

Aleda E. Lutz VA Medical Center
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VA



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

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News Release

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We invite any media interested in interviewing our VA staff to learn more about care and services to contact our Public Affairs Officer at 989-497-2500, extension 13020 or e-mail carrie.seward@va.gov

Aleda E. Lutz VA Nurses Exercise VA's Fourth Mission *COVID-19 creates civilian health care needs -- VA nurses help fulfill*

Saginaw, Michigan – Nurses at the Aleda E. Lutz VA Medical Center, Saginaw, MI did their part to help Veteran and civilian patients fighting novel coronavirus by serving on the frontlines of care at the John D. Dingell VAMC in Detroit and the VA Ann Arbor Healthcare System.

Their efforts were part of VA's national initiative to exercise its Fourth Mission of aiding local communities and health care facilities when called upon in times of national emergency. Where VA has the capacity and the resources, it will provide beds at VA medical centers and staff for community hospitals and nursing homes. VA's decisions in supporting community health care are made after determining the actions would not negatively impact Veteran care.

Many of the medical centers were converted into Intensive Care Units (ICU's) and step-down units as both were 100% COVID positive facilities. "The loss of lives from COVID is like nothing I have experienced. Patients are speaking to you one minute and in respiratory distress the next. It's unreal! I cared for one patient for a week straight. His brother had just died from COVID a few days prior to him getting it and he was so scared. One of the most troubling parts about this pandemic is with the isolation of the patient away from their loved ones. We are their family. We are there for them during their final hours and we celebrate with them through even their smallest triumphs. I couldn't imagine a greater honor than to be here supporting our patients, stated Kimberly Doxey, MSN, RN, Health Informatics Officer." Misty Lauria, MSN, MDRO Prevention Coordinator/Ethics Consultation Coordinator stated, "This deployment has shown just how much death and disparity COVID-19 can cause. However, I was able to see my patient (80 years old) come off a ventilator after 20 days! He was fully alert and oriented!! I called his wife for him, at 1:00 a.m. She assumed we were calling to inform her of his death. Instead, she was able to hear her husband say 'I love you' on the other end of the phone!!! It was such an emotional moment for everyone! It felt like we may have succeeded a little. It is so difficult to be a nurse, wanting to heal, but only receiving death. It makes things even more difficult knowing how much they want to see their

families but cannot. It has been a great privilege to take part in this and assist our VISN 10 partners.”

“We are so proud to be a part of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and our noble calling to care for Veterans and civilians during this Fourth Mission, no matter where they need us to be, stated Dr. Barbara Bates, Medical Center Director.”

States may request assistance from the Federal Government through their local Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Regional Emergency Coordinator (REC), as part of FEMA’s National Response Coordination Center. Counties, cities, and other municipalities should route all requests for Federal support through their respective states.

For the latest information about protecting yourself visit [CDC Coronavirus](#). To learn more about VA efforts to treat Veterans with COVID-19, visit [VA COVID-19 Care](#).

The Aleda E. Lutz VAMC in Saginaw, Michigan operates an 81-bed skilled nursing and rehabilitation Community Living Center. It provides care to over 37,400 Veterans in a 35-county geographic area, from mid-Michigan to the Mackinac Bridge. Veterans also receive care at one of our nine VA Community Based Outpatient Clinics located throughout Michigan. More information about this VA can be found at www.saginaw.va.gov.

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