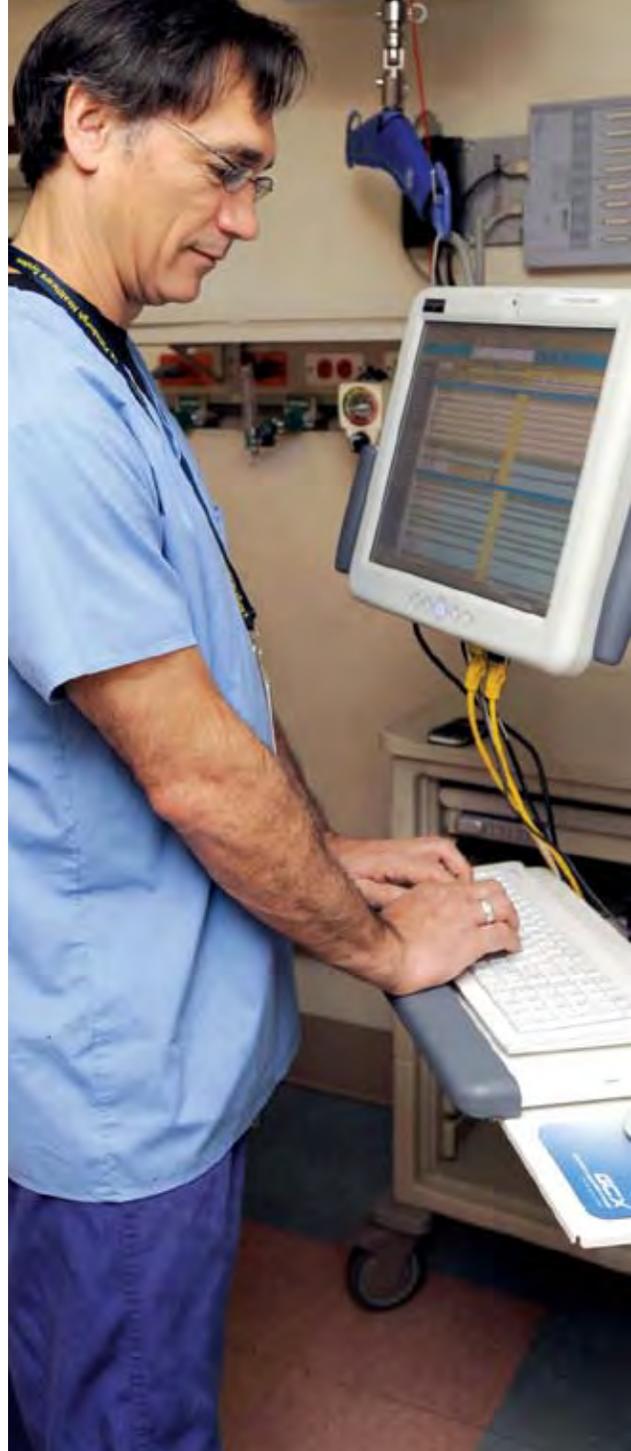
VISN 4 is one of the first VA networks to implement the ARK/CIS system. Wilmington, Philadelphia and Pittsburgh are already online. The five other VISN 4 medical centers with operating rooms and intensive care units will all have their systems up and running by September 2012.

McCalla says that in the near future, the data the new system collects will be used by researchers in ways that will revolutionize patient care. "We'll have moment-to-moment vital signs, assessments of patient's conditions and responses on a scale that's never been seen before," he explains. "We'll also have the ability to analyze data and discover patterns in care and treatment that will allow us to improve the care every Veteran receives. This will allow us to move much faster and with greater certainty in treatment." ♦

Our new system allows all Veterans' intensive care and operating room records to be captured electronically. This makes them legible and timely, and allows their medical records to be more thoroughly reviewed. That's the biggest advantage for Veterans."

Dewaine Beard

VISN 4 project manager, Anesthesia Record Keeper/
Clinical Information System



Earning the trust of Veterans through the actions of all employees; providing care, benefits, and services with compassion, dependability, effectiveness and transparency.



VISN 4 FINANCIAL REPORT

FISCAL YEAR 2011



\$118,610,889	Medical Care Collections Fund
\$1,212,166,000	Salary and Benefits
\$146,466,000	Consolidated Mail-Out Pharmacy
\$92,171,000	Drugs and Medicines
\$431,290,000	Overall Services

\$142,825,000	Lands and Structures
\$83,474,000	Equipment
\$324,237,000	Miscellaneous
\$51,697,389	Research
\$3,840,332	Donations

OPERATING BEDS

FISCAL YEAR 2011



STAFFING STATISTICS

FISCAL YEAR 2011



- ★ **13,144** Employees
- ★ **6,544** Volunteers
- ★ **5,428** Veterans Employed
- ★ **117** Research Staff
- ★ **2,534** Nurses
- ★ **640** Full-Time Physicians



Learn more about our Leadership Team at www.visn4.va.gov/VISNLeadership.asp or scan the QR Code below with a smartphone app.



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Appointed Dec. 2006



CARLA ACRE SIVEK, MSW
DEPUTY NETWORK DIRECTOR
Appointed July 2009



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CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER
Appointed June 2007



JAMES F. BAKER
CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER
Appointed Dec. 2009



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Appointed Feb. 2008



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DAVID E. COWGILL
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