February 5, 2018

Dear Veterans Enrolled for Care At the VA:

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) National Salute to Veterans is observed annually during the week of Valentine's Day, which promotes the Salute's expression of honor and appreciation to inpatient and outpatient Veterans. This year's observance will be February 11-17, 2018.

First and foremost, let me say it is our honor and privilege to care for Veterans and their families in Alpena, Bad Axe, Cadillac, Cheboygan, Clare, Gaylord, Grayling, Oscoda, Saginaw, and Traverse City. With over 1,200 employees who chose the VA mission of caring for Veterans over any other Federal job, we strive each and every day to make the delivery of care and services better than the day before.

Some accomplishments we have realized over the past several months to support Integrity, Commitment, Advocacy, Respect, and Excellence as our ICARE values include:

- Improving our grounds, infrastructure, and parking.
- Increasing access across a number of clinics, as a result of same-day access and direct scheduling for some specialties.
- Implementing a smoke-less environment policy.
- Enhancing community partnerships through networking at events and activities, as well as public speaking engagements.
- Experiencing a net gain of 862 Veterans enrolled in VA care across 35 counties.
- Continuing to promote Suicide Prevention and other programs to keep Veterans safe.
- Developing a Whole Health approach to Veteran-centered care to focus on pain management and integrative therapies, along with other key components in keeping the Veteran at the center of everything we do.

These are just a few of the successes we have experienced.

Without our employees engaging in teamwork and continuous improvement, these accomplishments couldn’t have been realized.
One of the important activities of National Salute to Veterans Week is also promoting volunteerism. We have several volunteer opportunities at the Aleda E. Lutz VA, 1500 Weiss Street, Saginaw, MI. Please reach out to Voluntary Service at 989-497-2500, Extension 13360 if you are interested in learning more.

Again, we salute you, the Veterans we are honored to serve!!

Sincerely,

Ginny L. Creasman, Pharm.D. FACHE
Medical Center Director
Aleda E. Lutz VA Medical Center
Saginaw, Michigan