



Wilmington VA Medical Center (VAMC) and its five community based outpatient clinics (CBOC) are proud to serve Veterans in Delaware and southern New Jersey.

Wilmington VA Medical Center
1601 Kirkwood Highway
Wilmington, DE 19805
800-461-8262
302-994-2511

WILMINGTON VAMC - WILMINGTON, DELAWARE
ATLANTIC COUNTY CBOC - NORTHFIELD, NEW JERSEY
CAPE MAY COUNTY CBOC - CAPE MAY, NEW JERSEY
CUMBERLAND COUNTY CBOC - VINELAND, NEW JERSEY
KENT COUNTY CBOC - DOVER, DELAWARE
SUSSEX COUNTY CBOC - GEORGETOWN, DELAWARE

ANNUAL REPORT 2018

The formal dedication of a 336-bed VA hospital, known today as Wilmington VA Medical Center, took place on April 2, 1950. The ninth VA hospital to open after World War II ended, Wilmington's facility at the 32-acre site on the edge of Elsmere, Delaware, was but one of 32 new VA hospitals or major additions scheduled for completion in 1950 alone. Today, by way of adaptive reuse, the old hospital has been transformed over the years into a thriving medical center that supports outpatient, acute care, and a 40-bed community living center.

ANNUAL REPORT



2018

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On Behalf of the Wilmington VA Medical Center

Thank you for supporting our Veterans! Whether you're an employee, volunteer, caregiver, service officer, community partner—or a veteran yourself—please accept our sincere appreciation for a year of support and genuine interest in the success of the Wilmington VA Medical Center and our five community based outpatient clinics. Together, we proudly serve the Veterans of Delaware and southern New Jersey!



PHOTO BY DAVID CURTIS

Enclosed, you'll find our 2018 Annual Report. A summary, it offers a glimpse into the efforts of highly talented professionals who display unwavering dedication to our Veterans—and each other. I'm confident that you'll find their accomplishments Veteran focused, creative, and innovative. Thanks for always supporting their achievements and regularly sharing your valued feedback, which enables us to improve quality, safety, and access to excellent care.

Looking to 2019, our team members are focused on the Veteran experience. We're working to build better trust, embrace best practices, improve delivery of care, and make the medical center and clinics great places for employees, volunteers, and most importantly, our Veterans.

How we provide care today impacts where Veterans will choose to get their care tomorrow. We want Veterans to choose Wilmington VAMC because our team members are committed to practices that promote zero patient harm paired with timely access delivered by compassionate experts who are passionate about health care.

Veterans will forever be the driving force in all facets of our work. At VA, we now have unparalleled access

to data and information from various satisfaction surveys. We are embracing feedback from Veterans and other stakeholders to become better in everything we do. These tools, paired with our incredible staff and volunteers, will ensure Veterans get the best care anywhere. We'll get there by focusing on four things:

- Putting Veterans first by providing quality care, every day, in every service.
- Ensuring employees and volunteers have a great place to work.
- Developing and sustaining a culture of safety, quality, and excellence.
- "Walking the talk" in a respectful and collaborative manner.

It is going to take all of us. Both VA and community partners must continue to work together and look out for the best interests of Veterans. How we care for Veterans today will contribute not just individual health and wellbeing but will influence how and where Veterans get that care tomorrow.

In closing, working at VA isn't something we have to do. It's something we get to do. It's a total honor and privilege to have the opportunity to serve those who served us. On behalf of the entire leadership team, thank you, and please know that I'm truly proud to be your medical center director.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Vince Kane".

VINCE KANE

Meet Our Leadership Team

Director



Vince Kane

Associate Director of Operations



Kim Butler

Associate Director of Patient Care Services & Nurse Executive



Kathleen Craige

Chief of Staff



George Tzanis

Executive Assistant to the Director



Virginia Yelland

Executive Assistant to the Associate Director of Operations



Sarah Wilson

Executive Assistant to the Chief of Staff



Mike Amos

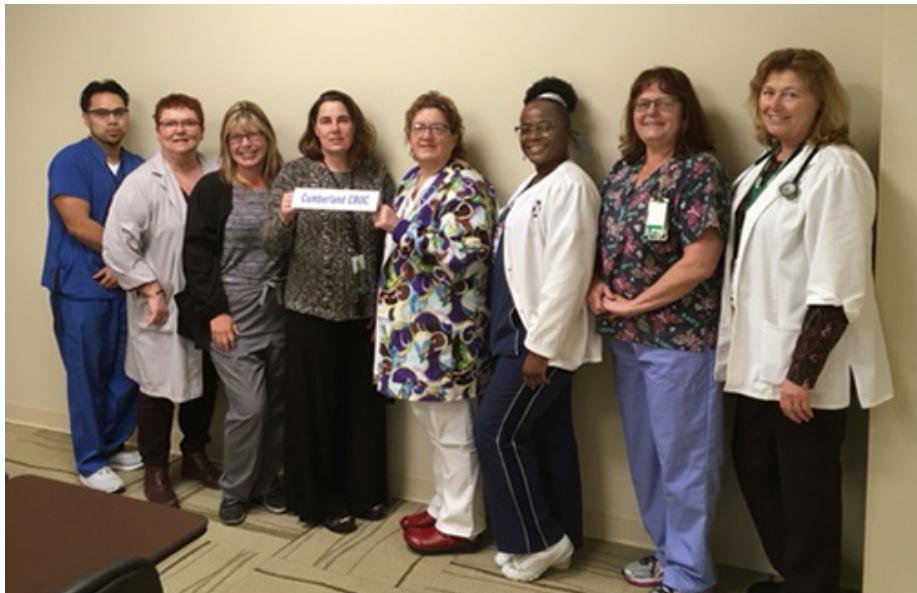
Chief of Ambulatory Care



Bill Griffiths

Meet Our Team Members

Wilmington VA Medical Center and the community based outpatient clinics are staffed by more than 1,020 dedicated professionals who care for Veterans in Delaware and southern New Jersey. Here are just a few of our team members.



Staff, Cumberland County Community Based Outpatient Clinic, Vineland, N.J.



Chaplain Paul Buck, Chaplain Service.



Staff, Atlantic County Community Based Outpatient Clinic, Northfield, N.J.



PHOTOS BY DAVID CURTIS
Chris Trexler, Environmental Management Service.



Social Work Services, Wilmington VAMC & Community Based Outpatient Clinics.



PHOTO BY KATIE WILSON/OFFICE OF U.S. SENATOR TOM CARPER
Denise Rowley, Kent County Community Based Outpatient Clinic, Dover, Delaware, and U.S. Senator Tom Carper, Navy Veteran.

Staff of VAMC & CBOCs

Dedicated VA staff cover many disciplines such as surgical, dental, administration, outreach, counseling, social work, dietary, suicide prevention, facilities, environmental, communications, voluntary, education, housekeeping, and much more.



Mark Taylor, Veterans Outreach Team.



Post Deployment Care Team, Wilmington VA Medical Center.



Freddy Allen, Vet Center Outreach Team.



Academic Affiliations, Education & Research

In 2018, Wilmington VA Medical Center established the Office of Academic Affiliations, Education & Research. A first accomplishment of the new office was its efforts to secure roughly \$300,000 to support additional physician training. This grant was awarded by way of a competitive process through VA's Office of Academic Affiliations in Washington, D.C.

In the springtime, Wilmington VAMC launched an academic affiliation with Rowan University School of Osteopathic Medicine. The new partnership brought resident physician trainees studying psychiatry and family medicine to the Cumberland County Community Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC) in Vineland, New Jersey. As psychiatry and family medicine are among VA's key clinical services, this educational relationship with Rowan University holds great promise with further advancing the mission to provide exceptional health care to area Veterans. Additionally, Rowan physician trainees in internal medicine, geriatrics, and pain management will begin rotations at the medical center.

The academic office also had a very productive year on the research front. In fall of 2018, the medical center received authorization from VA's Office of Research & Development to initiate a research program. This initiative will enable Wilmington VAMC to engage with key research partners, including the University of Delaware, Delaware Idea Network for Biomedical Research Excellence (INBRE), Coatesville VA Medical Center, and Corporal Michael Crescenz VA Medical Center (Philadelphia) on a wide variety of clinical and health service projects. These have the potential for direct and positive effects on patient health care. The research program also enables Wilmington VAMC, together with its partners, to qualify for grants from VA's \$1.9 Billion research budget.

Projects with the University of Delaware are already underway, which include a pilot study comparing the efficacy of VA's MOVE! Weight Management Program with health coaching to improve outcomes for patient weight and physical activity levels. Also, in the works is a proposal to determine if the University of Delaware's Lerner College of Business Patient Experience Academy curriculum will improve Veteran satisfaction and care at the Wilmington VAMC. The Office of Academic Affiliations, Education & Research anticipates that many more research proposals will be forthcoming next year, and that its local program will become a key component of VA research activity at regional and national levels.



PHOTO BY DAVID CURTIS



ROWAN UNIVERSITY

School of
Osteopathic Medicine



Suicide Prevention

Wilmington VAMC continues to identify at-risk Veterans

Suicide prevention continues to be one of the highest priorities of Wilmington VA Medical Center and the outpatient clinics.

As part of the commitment to use resources, services, and all technology available to reduce Veteran suicide, VA has an innovative program called Recovery Engagement and Coordination for Health – Veterans Enhanced Treatment, or REACH VET.

Wilmington VA Medical Center and the community outpatient clinics utilize this predictive model, which uses an algorithm of 61 variables to identify Veterans who are at the most risk.

Alongside this program, suicide prevention coordinators work closely with Wilmington VA Police Department (VAPD) and its area Veterans Response Teams (VRT) to better identify and expedite VA health care services for Veterans in distress.

Recently, Wilmington VAMC's coordinators ordered twelve iPad devices to facilitate Video On-Demand (VOD) and Virtual Medical Room (VMR) visits with Veterans identified as emergent risk.

To increase awareness and better identify those in distress, prevention coordinators doubled outreach efforts each month during 2018. Specifically, the team participated in suicide briefings at the headquarters of the Delaware Air National Guard and New Jersey Army National Guard.

Visit VeteransCrisisLine.net to download free outreach materials, including flyers to print and distribute, digital ads to display on your website, and content to post on social networks or publish in newsletters. Learn how you and the community can work together to prevent suicide.

No one can do everything, but everyone can do something. We are all part of the solution, and it starts with one small act.

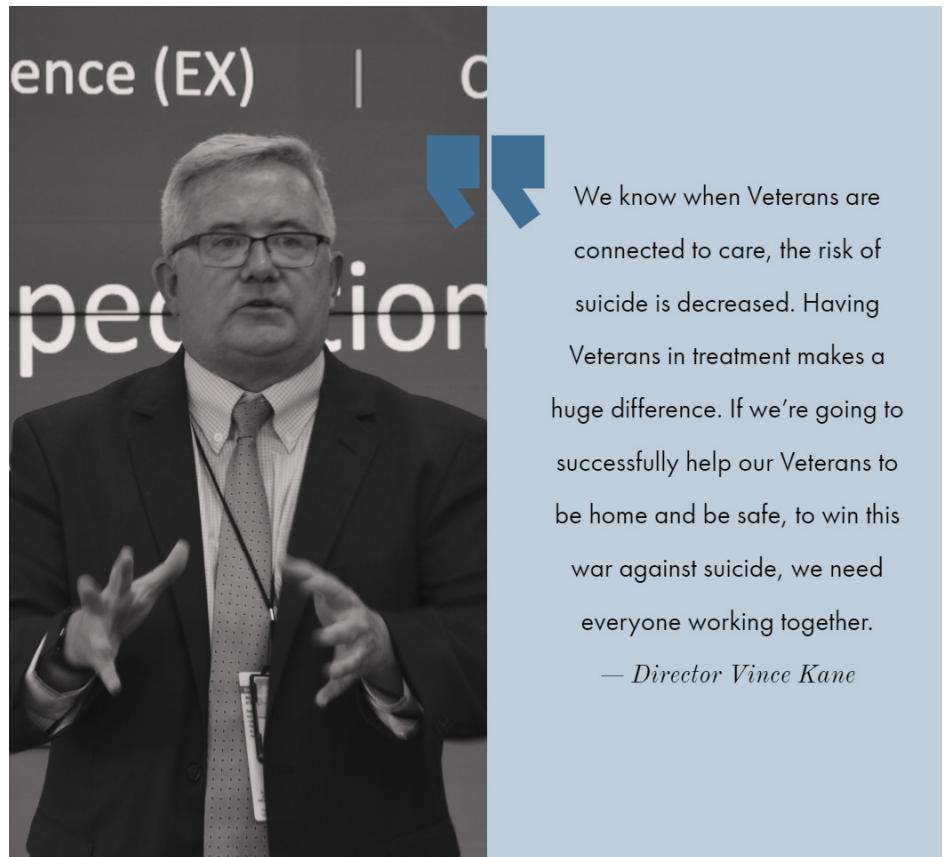


PHOTO BY DAVID CURTIS

Suicide Prevention Coordinators

Kent Johnson - Northern Delaware - 302-275-5676

Matt Jacobs - Southern New Jersey - 302-300-6570

Dave Parsons - Southern Delaware - 302-354-7052

Coordinators make sure Veterans receive needed counseling and services. Calls to Veterans Crisis Line are referred to local suicide prevention coordinators for follow-up services.



Veterans Crisis Line
1-800-273-8255 **PRESS 1**

Police Department



Wilmington VA Police Department (VAPD) had an active 2018. Wilmington VAPD graduated two cohorts of local police officers, enlarging the ranks of Delaware's Veterans Response Team. The VRT instructional program serves to educate local law enforcement officers how to respond to incidents involving Veterans. Program instruction also reviews the many resources offered by VA, community partners, and service organizations.

Also, in 2018, Wilmington VAPD announced their "First Light" program. The initiative, signifying a new day/new beginning, focuses on those struggling with addiction and looking for help. Participants turn in their contraband (drugs/paraphernalia) and receive assurance of leniency if agreements are struck to enter treatment. The Wilmington VAPD enterprise is loosely based on similar programs used by police agencies across the country.

The VA's Office of Security & Law Enforcement (OS&LE) conducted their annual inspection and found Wilmington VAPD to be "highly satisfactory." This rating is the second highest distinction possible.

Other accolades include an award bestowed by the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP). The award is the One Mind Campaign certification, which is presented to departments that establish programs to improve effectiveness of response to incidents involving individuals with mental health concerns.

Also in 2018, Wilmington VAPD sent one of their law enforcement officers to training to be designated as a mental health first aid instructor. That VAPD officer is now certified to train local law enforcement agencies, which include the New Castle County Police Department and its Hostage/Crisis Negotiation Team.

When it comes to community involvement, VAPD officers participated in the 32nd Annual Law Enforcement Torch Run for Special Olympics. Of note, the torch run passed the medical center by way of Kirkwood Highway. The police officers also raised significant donations to benefit Special Olympics.

Wilmington VA Police Department is dedicated to "Protecting Those Who Served." Their ranks consist of 20 law enforcement officers, two dispatchers, and one program support assistant. Currently, 87 percent are Veterans with representatives from all five military branches. Wilmington VAPD provides 24-hour patrols of the medical center, benefits office, support buildings, and parking lots.



PHOTO BY DAVID CURTIS



PHOTO BY DAVID CURTIS



With an agreement to enter into treatment, VA Police will accept all drugs and paraphernalia, and you will not be charged. For more information, visit us next to the Emergency Dept.



GRAPHIC BY BERNARDO SZYMCZAK

Health Education



Wilmington VA team receives Precision Engagement Award

Staff with Wilmington VA Medical Center's Patient Education Resource Center and Patient Care Services attended the 2018 GetConnected conference from April 30 to May 2 at National Harbor, Maryland. Representatives in attendance included Mary B. Gallagher, MSN, RN, CCRN, who presented "Leading Service Excellence." Her presentation, which was well received by attendees, stressed customer service as a critical element in the health care and satisfaction of patients.

Mary Gallagher also discussed an evidenced-based electronic display prompt, **Bedside Ethics Consult**, which appears on the GetWellNetwork and is accessible to patients at the Wilmington VAMC. Another staff member, Shannon Laarendi, RN, gave a talk on the **Sleep Hygiene** digital prompt, which is also on the GetWellNetwork. This sleep hygiene digital tile, when selected via touch screen, guides the user through several prompts that provides information about improving quality sleep and rest. Both prompts give inpatients and resident Veterans an active role in managing their health care and individual wellness.

During the award portion of the conference, Wilmington VAMC received the **2018 Precision Engagement Award** for patient satisfaction. The Precision Engagement Awards recognize health care organizations that implement innovative methods to connect with patients at the right time in the right place and with the right information, based on their readiness to engage.

By utilizing the GetWellNetwork as a tool, Wilmington VAMC's customer experience scores increased, according to the Survey of Healthcare Experiences of Patients (SHEP). In fact, the medical center's customer service scores were well above the regional and national averages.

The GetWellNetwork, a cloud-based patient engagement solution and digital health technology, works with over 350 hospitals that all utilize the network and its software applications to educate patients, garner feedback, improve outcomes, and increase patient satisfaction. A demonstration of the network can be requested by visiting www.getwellnetwork.com.

My HealtheVet and its secure messaging application, both continue to rise in popularity with Veterans in Delaware and southern New Jersey. In 2018, VA Healthcare-VISN 4 set a goal for Wilmington VAMC to increase the number of patients who actively communicate with VA providers by way of secure message. As of the date of this report, 45.02 percent of Wilmington VAMC's Veterans are active users, surpassing the stretch goal of 44.48 percent, a 10-percent increase over last year!

Veterans who have questions about My HealtheVet can visit the Wilmington VAMC's Patient Education Resource Center. It's open to patients, families, and visitors during the week from 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. This resource is located on the first floor in Room 1232. Veterans and family members can browse numerous health brochures, view health-oriented videos, or use the My HealtheVet computer lab to access their VA health information. A registered nurse is available on site to assist visitors with questions.

When should I think about asking for an ethics consultation?

Here are some examples of why Veterans and families ask for an ethics consultation:

"I have to make a serious decision about a treatment that could affect how long I may live. After talking it over with my health care team, I am still not sure I agree with the doctor's recommendation."

"We don't agree about the right thing to do for our brother's care."

Would you like an Ethics Consult?

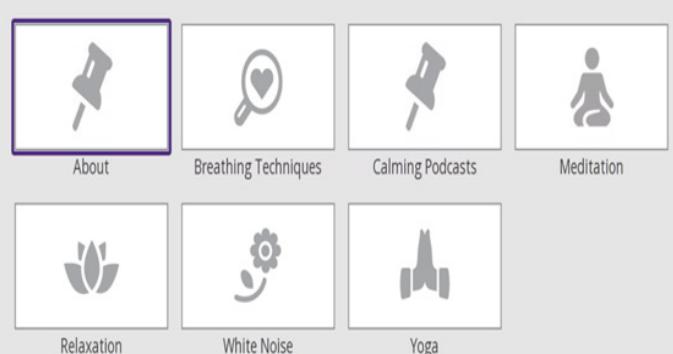
Yes, please

No, thank you

Sleep Menu (Chemo/Dialysis)

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Community Living Center

To the Veterans in the Community Living Center (CLC), the Wilmington VA Medical Center is more than just a hospital—it's home. To promote an active lifestyle for resident Veterans, Susana Cebula, MSM-HCA, CTRS (recreation therapist), plans programs, activities, and events. These are designed to focus on physical, emotional, spiritual, and mental wellness.

Popular activities for CLC residents include the Spring Fling Snowball Fight, horseback riding lessons at New Castle County Carousel Park Equestrian Center, and the CLC Garden Club to plant vegetables, herbs, and spices. Other favorites include expressive arts, live entertainment, art shows, birthday celebrations, Wii tournaments, community outings, pet therapy visits, family gatherings, spiritual expressions, reading groups, bingo, reminiscing, current events discussions, daily exercise classes, intergenerational programs, movie night, and so much more!



PHOTO BY SUSANA CEBULA

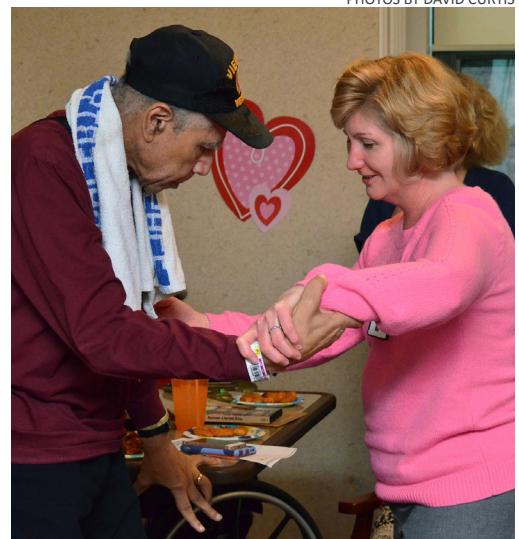


PHOTOS BY DAVID CURTIS



PHOTO BY SUSANA CEBULA





Nutrition & Food Service



PHOTO BY DAVID CURTIS

NFS team launches Wilmington VAMC's dining experience, first in VISN 4 network

In June 2018, Wilmington VA Medical Center's dining experience was launched. It is the first, and only, room service program in the network, VA Healthcare-VISN 4. The dining program is just like ordering room service at a hotel—what you want, when you want it. Wilmington VAMC's Nutrition & Food Services (NFS) began the process of creating the program by surveying Veterans who receive care at the medical center.

The NFS team received comments about favorite food items, menu options, and recommended hours of operation. Feedback from Veterans was the guiding force of the program's implementation. The NFS chefs then began creating standard recipes for top menu items. Potential entrées were then taste tested by Veterans. They gave feedback and input, which helped improve the facility's efforts. The initial feedback was overwhelmingly positive!

The medical media team was essential in putting the ideas on paper. David Curtis, Navy Veteran and staff photographer, organized a photo shoot that featured the most popular dish, Chicken Cacciatore. Bernardo Szymczak, Marine Veteran and visual information specialist, created different menu designs, which catered to various diets whether regular, heart healthy, carbohydrate controlled, puree, mechanical, and advanced texture diet. The goal was to have menu items for any Veteran who calls and places a food order.

The VA information technology team, which is co-located on the main campus, quickly joined the effort. The IT team set up additional phone lines and printers. Of course, nothing could be purchased without the help of logistics expert, Lucy Crescenzo. She was instrumental by making sure Wilmington VAMC received the correct equipment to print out the unique order tickets. The flow of the kitchen needed updating as well. Even though renovations were done, many pieces of equipment had to be changed and purchased. Facilities stepped forward and made quick improvements and adjustments.

In addition, the clinical registered dietitians began educating providers about the benefits of ordering less restrictive diets when medically feasible, which would encourage intake and possibly improve health status. Customer service, therapeutic diets, and additional computer trainings were completed with all NFS staff members. It took a full force, however, after seven months of work, staff took their first order on June 5, 2018. The implementation of the new dining experience was truly a team effort with support from nearly every service and section at Wilmington VAMC.



PHOTO BY DAVID CURTIS

Thanksgiving, Football & Sunday Brunch

While planning the dining program, NFS took a closer look at ways to improve food service within the Wilmington VAMC's Community Living Center. The NFS team realized that they truly work inside the home of 40 Veterans. They knew their program needed to include home cooked meals. The team began offering specially crafted dishes that matched various holidays and seasons. A traditional turkey dinner on Thanksgiving. On Christmas Eve, the team paired tasty food with a social gathering. For the Super Bowl, a party was thrown while the big game was featured on the main television.

Besides these efforts, the NFS team changed their work flow, hours, and developed special menus for other events that

Veteran residents said were important to them. Out of this grew the idea of having Sunday brunch. The NFS staff started to host brunch meals with a rotating menu each week and season. For example, in the summer, there was a lot of outdoor grilling. As part of grilling, a “Guest Griller” program took form. This allowed other staff members to partake in the meal service. The guests included all top-level VAMC leaders including Director Vince Kane! The CLC residents and family members had the ability to talk to administrators in an informal setting and build rapport with all of the service chiefs. By summer’s end, residents got to enjoy the Wilmington VA’s inaugural “CLC Clam & Lobster Bake.” Other seasonal events included “Frosty Fridays” during warmer months and “Souper Fridays” in colder months.

Community Living Center's Dining Program

Besides the change in food and atmosphere, the CLC's dining room received new equipment such as a grill, steam table, and juice machine. These pieces replaced more institutional looking fixtures with the intent to promote a more welcoming and home environment. The design of the cooking space was reconfigured to promote access to snacks, drinks, and other amenities. Large bottles of condiments in restaurant-style caddies were placed at each table. Again, these small changes served to promote individual choice and lessen the appearance of a hospital facility.

When room service was introduced, Wilmington VAMC staff looked for a way to incorporate that program for CLC residents. To make this happen, small iPads were purchased and configured to take food orders. Tableside dining was then born! Wilmington VA staff can now take orders from Veterans in the CLC dining room, input as though they were in a restaurant, and have those requests sent direct to the on-duty chef. The whole ordering process takes place while appetizing cheesesteaks are cooking in the background. With the iPads, safety increases as well. Staff in the CLC can see both individual dietary restrictions and allergy information in real time. The software also acts a safeguard by preventing Veterans from receiving incorrect orders.



Tranquility Garden

The CLC also saw a garden project start to bloom this year. Facilities, recreation therapy, and nutrition & food services, all worked with CLC residents to determine what to plant in the courtyard. Besides flowers, other plants that took root included various herbs, tomatoes, cucumbers, and zucchini—all used in meals. The plants were showcased via raised flower beds so Veteran residents could see the fruit of their labor. The CLC staff and residents are excited to see the garden project expand well into next year!

Hydration Program - Expanded

Working with nurse partners, NFS staff found the need to offer additional beverages between meals. Not just the usual stock of beverages, but all types to include thickened drinks. Staff wanted these to be available and accessible in the CLC and acute care areas. At the close of 2018, NFS members began second and third cup of coffee service. The team is excited for the future and getting continued feedback from their Veterans. It has been a busy year for sure!



PHOTOS BY DAVID CURTIS

Veterans Outreach

Local outreach specialists enroll more than 420 Veterans in VA health care, attend nearly 400 community events

Wilmington VA Medical Center's outreach team continues to bring the VA to communities in Delaware and southern New Jersey. The outreach specialists make sure that Veterans and their families are heard, informed, and equipped with up-to-date information relating to the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) along with related benefits and services.

The team takes pride in making sure Veterans know how to best utilize VA health care and services earned by way of military service. Throughout 2018, the team assisted Veterans with a seamless and expedient transition into the VA health care system.

Outreach has been involved in community events, health fairs, Veterans conventions, town halls, symposiums, state fairs, deployment ceremonies, Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Programs, and seasonal festivals. The outreach team also promoted VA health care and enrollment through local radio stations, social media, television, and print publications.

During fiscal year 2018, the outreach team enrolled more than 420 Veterans in VA health care, and the team attended nearly 400 events throughout Delaware and New Jersey. The current outreach team includes Patrick Carney, Jacqueline Hinker, and Mark Taylor.

Patrick Carney is an OIF/OND veteran who most recently served with the U.S. Army's 1st Cavalry Division. Patrick covers VA outreach efforts for Atlantic and Cumberland Counties in New Jersey and can be reached at 302-358-9736.

Jacqueline Hinker is a long-time advocate, radio personality, and community leader in southern New Jersey. With strong ties to Wildwood, New Jersey, Jacqueline covers VA outreach efforts for Cape May County. She can be reached at 302-304-5509.



PHOTO BY DAVID CURTIS



PHOTO COURTESY OF OFFICE OF U.S. REPRESENTATIVE FRANK LOBIONDO
From left, Mark Taylor, Patrick Carney, U.S. Representative Frank LoBiondo (NJ-2), and Jacqueline Hinker.

Mark Taylor is an Army Veteran who brings experience as an Army recruiter and from years of operating non-profit organizations. Mark, the inaugural outreach specialist on the team, is responsible for community engagement for all of Delaware as well as Salem County, New Jersey. He can be reached at 302-932-7519.

Looking to 2019, the team is proud to announce that Valerie Camarillo will be joining their group with the responsibilities to cover Kent and Sussex Counties in Delaware.

Valerie is a Veteran of the U.S. Air Force and currently serves as a commissioned officer in the Delaware Air National Guard. If you are interested in meeting with Patrick, Jacqueline, Mark, or Valerie to set up an event or discuss VA issues, let them know! They're here to help.

Events in the Community



PHOTO BY SUSANA CEBULA



PHOTOS BY DAVID CURTIS



Care in the Community

CITC team takes innovative approach, deploys nurse navigators to improve community care coordination

Wilmington VA Medical Center's Care in the Community (CITC) team had an exciting 2018. They welcomed new leaders to their ranks including Jody A. Searight, PA-C, MS; Rebecca Martin, RN; and Tammy Schied, LPN. This year, the CITC team embarked on an innovative approach to decentralize care coordination by placing nurse navigators at CBOC locations.

Participating clinics are staffed with a registered nurse navigator, a licensed practical nurse navigator, and an advanced medical support assistant. The decentralized model allows Veterans to meet with nurse navigators to select community providers, negotiate their appointments, and finalize clear plans for continuity of care.

This model allows for better clinical monitoring and improved quality of care for Veterans. The process also gives each patient a single point of contact to assist with questions or other needs. The next phase is to expand this model with additional teams at Wilmington VAMC. This program has improved Veteran satisfaction and will be shared as a VA best practice.

Regarding community care, the CITC team saw a steady increase in non-VA care with a growth of 25 percent over last year. In June 2018, President Donald Trump signed into law the Mission Act, which provides rules and regulations to expand VA into an integrated health care system.

This effort will change the current siloed system and move VA into a partnership with community providers to coordinate improved and timely health care for Veterans. The changes will also authorize sharing of integrated electronic record for better continuity of care.



PHOTO BY DAVID CURTIS

MRI - Looking Forward

MRI/Ultrasound fusion biopsy now available, Wilmington VA first to rollout in VISN 4 network

At Wilmington VA Medical Center, staff constantly lean forward to implement new processes and procedures to improve the health care of Veterans.

This includes expanding health capabilities with technologies such as magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) machines.

This MRI technology, which has been available since the 1970s, uses a strong magnetic field combined with radio waves to create detailed images from inside the human body.

Wilmington VAMC is proud to announce a joint MRI venture between the radiology and urology departments. Veterans can now benefit from an MRI/Ultrasound fusion biopsy, which is a new technique to overcome challenges of diagnosing clinically significant prostate cancers.

Bottom line, the fusion creates a better view and picture for medical staff. The current standard in the diagnosis of prostate cancer is for patients to undergo cancer screening. This involves blood tests followed by biopsies of the prostate gland to explain abnormal blood test results. While these have been useful in the past, random biopsies can lead to unnecessary treatment and/or missed cancers.

This MRI/Ultrasound fusion allows medical staff to mark areas suspicious for prostate cancer on the MRI scan, which aids the urologist during an ultrasound biopsy to specifically target those worrisome areas.

The result is an increased chance that clinically significant cancers will be detected and quickly treated. Wilmington VAMC is the first facility in VA Healthcare-VISN 4 to offer this technique. The medical center is equally proud that it will benefit Veterans!



PHOTO BY DAVID CURTIS

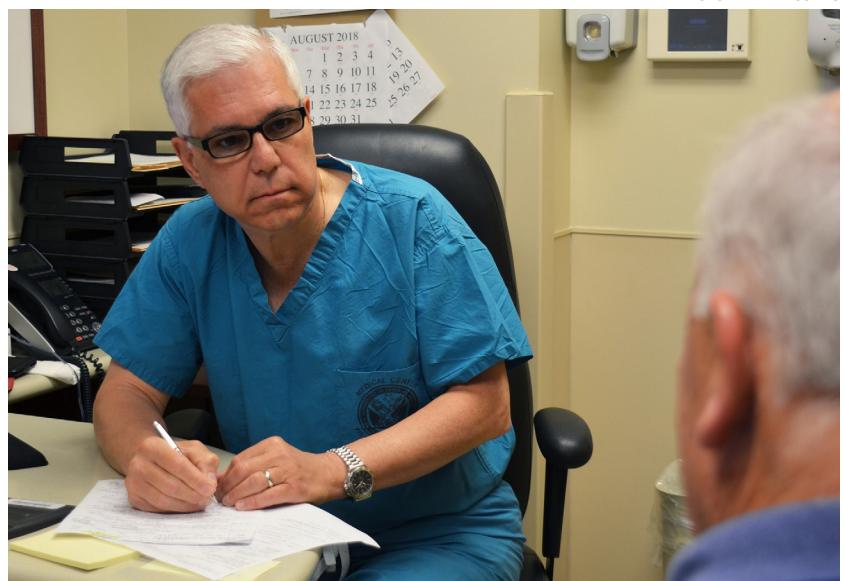


PHOTO BY DAVID CURTIS



PHOTO BY DAVID CURTIS

Voluntary Service



Over 14,000 volunteer hours logged at Wilmington VAMC, 260 regularly scheduled volunteers for fiscal year 2018

Wilmington VA Medical Center's Voluntary Service had another successful and fulfilling year! More than 260 volunteers were regularly scheduled across multiple areas within the facility.

In sum, volunteers logged more than 14,000 hours in fiscal year 2018! Those 260 volunteers, during the length of their volunteer careers, have given a total of 273,378 hours!

These dedicated folks help patients navigate the hallways, staff information desks, maintain the Veterans lounge, assist in the community living center, and much more. Wilmington VAMC is forever grateful for the time, energy, and dedication of all volunteers.

Besides volunteering, countless members of the community made monetary and non-monetary contributions of more than \$86,985. Of that amount, monetary donations were close to \$33,475.

Those funds are used to support the patients lounge, community living center, and efforts at the outpatient clinics. Non-monetary donations received included coffee, quilts, books, hats, and scarves.

Other highlights for 2018 included:

- Veterans Day/Welcome Home Heroes event
- POW/MIA Day and Recognition Chair
- Gift cards for Veterans needing food assistance
- Holiday gifts via angel tree for Veterans and families
- Launched volunteer appreciation holiday luncheon
- No Veteran Dies Alone program

Volunteers provide many important functions throughout the medical center. Volunteers perform several services and their talents are closely matched with one of many assignments. When registering to be a volunteer, voluntary service asks for a commitment of 100 hours in the first year.

The suggested time for each visit is 4 hours, however, many choose to volunteer 6 or 8 hours, depending on availability. To register as a volunteer, fill out VA Form 10-7055, Application for Voluntary Service, located on Wilmington VAMC's website. Applications can be submitted by email or faxed to 302-633-5584.



PHOTOS BY DAVID CURTIS



Dental Service

Ribbon-cutting event opens state-of-the-art dental clinic



The dental service at Wilmington VA Medical Center has seen many changes in 2018. The most significant of which was the move to the new clinic space on the sixth floor. This event was celebrated with a ribbon cutting, which included a visit by Dr. Patricia E. Arola, the assistant undersecretary for health for dentistry, as well as the presence of four previous chiefs of the Wilmington VAMC dental service.

The new dental suite has state-of-the-art equipment in 12 treatment rooms, an endodontic microscope, and 3-D radiographic imaging capabilities, to name but a few of the new additions. With this new space, staff look forward to expanding services to benefit Veterans. There are plans to add additional support staff and dental specialists to meet this goal.

Types of dental care and benefits include a wide range of services for eligible Veterans. Below are some of the many services offered by VA dentistry:

- Regularly scheduled cleaning and x-rays.
- Restorative procedures such as fillings, crowns and bridges.
- Comfortable, well-fitting dentures.
- Oral surgery such as tooth extractions.
- Access to oral and facial reconstruction surgery as a result of trauma or serious illness.

VA dental care eligibility and Veteran dental benefits are based on several factors. Those eligible receive the necessary VA dental care to maintain, restore, and improve oral health and masticatory function, including repeat care.



Employee Awards

PHOTO BY: JENNIFER COOPER



Krystal Kamrowski, Employee of the Year. Christine Masiello, Clinician of the Year.

PHOTO BY: JENNIFER COOPER



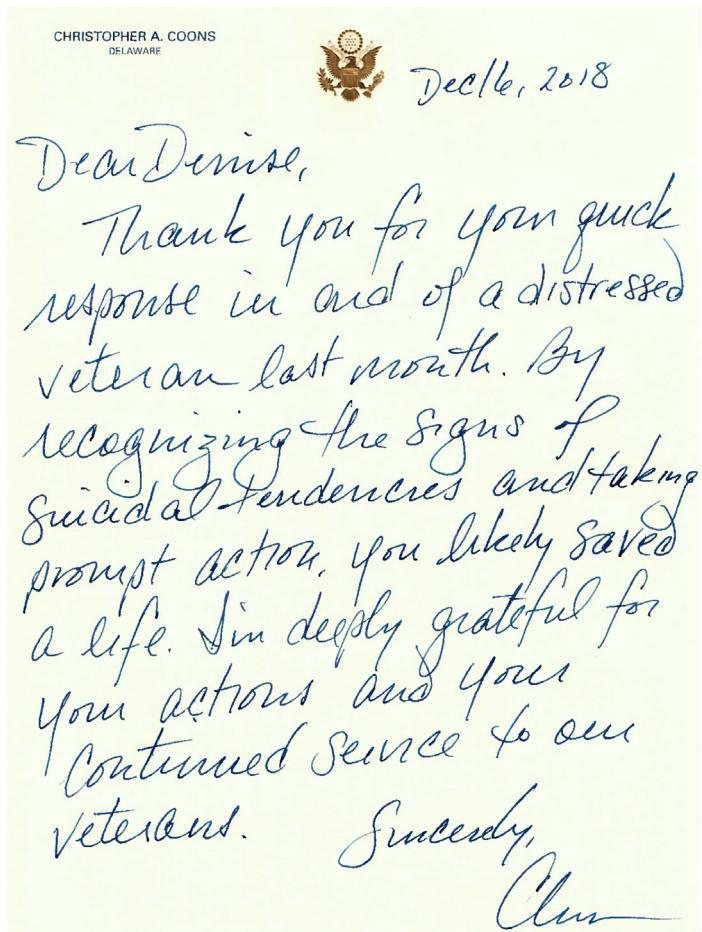
Dr. Kristen Hyland, Physician of the Year. Social Work, Homeless Program, CARF Award.

PHOTO BY: JENNIFER COOPER



Cumberland County Community Outpatient Clinic, Team of the Year for 2017-18 (Fiscal Year).

Accolades & StaffAwards



For significant achievement in building a more environmentally sustainable organization



Numbers & Statistics

During 2018, Wilmington VA Medical Center and outpatient clinics had an operating budget of \$200 million. With 1,020 employees, 231 were Veterans, which is roughly 23 percent. Veteran patient counts increased to 31,277 unique Veterans. That total number continues to trend up from

29,917 Veterans in 2016 and 30,606 Veterans in 2017. Currently there are 2,497 patients who are women Veterans. Emergency room visits have dropped from 9,173 to 8,732 this year. Paired with those numbers, outpatient visits have climbed from 317,618 to 338,184 this year. Outpatient



\$200 Million Budget

For fiscal year 2018, Wilmington VA Medical Center had a total operating budget of \$200 million.



1,021 Employees

Roughly 1,021 employees were on staff across the medical center and community clinics during fiscal year 2018.



231 Veteran Employees

During fiscal 2018, Wilmington VAMC and clinics had a staff comprised of 231 Veterans. That is roughly 23 percent.



144,141 Calls

For 2018, about 144,141 calls were received. Average speed to answer was 27 seconds (Goal < 30 seconds). 4.85 percent of calls disconnected before answered (Goal < 5 percent).



\$86,985 Donations

During fiscal year 2018, Wilmington VAMC's voluntary service received \$86,985 in monetary and non-monetary donations.



260 Volunteers

Wilmington VA Medical Center has 260 regularly scheduled volunteers. In fiscal year 2018, they gave 14,000 hours.

encounters equally climbed from 433,830 to 463,028. Proactive measures to get Veterans to scheduled appointments as well as reaching out to them has positively impacted emergency room visits. Community care consults also trended up, moving from 13,049 to 17,333. There were 967 admissions in fiscal year 2018. Answering phone calls and inquiries in a timely manner has been a major focus in 2018. About 144,141 calls were received by Wilmington VAMC call center this year. The average speed to answer was 27 seconds, which exceeds the goal of 30 seconds. Only 4.85 percent of incoming

Numbers & Statistics

calls were abandoned before those calls could be answered. That exceeds the set goal of 5 percent. Voluntary service received \$86,985 in monetary and non-monetary donations. Monetary contributions, for example, support activities at the community living center and elsewhere. Also in 2018, roughly 260 volunteers contributed over 14,000 hours. The Veterans outreach team attended more than 400 community events in two states and enrolled over 420 Veterans in VA health care and associated services.



31,277 Unique Patients

In 2018, Wilmington VAMC and community based outpatient clinics had 31,277 unique Veteran patients.



338,184 Outpatient Visits

Roughly 338,184 outpatient visits took place in 2018 at the medical center and clinics.



2,497 Women Vets

About 2,497 women Veterans were actively enrolled in VA health care in fiscal year 2018.



17,333 Care Consults

Community care consults for Fiscal Year 2018 were 17,333. That is a rise from 13,049 the year before.



400 Outreachs

Outreach planned, organized, and/or attended more than 400 outreach events in Delaware and New Jersey. At least 420 Veterans were enrolled in VA health care and other services.



967 Admissions

There were 967 hospital admissions during fiscal year 2018 at Wilmington VAMC.

Have you considered the VA for your health care needs? VA offer comprehensive services ranging from preventive screenings to long-term care. Wilmington VAMC proudly serves Veterans in multiple locations for convenient access to the services we provide. In addition to the medical center, community based outpatient clinics are located in Delaware and southern New Jersey.

What's Coming in 2019!

Garage

Plans to break ground on a 370-spot garage coming in late 2019!

Cape May

Ground breaking is slated for late 2019 for a new clinic that is 12,000 square feet!

Dover

Kent County Community Based Outpatient Clinic is slated to grow to 24,000 square feet!



PHOTO BY DAVID CURTIS



1-800-273-8255

The Veterans Crisis Line is open 24/7 at 1-800-273-8255 (Press 1). You can also visit the website VeteransCrisisLine.net. No one can do everything, but everyone can do something.

1-877-424-3838

Homeless Veterans Hotline is open 24 hours a day / 7 days a week.

1-800-450-8262

Call for prescription refill and appointment Verification. Can also track prescriptions by way of My HealtheVet.

1-800-461-8262

Wilmington VA Medical Center, Call center is staffed Monday to Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Emergency department is open 24/7. If you have a life threatening emergency, dial 911.



Wilmington VA Medical Center, Wilmington, Delaware.



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Wilmington VA Medical Center