[We] have accomplished another successful year at GLA with innovative services and redesigned programs to better meet the needs of our Veterans.

Our patient-centered care journey is moving forward and our patients have noticed the positive changes taking place at GLA. Ongoing improvements in a therapeutic healing environment and the implementation of a new patient-centered model of care delivery in our ambulatory care clinics across all GLA sites “PACT” (Patient Aligned Care Teams) are just a few of those positive changes. Staff training and education, environmental projects, nutritional initiatives and establishing the Integrative Medicine Center; are well underway and will continue in the years to come.

This year, GLA established a fresh presence on the social media platform providing enhanced communication with our internal and external audiences. We are also excited about our “green initiatives” including implementation of turf replacement water conservation projects. Thanks to the dedication and hard work from our outstanding staff members, we have passed several major accreditation surveys such as: The Joint Commission, Office of the Inspector General/Combined Assessment Program, and the Office of Research Oversight, with excellent results.

We at GLA are honored to serve America’s Veterans and will continue to provide the highest standards of health care they deserve. We are committed to continuous improvements in medical care, research, innovations, and customer service. Our success is measured by your satisfaction, and our commitment is leading excellence in health care in the 21st century.

Sincerely,

Director
VA Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System

VA Desert Pacific Healthcare Network
Awards and Recognition

GLA received two out of eleven “Spirit of Planetree” Awards at the 2010 National Planetree Conference for extraordinary achievements in Patient-Centered Care. We received the Arts and Entertainment Award for collaborating with 100 organizations to host more than 1,000 events at 12 VA sites. In addition, we were honored in the Healthy Community category for partnering with community agencies to seek out and assist homeless Veterans.

“VHA Energy Engineer of the Year” awarded to Ross Manoukian for achieving excellence in the fields of energy conservation and related design and construction.

“Clinical Nurse Specialist of the Year” awarded to Elissa Brown by the National Association of Clinical Nurse Specialists 2010.

Sarla Duller, NP, received second place for the Under Secretary of Health Award for “Excellence in Transplant Care.” Duller was also recognized as the Advanced Practice Nurse of the Year 2010 by the Philippine Nurses Association of American Southern California.

The Veterans Day National Committee selected Ron Bergan’s Veterans Day illustration as the National Veterans Day Poster 2010. Ron, public affairs specialist, had his poster design distributed to federal agencies, military installations nationally, and around the world.

Leslie Atles, CCE CBET, awarded the “Marvin Shepherd Patient Safety Award” by the American College of Clinical Engineers & Healthcare Technology Foundation for improving GLA physician / clinician relations between the biomedical engineering department and clinical services.

We Advanced Services to Women Veterans

GLA is one of four inaugural sites of the national VA Women Veterans Practice Based Research Network, established to better integrate women Veterans into VA research and to develop and test interventions focused on women Veterans’ needs. Also, GLA’s women's health program developed a vital women's health clinic providing comprehensive care at LAACC.

This year a new mammography unit was opened at SACC to make scheduled and walk-in mammography’s more feasible. At GLA, key Environment of Care improvements have been made that affect the privacy, safety, and dignity of our female patients and their families.

These improvements include: appropriate locks on doors of mental health inpatient rooms for females, renovation of bathrooms serving female patients, increasing privacy in the Emergency Department, and installing baby changing tables and sanitary napkin dispensers in key bathrooms.

GLA's Nursing Service

Nursing service at GLA is undergoing a major reconstruction project to increase the capacity for telemetry and general medicine acute care to meet patient care demand in WLA’s building 500. The new inpatient units will be single-bed patient rooms that offer more privacy for both patients and families, and they will enhance the healing process with an environment conducive to solitude and tranquility.
We are Taking Care of Homeless Veterans

Through partnerships with community agencies, GLA’s Comprehensive Homeless Center opened two new transitional housing programs for OIF/OEF Veterans (New Directions, Chris’s Place and Volunteers of America, Hollywood.)

In 2010, VA Central Office provided GLA with $20 million to renovate building 209 on the VA WLA campus which will house a special long-term residential program targeting homeless Veterans with serious mental health issues.

GLA’s HUD-VA Supported Housing Program (HUD-VASH) received 550 housing subsidy vouchers in FY 2010; currently HUD-VASH is case managing over 900 formerly homeless Veterans who are living in their own apartments.

In collaboration with Los Angeles and Ventura County, two Veteran courts were established, diverting incarcerated Veterans from jail to GLA homeless, mental health, and substance use treatment programs.

Saving Money & Time

In 2010, we reduced Veteran MRI wait times by 42 percent and CT scan wait times by 48 percent from January 2010 to August 2010. In addition, the Fisher House helped save $1.1 million in hotel expenses for nearly 700 GLA Veterans and their families while providing a comfortable “home away from home” while waiting for their loved ones to heal.

Our pharmacy department implemented text messaging as a means to communicate with Veterans when prescriptions are ready for pick up. Texting freed up our Veteran’s time allowing them to complete other medical appointments while their prescriptions were filled. The pharmacy service also had $440,697 cost avoidance savings for the first two quarters of FY 2010 compared to the same period in FY 2009.

Continuing our Green Initiatives

$37.4 Million awarded for solar photovoltaic structures to support ongoing energy efficiency and renewable energy initiatives. WLA and SACC will receive the eco-friendly solar panels helping reduce the annual electric bill. In addition, we initiated a turf replacement and water conservation project saving approximately $50,000 per year according to LADWP.

California native and low succulent plants replaced 7.6 acres of traditional ground coverage on SACC and WLA helping save water, provide employment for local Veterans and create a healing environment for patients.

We also refurbished government surplus electric on campus to increase the number of alternative fuel vehicles. So far, 19 vehicles have been converted from gas to electric reducing pollution, recycling equipment that otherwise would go to a landfill, and providing usable equipment at 15-35 percent the cost of new equipment.

Using Text Messages To Notify Patients When Prescriptions Are Ready

A Beautiful And Comfortable Stay At The WLA Fisher House
We Advanced Healthcare Performance

For the second year in a row, GLA has shown marked improvement in performance, making 2010 our best year ever for meeting or exceeding all inpatient and outpatient quality targets.

Our performance is now outstanding across not only the network but the nation. Our most substantial gains have been in Diabetes Care, Behavioral Health (screening for depression, alcohol misuse, and PTSD) and Prevention Measures (screening for colon cancer, breast and cervical cancers, and offering immunizations.)

We formed working groups for each measure, developed action plans, and followed through by focusing weekly or bi-weekly on accomplishment of tasks. To keep the momentum, we continue to identify areas for improvement then develop strategies to achieve and maintain the best possible healthcare outcomes.

Providing Veterans Outstanding Healthcare

We Provided Healthcare in Rural Areas

Our Geriatric Scholars Program, directed by Dr. Josea Kramer, added an intensive didactic program designed to educate VA social workers in rural VA Community-Based Outpatient Clinics on state-of-the-art care for older Veterans.

In addition, patient enrollment for Coordination of Care Home Telehealth Program increased 118 percent from FY 2009. We also performed up to 3,000 teleretinal screening for patients and 3,500 clinical video teleconferencing encounters: 75 percent in Telemental Health, 13 percent in TeleMove, and 7 percent in TeleGI.

Furthermore, Dr. Lisa Altman secured and coordinated overnight lodging for our patients in rural areas reducing their travel time and improving their overall healthcare experience.

We Logged into Social Media

Click-Click! We launched our new internet site and joined social media. Our website featured insightful articles about Women’s Health, OEF/OIF health initiatives and patient-centered care programs. We also started tweeting on Twitter providing our Veterans up-to-date news and helpful links on new healthcare programs and benefits.

Veterans, families and staff found us on Facebook where they could learn about upcoming events and preview photos of special occasions happening around GLA.

Cutting Travel By Using Video Conferencing

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Visit us at www.losangeles.va.gov
We Expanded our Patient-Centered Care Journey

Our patient-centered care model of healthcare is based on our commitment to improving medical care, from a patient’s perspective. This year, 98 percent of our staff attended a patient-centered care retreat, where they were educated and empowered to take action to provide patient-centered care.

GLA continues to embrace and increase the number of complementary therapies by: participating in a holistic nursing research grant, training nurses in relaxation techniques, stress management, expanding the use of guided imagery with pre operation and post operation patients, reducing preoperative anxiety, promoting a sense of calm and relaxation, acupuncture with a pain management physician, aromatherapy and healing touch, Drum Circles, and expanding Tai Chi and Yoga programs. We also expanded spirituality resources including inspirational Care Notes, and Thoughts for the Day cards, which are placed on inpatient trays, and distributed at therapeutic drum circles.

This year, GLA participated in the Through the Eyes of the Veteran video, a national VA film showcasing leaders around the country in patient-centered care. Also, GLA opened a polytrauma pad, which provides an outdoor exercise option for individuals seeking a refreshing atmosphere. Lastly, in 2010 staff and patients ran in the LA marathon, and the VA WLA campus was part of the route!

Awards and Recognition

VA presented GLA Voluntary Services with the “American Spirit” Award for the William Morris Corporate faculty Sponsorship of “Surf Camp.”

Daughters of the American Revolution National Award presented Julie Stranges, SACC lead volunteer, for her work in literature and drama.

Aster Award (Bronze Level) given for the ‘VAGLA Surf Camp’ entry in the Special Video Production category. The Aster Awards Program is an elite competition recognizing the nation’s most talented healthcare marketing professionals for outstanding excellence in advertising.

VA Secretary’s Award to Lonnie Anderson, LVN and Sharon Valente, expanded RN role.

2010 Magnet Status Certification Development Award, received $10,000.

2010 Honorable Mention, Innovation Award for “Somewhere over the Rainbow: Integrating Novice Nurses into the CNL Role” from the office of nursing services.

Dr. Arnold Chin, MD, PhD, STOP Cancer Research Career Development Award, Oppenheimer Foundation Translational Seed Grant, American Association of Cancer Research Career Development Award for Translational Cancer Research, and UCLA Scholars in Translational Medicine Program.

Isla Garraway, MD, PhD, Young Investigator Award $225,000 for characterization of benign and cancerous prostate cellular hierarchy.

$100,000 Awarded to Voluntary Services from VACO and Disabled American Veterans to support new rural transportation in Northern County, five vans purchased already!
Our Mission
Honor America's Veterans by providing exceptional health care that improves their health and well-being.

Our Vision
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 and research and in service in national emergencies.