

VETERANS'

healthy living



**Making
Connections,
Delivering Care**



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs



Message from the Network Director

Ryan Lilly, MPA

Dear Veterans,

Sometimes distance is the biggest obstacle for Veterans in obtaining health care. VA New England is dedicated to closing the distance between Veterans and the care you have earned. We know you can't always get to us, so we are working on new ways to get to you.

Our outreach teams visit hundreds of local activities every year in person, looking for Veterans to connect with and assist with benefits and claims. Two of our most successful outreach events are WaterFire Providence and The Big E. This year was no exception. Read about how many Veterans we reached on page 6. We are especially proud that this year's WaterFire Salute to Veterans theme was "Honoring Our Women Warriors" because every Veteran counts.

We are also excited to introduce expanded telehealth to our health care services. Technology is expanding our reach as never before, allowing us to deliver health care to the homes of those who can't come to us. You can read about how telehealth is already saving lives on page 4.

Even as we embrace technological advances in health care we still wholeheartedly believe in the value of in-person, face-to-face health care. You can read about our new community-based outpatient clinic in Somersworth, N.H. on page 7, as well as our plans to partner with University of Massachusetts Medical School to bring you a new clinic in Worcester, Mass., in 2021.

Finally, health care isn't the only way we honor our Veterans. The Bedford VA community showed their appreciation and respect for local World War II Veterans with an "Honor Bus Tour" inspired by the Honor Flight program. I think you will love this story as much as I do (page 3).

With thanks for your service,

Ryan Lilly, MPA
Network Director

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ON THE COVER:

Cheri Glasset, lead telehealth clinical technician at the Edith Nourse Rogers Memorial Veterans Hospital in Bedford, Mass., connects with Lisa Eisele, Connected Care program manager for the VA New England Healthcare System, on the screen of a new, state-of-the-art clinical access station. The station is one of the latest telehealth technologies at VA medical centers. The equipment can listen to heart beats, conduct eye exams and check for skin conditions among other medical procedures.



VA MISSION:

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

Keeping Veterans in Good Health



Telehealth technology helps New England Veteran patients stay connected



Richard Tirrell, a Maine Veteran, had a low level of oxygen in his blood and his heart was beating at more than 100 times per minute. He was short of breath, having difficulty breathing and gasping with every breath.

Some 40 miles away from his home in Bath, Monica Fennell, his telehealth nurse, was remotely monitoring his health from her office at the VA Maine Healthcare System in Augusta. When she saw Tirrell's oxygen level dip to a dangerous level, Fennell called and told him he needed to get to an emergency room right away.

"The VA saved my life," says Tirrell, who checks in with Monica at least once a month. "Telehealth keeps me honest; it makes sure I'm checking my vitals every day and doing the things I need to do and that's very important. If you're a Veteran and you are offered telehealth, I definitely recommend it."

Telehealth is the new and ever-growing world of health care. "VA New England is investing significant resources and technology to keep our Veteran patients connected and in good health from any location no matter where they live," says Lisa C. Eisele, RN, Connected Care program director.

Connected Care is the broad title for all the technology solutions VA is using to enable Veterans to virtually meet-up with their VA health care providers.

It's all part of the largest telemedicine initiative in the country led by the Veterans Health Administration. For VA New England, expansion of telehealth capabilities is a major strategic objective.

"We provided care to over 25,000 Veterans last year using telehealth technology and our goal is to provide the right care in the right place at the right time through the use of state-of-the-art technologies," said Eisele. "We're making VA health care more convenient and reducing travel times for Veterans. This is especially important for those in very rural areas with limited access to VA health care facilities. We're able to meet Veterans where they are."

Called Telehealth, the VA offers smartphone- and computer-based technology for its patients, ranging from two-way teleconferencing systems linked with medical equipment to using an Internet connection and web camera to create an on-line medical appointment.

Veterans Connect with VA at The Big E



In September, in Massachusetts, Eastern States Exposition kicked off its annual fair with Military Appreciation Day at “The Big E,” the largest VA veteran outreach event in the nation.

On the Avenue of States, Veterans met with VA health care and benefit representatives. This year, 102 Veterans signed up for VA health care, 122 met with representatives from the Veterans Benefits Administration, and 78 started a claim for service-connected disability compensation and pension, according to Michael McNamara, outreach program manager, VA New England Healthcare System.

In addition, more than 400 Veterans met with readjustment counselors from across New England at a Mobile Vet Center that was co-located with the VA outreach area.

Along with the VA outreach area, more than 30 state and community partners answered questions about local and state benefits at a “Veterans Commons” area at The Big E’s Massachusetts State Building.

WaterFire Honors Women Veterans



On November 2, Providence, R.I. honored Veterans, active and reserve military personnel, and their families at the 7th Annual WaterFire Salute to Veterans.

The theme of this year’s Salute to Veterans was “Honoring Our Women Warriors,” featuring speakers and presentations celebrating the contributions of women Veterans. A special exhibit, “Women Who Served,” showcased memorabilia recognizing women Veterans and photographs honoring women who made the ultimate sacrifice in combat.

Keynote speaker retired Army 1st Sgt. Dora Vasquez-Hellner of Westerly, R.I., was this year’s honoree, leading the Torch procession to Waterplace Park.

VA New England Healthcare System set up a Veterans Resource Center at the event to reach out to as many Veterans as possible. VA Outreach Specialists greeted Veterans and shared information about VA benefits and readjustment services. They spoke with over 400 Veterans and family members this year.

2020 Save the Dates!

VA New England’s outreach team will be at the following events this year to assist Veterans and their family members. For more information, visit www.newengland.va.gov/outreach.

BOSTON RV & CAMPING EXPO
Boston Convention & Exhibition Center, Boston, MA, Jan. 24-26

CT FISHING & OUTDOOR SHOW
Mohegan Sun, Uncasville, CT, Feb. 14-16

NORTHEAST HUNTING & FISHING SHOW
Connecticut Convention Center, Hartford, CT, March 20-22

NEW ENGLAND SALTWATER FISHING SHOW
Rhode Island Convention Center, Providence, RI, March 27-29

LACONIA MOTORCYCLE WEEK
Laconia, NH, June 13-21

NASCAR
New Hampshire Motor Speedway, Loudon, NH, July 16-19

MARSHFIELD FAIR
Marshfield, MA, Aug. 21-30

**CHAMPLAIN VALLEY FAIR
MILITARY APPRECIATION DAY**
Essex Junction, VT, Sept. 4

THE BIG E MILITARY APPRECIATION DAY
West Springfield, MA, Sept. 18

THE DURHAM FAIR
Durham, CT, Sept. 24-27

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 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

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 Manchester, NH 03104
 (603) 624-4366
 (800) 892-8384

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 (401) 273-7100
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 VT 05009
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 New London, CT 06320
 (860) 437-3611

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

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 Waterbury, CT 06706
 (203) 465-5292

Willimantic CBOC
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 Social Security Office)
 Willimantic, CT 06226
 (860) 450-7583

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

MAINE

Bangor CBOC
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 Bangor, ME 04401
 (207) 561-3600

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 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

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

Mobile Medical Unit
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 Bingham, ME 04920
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 Rumford, ME 04276
 (207) 369-3200

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 Saco, ME 04072
 (207) 294-3100

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 (978) 342-9781

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 Framingham, MA 01702
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 (978) 282-0676

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 Greenfield, MA 01301
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 Lowell, MA 01852
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 Lynn, MA 01904
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Martha's Vineyard Hosp.

One Hospital Road
 Oak Bluffs, MA 02557
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 New Bedford, MA 02740
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 Pittsfield, MA 01201
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 Worcester, MA 01605
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