Welcome to the Winter 2019 edition of The Veterans Gazette.

Happy New Year to you all! I would like to begin by sharing our current leadership changes. Our Associate Director, Chris Cauley, accepted the position of Associate Director for the Ann Arbor VA Healthcare System. Currently, Carol Dopp is our Acting Associate Director, Dr. Campana is our Acting Chief of Staff, and Katy Ball is our Acting Associate Director for Patient Care Services. Recruitment for the Medical Center Director and Associate Director are in process. We are working diligently to fill these positions with highly-qualified individuals who represent our ICARE values, which are Integrity, Commitment, Advocacy, Respect, and Excellence.

I am delighted to share some good news! A recent Dartmouth Study, published in the Annals of Medicine, highlights data which shows the Department of Veteran Affairs may provide better quality care than other hospitals in many American communities. One of the most notable highlights of the study showed VA hospitals were the best or above average for treating heart attacks, heart failure, and pneumonia. Also noteworthy, the VA ranked 6th out of 17 federal government organizations in 2018, as “Best Places to Work!”

Our VA Medical Center continues on its journey of Whole Health. Staff are continuing to receive education, Veterans are being invited to Whole Health Orientation, and we are striving to incorporate integrative therapies for reduction in opioids and pain management. Whole health continues to place the Veteran in the center of their care and provide them with a variety of alternative resources in addition to standard practices. This is a very exciting time for our VA and we look forward to many more exciting initiatives for Veterans in 2019!

Finally, I thank you for your service and for choosing the VA for your healthcare needs. If you know of other Veterans who may qualify for VA health care, invite them to apply by visiting www.vets.gov, visiting any one of our VA facilities, or calling Eligibility at 989-497-2500, Extension 13120 or 13121.

-Dr. Barbara Bates
Acting Medical Center Director

On The Cover: Aleda E. Lutz VA Medical Center’s Whole Health Program sponsored a Veteran Resource Event in November. The event was a huge success with a host of live demonstrations, including Yoga, Tai Chi, Kick Boxing, and a Healthy Teaching Kitchen, just to name a few. Numerous informational booths were staffed with other great programs available for Veterans to improve their health and well-being. Showcasing the alternative resources the VA has to offer, helps us show Veterans why they should choose VA!
**Virtual Video Care for Urgent Care Clinic**

Veterans now have an additional way to receive medical care from the Aleda E. Lutz VA Medical Center without leaving their home or office.

Call the TeleNurse at 989-497-2500, Extension 11230, with your medical issue, and the nurse will determine if Virtual Video Care is a viable option.

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**Medsafe Disposal Receptacle**

Introducing the new medsafe, a medication disposal receptacle, located in the lobby near the patient waiting area, in Building 1. It is for Veteran patients to dispose of outdated prescriptions, prescribed in their name. Instructions are on the receptacle.

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**Veteran Service Officer Hours**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DEPARTMENT/ROOM</th>
<th>EXT.</th>
<th>State Dept. Phone</th>
<th>WORK SCHEDULE</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>American Legion, Room 1343</td>
<td>11730</td>
<td>313-964-6640</td>
<td>Tues and Wed, 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disabled American Veterans, Room 1344</td>
<td>13382</td>
<td>313-964-6595</td>
<td>Monday - Friday, 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disabled American Veterans, Room 1343</td>
<td>11730</td>
<td>313-964-6595</td>
<td>Monday, Thursday, Friday, 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military Order Purple Heart, Room 1345</td>
<td>13385</td>
<td>313-964-6888</td>
<td>Monday - Friday, 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veterans of Foreign Wars, Room 1346</td>
<td>13386</td>
<td>313-964-6510</td>
<td>Monday - Friday, 7:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Legion at Vet Center, 5360 Hampton Place, Suite 200, Saginaw, MI</td>
<td>14650</td>
<td>313-964-6640</td>
<td>Thursdays, 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marine Corps League</td>
<td></td>
<td>313-964-6830</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fax Number Internal - 14954
Fax External - 989-321-4954

**Location:** Hallway around corner from VCS Retail Store

**PLEASE NOTE:** Veterans will need to present to the Veteran Service Organization which currently holds their Power of Attorney for a previous claim or appeal.
**Feature Articles**

**National Salute to Veteran Patients**

February 11—15, 2019, the week of Valentine’s Day, is National Salute to Veteran Patients Week. The purpose of the National Salute to Veteran Patients Program is to pay tribute and express appreciation to Veterans, increase community awareness of the role of the VA medical center, encourage citizens to visit hospitalized Veterans, and to become involved as volunteers. This designated week is an opportunity to say thank you to a special group of men and women, more than 98,000 Veterans of the U.S. armed services, who are cared for every day in Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) medical centers, outpatient clinics, domiciliaries, and nursing homes. During the National Salute, VA has activities and events including special visits to hospitalized Veterans, Valentine distributions, photo opportunities, essay contests, special recreation activities, and Veteran recognition programs.

The National Salute to Veteran Patients Week provides an opportunity for the community to become acquainted with the volunteer opportunities within the medical center. Please call Voluntary Service (989) 497-2500 at Extension 13369 to share your talents!

**Chronic Disease Workshop**

Don’t let your chronic condition rule your life! Workshops meet weekly for six weeks and will be at the following locations/dates:

- **Saginaw VAMC, Auditorium, Mondays, 9:00 a.m.—11:00 a.m., Bldg. 1, Room 4254, starting on March 11, 2019.**
- **Cheboygan CBOC, Fridays, 8:30 a.m.—11 a.m. starting on March 15, 2019**
- **Traverse City CBOC, Fridays, 11:00 a.m.—1:30 p.m. starting on March 15, 2019**

For questions or to register, contact Sarah Rousseau at 989-497-2500, Extension 11703 or email sarah.rousseau@va.gov

**Introducing the New VA Website www.va.gov**

The newly updated website offers easy log in to a centralized home page, access to the 20 top tasks 80% of Veterans need most, standard design to eliminate confusion across VA services, and a personalized profile where they can do basic things like update their name and address in one location.

Some recent feedback since the changes include, “Since you’ve updated it, it seems to send a message that the VA cares enough to try to make it more accessible,” and “VA has pivoted from focusing on the organizational structure to helping me as a Veteran.”

**Beware—Knowledge is Power!**

We have learned Veterans may be receiving “neighbor spoofing” phone calls from agencies who have used our VA phone number to try and sell them products or obtain personal information.

For any Veteran experiencing this, please visit: [https://www.consumer.ftc.gov/blog/2018/01/thats-not-your-neighbor-calling](https://www.consumer.ftc.gov/blog/2018/01/thats-not-your-neighbor-calling) to learn more about this and how you can report such calls. VA does not call Veterans to sell products!

**Military to Veteran Transition**

On January 9, President Donald J. Trump signed [Executive Order 13822](https://www.va.gov/opa/order_13822.html), “Supporting Our Veterans During Their Transition From Uniformed Service to Civilian Life.” This Executive Order directs the Departments of Defense, Veterans Affairs and Homeland Security to develop a plan to ensure that all new Veterans receive mental health care for at least one year following their separation from service.
VA staff presented with a Certificate of Appreciation for contributions which gained this facility the “2018 GREEN-HEALTH EMERALD AWARD” by reducing waste.

“Great Catch” Patient Safety Awardees

Women Veterans Connect at a Holiday Party and learn more about VA in Traverse City at Reigning Liberty Ranch

Simply Sensational Palliative Care Staff Peer Awardees

Staff play “Jeopardy” to get ready for Long Term Care Institute Survey
Aleda E. Lutz VA celebrated National Veterans and Military Families Month, November 2018, with events honoring Veterans and their families:

**Whole Health Veteran Resource Event**

**Traverse City Community Based Outpatient Clinic Outreach: “Donuts and Dog Tags Event”**

**Grand Traverse YMCA Veteran Salute**

**Health Care Annex Veteran Appreciation Day**

Traverse City CBOC Outreach “Donuts and Dog Tags” Event!

Veterans MOVE! Group took 2nd Place in the 2nd Annual Pick O’ Pot Contest (Flower Pots on the grounds)

Grand Traverse Veterans Center Flag Raising Event was held on November 13, 2018
Women’s Health Quarterly Newsletter
February is Heart Health Month

Heart disease is the No. 1 killer of women and is deadlier than all forms of cancer combined. The VA, in partnership with the American Heart Association, is committed to helping you reduce your risk of heart disease and live your best life!

FACTS
⇒ Heart Disease is a killer that strikes more women than men.
⇒ Heart disease affects women of all ages and the risks increases with age.
⇒ Your risk for heart disease is not eliminated even if you are physically active due to factors such as cholesterol, eating habits, heredity and smoking.
⇒ Women are more likely to experience shortness of breath, nausea, vomiting, back pain, and jaw pain during a heart attack.

Ideal ranges of the following heart disease risk factors:
⇒ Cholesterol less than 180mg/dL
⇒ Blood Pressure less than 120/80 mm/Hg
⇒ Blood Sugar fasting blood sugar of less than or equal to 100mg/dl
⇒ Body mass index (BMI) less than or equal to 25kg/m²

PREVENTION IS KEY
• Learn your personal risk(s) for heart disease.
• Schedule an appointment with your health care provider to discuss your risks.
• Quit smoking!
• Start an exercise program by walking just 30 minutes a day.
• Make healthier lifestyle choices. The VA offers free health coaching!

Any questions or concerns regarding women’s health can be discussed with the Women Veteran Program Manager, Andrea Norton at (989) 497-2500, Extension 11560 or the Women’s Health Clinical Care Coordinator, Jeanine Pfundt, at Extension 13972.
**Program Highlights**

**Flu Season is Still In Effect**
Stop in and see your provider to get your flu vaccine! Walgreens is still giving out flu vaccines too!

**Suicide Prevention**
If you know a Veteran who may experience thoughts of suicide, getting them the assistance they need, as quickly as possible, is crucial. The “BeThere” campaign offers information on how you can help.
Visit [www.VeteransCrisisLine.net/BeThere](http://www.VeteransCrisisLine.net/BeThere)

**Veterans Crisis Line:**
1-800-273-8255 Press 1

**Are you a caregiver** of a Veteran and need assistance? Call the Caregiver Support Line at 1-855-260-3274

**Community Care/ Emergency Care**
Learn about Community Care and Emergency Care by visiting the links below:
[www.va.gov/communitycare](http://www.va.gov/communitycare)

**National Center for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention**
Learn more at [www.prevention.va.gov](http://www.prevention.va.gov)

**VA Transportation**
1. They transport Veterans FROM the Aleda E. Lutz VA in Saginaw TO Ann Arbor and Detroit VA Medical Center's. Call 989-497-2500, Extension 13108 to schedule a ride.
2. They transport Veterans FROM Gaylord, Grayling, West Branch, and Standish TO Saginaw, Ann Arbor, and Detroit. Call 989-497-2500, Extension 13125 to schedule a ride.

**MOVE! Program**
Eat Better, Exercise, Lose Weight!
Ask your provider for more information.

**Construction Project Update**
The new Urgent Care has opened and the ambulance bay for drop off is temporarily closed. Drop off is currently located at the CLC entrance, located at building 22. The Building 1 (main VA Medical Center facility) renovations are still underway.
Special Program Contacts

Suicide Prevention Coordinator
989-497-2500, Extension 11778

Caregiver Support Coordinator
989-497-2500, Extension 11686

Former Prisoner of War Advocate
989-497-2500, Extension 11798

Homeless Veteran Program
989-497-2500, Extension 11773

LGBT Veteran Care Coordinator
989-497-2500, Extension 11783

Military Sexual Trauma Coordinator
989-497-2500, Extension 15713

Multiple Sclerosis Coordinator
989-497-2500, Extension 11440

Patient Advocate
989-497-2500, Extension 13012

Spinal Cord Injury Coordinator
989-497-2500, Extension 11783

Transition Care Management
989-497-2500, Extension 11794

Veterans Justice Outreach Coordinators
989-497-2500, Extension 11916 or Extension 11694

Women Veterans Program Manager
989-497-2500, Extension 11560

Office of Inspector General—1-800-409-9926
Joint Commission—1-800-994-6610

Help for Homeless Veterans
877-4AID-VET
va.gov/homeless | (877) 424-3838

VET Centers for
Readjustment Counseling
Services

Saginaw—5360 Hampton
Place, Phone (989) 321-4650

Traverse City—3766 N. US 31
South, Phone (231) 935-0051
CONTACT US

Community Based Outpatient Clinics:

**Alpena**  180 N. State Avenue  
989-356-8720

**Bad Axe**  1142 S. Van Dyke Rd, Ste. 100  
989-497-2500, Ext. 15602

**Cadillac**  1909 N. Mitchell Street  
231-775-4401, Ext. 11410

**Cheboygan County (Mackinaw)**  14540  
Mackinaw Highway  
231-436-5176

**Clare**  11775 N. Isabella Road  
989-386-8113, Ext. 13530

**Gaylord**  806 S. Otsego  
989-732-7525, Ext. 13520

**Grayling**  1680 Hartwick Pines  
989-344-2002

**Oscoda**  5671 Skeel Avenue, Ste. 4  
989-747-0026, Ext. 11411

**Traverse City**  3271 Racquet Club  
231-932-9720, Ext. 11412

**Grand Traverse VA Clinic**  
(Physical Therapy and Mental Health)  
880 Munson  
800-406-5143, Ext. 13653

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Aleda E. Lutz VA Medical Center  
1500 Weiss Street, Saginaw, MI

VA Healthcare Annex  
4241 Barnard Road, Saginaw, MI

800-406-5143  
Call Center, Extension 11230  
Tele-Nurse, Extension 11240

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VASaginaw www.va.gov

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