

# VETERANS'

*healthy living*

## Serving ALL Who Served

Saving Lives with  
NARCAN Training

Helping Veterans  
Move Forward



Bedford VA Medical Center  
Manchester VA Medical Center  
VA Boston Healthcare System  
West Haven VA Medical Center

**Celebrate  
Respect  
& Welcome  
LGBT Veterans**



U.S. Department  
of Veterans Affairs



**VA  
HEALTH  
CARE**

Defining  
**EXCELLENCE**  
in the 21st Century



# A Message from the Network Director

Michael Mayo-Smith, MD, MPH  
Network Director

Dear Veterans,

Fall is always a great time to sit back and reflect on what's been accomplished in the past year. Here at VISN 1, we're proud of the ways we're taking health care to the next level for Veterans – and making that care accessible to all those within our reach.

On page 3, learn about the new Bedford Green apartments built right on the Edith Nourse Rogers Memorial Hospital campus. This is just one of the many ways we're keeping our promise to end Veteran homelessness.

We are continuing in our commitment to deliver the best care for Veterans. We're proud to announce that the VA New England Healthcare System has achieved a five-star SAIL health care quality rating – showing we're succeeding in our quest to provide outstanding care and customer service (page 3).

Our VA Police go above and beyond to protect everyone who visits our health care campuses. Read on page 4 and 5 about how the VA Police throughout VISN 1 participate in training opportunities that help them respond to situations involving mental illness, drug addiction and PTSD.

We are dedicated to serving every Veteran, and that includes those who are part of the LGBT community. VISN 1 recently received high marks from the Human Rights Campaign (HRC) Foundation, and we've been recognized as a "Leader in LGBT Healthcare Equality." Read more about our achievements on page 6. And, read about one LGBT Veteran's story in how the care he's received within VISN 1 has made a positive difference in his life.

Lastly, when Veterans return home, sometimes they need a strong helping hand to help them transition to the next stage of their lives. Read more on page 7 about how VISN 1 offers a variety of educational and employment services to help Veterans pursue their dreams.

***Thank you for your service. Now let us serve you!***

Michael Mayo-Smith, MD, MPH  
Network Director



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### ON THE COVER:

Veterans march in the annual Boston Pride Parade on June 11, 2016. This year's theme was "Solidarity Through Pride." The Boston parade drew an estimated 500,000 spectators, 35,000 marchers, 257 contingents and 28 floats – some of the best participation the parade has ever had.



## VA MISSION:

*Honor America's Veterans by providing exceptional health care that improves their health and well-being.*

# New, Safe Housing for Homeless Veterans



*Betsy Collins of Peabody Properties, Inc. cuts the ribbon at the Grand Opening Ceremony on July 21 for the new Bedford Green apartments on the Bedford VA's Edith Nourse Rogers Memorial Hospital campus. She's joined by other Bedford Green partners whose contributions helped to make the complex a reality.*

Ending Veteran homelessness has been a top priority for Veterans Affairs for many years, and the VA has made great strides toward that goal. In fact, the number of homeless Veterans has decreased greatly since 2009.

The new Bedford Green apartments built at the Bedford VA's Edith Nourse Rogers Memorial Hospital is just one of the ways the VA is continuing that commitment to help all Veterans find safe housing.

A grand opening ceremony for the four-acre apartment complex took place on July 21. Bedford Green provides 69 furnished one-bedroom apartment homes for homeless Veterans and those at-risk for homelessness, 55 years and older.

In addition to the apartments, the Veteran residents also have direct access to support services. That includes on-site VA case managers, as well as medical, clinical and well-being services.

## VISN 1 in Top 10% of VA Health Care Systems

The VISN 1 health care systems are being recognized as some of the best in the VA nationally. Recently, VISN 1 achieved a 5-star status in Strategic Analytics for Improvement and Learning (SAIL) metrics. SAIL is a Department of Affairs initiative to measure the health care quality of each hospital, such as mortality rates, infection rates and patient satisfaction. This status places VISN 1 in the top 10 percent of VA health care systems nationwide.



**Bottom line: VA patients in the New England Health Care System are getting excellent care.**

Much of this success comes down to the staff at each VISN 1 medical facility. Each person strives daily to deliver top-notch service and patient-centered care to all those they serve. They are focused on removing all barriers to excellent customer service.

"I want to congratulate all of you in the VA New England Healthcare System for achieving such great results in SAIL," says Dr. David Shulkin, VA Under Secretary for Health. "That's not easy to do, and it's really indicative of having a great focus on quality."

# VA Police Save Lives with NARCAN Training

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates that 165,000 people died from opiate (also referred to as opioid) overdoses between 1999 and 2014. And, this disturbing trend continues to shoot upward. Massachusetts has been hit particularly hard by the epidemic. In 2015, 1,319 people died of opiate-related deaths, making it the leading cause of accidental death in that state.



*VA Police from around VISN 1 use every resource available to ensure each VA campus is a safe place for anyone who visits.*

## **The Problem**

Opiates (i.e., morphine, codeine, fentanyl, etc.) are a class of drugs that very effectively manage pain. These drugs can do a lot of good for patients struggling with pain, but they are also highly addictive.

If not controlled, an addiction could form and a patient may seek out street drugs, like heroin, for relief. These drugs may be more potent than what's found in a prescription and they may take too much. Or, they might be mixed with other drugs, such as fentanyl. If the person is unaware of this, they might overdose.

VA medical campuses routinely deal with situations of patients having an opiate overdose. So now, the VA Boston Police Department is meeting this crisis head-on.

## **A Unique Solution**

Nasal naloxone (NARCAN®) is used to counteract these opiate overdoses, essentially reversing them. In 2014, Alan Kershaw, Clinical Pharmacy Specialist, Brockton campus of VA Boston, developed the Opioid Overdose Education and Naloxone Distribution (OEND) program for medical staff and Veteran patients. Soon after, it was expanded to VA Police.

The VA Boston Police are now trained to administer the NARCAN® nasal spray, and carry it on their utility belts in case they encounter someone overdosing during their patrol. It administers a 4mg dose of medicine, reversing an opiate emergency and potentially saving a life.

"If there's an overdose, police can sometimes get there faster than emergency medical staff can," says Kershaw.

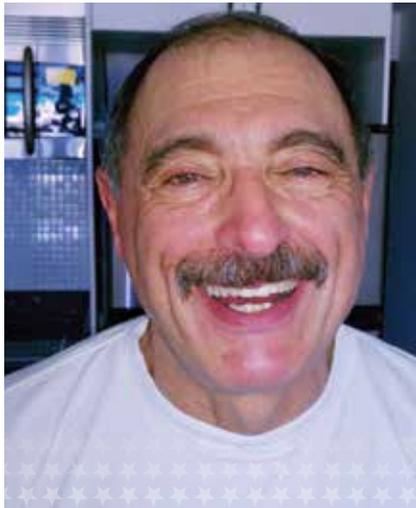
Since the program launched, VA Boston has dispensed 660 prescriptions for naloxone. They have documented 71 overdose reversals. And, six of those reversals happened with VA Police assistance.

## **Get Help for an Addiction**

- Veterans Crisis Line:  
1-800-273-TALK (8255) OR  
text 838255
- VA Substance Use Disorder Program Locator:  
[www.va.gov/directory/guide/SUD.asp](http://www.va.gov/directory/guide/SUD.asp)
- VA PTSD programs:  
[www.va.gov/directory/guide/PTSD.asp](http://www.va.gov/directory/guide/PTSD.asp)
- "Learn to Cope" support group:  
[www.learn2cope.org](http://www.learn2cope.org)
- [www.narcan.com](http://www.narcan.com)  
1-844-4Narcan  
(1-844-462-7228)



## Good Care Important for LGBT Veteran



Navy Veteran Bob Casanta (served from January 1967 to February 1971) says he's grateful for the wonderful care he receives within the VA Boston Healthcare System. As a gay man who tests positive for HIV, he says receiving good, consistent health care is invaluable to him.

"I really cannot say enough about the care I get at the VA hospital in Boston," says Casanta, who also gets treated for osteoarthritis. He says it's important for those in the LGBT community to have someone in their corner helping them manage their health.

Casanta says his openly gay therapist, Joseph Wigon, is responsible for much of his positive experience. As the lead therapist within the Infectious Disease and Oncology Department at VA Boston, Wigon has shown to be a strong advocate for the LGBT community.

## VISN 1 – Leader in LGBT Healthcare Equality

For many years, a struggle has existed within the health care industry about how to best care for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people. Not knowing how they might be perceived or treated, some LGBT people have, in turn, been reluctant to seek out health care. But, things are changing for the better.

### **A Step in the Right Direction**

Recently, every medical center within VISN 1 was recognized by the Human Rights Campaign (HRC) Foundation as a "Leader in LGBT Healthcare Equality." The results are based on the Healthcare Equality Index (HEI) 2016 annual survey that assesses the inclusive policies and practices related to LGBT patients, visitors and employees. This year, 496 of the 568 (87%) HEI 2016 survey participants met all of the Core Four criteria for LGBT patient-centered care. The four criteria are:

1. Patient Non-Discrimination Policies
2. Equal Visitation Policies
3. Employment Non-Discrimination Policies
4. Training in LGBT Patient-Centered Care

"When you think about the VA, and the history of 'don't ask, don't tell,' Veterans might have felt like a VA hospital wasn't a safe place for them" says Dr. Lynette Adams, Licensed Clinical Psychologist, Women Veteran Program Manager, at the VA Connecticut Healthcare System. "Going on record that we're looking at policies and practices for LGBT health care sends the message that all are welcome here."



# Education and Employment Help for Veterans

Returning home after military service can come with a host of challenges. One of the hardest questions a Veteran may struggle with is, "What do I do next?"

"Some Veterans come home and experience challenges with the transition from military to civilian life," says Lisa Mueller, a clinician for Veterans Employment Resources at the Edith Nourse Rogers Memorial Veterans Hospital in Bedford. "We provide services and connect them with VA and community resources."



## Walk and Roll for a Good Cause



On May 18, employees from the Edith Nourse Rogers Memorial Veterans Hospital in Bedford participated in the 6th annual VA2K 2016 Walk & Roll nationwide event. Organized by the Veteran Peers "Community Recovery Connections Team," Bedford's VA2K 2016 was celebrated with calypso music, bubbles, event tents and US flags.

The event encourages participants to stay active and help homeless Veterans through donations. The donations collected during the 1.2 mile walk benefited those moving into the Bedford Green apartment complex for homeless Veterans. Participants could also purchase food from "Morning Salute," a food truck run by formerly homeless Veterans.



Gold Star Mothers of Massachusetts and Rhode Island, (Pres. Karen Lounsbury pictured above), with help from Military Friends and the Honorable Few, donated a \$25 grocery card for each of the 69 "Welcome Home" gift baskets for each of the Bedford Green apartments.

### Where You Can Find Help

Here are just some of the employment and educational assistance open to Veterans within VISN 1:

#### **Supported Employment (SE) Program:**

This program is specifically designed for Veterans seeking community employment. They assist in finding a job that matches your preferences. Once hired, the SE staff provides any support you need to keep the job as long as you may need.

#### **Supported Self-Employment (SSE) Program:**

For those that dream of owning their own businesses, the SSE offers "Business Gym" classes. In partnership with the nonprofit organization, Veteran Business Owners Initiative (VBOI), SSE provides business mentors and other support to help Veterans move through each stage of small business development. Visit [www.veteranbusinessowners.org](http://www.veteranbusinessowners.org) to find a Business Gym class near you.

#### **Veterans Integration to Academic Leadership (VITAL)**

The VITAL Initiative partners with local colleges and universities to help Veterans leverage their unique skills to succeed in their education. To learn more about VITAL, visit: [www.mentalhealth.va.gov/studentveteran/vital\\_programs.asp](http://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/studentveteran/vital_programs.asp).

For more information on these programs, call 781-687-2575.

# VETERANS'

healthy living

VISN 1 Communications  
 Department of Veterans Affairs  
 200 Springs Road  
 Bedford, MA 01730

## VA MEDICAL CENTERS

### CONNECTICUT

#### VA Connecticut Healthcare System

**Newington Campus**  
 555 Willard Avenue  
 Newington, CT 06111  
 (860) 666-6951

**West Haven Campus**  
 950 Campbell Avenue  
 West Haven, CT 06516  
 (203) 932-5711

### MAINE

#### VA Maine Healthcare System

1 VA Center  
 Augusta, ME 04330  
 (207) 623-8411  
 (877) 421-8263

### MASSACHUSETTS

**Edith Nourse Rogers Memorial Veterans Hosp.**  
 200 Springs Road  
 Bedford, MA 01730  
 (781) 687-2000

#### VA Boston Healthcare System

**Brockton Campus**  
 940 Belmont Street  
 Brockton, MA 02301  
 (508) 583-4500

**Jamaica Plain Campus**  
 150 S. Huntington Avenue  
 Boston, MA 02130  
 (617) 232-9500

**West Roxbury Campus**  
 1400 VFW Parkway  
 West Roxbury, MA 02132  
 (617) 323-7700

#### VA Central Western MA Healthcare System

421 North Main Street  
 Leeds, MA 01053  
 (413) 584-4040

### NEW HAMPSHIRE

**Manchester VAMC**  
 718 Smyth Road  
 Manchester, NH 03104  
 (603) 624-4366  
 (800) 892-8384

### RHODE ISLAND

**Providence VAMC**  
 830 Chalkstone Avenue  
 Providence, RI 02908  
 (401) 273-7100  
 (866) 590-2976

### VERMONT

**White River Junction VAMC**  
 215 North Main Street  
 White River Junction,  
 VT 05009  
 (802) 295-9363

#### COMMUNITY-BASED OUTPATIENT CLINICS

### CONNECTICUT

**Danbury CBOC**  
 7 Germantown Road  
 Danbury, CT 06810  
 (203) 798-8422

**New London CBOC**  
 4 Shaw's Cove, Suite 101  
 New London, CT 06320  
 (860) 437 3611

**Stamford CBOC**  
 Stamford Health System  
 1275 Summer Street  
 Stamford, CT 06905  
 (203) 325-0649

**Waterbury CBOC**  
 95 Scovill Street  
 Waterbury, CT 06706  
 (203) 465-5292

**Willimantic CBOC**  
 1320 Main Street  
 Tyler Square (next to  
 Social Security Office)  
 Willimantic, CT 06226  
 (860) 450-7583

**Winsted CBOC**  
 115 Spencer Street  
 Winsted, CT 06098  
 (860) 738-6985

### MAINE

**Bangor CBOC**  
 35 State Hospital Street  
 Bangor, ME 04401  
 (207) 561-3600

**Lincoln CBOC**  
 99 River Road  
 Lincoln, ME 04457  
 (207) 403-2000

**Calais CBOC**  
 50 Union Street  
 Calais, ME 04619  
 (207) 904-3700

**Caribou CBOC**  
 163 Van Buren Road, Ste. 6  
 Caribou, ME 04736  
 (207) 493-3800

**Fort Kent CBOC**  
 Medical Office Building  
 197 East Main St.  
 Fort Kent, ME 04743  
 (207) 834-1572

### Houlton CBOC

Houlton Regional Hospital  
 20 Hartford Street  
 Houlton, ME 04730  
 (877) 421-8263, ext. 2000

### Lewiston/Auburn CBOC

15 Challenger Drive  
 Lewiston, ME 04240  
 (207) 623-8411 Ext. 4601  
 (877) 421-8263 Ext. 4601

**Mobile Medical Unit**  
 Main Street  
 Bingham, ME 04920  
 (866) 961-9263

### Portland CBOC

144 Fore Street  
 Portland, ME 04101  
 (207) 771-3500

### Rumford CBOC

431 Franklin Street  
 Rumford, ME 04276  
 (207) 369-3200

### Saco CBOC

655 Main Street  
 Saco, ME 04072  
 (207) 294-3100

### MASSACHUSETTS

#### Causeway Street CBOC

251 Causeway Street  
 Boston, MA 02114  
 (617) 248-1000

#### Fitchburg CBOC

Phillip J. Philbin Federal Bldg.  
 881 Main Street  
 Fitchburg, MA 01420  
 (978) 342-9781

#### Framingham CBOC

61 Lincoln Street, Suite 112  
 Framingham, MA 01702  
 (508) 628-0205

#### Gloucester CBOC

298 Washington Street  
 Gloucester, MA 01930  
 (978) 282-0676

#### Greenfield CBOC

143 Munson Street  
 Greenfield, MA 01301  
 (413) 773-8428

#### Haverhill CBOC

108 Merrimack Street  
 Haverhill, MA 01830  
 (978) 372-5207

#### Hyannis CBOC

233 Stevens Street  
 Hyannis, MA 02601  
 (508) 771-3190

#### Lowell CBOC

130 Marshall Road  
 Lowell, MA 01852  
 (978) 671-9000

#### Lynn CBOC

225 Boston Street, Ste. 107  
 Lynn, MA 01904  
 (781) 595-9818

### Martha's Vineyard Hosp.

One Hospital Road  
 Oak Bluffs, MA 02557  
 (508) 771-3190

### New Bedford CBOC

175 Elm Street  
 New Bedford, MA 02740  
 (508) 994-0217

### Pittsfield CBOC

73 Eagle Street  
 Pittsfield, MA 01201  
 (413) 499-2672

### Plymouth CBOC

116 Long Pond Road  
 Plymouth, MA 02360  
 (800) 865-3384

### Quincy CBOC

110 West Squantum St.  
 Quincy, MA 02171  
 (774)-826-3070

### Springfield CBOC

25 Bond Street  
 Springfield, MA 01104  
 (413) 731-6000

### Worcester CBOC

605 Lincoln Street  
 Worcester, MA 01605  
 (508) 856-0104

### NEW HAMPSHIRE

#### Conway CBOC

71 Hobbs Street  
 Conway, NH 03818  
 (603) 624-4366, ext. 3199  
 (800) 892-8384, ext. 3199

#### Keene CBOC

640 Marlboro Street  
 Keene, NH 03431  
 (603) 358-4900

#### Littleton CBOC

264 Cottage Street  
 Littleton, NH 03561  
 (603) 575-6700

#### Portsmouth CBOC

302 Newmarket Street  
 Portsmouth, NH 03803  
 (603) 624-4366, ext. 3199  
 (800) 892-8384, ext. 3199

### Somersworth CBOC

200 Route 108  
 Somersworth, NH 03878  
 (603) 624-4366, ext. 3199  
 (800) 892-8384, ext. 3199

### Tilton CBOC

630 Main Street, Ste. 400  
 Tilton, NH 03276  
 (603) 624-4366, ext. 3199  
 (800) 892-8384, ext. 3199

### RHODE ISLAND

#### Middletown CBOC

One Corporate Place  
 Middletown, RI 02842  
 (401) 847-6239

### VERMONT

#### Bennington CBOC

186 North Street  
 Bennington, VT 05201  
 (802) 440-3300

#### Brattleboro CBOC

71 GSP Drive  
 Brattleboro, VT 05301  
 (802) 251-2200

#### Burlington Lakeside CBOC

128 Lakeside Ave., Ste. 260  
 Burlington, VT 05401  
 (802) 657 7000

#### Newport CBOC

1734 Crawford Farm Rd.  
 Newport, VT 05855  
 (802) 624-2400

#### Rutland CBOC

232 West St.  
 Rutland, VT 05701-2850  
 (802) 772-2300



WHERE TO FIND US