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Notice

Content and photos in this newsletter were developed prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. Veterans should verify all services/facilities mentioned within are operating under normal status while medical center services remain impacted by the pandemic.







lebanon.va.gov



MEDICAL UPDATE

Telehealth Options to Enhance Veteran Experience at Lebanon VAMC

Teleĥealth Technology Helps Veterans Stay Connected

Jessica Lehman, Connected Care Program Specialist

Operating the nation's largest health care system, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) uses a wide variety of technologies to ensure excellence in the delivery of care. New technologies are revolutionizing health care, and VA is recognized as a world leader in the development and use of telehealth. Telehealth services are mission-critical to the future direction of VA care to our Veterans. Lebanon VAMC offers telehealth services through several different means to our Veterans, such as in the home, clinic to provider, or hospital to provider. Lebanon VAMC uses clinical video telehealth, store and forward, home telehealth and VA Video Connect (VVC). Telehealth allows VA to bring health care to Veterans where they live, making care more accessible and more convenient. In addition, telehealth allows VA to more efficiently provide clinical expertise across the entire health care system. Finally, a Veteran's geographic location should not limit their access to quality care. VA is committed to increasing access to care for all enrolled Veterans and has placed special emphasis on those in rural and remote locations.

What is Telehealth?

Telehealth uses technology and data to improve the way VA delivers care to you. VA telehealth services give you remote access to the care you need, when and where you need it. Any Veteran who qualifies to receive VA health care and lives in the United States or a U.S. territory is eligible to connect with their VA providers through telehealth. Your VA care team can work with you to develop the care plan that is best for you.

Why Should I Use Telehealth?

Telehealth is a modern way to deliver and receive patient-centered health care. It connects you with your provider no matter the distance. VA telehealth services can reduce travel and bring care closer to you through real-time, interactive video visits, in-home and mobile health remote monitoring and technologies that gather and store health data. Telehealth technologies let providers collect more health data – like your blood pressure – more often. This data will only be collected with your consent. It can help your provider get a clearer picture of your health and develop a care plan that is tailored to your needs.

Where Do I Use Telehealth?

At Home - Home telehealth services work with your current care plan, allow you to avoid traveling to clinics, fit

From the desk of the director... Dear Veterans, Advocates, and Fellow Employees,

The history of humanity is one of progress. We are always moving forward. And what is true for the human race, is also true for this medical center, our staff and volunteers. We are always striving to make progress, to improve, to make today better than yesterday and to set the conditions to guarantee tomorrow is better than today.

Here at Lebanon VA Medical Center and our five community clinics, our values and mission remain unchanged, they are timeless; they are the catalysts which propel us forward but the means we use to accomplish that mission are constantly improving. This is why you will learn about advances to telehealth and ongoing facility modernization projects in this newsletter. The progress made just in these two areas alone are literal game changers for Veterans. If you have questions about telehealth, please call one of our telehealth specialists at 717-272-6621, ext. 4076. And if you're not familiar with the many benefits of My HealtheVet to include things like re-ordering medications, sending your providers secure messages, checking your appointments, checking your medical images and/or records, be sure check out page 5.

You will also read in these pages about the gratitude one Veteran has for an entire department here and the appreciation we have for the Volunteers who accomplish so much by multiplying our efforts and freeing staff for other pressing needs.

Veterans are at the center of EVERYTHING we do because they are at the center of our heart.

Be Well!

Robert W. Callahan, Jr. *Director and CEO*



Robert W. Callahan, Jr. Director



LEBANON VA MEDICAL CENTER LEADERSHIP TEAM:

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Linda S. Umberger, RNExecutive Assistant to the Director

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BE INFORMED, STAY CONNECTED!

Sign up for e-mail updates from Lebanon VAMC today!

- Visit www.lebanon.va.gov/news.
- Look for the "Connect with Lebanon VA Medical Center" block.
- Enter your e-mail address to receive e-mail updates from us.

Telehealth Options (continued from page 1)

your lifestyle, and help you stay health and independent. A variety of options for home telehealth are available that include: video appointments on VVC, home telehealth remote monitoring with devices that send data to your care team, secure messaging on My HealtheVet and more.

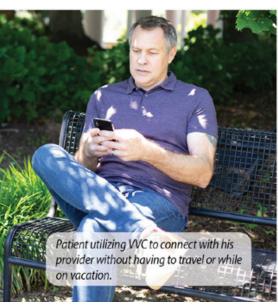
In the clinic - Telehealth enables you to access the quality care you need in more than 50 specialty areas from your local VA clinic. Through telehealth video technology, you can connect to VA specialists or to a VA care team located in other VA medical centers – hundreds of miles away.

In the hospital - Telehealth technologies in hospitals help VA providers around the country collaborate to improve your care. One example of this is Tele-ICU units that use video technology to bring a critical care team and specialists from across the nation together to consult on a case.

Lebanon VAMC Telehealth Services

VA VIDEO CONNECT (VVC):

One of our newest additions to telehealth options is VVC. This is a web-based conferencing tool. It is secure and simple and allows a Veteran to connect with their Provider through real-time video anywhere in the country. This program allows Veterans receiving VA care to access telehealth care services on their smartphones, tablets and personal computers. Specifically, VVC will give Veterans access to receive real-time video care from wherever they are, when that makes sense for their specific clinical need. Veterans will be able to privately interact with their VA care team over live encrypted video using the camera on their smartphone, tablet, or computer.



TELE URGENT CARE:

VISN 4, including Lebanon VAMC, has tele urgent care, which allows you to connect to your health care team privately and securely in a virtual medical room from anywhere using the camera on your smart phone, computer or tablet. Veterans can dial the main number of their local VA medical center and press option #3 to speak with a nurse. The nurse will review your symptoms, provide a care recommendation, and if appropriate, schedule a tele urgent care appointment.

Tele Urgent Care is available through Lebanon VAMC's region VISN 4 by calling 1-833-835-3874.

MY HEALTHeVET:

Lebanon VAMC continues to encourage Veterans to use My HealtheVet, which offers Veterans online access to order pharmacy refills, manage VA appointments, VA treatment notes, lab results and secure messaging with their VA care team. Lebanon VAMC rolled out secure messaging in 2013 and to date has 48,120 active users who routinely message their provider team. Veterans interested in this offering can logon to www.myhealth.va.gov and create a personal account. Veterans can also contact Edward Bleyer, My HealtheVet Coordinator, at 717-272-6621, ext. 5737, for assistance, or stop in at building 17, room 106, at Lebanon VAMC for instruction on how to use the service. A more detailed article on My HealtheVet is included in this newsletter! (See Page 5.)

VA ONLINE SCHEDULING:

VA Online Scheduling is now available through My HealtheVet where Veterans can self-schedule primary care appointments, request help scheduling primary care appointments at participating VAMC's, self-schedule or request help scheduling specialty appointments and view and/or cancel appointments and requests.

VEText:

VEText is a text message appointment reminder system. All Veterans are automatically opted-in, which allows you the ability to confirm and/or cancel appointments and the ability to stop and/or start reminders. Text messages are sent seven days and again two days before each appointment. VEText works for VA health care appointments only.

VA Mobile Apps:

Focusing on applications that allow Veterans enrolled in VA Health Care to enter patient-generated data and share that health information with their VA care teams. App options include: Caring4Women Veterans, Ask a Pharmacist, MOVE! Coach, PTSD Coach, Stay Quit Coach and Veteran Appointment Request. Current VA Mobile app offerings are available through the VA App Store at https://mobile.va.gov/appstore. In-depth descriptions, training materials and FAQs are also available for each mobile app.



VA's App Store is available at www.mobile.va.gov.

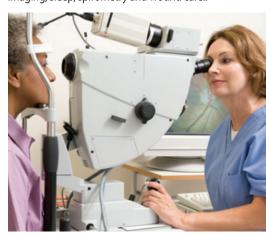
CLINICAL VIDEO TELEHEALTH:

Clinical Video Telehealth is real-time care delivered to Veterans through interactive video. Some clinical video telehealth applications include: endocrinology, psychology/psychiatry, physical therapy, occupational therapy, anticoagulation and palliative care.



STORE AND FORWARD:

Store and Forward Telehealth are images or videos that are captured and then reviewed by a provider at a different time for clinical evaluation. Program examples include dermatology, diabetic retinopathy imaging, sleep, spirometry and wound care..



Images are obtained and sent to a specialist to review for more timely diagnosis and treatment.

continued on page 8...

Lebanon VAMC Patient Survives Lung Cancer With Care From Team Here

Angela King-Sweigart, Public Affairs Specialist



Despite advancements in technology (see the sidebar to the right) lung cancer remains the number one cause of cancer-related deaths in the U.S. for both men and women.

U.S. Army Veteran and WAC (Women's Army Corps) Rebecca Cassidy's primary care physician here, Dr. David Bowers, discovered a concerning spot on her lung while investigating an unrelated health issue. He immediately referred her to a pulmonary specialist, Dr. Michael Stefanski and his team, for further evaluation. Stefanski recommended additional procedures to get a diagnosis.

The test results came back and Stefanski broke the news to her that it was cancerous and Stage 1. "That was devastating. I felt lost, worried...devastated," she said.

Cassidy's reaction was something that Stefanski has seen before and is well-equipped to deal with. "When I discuss a potential diagnosis of cancer, anxiety and fear of the unknown are natural emotions," he said.

After the diagnosis the pair made plans for how to beat it. The quick turnaround time enabled doctors to treat the cancer in its earliest stage and perform surgery to remove the cancer. "From the time I found out I had cancer until the time it was removed it was one year," said Cassidy.

And now she says, "I'm cancer free. At least I know if I die from anything it won't be cancer."

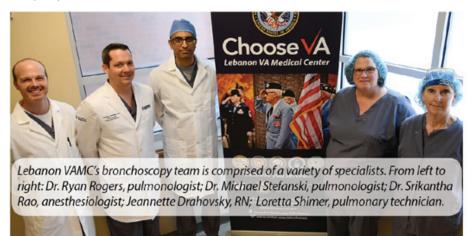
Her overall experience with Lebanon VAMC was a positive one and reinforces the emphasis Stefanski and his team have on a positive patient experience. "A pivotal aspect of our lung cancer care here at Lebanon VA is a personal touch," he says.

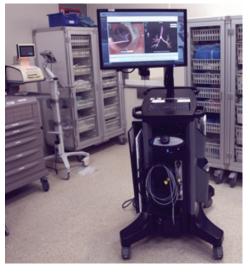
"... I couldn't have asked for better doctors. And the teams that they have.... They are very understanding and cooperative," she said. "... I know for a fact God gave me those doctors."

Her advice to other Veterans who may be facing the same challenges includes starting early and keeping appointments as testing takes time. "If you are nervous, get past it. You need to get 'er done," she says.

See her story on YouTube at:

https://youtu.be/WtRas3BJoOA





A view of Lebanon VAMC's Electromagnetic Navigation Bronchoscopy machine.

Lebanon VA Medical Center's pulmonary clinic recently acquired an advanced bronchoscopy capability to help diagnose Veterans with possible lung cancer.

Bronchoscopy is a test that allows doctors to look inside your lungs using an instrument that is inserted through the nose or mouth.

The new bronchoscopy system uses electromagnetic navigation which creates a 3D map guiding doctors to the area of concern in the lung to determine if the area is cancerous.

"It is vitally important to diagnose lung cancer as early as possible," says Dr. Michael Stefanski, a pulmonologist here, "as treatment of early versus late state lung cancer varies dramatically."

If you are a current patient here, speak with your primary care provider about your risk for lung cancer or a possible referral to the pulmonary specialist. The pulmonary clinic is in Building 17 on the ground floor.

Learn more about the machine on YouTube at:

https://youtu.be/xyv lw4dwGl

My HealtheVet: Providing greater control over your care and wellness 24/7

Edward Bleyer, Communications Specialist, My HealtheVet Coordinator



Want to have your personal health information at your fingertips? My HealtheVet, part of the Connected Care family, is the VA's private and secure online Personal Health Record (PHR) for Veterans, service members, dependents and caregivers. It provides you with the opportunity and tools to make informed decisions and to take an active role in managing your health care.

My HealtheVet was launched on Veteran's Day 2003. The award-winning website has 16+ years of proven success. You can register for an account by going to www.myhealth.va.gov. Once registered,

you will have either a basic or advanced account. A basic account provides you access to medical libraries and the ability to enter personal data into journals and other tools to track your health measures. By registering as a Veteran and VA patient you'll have an advanced account, which enables you to refill your prescriptions, track delivery and view your allergies. To take advantage of all the features My HealtheVet has to offer, you'll need to upgrade your account to a premium account. There are multiple ways to upgrade to a premium account.

- Log in with a Sign-In Partner (Online) DS Logon Premium Account or ID.me
- Upgrade via VA Video Connect (VVC) in coordination with the My HealtheVet Office
- Upgrade in person at a VA facility (Face to Face)

Upgrading to a premium account is absolutely free! If you choose to upgrade in person, you can stop by the My HealtheVet office in Building 17, Room 106. You can also see any of the Centralized Business Office staff or Release of Information staff to upgrade as well. Staff are also available at any of our Community Clinics to authenticate/upgrade you as well!

Some of the many benefits of a Premium account include:

- ★ Pharmacy: Refill your VA prescriptions, track delivery, receive shipment email notifications and much more.
- ★ Secure Messages: Use the Secure Messaging feature to communicate about non-emergency matters with a variety of VA staff and services (e.g., providers, administration, billing, pharmacy) as implemented at your VA facility.
- ★ Appointments: Keep track of your upcoming VA medical appointments and get email reminders. VA patients with a premium My HealtheVet account who have had a primary care appointment at a participating facility in the last two years can use the online scheduling tool to schedule VA appointments.
- ★ VA Blue Button Report: Customize your request for information by choosing the date range and types of information you want to view, such as lab results and progress notes. This option gives you access to current and historical information, self-entered, information and DoD Military Service information.
- ★ VA Health Summary: This is a continuity of care document designed to support you sharing a summary of your VA health information, such as allergies, health conditions, medications, laboratory tests, and more, with community (non-VA) providers or other electronic applications. Note: You are not able to choose the information included in the summary.
- ★ VA Medical Images and Reports: Access your radiology studies such as X-rays, MRIs or CT scans. You can download and share these images and reports with your providers, including non-VA providers.
- ★ Veterans Health Library: Visit this online library of trusted health education to learn more about health and wellness, look up information about tests or medications, or learn about specific conditions such as Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), women Veteran health issues, traumatic brain injury (TBI) and others.
- ★ One of the most used features of My HealtheVet is **Secure Messaging** (SM). SM is web-based, encrypted communication between patients and health professionals. For patients, SM through My HealtheVet offers convenient access to health care team members for non-urgent issues. For clinical staff, SM provides a personal and efficient way to communicate virtually with patients. Health care team members find that online communication tends to be faster than telephone calls and helps coordinate care. SM can substitute for other types of communication and encounters and may improve the quality of in-person visits.

[Lebanon VAMC had over 19,500 users of Secure Messaging for Fiscal Year 2019. Receiving 47, 605 Inbound Messages with an average completion rate of <1 Day.]



As part of the Connected Care family, My HealtheVet also has a link to the latest VA mobile apps. It's another way to connect with many of the tools and resources available. Veterans with a My HealtheVet premium account can access these apps that will either be downloaded directly to a mobile device or through a mobile-friendly website.

With VA apps, you will be able to:

- ★ Connect with health care teams from anywhere with VA Video Connect
- ★ VA Launchpad organizes VA apps and capabilities to easily find tools VA has made available to you
- ★ Schedule/cancel appointments using VA Online Scheduling
- ★ View your VA health care data
- ★ Refill prescriptions
- ★ Send secure messages to your VA care team between your appointments
- ★ Share your health information with your VA care team
- ★ Access new tools for managing and tracking your own health

If you would like assistance with registering, upgrading, or My HealtheVet portal use, please contact Lebanon VAMC's My HealtheVet Coordinator, Ed Bleyer, at 1-800-409-8771 ext. 5737.

VOLUNTARY SERVICE UPDATE

Voluntary Service: 101 Jeremy K. Fees, Chief, Voluntary Service

Voluntary Service at Lebanon VAMC is charged with two main responsibilities. These responsibilities are coordinating the facility's volunteer program and managing all donations (monetary or physical) that come to our facility, Community Clinics, Vet Centers and the Fort Indiantown Gap National Cemetery. Both volunteers and donations have far reaching impacts throughout Lebanon VAMC and our operations.

Volunteers can be seen serving in many roles. They staff the information desks at the two main entrances, transport Veterans from their home to the facility for medical appointments, they carry specimens from draw locations to the lab for analysis, and many more tasks. Nationally, in fiscal year 2019, over 61,000 volunteers served more than 9.2 million volunteer hours. However, it is impossible to calculate the amount of caring and sharing our volunteers give to Veteran patients here at Lebanon VAMC. One thing is however clear -- volunteers are a priceless asset to Veterans and Lebanon VAMC!

Donations are used to support Veterans and their quality of life. Lebanon VAMC receives monetary, item and activity donations. Voluntary Service collects items of need for resident Veterans, Veterans that are homeless or recently housed, Veterans in the Residential Recovery Program and more. Many of the items collected are personal care items such as deodorant and toothpaste. More specific requests include prepaid or pay-asyou-go cellular phones, cleaning supplies, stamps and crafts. Nationally, individuals and partnering organizations gave over \$99 million in gifts and donations. As these are just some of our everyday general needs, there are other needs that come up as well, and you can always contact Voluntary Service for a list of our current specific needs.

Monetary donations are used in many ways. All cash and check donations are deposited into one of several accounts that are used to support a variety of different programs and services. There are accounts established to support Social Work, Behavioral Health, Homeless Veterans, Hospice, Veteran Games and various other programs. One great example of how monetary donations increase the wellbeing of our Veterans is the activities and off-station events for Resident Veterans. Voluntary Service can provide holiday meals, plan fun parties and take Veterans to sporting events. The goal is to increase their quality of life and these opportunities mean a lot to the Veterans themselves in terms of their social interactions and overall quality of life.

Voluntary Service is always in need of volunteers and donations. If you or someone you know may be interested in finding out how they can help support our Veterans, please contact the office at (717) 228-6123.



Representatives from the Mount Joy American Legion - Post 185 present Lebanon VA Medical Center with a check of the proceeds from their annual New Year's Day motorcycle ride. This ride marked the 11th year for the event and the 11th year they have donated proceeds from the ride to support the Medical Center and South Central Pennsylvania's Veterans. Lebanon VAMC remains extremely appreciative of their longstanding support.



Volunteers Daryl Bare and Rodney Kiscadden are an essential part of helping conduct evening social activities in the Social Room. Our Veterans were appreciative of their help distributing pizza at this evening activity on April 21, 2020.



Volunteers volunteered 49,764 hours at Lebanon VA Medical Center in fiscal year 2019. A formal event, like this one held in 2019, is held annually to recognize their contributions to Lebanon VAMC.

Lebanon VAMC in need of Volunteer Drivers

Transportation volunteers provide an essential service to Veterans. In a typical day, volunteer drivers transport Veterans from their home to Lebanon VAMC and back. Currently, Dauphin, Schuylkill, Lancaster and Cumberland counties are in urgent need of volunteer drivers. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact the Voluntary Service office at 717-228-6123.

FACILITIES & ENGINEERING UPDATE

New Space Activations, Other Projects Continue To Progress At Lebanon VAMC Campus And York Clinic

Thaddeus S. Kocuba, Facility Manager, Engineering Service

Multiple new areas have opened at the medical center during early 2020. On Feb. 20, the new ICU in Building 104 opened.

The Oncology and Urology Outpatient Clinic also opened and involved a remodeling of a second-floor unit in Building 1 (1-2A). The space opened in March. The completion of this project wrapped up the phased renovation of the entire second Floor of Building 1.

Our new Sterile Processing Area, built on the rear of Building 1, is also nearing completion. The new space is expected to be fully operational this summer.

The work on Building 24 (YMCA/Gym/new MOVE! area) is also nearly complete. All spaces except the pool are now open. The engineering department is working with the vendor to resolve pending issues in this area so that it can be reopened soon.





An in-house engineering project team has also started converting approximately 1,000 square feet of what was formerly radiology space on the first floor of Building 1 (1-1A) into a new Pain Management Clinic. The work is progressing well with completion slated for summer.

Phase 1 of an expansion project at the York VA Community Clinic has also wrapped up and work on Phase 2 has begun. The Phase 2 portion will renovate the old York clinic to create a Patient Aligned Care Team (PACT) style clinic, new Physical Therapy area and a new Blood Lab. The PACT-style design focuses on caring for the whole patient in one location and enables a consistent design across clinics. The design scheme enables physicians and clinical staff to work as a team, collaborating more efficiently across disciplines to make patient care decisions. This design is already in place at our other community clinics. Phase 2 of the York project will renovate approximately 7,800 square feet of additional space that became available in the building for expansion of primary care space. The York expansion is expected to be completes and open sometime during the fall.

Three large design projects that were driven by the master planning process covered in the last newsletter are also underway. Design for a new primary care addition along with a new entrance to Building 17 is underway. A new medical/surgical bed unit for Building 104 is also in design, along with a new standalone Community Living Center that will be located along the front entrance drive approaching Building 1. Construction on those projects should be expected to begin at some point during the next year.





Telehealth Options (continued from page 3)

HOME TELEHEALTH:

Home telehealth is for high-risk Veterans with chronic diseases that can be enrolled and assigned a RN Care Coordinator. The Veteran receives case management through technologies such as in-home and mobile monitoring, messaging and/or video technologies. Some of the diseases monitored are congestive heart failure, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, diabetes, depression, hypertension and post-traumatic stress disorder.

Patient takes and enters vital signs at the comfort of their home and transmits the data to their RN Care Manager for daily monitoring.

ne and oring.

TELESTROKE:

Lebanon VAMC also now offers telestroke through the VA National Telestroke Program (NTSP) using iPads to bring a remote stroke neurologist to a patient's bedside. The program is comprised of a virtual hub of VA stroke neurologists around the country that participate in a 24/7/365 call schedule to provide emergency stroke consultation to participating facilities. The program uses an innovative approach to providing services by using low-cost, highly-reliable commercial technology: iPads.

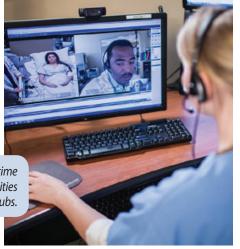
Remote stroke neurologist assesses the patient to provide the quickest treatment plan where seconds count!

kest unt!

TeleICU:

With our new state of the art Intensive Care Unit, we also introduced TelelCU. This new telehealth option will link Lebanon VAMC's team of inpatient care doctors to a team of national intensivist doctors and specialists for on-demand, real-time clinical video consultations. The services provided range from consultative to full clinical support and may be time-based, only at night, or up to 24/7 coverage.

TeleICU workstations allow providers and nurses to offer real-time intensive care telehealth services to more than 20 VA medical facilities across the country from four staffing hubs.



Veterans can access any of these telehealth services by consulting with their provider during their next visit to determine if they could benefit.

Lebanon VAMC Service Locations



- A Lebanon VA Medical Center 1700 South Lincoln Avenue Lebanon, PA 17042 PH: (717) 272-6621
- Berks County VA Clinic 2762 Century Boulevard Suite 120 Wyomissing, PA 19610 PH: (484) 220-2572
- Cumberland County VA Clinic 5070 Ritter Road Mechanicsburg, PA 17055 PH: (717) 590-1525
- Ft. Indiantown Gap
 VA Outreach Clinic
 Bldg. 4-114 (Hawkins Road)
 Fort Indiantown Gap
 Annville, PA 17003
 PH: (717) 272-6621
 Hours: Wednesday & Friday
 Managed by Lebanon VAMC Primary Care
- E Lancaster County VA Clinic 212 Willow Valley Lakes Drive Suite 208 Willow Street, PA 17584 PH: (717) 740-4434
- F Schuylkill County VA Clinic 1410 Laurel Boulevard Suite 2 Pottsville, PA 17901 PH: (570) 628-5374
- York County VA Clinic 2251 Eastern Boulevard York, PA 17402 PH: (717) 840-2730

Enrollment & Eligibility Questions?

CALL 717-228-6000 TO SPEAK TO ONE OF OUR ENROLLMENT SPECIALISTS

The Best Care Anywhere... The Best Employees Anywhere. Quality care at 7 locations in South Central PA.



Lebanon VA Medical Center

1700 South Lincoln Avenue Lebanon, Pennsylvania 17042

717-272-6621 • 1-800-409-8771 www.lebanon.va.gov





COMMON LEBANON VAMC CONTACTS

717-272-6621 / 1-800-409-8771

Appointment Line x 5105
Telephone Nursing Care x 6041
Pharmacy Center x 6009
Auto Med Refill/Account/Appt Info Line x 5991
Enrollment/Eligibility x 6000
VETERANS CRISIS LINE 1-800-273-8255 Press 1