HONORING ALL WHO SERVED

WWI 100 YEARS

VETERANS DAY

NOVEMBER 11, 2018

va.gov
Welcome to the Fall 2018 edition of The Veterans Gazette.

I’m happy to report, our VA was recently awarded a 5-STAR Rating for Fiscal Year 2018 which ended on September 30, 2018. This rating evaluates and benchmarks quality of care delivery at VA medical centers across the nation.

Our staff have worked hard to improve from a 4-STAR to a 5-STAR designated rating, with 5-STAR being the highest a facility can achieve. It is through hard work, determination, and constantly looking for improvement opportunities our VA is able to achieve such a rating.

I’m also proud to share our Palliative Care Team received an Excellence in Care Award from Veterans Integrated Service Network (VISN) 10 Leadership. The team exceeded the 65% goal with 87% for families answering the question “How would you rate the care your loved one received in the last month of life?” as favorable. Our Palliative Care Team has been top in our VISN for the past two years and ranks as one of the top Palliative Care Units nationally as well.

Lastly, we want newly transitioning Veterans (those leaving the military) to know the VA is here to help them with their medical and mental health needs. It is important for them to learn about their eligibility for their earned health care benefits. Please talk with Veterans you may know who are not utilizing the VA for their health care and invite them to learn more 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

“Proudly Serving All Who Have Served”
Information You Can Use

**Protect Yourself This Flu Season**

Please take precautions early and get your flu vaccine. Talk with your health care provider at the VA about the opportunity to be vaccinated. You may also present to any Walgreen’s Pharmacy with your Veteran ID Card to receive a vaccine. The VA will pay for a regular-dose vaccine, however, if you wish to receive the higher-dose vaccine, you will be responsible for the cost.

**Hepatitis Screening Is Important!**

It is important for Veterans to talk with their health care team about the risks associated with Hepatitis. Early detection of Hepatitis allows the VA to develop a treatment plan to help manage the condition. We encourage you to visit this [link to learn more.]

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**Veteran Service Officer Hours**

You may visit Service Officers at the Aleda E. Lutz VA, 1500 Weiss Street, Saginaw for your Veterans benefits, claims, pension, or appeals. They are located in Building 1 (the main medical center), in the hallway around the corner from the VCS Retail Store.

You may also call 989-497-2500 and the extensions below, or contact the Veteran Service Organization State of Michigan Offices at the numbers provided.

- **American Legion** – Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. Ext. 11730 or (313) 964-6640
- **Disabled American Veterans** – Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday, 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m., Wednesday 8:00 a.m.—2:00 p.m., Ext. 13382 or (313) 964-6595
- **Military Order of the Purple Heart** – Monday – Friday, 8:00 a.m.— 4:00 p.m. Ext. 13385 (313) 964-6888
- **Marine Corps League** – Saginaw Vet Center (5360 Hampton Place, Suite 200, Saginaw) Monday—Wednesday, 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. Ext. 14650, or (989) 321-4650, (313) 964-6830. *Still no MCL Service Officer assigned to the Aleda E. Lutz VA Medical Center.*
- **Veterans of Foreign Wars** -- No Service Officer at this time. (313) 964-6510.

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**Construction Project Update**

The Building 1 (main VA Medical Center facility) Renovation to upgrade corridors, flooring, finishes, waiting rooms, and layout, is still underway. Every floor of the main Medical Center will undergo upgrades over the next several months.
**Staff Training in Assisted Living Residences – VA**

In May 2018, implementation of a new program, Staff Training in Assisted Living Residences – VA (STAR-VA), began in the Community Living Center (CLC). STAR-VA offers a patient-centered approach to assisting Veterans with dementia who exhibit challenging behaviors as part of the disease progression. STAR-VA focuses on the provision of education about dementia and implementation of environmental modifications to reduce challenging behaviors and meet the Veteran’s unique needs.

Recently, CLC nursing staff diligently worked to assist a Veteran with dementia using the STAR-VA program. As a result of their dedication and teamwork, CLC nursing staff successfully reduced the Veteran’s frequency of challenging behaviors such that, after implementation of the staff-created STAR-VA plan, the Veteran displayed no dementia-associated challenging behavior. STAR-VA techniques will continue to be utilized as we continue to provide quality care for Veterans.

**November is National Family Caregivers Month**

November is National Family Caregivers Month and VA thanks, celebrates, and honors each and every family caregiver of a Veteran! One way VA celebrates family caregivers is through VA’s Caregiver Support Line (CSL).

The CSL is only a toll-free call away at 1 -855-260-3274. The calls are answered by licensed social workers who can provide family caregivers with resources, support, or simply just someone to talk to for support.

The CSL also provides educational calls for family caregivers on a variety of topics. If you’re interested in participating in one of the CSL Education calls or just learning more about the calls, please contact our local Caregiver Support Coordinator at 989-497-2500, Extension 11686.

Our VA invites Veterans to visit The Voice of the Veteran Board in the VA Medical Center’s Main Lobby. This is an opportunity for Veterans, and their families or caregivers, to submit suggestions which are being evaluated for adoption by our facility. Veterans are contacted to discuss their suggestions and those selected will be showcased on the board. Compliments to our facility are also displayed.

We hope you’ll stop by!
Our VA received positive press from Samantha Stricker’s Lemonade Stand Donation to our VA.
We thank Samantha for all she has done to help support Veterans at our VA!

July 25 marked the fourth year Gaudreau The Florist of Saginaw has Brought Smile Mugs with flowers to the VA for Veterans. Veterans left the VA that day feeling appreciated through this kind gesture.

Veterans participate in Tai Chi and Yoga at the VA. Talk with your health care team about how you can benefit from such integrative therapies to help you ease pain, tension, stress, anxiety, and more.

Our VA hosted the Latvian National Guard Orchestra on Friday, August 17, 2018, as part of their tour with the 126th Army National Guard Band. They were fantastic!!!
Our VA broke ground for the new 22,500 square foot Traverse City Community Based Outpatient Clinic, honorably named the Colonel Demas T. Craw VA Clinic, on August 2, 2018. It is anticipated the clinic will be built and opened in late 2019 or early 2020.

This year, the Aleda E. Lutz VAMC sent three legally-blind Veterans and one ambulatory Veteran to the 32nd Golden Age Games in Albuquerque, NM to compete against over 800 Veterans from around the country. Our Veterans competed, in their respective age group, in Air Rifle, Boccia Ball, Bowling, Disc Golf, 9-Ball, Horseshoes, and Shuffleboard. Veterans placed in many events bringing home bronze, gold, silver, and many ribbons.

Our Annual POW*MIA Ceremony was held on September 21, 2018.
**Program Highlights**

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<tr>
<th>Are you a caregiver of a Veteran and need assistance? Call the Caregiver Support Line at 1-855-260-3274</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Suicide Prevention</strong></td>
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<td>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.</td>
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<td>Visit their website</td>
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<td><strong>Veterans Crisis Line:</strong> 1-800-273-8255 Press 1</td>
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<td><strong>Women’s Toolbox Sessions</strong></td>
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<td>1st and 3rd Wednesdays of the Month from 1:00 p.m.—2:30 p.m.</td>
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<td>4241 Barnard Street, Saginaw</td>
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<td>Call 989-497-2500, Ext. 11962 for details.</td>
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<th>Community Care/ Emergency Care</th>
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<td>Learn about Community Care and Emergency Care by visiting the links below:</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Emergency Care</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Community Care</strong></td>
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<th>Lactation Room Available</th>
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<td>For nursing mothers, there is a lactation room available at the VA. It is located on the 4th floor, Room 4146.</td>
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<tr>
<td>To request VA to speak or attend your event, please call 989-497-2500, Ext. 13020</td>
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**ATTENTION VETERANS WHO RECEIVE BENEFICIARY TRAVEL**

**VETERANS MUST APPLY FOR PAYMENT OF BENEFICIARY TRAVEL WITHIN 30 CALENDAR DAYS AFTER COMPLETING THE BENEFICIARY TRAVEL ASSOCIATED WITH THEIR VA APPOINTMENT!!!**
Special Program Contacts

Suicide Prevention Coordinator
989-497-2500, Extension 11778

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

Homeless Veteran Program
989-497-2500, Extension 11773

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

Multiple Sclerosis Coordinator
989-497-2500, Extension 11440

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

Transition Care Management
989-497-2500, Extension 11794

VA Caregiver Support Coordinator
989-497-2500, Extension 11686

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

Women Veterans Coordinator
989-497-2500, Extension 11560
New Additions!!

The Aleda E. Lutz VAMC is committed to expanding and improving our Women’s Health Program. In addition to the Women Veterans Program Manager, Andrea Norton, we have increased our women’s health staff. We now have a Gynecology clinic headed by the Women’s Health Medical Director, Dr. Bradley and Anne Beaudoin, RN. They have a combined total of over 30 years of dedicated work in women’s health. We also have a brand-new Women’s Health Clinical Care Coordinator, Jeanine Pfundt, RN, CMN, WHNP who brings a wealth of women’s health knowledge and over 20 years of experience to the team. There are Designated Women’s Health Providers (DWHPs) in all our Patient Aligned Care Teams, ready to meet the needs of women Veterans across the 35 counties we serve. We work closely with our Community Care staff to contract with community providers for services such as maternity care and mammography, while ensuring those services are coordinated. Should you need follow up or are having any gynecological issues, Dr. Bradley is accepting patients in Saginaw.

There are going to be exciting changes on the horizon for the Women’s Health Program, and we want to make sure you stay up to date! We will be sending out a quarterly newsletter to inform you on expansion & improvement efforts, new guidelines & policies, and women’s health education. We want to assist in any way we can as you continue your journey to wellness.

Are you due for your yearly mammogram? If you need to schedule a mammogram, please contact your PACT primary care provider. Don’t forget to have your screening results sent to your VA provider to ensure your health care in the community is coordinated.

Any questions or concerns regarding women’s health can be discussed with the WVPM, Andrea Norton at (989) 497-2500 ext.11560 or the WHCCC, Jeanine Pfundt, at ext 13972.
Breast Cancer Risk Factors
Anything that increases the chance of developing a disease is called a risk factor. Some risk factors for breast cancer include the following:

- Age at start of menstruation
- Number of previous breast biopsies
- Age at first live birth
- Number of first-degree relatives with breast cancer
- At least one breast biopsy with atypical hyperplasia

According to the Center for Disease Control [www.cdc.gov/cancer/breast/statistics](http://www.cdc.gov/cancer/breast/statistics)

Breast Cancer Statistics
In 2015, the latest year for which incidence data is available. 242,476 new cases of Female Breast Cancer were reported, and 41,523 women died of Female Breast Cancer in the US. For every 100,000 women, 125 new cases of Female Breast Cancer were reported and 20 died of cancer.

The VA follows the recommendations from the American Cancer Society regarding mammograms. The ACS recommends that women with an average risk for breast cancer should begin having yearly mammograms by age 45, and can change to having mammograms every other year beginning at age 55. Women should have the choice to start screening with yearly mammograms as early as age 40 if they desire.

Did you know that localized breast cancer has a 99% survival rate if detected early? The most reliable path to early detection is a mammogram. Talk to your VA health care provider about when you should start.

Andrea Norton, LMSW, Women Veteran Program Manager, LGBT Veteran Care Coordinator
Jeanine Pfundt, RN, CNM, WHNP, Women’s Health Clinical Care Coordinator
Dr. Donald Bradley, Gynecologist, Women’s Health Medical Director
Anne Beaudoin, RN, Gynecology
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

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

Connect With Us At:
www.saginaw.va.gov
www.facebook.com/VASaginaw
MyHealtheVet:
www.myhealth.va.gov

We invite you to sign-up for our periodic e-mail and website updates by visiting our webpage and subscribing with your e-mail address.
Tribute to Veterans Day

We remember our Nation’s Veterans, those men and women who fought for freedom and, through their service and sacrifice, guaranteed our liberty and way of life.

For over 243 years of independence, these patriots stood watch over America.

From Bunker Hill to Bagdad, their vigilance and determination to uphold the beliefs on which our Nation was founded have made us the beneficiaries of their blessings.

America has been blessed; as no other country in the world.

The sacrifices of our armed forces have provided an environment of security and freedom in which our Nation has grown and flourished in business, law, human rights, economics, science and technology, and the arts.

America has long been a beacon of hope and freedom to others around the world, drawing millions to our shores and serving as a model of democracy.

Every Veterans Day is special, but this year’s commemoration is particularly meaningful.

Exactly 100 years ago on November 11, the guns of the Great War fell silent across Europe. It was at the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month of 1918 whereby World War I, “the war to end all wars,” ended.

The aftermath of that horrific war, the first conflict to incorporate machine guns, barbed wire, tanks, airplanes, and chemical weapons, gave rise to better care for Veterans who had suffered in the war.

To this day, our VA is proud to care for Veterans and their families. We THANK YOU for your service and for choosing VA for your care!