The mission of the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) is to “Honor America’s Veterans by providing exceptional health care that improves their health and well-being.”

To support this important mission, VA New England Healthcare System (VISN 1) must continually assess the needs of the organization and make adjustments—not only to keep VISN 1 on the cutting edge of health care, but also to ensure that we meet the needs of our Veterans. To guide us on this journey, we will strive for excellence in: population health, patient experience, financial stewardship, workforce, and service to our communities. (see page 1).

We will also continue to subscribe to VA’s core values of Integrity, Commitment, Advocacy, Respect, and Excellence (ICARE). These values are the foundation for how we carry out our responsibilities and how we interact with Veterans. In this report, you can read about a few individuals in VISN 1 who exemplify the ICARE values (see page 12). For each individual named in this publication, literally thousands of others make equally outstanding contributions daily to our mission. Thank you for all you do.

Pages 4–11 highlight each of our VA Medical Centers and their achievements in bringing exceptional care and innovative technology to the Veterans of New England, and it identifies some of the challenges we face moving forward.

I am proud of what we have accomplished thus far on behalf of Veterans in VISN 1, and I look forward to working with you for many years to come as we travel the road to EXCELLENCE together.

Sincerely,

Michael F. Mayo-Smith, M.D., M.P.H.

Network Director
VETERANS HEALTH ADMINISTRATION
VISION STATEMENT, MISSION STATEMENT, AND GOALS

VHA VISION STATEMENT
VHA will continue to be the benchmark of excellence and value in health care and benefits by providing exemplary services that are both patient centered and evidence based.

This care will be delivered by engaged, collaborative teams in an integrated environment that supports learning, discovery, and continuous improvement.

It will emphasize prevention and population health and contribute to the nation’s well-being through education, research, and service in national emergencies.

VHAN 1 MISSION STATEMENT
Honor America’s Veterans by providing exceptional health care that improves their health and well-being.

VHAN 1 DOMAINS OF VALUE AND STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES, FY 2015-2019

EXCELLENCE in Population Health

Objective: Treatment and Rehabilitation of Chronic Pain

EXCELLENCE in Patient Experience

Objective: Increase Access to Our Health Care Services

EXCELLENCE in Financial Stewardship

Objective: Expand our Patient Base

EXCELLENCE in Workforce

Objective: Develop Our Supervisors

EXCELLENCE in Service to Our Communities

Objective: Enhance Research

A Message from the Network Director...
VHA Vision Statement, Mission Statement, and Goals
VA Core Values: I CARE
Academic Partners and Affiliations
VA Connecticut Healthcare System
VA Maine Healthcare System
Edith Nourse Rogers Memorial Veterans Hospital (Bedford VAMC)
VA Boston Healthcare System
VA Central Western Massachusetts Healthcare System
Manchester VA Medical Center
Providence VA Medical Center
White River Junction VA Medical Center
Network Director’s I CARE Awards

New Bedford Mayor Jon Mitchell cuts the ribbon to the new physical therapy wing of the New Bedford VA Community-Based Outpatient Clinic Monday, Dec. 22, 2014, with Providence VA Medical Center Director Dr. Susan MacKenzie, New Bedford Veterans’ Services Director Christopher Gomes, and on the far right, Michael Keegan, Chief of the Civil, International and Interagency Support Project Management Branch, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New England District. The facility was renovated to expand services and improve patient access, exemplifying the VA’s commitment to provide high-quality, accessible health care to Veterans in our communities. Providence VA photo by Winfield Danielson
VA CORE VALUES: I CARE

**Integrity**
Act with high moral principle. Adhere to the highest professional standards. Maintain the trust and confidence of all with whom I engage.

**Commitment**
Work diligently to serve Veterans and other beneficiaries. Be driven by an earnest belief in VA’s mission. Fulfill my individual responsibilities and organizational responsibilities.

**Advocacy**
Be truly Veteran-centric by identifying, fully considering, and appropriately advancing the interests of Veterans and other beneficiaries.

**Respect**
Treat all those I serve and with whom I work with dignity and respect. Show respect to earn it.

**Excellence**
Strive for the highest quality and continuous improvement. Be thoughtful and decisive in leadership, accountable for my actions, willing to admit mistakes, and rigorous in correcting them.
ACADEMIC AFFILIATES

• Boston University School of Medicine
• Brown Medical School
• Dartmouth Medical School
• Harvard Medical School
• Tufts University School of Medicine
• University of Connecticut School of Medicine
• University of Massachusetts School of Medicine
• University of New England School of Osteopathic Medicine
• University of Vermont School of Medicine
• Yale University School of Medicine
• Hundreds of affiliations with other health care schools in New England

NATIONAL ACCREDITATION ORGANIZATIONS

• The Joint Commission
• Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF)
• National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA)
• College of American Pathologists (CAP)
• American Psychological Association
• American Dental Association for Advanced Dental Education
• Association for the Accreditation of Human Research Protection Programs (AAHRPP)
• Association for Assessment and Accreditation of Laboratory Animal Care (AAALAC)
• American Association of Blood Banks (AABB)
VA Connecticut
Healthcare System

http://www.connecticut.va.gov

Newington Campus
555 Willard Avenue
Newington, CT 06111
860-666-6951
860-667-6838 (24/7)

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

Director: Gerald F. Culliton, MPA, FACHE

https://www.facebook.com/VAConnecticut
https://twitter.com/VeteransHealth

COMMUNITY CLINICS
• Danbury • Waterbury
• New London • Willimantic
• Stamford • Winsted

FACILITY ACCOMPLISHMENTS
• The American College of Psychiatrists presented the 2014 Award for Creativity in Psychiatric Education to the VA National Telemental Health Center.

Facility Statistics

<table>
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<th>Category</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
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<td>Outpatient Visits</td>
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<td>Research Funding Awarded</td>
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<td>135</td>
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<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domiciliary Beds</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

• The Eastern Blind Rehabilitation Center was the recipient of the New Haven Symphony Orchestra 2013-2014 Season Community Award.

• Neurologist Dr. Stephen G. Waxman is the 2013 recipient of the Paul B. Magnuson Award for Outstanding Achievement in Rehabilitation Research and Development.

• Dr. Laurie Harkness was named the 2013 recipient of the Under Secretary for Health’s Excellence in Social Work Leadership Award.
VA Maine Healthcare System

http://www.maine.va.gov

1 VA Center
Augusta, ME 04330
877-421-8263
207-623-8411
877-421-4263 toll-free

Director: Ryan S. Lilly, MPA

https://www.facebook.com/VAMaine
https://twitter.com/VeteransHealth

COMMUNITY CLINICS
• Bangor
• Calais
• Caribou
• Fort Kent
• Houlton Outreach Clinic
• Lewiston/Auburn
• Lincoln Outreach Clinic
• Portland
• Rumford
• Saco
• Bingham Outreach Clinic

Facility Statistics

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<tr>
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<td>71</td>
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<tr>
<td>Skilled Nursing Home Beds</td>
<td>100</td>
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</table>

FACILITY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

VA Maine has become a national leader in Rural Health advocacy by being awarded over $5 million in Office of Rural Health funding for 10 pilot projects designed to develop ways to care for our underserved rural Veterans. These include mental health, opiate-use reduction, service expansion at rural CBOCs, expansion of rural home-based primary care programs, better access to lab work, in-home retinal imaging services, and education of providers and staff in rural health matters. VA Maine is also partnering in a State of Maine – VHA joint program to explore ways to electronically share patient information in a secure environment to better serve VA patients that receive care in the community.
Edith Nourse Rogers Memorial Veterans Hospital
(Bedford VAMC)

http://www.bedford.va.gov/
200 Springs Road
Bedford, MA 01730
781-687-2000
800-838-6331 toll-free

Director: Christine Croteau

https://www.facebook.com/BedfordVAHospital
https://twitter.com/VeteransHealth

COMMUNITY CLINICS
• Gloucester
• Haverhill
• Lynn

FACILITY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Bedford VAMC had featured improvement work at the VISN 1 2014 Improvement as follows: the ePharmacy Claim Rejection Process Improvement, Collaboration to Improve CRC Resident’s Foot Care, Facility Training and Education Funding Request Process, Housekeeping Management Improvement Project, Laboratory Cost Savings, and Peer Involved Smoking Cessation. Bedford VAMC improvement work was recognized in many categories: Laboratory Cost Saving received the Excellence in Financial Stewardship award; Housekeeping Management received the Excellence in Workforce award; and ePharmacy Claim Rejection Process Improvement was awarded the overall Judge’s Award.

Facility Statistics

<table>
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<td>304</td>
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<td>Domiciliary Beds</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CWT/TR Beds</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Photo by John Phelan
VA Boston Healthcare System

http://www.boston.va.gov

Brockton Division
940 Belmont Street
Brockton, MA 02301
508-583-4500
800-865-3384 toll-free

Jamaica Plain Division
150 S. Huntington Avenue
Boston, MA 02130
617-232-9500
800-865-3384 toll-free

West Roxbury Division
1400 VFW Parkway
West Roxbury, MA 02132
617-323-7700
800-865-3384 toll-free

Director: Vincent Ng
https://www.facebook.com/VABoston
https://twitter.com/VeteransHealth

COMMUNITY CLINICS
- Causeway Street
- Framingham
- Lowell
- Plymouth
- Quincy

Facility Statistics

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<td>657,894</td>
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<td>Skilled Nursing Home Beds</td>
<td>160</td>
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<td>Domiciliary Beds</td>
<td>98</td>
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<tr>
<td>CWT/TR Operating Beds</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

FACILITY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- VA Boston Healthcare System (VABHS) is one of only two VA facilities nationwide to receive a 5-star ranking for Quality in the SAIL report in 10 consecutive quarters (FY12-FY14TD) and two annual reports (FY10 and FY11).
- VABHS ranked third nationally in the FY14 Integrated Ethics Quality in Healthcare Survey.
- VABHS has been named one of the Top 100 Best Places to Work for 2013 by the Boston Globe newspaper.
VA Central Western Massachusetts Healthcare System

http://www.centralwesternmass.va.gov
421 North Main Street
Leeds, MA 01053
413-584-4040
800-893-1522 (24/7)

Director: John Collins

https://www.facebook.com/VACWMASS
https://twitter.com/VeteransHealth

COMMUNITY CLINICS
• Fitchburg
• Greenfield
• Pittsfield
• Springfield
• Worcester

FACILITY ACCOMPLISHMENTS
• VA CWM HCS continues to build our research and development program, particularly with increased collaboration between the VA CWM HCS and the University of Massachusetts Medical School (UMass) in Worcester.

• The system was selected as the first rural VA healthcare system to be part of the Million Veteran Program.

• The system received its first grant for maternity care for women Veterans.

• The associate chief of staff for research for VA Central Western Massachusetts HCS lead a research team looking at the “Five-year Trends in Women Veterans’ Use of VA Maternity Benefits, 2008–2012.”

• VA CWM HCS was invited to participate in a critical trial network application that will engage our Mental Health team along with academic partners for psychology qualitative science research.

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<tr>
<td>Total Patients Treated</td>
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<td>Employees</td>
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<td>Medical Care Budget</td>
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<td>Total Inpatients Treated</td>
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<td>Outpatient Visits</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research Funding Awarded</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of Active Research Projects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Operational Beds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospital Operational Beds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CWT/TR Operating Beds</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Manchester
VA Medical Center

http://www.manchester.va.gov

718 Smyth Road
Manchester, NH 03104
603-624-4366
800-892-8384 toll-free

Director: Tammy A. Krueger

https://www.facebook.com/ManchesterVAMC
https://twitter.com/VeteransHealth

COMMUNITY CLINICS
- Conway
- Portsmouth
- Somersworth
- Tilton

FACILITY ACCOMPLISHMENTS
- Rebuilt/increased pain care services
- Grand re-opening of the facility’s operating suites.
- Facility launched new Nurse First program to streamline access and enhance the Veteran experience.
- Facility in partnership with the VBA has newly dedicated space for VBA representatives on station enhancing the Veteran experience and supporting access across the organization.
- Aggressive outreach campaign and eligibility education to the community.
- Established strategic plan.
- Manchester VAMC FY 2014 Veteran User Growth Milestones were accomplished and/or surpassed for each quarter.
- Community partnerships, medical center leadership are members of:
  - Commission of PTSD/TBI for the State of New Hampshire
  - Military Leadership Team for the State of New Hampshire
  - State Veterans Advisory Committee
- Recognized as the top Veterans Affairs Medical Center in the nation for Staff Involvement in improvement efforts.

Facility Statistics

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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Employees</td>
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<td>Medical Care Budget</td>
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<td>Total Inpatients Treated</td>
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<td>Outpatient Visits</td>
<td>225,025</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Operational Beds</td>
<td>112</td>
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</table>

Photo by John Phelan
Providence VA Medical Center

http://www.providence.va.gov
830 Chalkstone Avenue
Providence, RI 02908
401-273-7100
866-363-4486 toll-free

Director: Susan MacKenzie, Ph.D.
https://www.facebook.com/VACProvidence
https://twitter.com/VeteransHealth

COMMUNITY CLINICS
• Hyannis
• Middletown
• New Bedford

FACILITY ACCOMPLISHMENTS
Clinical Enhancements:
• National Model for the Homeless PACT.
• Introduction of Interventional Radiology program.
• Establishment of multidisciplinary Pulmonary Hypertension Clinic by Pulmonary and Cardiology, resulting in more efficient expert care.
• Expanded access to care offering evening clinics and expanded use of new informatics and technology such as My HealthVet secure messaging and telehealth technology.

Surveys, accreditations, and designations:
• Pathways to Excellence® designation by the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC), March 2014.
• The Opiate Rehabilitation Treatment Program received full Joint Commission accreditation in November 2013.
• College of American Pathologists (CAP) awarded Pathology and Laboratory Service accreditation effective August 2013.

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<td>Outpatient Visits</td>
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<td>250</td>
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<td>Total Operational Beds</td>
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</table>

Total Patients Treated: 33,571
Employees: 1,203
Medical Care Budget: $231,053,183
Total Inpatients Treated: 2,831
Outpatient Visits: 382,817
Research Funding Awarded: $15 million
Number of Active Research Projects: 250
Total Operational Beds: 73
White River Junction
VA Medical Center

http://www.whiteriver.va.gov

215 North Main Street (Mailing)
163 Veterans Drive (GPS)
White River Junction, VT 05009
802-295-9363
866-687-8387 toll-free

Director: Deborah Amdur

https://www.facebook.com/WhiteRiverJunction
https://twitter.com/VeteransHealth

COMMUNITY CLINICS
- Bennington
- Brattleboro
- Burlington Lakeside
- Keene
- Littleton, NH
- Newport
- Rutland

FACILITY ACCOMPLISHMENTS
- WRJ VAMC had the distinction of being identified as a Joint Commission “Top Performer” for the second year in a row.
- WRJ VAMC’s Home Based Primary Care (HBPC) program received approval for FY 15 VHA Office of Rural Health funding. The HBPC project will improve access to healthcare services and the health of rural Veterans through the creation of new access locations and use of new technologies.

For FY 15 VHA Office of Rural Health funding. The HBPC project will improve access to healthcare services and the health of rural Veterans through the creation of new access locations and use of new technologies.

- WRJ VAMC’s Environmental Management Service (EMS) was awarded the National VA Green Management Programs Sustainability award.
- WRJ VAMC’s Chief of Primary Care, Hugh Huizenga, MD, received the Vermont Executive Association’s individual Distinguished Government Service – Professional Award.

Facility Statistics

<table>
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The New England Healthcare Network Director gave out a total of 24 ICARE Awards in 2014. On the following pages are examples of each of the ICARE values.

## 2014 Recipients

- **Kathleen Dunn, LICWS**, Palliative Care Coordinator, VA Boston Healthcare System
- **Pharmacy Dispensing Engaged Work Team**, VA Central Western Massachusetts HCS
- **Daniel White**, VA Connecticut HCS Housekeeper and OIF/OEF veteran
- **VA Maine Women’s Clinic Design Team**
- **David James, RN, BSN, CHPN**, Bedford VAMC (posthumously nominated and awarded)
- **Newington Transportation and Travel Staff**, VA Connecticut Healthcare System
- **TeleHealth/TeleRehabilitation Team**, White River Junction VAMC
- **Lanier Summerall, MD**, White River Junction VAMC
- **Calais CBOC Coverage Nursing Team**, VA Maine Healthcare System
- **Oncology Staff**, Manchester VAMC
- **Flu Taskforce Team**, VA Boston HCS
- **VISN 1 Primary Care Staff**, VISN-wide
- **Environmental Management Section Staff**, VA Maine Healthcare System
- **SCALE (Study of the Communication of Adverse Large-Scale Events) Team**, Bedford VAMC
- **Community Living Center Team**, VA Central Western Massachusetts Healthcare System
- **Committee Members for the Wall of Valor**, Manchester VAMC
- **Dr. Amy Schwartz**, VA Connecticut Healthcare System
- **Non-VA Medical Care Office**, VA Boston Healthcare System
- **Systems Redesign Teams**, VISN-wide
- **Compensation and Pension Program**, VISN-wide
- **Paul Corbett**, VISN 1
- **Baldrige Assessment Team**, VISN 1
- **Acting Medical Center Leadership**, Bedford VAMC
- **Sheila Peters**, Manchester VAMC, and **Joe Byron**, founder of Honor Flight New England
For demonstrating exceptional INTEGRITY in leading the Study of the Communication of Adverse Large-Scale Events (SCALE). SCALE is being used to determine the most effective way to disclose adverse events to Veterans in a way that lessens anxiety and distress and increases confidence and trust in the VA. This project has gone well beyond original expectations, and has yielded cutting-edge knowledge on communicating disclosures.

**SCALE Member Rani Elwy, PhD’s Reflections on Integrity**

“As researchers we aim to do work that is meaningful for everyday hospital and health system practice. What is most important about our SCALE work is that we have done just that. Throughout our study, we were able to present results in real time to a wide audience of Department of Veterans Affairs officials, who then were able to implement changes right away on how disclosures were communicated. For our research to have that kind of immediate impact was really exciting.”
I CARE Award Citation

For demonstrating exceptional COMMITMENT as a steadfast advocate for Veterans and their families, working tirelessly to improve end of life care for all VA Veterans. The phrase “above and beyond” does not do justice to the service and care that Kathleen provides and the commitment she shows by providing support to Veterans and their families, giving patients and their families a seamless discharge, no unanswered questions, less confusion, and more control. Because of her willingness to work diligently to serve Veterans, hundreds of Veterans and their families have had care from VA that makes Kathleen’s co-workers enormously proud of our organization and grateful to her.

Kathleen’s Reflections on Commitment

“I am very honored and humbled to receive this award. It takes a team to provide end of life care to Veterans and I am lucky to work with a wonderful team. Thank you for the privilege to serve Veterans every day.”
I CARE Award Citation

For demonstrating exceptional ADVOCACY as a Veteran Peer Support Specialist, who noted a gap in retreats for female Veterans, Ms. Brown took the initiative to organize a first time retreat after working with the community group Wounded Warriors@45 North. Ms. Brown is passionate about meeting the needs of our female Veteran population and plans to continue enhancing the female Veteran experience in VA.

Shannan’s Reflections on Advocacy

“One thing I wanted to say when I came to the VA is that I didn’t know what it was about. Then I got into this role and went on board and started the female Veteran retreat. One female Veteran that came to the retreat said ‘I went up with eight other female Veterans, and came back with eight friends.’ The Manchester VA is rockin’!”
I CARE Award Citation

For demonstrating exceptional RESPECT to our nation’s Veterans through their work with Honor Flight New England. These individuals have volunteered countless hours helping to transport America’s Veterans to Washington D.C. to visit war memorials dedicated in their honor. They go out of their way to ensure that Veterans have an experience that creates lasting memories and pays tribute to their service.

Sheila Peters’ Reflections on Excellence

“Receiving the I CARE award was such a wonderful surprise. I am honored to volunteer for Honor Flight New England because our WWII Heroes deserve this trip, and it is a long time coming. I believe that it is because of their heroism we have the freedoms we enjoy today. I do the initial contact and I call the WWII Heroes to let them know about their upcoming Honor Flight. It is such a thrill for me; the Heroes are so excited, they act like they have won the lottery.

Truly I am the lucky one, working with Joe Byron and all the other dedicated volunteers of Honor Flight New England, is my pleasure! Thank you, Dr. Mayo Smith, for being our very first physician on our very first flight, and thank you for your continued support.”
I CARE Award Citation

For demonstrating exceptional **EXCELLENCE** in showing continuous improvement three years in a row in the IntegratedEthics Staff Survey. VISN 1 was number one for 2014 for “Overall rating as an ethical organization,” maintaining the favorable trend of improving ethics quality in health care. This high ethics quality has helped increase employee morale, patient satisfaction, and productivity and efficiency across the Network.

**VISN 1 IntegratedEthics Committee Chair Tammy A. Krueger’s Reflections on Excellence**

“I am proud to be part of a VA New England Healthcare System team that has supported improvements visible by all. The IntegratedEthics Committee work has contributed to an enhanced ethical environment from leadership throughout the organization and inclusive of all stakeholders. One that is transparent and mirrors the ICARE values and characteristics.”