



Feb, 2004



Department of
Veterans Affairs
Medical Center
Chillicothe, Ohio

National Salute

Ohio Governor Bob Taft, Miss Ohio Janelle Coutts and the Ohio Road Show headlined a special Valentine's Day program on February 13, 2004, capping off a week of activities celebrating National Salute to Hospitalized Veterans.

Taft said that "Ohio does love our veterans on Valentine's Day and every day of the year" adding that "just as our veterans were there when America needed you, we have an obligation to be there when you need us and to support you and to care for you whenever you need that care."

National Salute to Hospitalized Veterans Week was created 26 years ago to pay tribute to America's hospitalized veterans. It began in 1978 when VA assumed sponsorship of a program started in 1974 by No Greater Love, Inc., a humanitarian organization that chose the week of February 14 as an appropriate time to say thank you to more than 98,000 veterans of the U.S. armed services who are cared for every day in Department of VA medical centers, outpatient clinics and nursing homes.

The week's activities also included visits from the Westland High School Junior ROTC Drill team, over 160 second-graders from the Waverly School System, two major Central Ohio Rock and Roll bands and members of the Ohio State University football team. And, of course, hundreds of valentines were received from various schools and volunteer groups such as the VFW and American Legion Auxiliary. Valentine boxes were distributed to those hospitalized veterans in attendance, compliments of the Girl Scouts of Fairfield, Pickaway and Hocking counties, American Red Cross and Campfire, Inc.

Emmy Award winning stage and television actor and director Joe Mantegna, best known for his roles on "The Money Pit", "Weeds" and "Suspect", is National



Governor Bob Taft presents Valentine Card prepared by employees of the Governor's office to Acting Medical Center Director, Keith Sullivan while State Senator Clyde Evans watches.

RECIPIENTS OF SERVICE PINS FOR JAN 2004

30 year

Emerson Cade – Environmental Management Service

20 year

Mary Jane Downing – Medical Administration Service

15 year

Donna Good – Geriatrics and Extended Care Liner
Cheryl Hitchens – Geriatrics and Extended Care Line
Denise Baxter – Mental Health Care Line
Patrick Phillips – Protective Services
Brenda Hickman – Primary and Preventative Care Line

10 year

Deborah Hiles – Nutrition and Food Service



Veteran Industries

I recently interviewed a veteran who had been unemployed and homeless prior to coming to the Chillicothe VA Medical Center. On the date of our interview, he had permanent employment, a new truck and was looking forward to moving into his own home. Let's just call him Joe. He couldn't say enough good things about the Medical Center's Veterans Industries program, stating "ones that really want to get help can get a lot out of this program.". This observation is typical of those made by veterans participating in the Vocational Rehabilitation Program.

Veterans Industries obtained employment for 107 veterans or 58.5% of its patients in 2003, the highest employment rate in the VISN. Veterans were paid close to \$180,000 while participating in various community contracts. Patient satisfaction with the program was very high with 96% of the patients surveyed stating they would recommend a friend, 96% stating they were satisfied with the program and 70% stating they were very satisfied.

The program offers vocational counseling, job re-integration training and much more. Veterans earn a chance to regain their self-esteem and also the respect of the community. After gaining job experience and proving reliability, the veterans work with Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors to find permanent jobs.



Early therapy clinic

Chillicothe's mission of vocational rehabilitation predates the medical center. As soldiers began returning from World War I in 1918, the U.S. Veterans Bureau established a local training school with early training focusing on agricultural activities. In 1925, the hospital produced over 14,000 gallons of food products and maintained over 100 head of hogs, a herd of 80 sheep, a flock of 1,500 chickens, and a dairy herd of 98 cattle. Over the years, training skills were added in other trades including automotive maintenance, agriculture, upholstery, electrical principles, photography, woodworking, laundering, and even tailoring.



Assembly area

The Hospital Industries Program (HIP) began in 1967, allowing businesses to contract for assembly work, packaging, sorting and mailing. A major contract was signed in 1989 with Weastec Corp. for veterans to assemble parts used to make turn signals installed in vehicles manufactured by the

Honda Corporation of America.

The Chillicothe Paints professional baseball team played their first game on June 30, 1993, and a contract with Veterans Industries provided field maintenance for the first several seasons of what has since become the Frontier League's oldest franchise. When appropriated funding for VA golf courses ended in 1996, the South Central Ohio Homeless Veterans Committee (SCOHVC) leased the local golf course and contracted with the Veterans' Industries Compensated Work Therapy Program (CWT) for the work force to maintain the grounds. Other current major CWT contractors include Calmar and Info-Sight.



Cost effectiveness for the VA and community businesses is a major plus for this program. The money the veterans earn comes from those companies who have contracted with Veterans Industries. "We can provide inexpensive labor to local businesses plus give our veterans a fresh start back into the workforce, with little cost to the VA and taxpayers," states Toni Throckmorton, Marketing and Service Representative for Veterans Industries.

Joe has now been steadily employed at Sugar Creek Packing since November and said the Veterans Industries program was a major turning point in his life. "I was living in abandoned houses and under bridges. It saved my life."

In 2002, the program earned a three year CARF accreditation (Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities) , the highest accreditation that may be awarded.

Medical Center leaders earn prestigious healthcare management credential

Linda L. Kight, Facility Planner and Kathleen Velarde, R.D., L.D., Chief Nutrition and Food Service at the Chillicothe VA Medical, recently earned board certification in healthcare management, advancing to Diplomate status in the American College of Healthcare Executives.

ACHE, an international professional society of 30,000 healthcare leaders, recognized Ms. Kight and Ms. Velarde at ACHE's February Convocation Ceremony, held during the organization's annual Congress on Healthcare Management.

"Because healthcare management ultimately affects the people in our communities, it is so important to have a standard of excellence that is promoted by a professional society," says Thomas C. Dolan, Ph.D, FACHE, CAE, president and CEO of ACHE. "Earning board certification from ACHE is one way that healthcare leaders can show that they are committed to providing quality service."

To earn board certification, candidates must successfully complete a comprehensive exam covering subjects related to healthcare management, demonstrate their continuing education and professional experience, as well as participate in community activities. Ms. Kight and Ms. Velarde are privileged to use the "CHE" (Certified Healthcare Executive) designation, which indicates board certification in healthcare management and ACHE Diplomate status. More than 5,000 healthcare executives hold Diplomate status.

The American College of Healthcare Executives is an international professional society of nearly 30,000 healthcare executives who lead our nation's hospitals, healthcare systems, and other healthcare organizations. ACHE is known for its prestigious credentialing and educational programs and its annual Congress on Healthcare Management, which draws more than 4,000 participants each year. ACHE is also known for its journal, the Journal of Healthcare Management, and magazine, Healthcare Executive, as well as ground-breaking research and career development and public policy programs. ACHE's publishing division, Health Administration Press, is one of the largest publishers of books and journals on all aspects of health services management in addition to textbooks for use in college and university courses. Through such efforts, ACHE works toward its goal of being the premier professional society for healthcare leaders by providing exceptional value to its members. For more information, please contact (312) 424-9400 or memberships @ache.org.

Gordon H. Mansfield - Deputy Secretary of Veterans Affairs

Deputy Secretary of Veterans Affairs Gordon H. Mansfield serves as the chief operating officer for the federal government's second largest department, responsible for a nationwide system of health care services, benefits programs and national cemeteries for America's veterans and their dependents. With a budget of \$64 billion for fiscal year 2004, VA employs approximately 230,000 people at facilities nationwide.

Mr. Mansfield was confirmed by the Senate on January 22, 2004. He previously served as VA Assistant Secretary for Congressional and Legislative Affairs since August 1, 2001.

Prior to his appointment, Mr. Mansfield served as the legislative advisor to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs and was responsible for VA's Congressional relations and for representing VA programs, policies, investigations and legislative agenda to Congress.

Prior to joining VA, Mr. Mansfield served as executive director of the Paralyzed Veterans of America (PVA) since April 1993. In that position, the highly decorated Vietnam veteran oversaw daily operation of PVA's national office in Washington, D.C. Mr. Mansfield held a number of positions at PVA from 1981 to 1989, and served as the organization's first associate executive director of Government Relations.

Mr. Mansfield served as Assistant Secretary for Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity at the Department of Housing and Urban Development from 1989 to 1993 under President George H. W. Bush's Administration. Prior to 1981, he practiced law in Ocala, Florida.

Mr. Mansfield received his undergraduate degree from Villanova University and law degree from the University of Miami. Following his 1964 enlistment in the Army, Mr. Mansfield served two tours of duty in Vietnam. While serving as company commander with the 101st Airborne Division during his second tour, he was wounded during the Tet Offensive of 1968 sustaining a spinal cord injury. For his actions while his unit was under fire, he was decorated with the Distinguished Service Cross. He was medically retired by the U.S. Army at the grade of Captain. His other combat decorations include the Bronze Star, two Purple Hearts, the Combat Infantryman's Badge and the Presidential Unit Citation.

Mr. Mansfield also is a recipient of the Presidential Distinguished Service Award and the Villanova University Alumni Human Relations Medal. He was inducted into the U.S. Army Officer Candidate School Hall of Fame in 1997.

Black History Month

Brown v Board at 50

(February is Black History Month with the 2004 theme being "Brown v. Board of Education 50th Anniversary.")

Linda Brown was an eight year old black child who had to ride a bus 5 miles across Topeka, Kansas to attend grade school, while her white friends were able to attend classes at a public school just a few blocks away. The Topeka School system was segregated on the basis of race, and under the separate but equal doctrine, this arrangement was acceptable and legal. Linda's parents sued in federal district court on the basis that separate facilities for blacks were inherently unequal. The lower courts agreed with the school system that if the facilities were equal, the child was being treated equally with whites as prescribed by the Fourteenth Amendment. The Browns and other families in other school systems appealed to the Supreme Court that even facilities that were physically equal did not take into account "intangible" factors, and that segregation itself has a deleterious effect on the education of black children. Their case was encouraged by the National Association For the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and was argued before the Supreme Court by Thurgood Marshall, who would later become the first black justice on the Supreme Court.

The Issue Before the Court:

Does racial segregation of children in public schools deprive minority children of equal protection of the laws under the Fourteenth Amendment?

Supreme Court Ruling: The Supreme Court ruled unanimously to end racial segregation in public schools.

Summary and Excerpt of Ruling

The high court ruled unanimously to overturn the Plessy v. Ferguson decision. The decision of the court was delivered by Chief Justice Earl Warren. After outlining the facts of the case and history of the Court's thinking on the "separate but equal" doctrine, Warren stressed the importance of education in the consciousness of American life:

"Today, education is perhaps the most important function of state and local governments. Compulsory school attendance laws and the great expenditures for education both demonstrate our recognition of the importance of education to our democratic society. It is required in the performance of our most basic public responsibilities, even service in the armed forces. It is the very foundation of good citizenship. Today it is a principal instrument in awakening the child to cultural values, in preparing him for later professional training, and in helping him to adjust normally to his environment.



Thurgood Marshall with James Nabrit Jr. and George E.C. Hayes after their victory in the Brown v. Board of Education case before the Supreme Court, May 17, 1954.

In these days, it is doubtful that any child may reasonably be expected to succeed in life if he is denied the opportunity of an education. Such an opportunity, where the state has undertaken to provide it, is a right which must be made available to all on equal terms.

We come then to the question presented: Does segregation of children in public schools solely on the basis of race, even though the physical facilities and other "tangible" factors may be equal, deprive the children of the minority group of equal educational opportunities? We believe that it does."

The basis of the decision rests on the Equal Protection clause of the Fourteenth Amendment, which applies the standard of equality to the actions of the states as well as the Federal government in a concept known in legal circles as "incorporation." Warren wrote:

"We conclude that, in the field of public education, the doctrine of "separate but equal" has no place. Separate educational facilities are inherently unequal. Therefore, we hold that the plaintiffs and others similarly situated for whom the actions have been brought are, by reason of the segregation complained of, deprived of the equal protection of the laws guaranteed by the Fourteenth Amendment."

Results of the Ruling:

The Brown case signaled the end of "de jure" segregation in the United States, that is, segregation of public places that is mandated by law. Once the Brown decision was handed down, the African-American community, along with forward-thinking white Americans, placed sufficient pressure on the legal and political system to bring an end to state-supported segregation in all public facilities within twenty years through the Civil Rights Movement, led by Dr. Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr.

A letter from CARES Commission Chairman Alvarez



Department of Veterans Affairs
CARES Commission

February 11, 2004

*Dr. Robert H. Roswell
Under Secretary for Health
Department of Veterans Affairs
810 Vermont Ave NW
Washington DC 20420*

Dear Dr. Roswell,

It is said that one can determine the character of a nation by observing how it treats its military veterans. To that, I'd like to add a commentary that in providing health care for America's veterans the staff at VA medical centers embody the commitment, sensitivity and respect of all of us, reflecting the view of their fellow Americans.

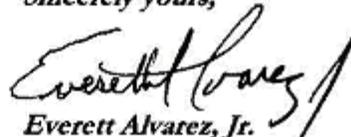
During site visits, at the many public meetings, and informal exchanges with veterans and their families, the CARES Commission made some observations that I would like to pass on to you. Our veterans are rightfully proud of their service, are grateful that their country provides such quality medical care, and are full of praise for the VA staff who provide such care.

We saw the dynamics of health care delivery in a spirit of teamwork. There was real enthusiasm shown as the VA people went about their tasks. In a medical system challenged as it is, the dedication to service yielded innovation across the board. We saw nurse-managed treatment teams, physician assistants and clinical pharmacists working hand in glove with physicians and other medical professionals on inpatient units and on primary care teams, registered dieticians as part of specialty and primary care clinics, and somewhat beleaguered support personnel providing administrative duties to make all the good work fit together. Additionally we saw the same commitment of service in those who are the behind the scenes team members such as engineering, supply, housekeeping staff, and the list goes on.

And what would we do without the thousands of volunteers we saw in reception areas, on the treatment units, and generally expressing their respect and, I submit, love for our veterans?

Bob, you have to be proud to be leading the Veterans Health Administration. On behalf of my fellow CARES Commissioners, please pass on to your colleagues our gratitude for all they do so capably and for making our job so rewarding and fulfilling.

Sincerely yours,


Everett Alvarez, Jr.
Chairman
CARES Commission

Coders are special people

Coders are special people you see
We analyze, educate and understand terminology
We cannot code or get reimbursed
If the Doctors don't start with documentation first

We're on a mission to seek and find
So you can bill for that last thin dime

Dear, dear Doctor, you're under arrest
For you have failed the documentation test
Your abbreviations just drive us mad
The ones not approved are really bad

Fraudulent coding we do not do, because
The documentation is up to you
You need us you see, for we are the key
To bring in our money as fast as can be

To educate and to understand
For coders we know, are in high demand
We have to follow Medicare rules and regulations
Cause fraud will ruin our reputation
and

We can't assume and diagnose you see, so
We code signs and symptoms, which will change the
DRG

The codes go up and the codes go down
Cause the documentation cannot be found
If you have a question, whom do you ask
You run to the coders really fast

The conditions and diseases are ICD-9
HCPC's and CPT's consume our mind
The bones in the body, we know every one
The E-codes we give them are so much fun

So as you can see,
Coders really ARE special people,
aren't WE?

Mel Peters, Robin Cottrill, Joyce Doles, Esther Davies, Wilma Thrush,
Tammy Moore, Debbie Snyder, Jodi Foltz, and Tara Jones



**Lancaster Community
Outpatient Clinic**
1550 Sheridan Drive, Suite 100
Lancaster, Ohio 43130
740-653-6145

February 11, 2004
Noel Sheets
Girl Scout Council
Appalachian Service Center
Athens, OH 45701
RE: Valentine Day boxes

I would like to express our appreciation on behalf of the staff and the veteran patients we serve. This was a big surprise for our veterans and they have greatly appreciated being remembered on Valentines Day. We have received numerous expressions of gratitude in person and by phone.

This has certainly made the veterans feel as they have not been forgotten. One of our veterans cried and said he had never received a Valentine box before.

I know there were a lot of Girl Scout troops involved in this project and just want to make sure that they get the feedback that all of their hard work was very well received.

The veterans wanted to know where to send thank-you cards and I have passed along your address per Peggy Griffith of the Fairfield Red Cross.

Our Voluntary Service, through the Chillicothe VA, has requested that a Donation Information Form be filled out and sent back to them. If you would kindly fill out the estimated value of these boxes and return the form to Dept of Veterans Affairs, Voluntary Service (135), 17273 SR 104, Chillicothe, OH 45601.

Again, thank you so much for the dedication to our servicemen and women.

Sincerely

Brenda Reisinger
Clinic Manager

Enduring and Iraqi Freedom

and other Theaters of Operation <http://www.vba.va.gov/efif/> - The Department of Veterans Affairs has a web site for returning Active Duty, National Guard and Reserve service members of Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom. We honor the opportunity to provide benefits information and assistance to eligible veterans who honorably fought and served in our Nation's armed forces.

As you search our web site, you will find that VA offers a wide range of benefits for returning veterans. We have included links to other federal agencies and organizations that offer related benefits and services. It is our sincere hope that you will find our web site of great value. Before you begin your research, here are some quick tips.

Accurate Data Entry

Submitted by Marcy A. Downing, CBI Officer

Accurate data entry must be a primary concern for every employee, not only for preventing errors before they occur and eliminating unnecessary work, but also for ensuring health care compliance and integrity, data quality and maintaining a high level of security for funding and health care services.

Today, private organizations, as well as the United States Government, spend large sums of money to sort through their databases looking for valuable information, and often dollars are spent cleaning up those databases to ensure accurate accounting of revenue and costs. Inaccurate data leads to a lot of expense and waste, and for VA, it means lost appropriation of funding, lost revenue from third party entities, misrepresented health care statistics, and customer complaints.

According to the background information within VHA Directive 2002-050 dated July 5, 2002, "Accurate and complete patient information is critical to VHA for patient care, management reporting, resource allocation, corporate forecasting and other business and clinical needs." The quantity of patient information now stored electronically in VHA databases has grown both in size and complexity. It is also widely distributed, residing at each of 163 VHA health care facilities, as well as corporate (Austin Automation Center and other) databases. The accuracy of patient information and patient identification directly affects administrative, clinical, billing, and interdepartmental processes, such as eligibility data sharing between Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) and VHA.

It cannot be stressed enough that not only should each employee ensure that the right information is entered on the right patient, at the right time, but also, that the data is entered in the correct VA standard format.

Examples of errors can include, but are not limited to:

- Demographic and insurance information not updated at time of encounter.
- Service connected/non-service disability not accurately entered at the time of discharge from inpatient care or outpatient visit.
- Inappropriate levels of outpatient visit codes causing possible loss in workload and reimbursement or possible external audits.
- Attachment of clinic visit notes to future visit dates.
- A patient's request to cancel an appointment is entered as a no-show.
- Inappropriate use of copying and pasting of other provider notes.

As in the sayings, "information is power" and "garbage in, garbage out," consider that bad information in a database is worse than no information at all. Bad information can lead the organization to a heap of garbage with little value and a false sense of its position.



ATTENTION:
Female Veterans
 Learn more about the services VA offers at the
Center for Women Veterans
<http://www.va.gov/womenvet/>

CARES Commission Announces Recommendations

WASHINGTON – The independent commission charged with studying the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) proposal for realigning its health care system holding a press conference on Friday, Feb. 13, to discuss its findings.

The commission's report deals with VA's Capital Asset Realignment for Enhanced Services, or CARES, process. "I appreciate the hard work that went into producing this report, and I commend the commission, chaired by Everett Alvarez, for its service to veterans," said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Anthony J. Principi.

The CARES Commission conducted 38 public hearings and 10 public meetings around the country, heard from 770 witnesses, including 135 members of Congress and seven governors, and received written comments from more than 212,000 people since it began its work in August.

VA operates the nation's largest integrated health care system, with more than 1,300 sites of care. The system is expected to treat more than 5 million patients this year during 600,000 hospitalizations and 51 million outpatient visits.

Principi said VA will not publicly comment on the CARES Commission's report until after he has made a final decision on its recommendations in approximately 30 days.



Photos from National Salute to Hospitalized Veterans Week, 2004



Women Legislators join efforts in Veterans History Project

Secretary of Veterans Affairs Anthony J. Principi was the featured speaker on Feb. 24 at the start of the Library of Congress' Veterans History Project to increase national awareness.

"I am proud VA is a part of this very important effort to preserve the legacy of America's veterans," said Principi. "This project will allow younger generations of Americans to learn about the sacrifices and patriotism of those who fought to guarantee their freedom."

Women elected officials from every state and U.S. territory have been selected to serve as veterans team leaders for NFWL's "Heart to Heart" program to record interviews with veterans for presentation to the Library of Congress' Veterans History Project.

State Senator Joy Padgett, R-Coshocton, plans on making sure the entire nation know the stories of Ohio's veterans by serving as the state team leader for the Veterans History Project. While Secretary Principi was speaking at the national ceremony in Washington, D.C., Padgett held events in both Marietta and Zanesville to promote the project.

The project originally kicked off statewide in Chillicothe back in August, 2003 with an event co-hosted by VAMC Chillicothe and U.S. Representative Bob Ney. Ney chairs the House Administration Committee which has oversight of the Library of Congress. VAMC Chillicothe is a partner with the Library of Congress in the Veterans History Project.

Through the involvement of Senator Padgett, Ney hopes to see more counties getting involved in the project. "We can find out what happened from the ones who actually lived it," said Padgett.

Marietta resident Eugene Parker, a World War II veteran and former prisoner of war, was interviewed at the Chillicothe VA Medical Center last year.. "You never get over the hurt but if you don't talk about it and keep it penned up, it hurts you even more."

Padgett's events included a round-table dialogue with several veterans along with County Veterans Service Officers, County Commissioners, Jim Forster, Acting Director of the Governor's Office of Veterans Affairs and



State Senator Joy Padgett listens to veterans concerns in Zanesville

Bob Barnhart, Public Affairs Officer at VAMC Chillicothe.

Washington County Veterans Service Officer Roy Ash said he felt the project was very worthwhile but started too late. "I wish we would have started this project earlier but we can start capturing the reminiscences, narratives and histories of the World War II veterans." Ash said the Washington County Veterans Service Commission was committed to procuring equipment and providing a location for conducting the interviews and hoped to partner with another local group.

Barnhart said "the experience has been very rewarding on several levels: first, it's a most appropriate means of paying tribute to the men and women who served in and in support of our nation in its time of need; second, the process will build a national educational resource for future generations; and third, the relationships that have developed are very special because you develop a bond when someone shares something with you that may never have been shared previously."

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is joining forces with the National Foundation for Women Legislators (NFWL), the Disabled American Veterans (DAV) and the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress to record interviews with veterans for presentation to the Library of Congress' Veterans History Project.



Learn more at <http://www.loc.gov/vets> and <http://www.chillicothe.med.va.gov/vetshistory.html>

FY2003 Goalsharing

Overall Team Accomplishments

VAMC Chillicothe had a very successful first year with Goalsharing. 167 teams met or exceeded their stretch goal, and 2 teams met their meaningful goal. These teams were made up of over 1021 employees for a participation rate of 95% - the highest in the VISN.

Teams reported cost savings or an increase in collections of over \$237,000, with numerous teams working toward improvements in customer service. Listed below are just some of the team accomplishments for FY03. Twenty-eight of our local goals were forwarded to the VISN Goalsharing Committee to consider for possible VISN-wide implementation.

- Team goal was to reduce the OP lag time billing days to 150. They were able to decrease the OP lag time by the end of July 2003 to 47.64 days, an improvement of 138.21 days from FY2002.
- Three teams worked together to increase the number of pounds of corrugated cardboard that was recycled. Their stretch goal was 1089 lbs of cardboard. The teams were able to collect a total of 16,246 lbs of cardboard as of 7/31/03.
- Team goal was to decrease the average wait time for new enrollee veterans who do not have a need or desire to see a physician at the time of registration. Stretch goal was to decrease from the baseline of an average of 137 minutes per veteran to an average of 111 minutes per veteran. The team was able to reduce the overall time to an average of 52 minutes per veteran which also increased the number of vesting physicals acquired for this type of veteran and had only 3 no shows out of 90 appointments for the vesting physical appointment.
- Five teams on 211AB set a goal to contact 37% of the inpatients admitted to the unit to determine their level of customer satisfaction. Their purpose was to use the information to improve customer satisfaction by an improved awareness of their patients' needs. They were able to contact 88% of the patients admitted during this period.
- Five teams on 211AB set a goal to contact 37% of the inpatients admitted to the unit to determine and improve customer satisfaction through improved awareness of their patients' needs. They were able to contact 88% of the patients admitted during this period.
- Team set a goal to increase customer satisfaction through music. The team performed 10 musical sessions for the veterans, holding two major sessions in the Rec Hall and visiting the wards for the others. This was very well received by the veterans, family members, and staff alike.
- Police & Security teams set a goal to increase patient safety by increasing foot patrols in highly occupied areas and in the large circle per week. Their stretch goal of 18 per week, was exceeded, increasing the actual number to 35 per week. This resulted in more face-to-face communications with both veterans and staff that on at least two occasions allowed a better response by the Police Department than might have been possible before the start of the project.
- A team from Chaplain Service worked to increase opportunities for veterans to participate in spiritual re-creational activities. They were able to exceed their stretch goal of 44 per month to 52.5 per month, thereby facilitating veterans' participation in worship services while hospitalized which also increases their overall satisfaction with care.
- A Pharmacy team worked to increase the average number of refill slips submitted in the refill box, especially 30 day fills, so that patients will get their refills before they run out. Their stretch goal was to increase this to an average of 847 month, but was able to exceed and maintain an average of 1,200. There is a reduction in phone calls requesting for partial medications to tide them over until their refills arrived which also decreased costs due to not having to send out partials via overnight mail or FedEx.
- A team in Engineering worked on a goal to increase education to staff on Elevator Safety. They developed a PowerPoint presentation and brochure and were able to train 135 staff thereby meeting their stretch goal. Their hope is that educating staff on elevator safety will lower injuries and cut the cost of repair and maintenance.
- A team in Primary Care set a goal to contribute to better healthcare for our veterans by the addition of clinical reminders to the current list. The team was able to add eight additional clinical reminders that exceeded their stretch goal of 7. By utilizing the clinical reminders, the health care providers are more attuned to the patient's disease process and thus, will provide our patients with a more complete treatment regime based on national standards of care. An example of improvement shows those heart failure patients given weight instruction prior to admission that went from 0% compliance in March (first month implemented) to 88% in June.

Two Dental Service teams set a goal to increase the number of inpatient and domiciliary patient oral examinations performed. Their stretch goal was to perform 963 exams but they were able to perform 1,006. They diagnosed and treated several patients on the ward with oral lesions. Patients that were unaware that they were eligible for dental services were found and treated and many patients requiring emergency extractions were examined and treatment was provided. See <http://vaww.chillicothe.med.va.gov/goalshare.html>

Medical Center Accomplishments 2003



- In June, 2003, Douglas A. Moorman became the Medical Center Director.
- A formal mentoring program was implemented and the first class (11 participants) was graduated in May.
- The medical center acquired a new CT scanner which became operational in December.
- A location was identified for a new Alternative Delivery Site in Cambridge, Ohio which is hoped to be operational in April, 2004.
- The medical center had 199,244 outpatient visits and treated 4,574 inpatients.
- The medical center exceeded 116% of the fiscal year collection goal.
- The medical center's "goalsharing" program (see related article) saw 169 teams meet or exceed their goals.
- New patient programs were initiated including expansion of MHICM (Mental Health Incentive Case Management), HBHC (Home Based Primary Care), a sleep lab, digital radiography, and the successful recruitment of a gastroenterologist.
- A number of projects were completed including relocation of the surgery clinic to Building 30, renovation of 211AB, and the remodeling of the Stress Testing area in Building 31.
- The medical center participated in the CARES (Capital Asset Realignment for Enhanced Services) hearings in late summer.
- Geographic partnering with the Columbus Outpatient Clinic continued in the administrative areas of A&MMS, CIO, Engineering, Fiscal, HRM and PBS.
- Fiscal Service had a successful quality assurance audit by the DVA Office of Financial Policy.
- Local volunteer Pat Olaker received the Secretary of Veterans Affairs Voluntary Service Award for over 19,000 volunteer hours.



Volunteer of the Year - The Chillicothe-Ross Chamber of Commerce presented its Volunteer of the Year award to Lori Hice, of the Veterans Affairs Medical Center, at their annual dinner on February 26, 2004.

Hice, the Patient Services Coordinator at VAMC Chillicothe, is the chairman of the steering committee of the Chamber's Pathfinders Leadership program. Chamber President Marvin Jones noted that in the past year, the program has undergone substantial changes in its curriculum and said Ms. Hice ensured its success by overseeing the committee and attending many of the sessions. In more than eight years, the chamber's Pathfinders Leadership Program has turned out more than 100 graduates who now are using their skills and knowledge as better employees for their businesses and organizations.



Calendar of Events

- VAVS Mtg./Volunteer Recognition (by invitation only) - Friday, 4/23/04 - AMVETS Post 2256, Circleville - Mtg. - 3 pm; Awards - 4 pm; Dinner - 5 pm.
- Summer Carnival - Saturday, 6/5/04, 1-3 pm (Bldg 9 parking lot)
- Bloodmobile - TBA, 9 am - 3 pm (Bldg. 9)
- POW/MIA Recognition Ceremony - Friday, 9/17/04, 2 pm (Bldg. 9)
- VAVS Committee Mtg. - Saturday, 9/11/04, 10:30 am (Bldg. 9)
- Veterans Day Ceremony - Thursday, 11/11/04, 10 am (Bldg. 9)
- VAVS Committee Mtg. - Saturday, 11/20/04, 10:30 am (Bldg. 9)
- Christmas Tree Lighting/Ohio Road Show - Monday, 11/29/04, 1:30 pm (Bldg. 9)
- Unit Shopping - Wednesday, 12/23/04, 2 - 3 pm (meet in Bldg. 9)

