Honoring Service
Empowering Health

Providing Veterans, Personalized, Proactive, and Patient-Driven Health Care

Hugo Reyes
Vietnam 1969-1971

Hy Amnesty
WWII, Philippines 1943 and Korean War 1949-1951

Vana Bell
Iraq 2007-08 and 2008-09
Dear Partners,

It’s my pleasure to share with you VA Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System’s (VAGLAHS) successes over the past year providing exceptional medical care to Veterans in a patient-centered care environment. As you will see from this report, we have continued our journey cultivating a personalized, proactive and patient-driven healthcare environment where the Veteran is the “Captain of the Team”. We continue to align our practices to reflect VHA’s strategic goals of Honoring Service and Empowering Health.

Highlights of our journey include the emergent of healing spaces that inspire wellness and health. We reduced overhead paging, updated medical reception areas and added landscape art murals throughout our facilities.

We also integrated mental health with primary care, enhanced tele-health services to clinics in rural areas and offered additional integrative therapies such as healing touch, aromatherapy and guided imagery for a more personalized and proactive approach to patient care.

Aligning our resources to deliver continued value to our Veterans is a continuous goal of VAGLAHS. We are renovating existing buildings, creating a new comprehensive homeless center and modernizing technology infrastructures to better serve the needs of our diverse Veteran population.

Between 2011 and 2013, the homeless Veteran Point-in-Time count in VAGLAHS’s catchment area dropped 28 percent from 7,375 to 5,776. We continue to move forward with the goal of ending homelessness amongst Veterans by 2015.

Another noticeable achievement was our successful Joint Commission Accreditation Survey. Surveyors repeatedly praised VAGLAHS staff on the quality of patient care, cleanliness, organization and how much our patients love the care they receive.

We continue to work with our valued Veteran Service Organizations and community partners to deliver the finest healthcare to our Veterans. The newly established Los Angeles Mayor’s Office of Veterans Affairs partnered with VAGLAHS to provide information on treatment and housing for Veterans who are homeless. In addition, VAGLAHS’ active partnerships with the Department of Defense, federal agencies, and non-profit organizations helps expand our footprint in the greater Los Angeles area so all eligible Veterans are aware of our services and can take full advantage of the healthcare benefits they have earned and deserve. Thank you for being our strongest supporters!

Providing the best care to our Nation’s Heroes is truly an honor and a privilege. We are excited to continue our service and support to our Veterans in a proactive, patient-centered care environment.

Sincerely,

Donna Beiter, RN, MSN
Director, VA Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System
VA Desert Pacific Healthcare Network
### Fiscal Year 2013

#### Veterans Health Administration Mission

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

#### Outpatient Visits
- 1,258,715

#### Unique Patients
- 87,210

#### Inpatients Treated
- 9,531

#### Operational Beds
- Total Operational Beds: 740
  - Domiciliary: 296
  - Community Living Center: 191
  - Inpatient Mental Health: 65
  - Medical-Surgical: 88
  - Rehabilitation & Intermediate: 46
  - Intensive Care & Progressive Care: 54

#### Employees
- Total Number of Employees: 5,325
  - Employees that are Veterans: 1,405

#### Volunteer Services
- Number of Volunteers: 2,442
  - Volunteer Hours: 255,730
  - Donations: $2,575,660.41

#### Research Budget
- Total Budget: $39,700,985
  - Projects: 657

#### VAGLAHS
- **TOTAL FISCAL YEAR BUDGET**: $874,755,875*

  *Does not include MCCF collections or alternative revenue

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#### Veterans Health Administration 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, research and service in national emergencies.
Maximize Access to Mental Health Services

- Mental Health Integration construction began at three Ambulatory Care Centers. Roll out continues with Bakersfield, Santa Maria and Oxnard CBOCs.

Provide More Non-Traditional Care

- GRECC implemented integrative medicine including a “day spa” that provides massage, healing touch, guided imagery, and aromatherapy.
- Expanded healing touch therapy to Veterans at SACC.

Individualized Performance Expectations for All Employees

- We Achieved 98% completion rate for Patient Centered Care annual training. Instructions focused on GLA+ [Greet, Act, listen and Thank a Veteran] which forms the foundation for GLA’s internal recognition and performance standards for patient centered care.

Build IT Infrastructure

- Deployed & upgraded software for 8,000+ PCs across VAGLAHS.
- Improving telephone systems:
  - Broke ground on VAGLAHS Call Center.
  - Converted existing pharmacy phones to faster Voice-over-IP call center.

Create New Design and Architectural Standards for Healthier Environment

- Enhancing patient care facilities:
  - 12-Building Seismic Correction Project Phasing Plan to include additional compensated work therapy/transitional residence housing.
  - Conducted research and created pre-design for clinical addition to B500.
**Connected Health Care**

- Tele-health services between facilities to better serve Veterans in rural areas now include:
  - Tele-Diabetic Clinic between WLA and LAACC CBOCs.
  - Tele-Wound Care Program between SACC and Santa Maria/San Luis Obispo CBOCs.
  - Tele-Spinal Cord Injury between VA Long Beach and Santa Maria/San Luis Obispo CBOCs.
  - Tele-Tai Chi between WLA and Santa Barbara/Santa Maria/Bakersfield CBOCs.
  - Poly-trauma Tele-health services now available at the Bakersfield CBOC.
  - Established Speech Pathology Tele-health clinic in Bakersfield and Santa Maria CBOCs.

12-pilot projects currently underway include:

- Health Services Research and Development (HSR&D) partnership for pre/post outcomes evaluations.
- Clinical Video Tele-conference (CVT) to CBOCs.
- Partnership with Pain Clinics and Community Living Centers to provide treatments, mentoring and education for patients.

**Integrated Health**

Developed multi-platform resources such as videos, DVDs, reference guides, resource manuals, audio files, and online courses to increase Veteran’s access to Tai Chi, Breathing-Stretching-Relaxation and Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction therapies.

**Align Education and Staffing to Reflect Patient Population Needs**

- Developed a communication support group to address specific needs of Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual and Transgender growing patient population at LAACC. In addition, Audio and Speech Pathology expanded program for assessment and management of transgender patient population.
- Community Care increased staff to 400 and boosted budget allocations to better serve Veterans who are homeless.
- Extend and adjusted service hours at LAACC, SACC, and WLA PACT to accommodate Veterans schedules.

**Utilize Facilities to Better Serve Veterans**

Recognizing employee’s service. Zumba classes for staff and Veterans.

Ground-breaking ceremony for therapeutic art for homeless Veterans at the West Los Angeles
Specialty Services More Coordinated and Available

▲ Nursing department implemented CVT Wound Clinic at Sepulveda to service northern VA clinics.

▲ Established Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation services in the WLA Women’s Health Clinic.

Healing Environments

▲ Lobby renovations, art murals and concierge services create a welcoming and healing environment for patients and families.

▲ Minimized overhead paging to reduce noise levels.

New Performance Measures Based on Personalized, Proactive, Patient-Centered Care

▲ Implemented TruthPoint and Unit Champion Teams; a new initiative where VA staff conduct patient satisfaction assessments around inpatient and outpatient settings and solicit Veteran input about their care to discover new ways to enhance their overall healthcare experience and achieve higher levels of patient satisfaction.

▲ Changes and suggestions from surveys improved multiple nursing area scores ranging from 8% to 52%.

▲ Renovation and activation underway for B209 Therapeutic & Supportive Housing for homeless Veterans.

▲ Opened two permanent and supporting housing residential complexes for 147 formally homeless, disabled and low-income Veterans.

▲ Construction underway to transform and renovate B220 into the new Integrative Health and Healing Center. Tai Chi, Aromatherapy, and Qigong are a few of the programs that will be housed there once completed.

▲ Renovating 3 West, 3 South, and 2 South A and B pods to include single occupancy rooms.

▲ Utilize space inside Veterans State Home to open an accredited pharmacy.

▲ Consolidated 18 bed subacute Transitional Care Unit and 20 bed Gero-psychiatry secure ward into 38 long-term or sub-acute care bed.

▲ Developing a 20,000 foot comprehensive homeless center in B402.

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Awards & Recognitions

Donna Ames, M.D., received the 2013 Planetree Physician Award.

Donna Ames, M.D., and the Psychosocial Rehabilitation and Recovery Center Staff received the 2013 Planetree Healthy Communities/Enhancement of Life’s Journey award.

Gregory A. Brent, M.D., was awarded the Lewis E. Braverman Distinguished Award Lectureship from the American Thyroid Association (ATA). ATA Awards recognize an individual who has demonstrated excellence and passion for mentoring fellows, students, and junior faculty.

Gholam Berenji, M.D., received the 2013 Mentor-of-the-Year Award from the American College of Nuclear Medicine.

Paul Cohen, Jewish War Veteran Commander Post 603 and VAGLAHS Volunteer was selected as LA County 2013 Volunteer of the Year.

Bill Daniels, LCSW, Chief of Mental Health was the recipient of the Leadership VA Alumni Association Honorary Leadership Award.

Cynthia Douglas-Ybarra, R.N., BSN, PCCN, CCRN, was named Nursing Excellence Award Regional Finalist by Nurse.com for demonstrating superior clinical nursing knowledge and expert skills that impact the quality of care and improve patient care outcomes in an inpatient clinical setting or nursing specialty.

Larry Foster, Marine Corp Veteran and Voluntary Service Specialist came in first place in the Instrumental Solo or Group/Drums/Percussion category for the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival. Larry’s 3-minute drum solo performance also won him a coveted spot as 1 of 25 talents selected to attend the award ceremony in person to showcase their talents in front of a live audience.

Margaret Kohn, R.N., MSN, ACNP, ANP-C, CCRN, CSC, CHSE, was nominated for the Under Secretary for Health’s Excellence Award for Excellence in Clinical Simulation Training, Education and Research.

Betty Jo Kramer, Ph.D., was selected as the recipient of VA’s prestigious 2013 David Worthen Award for Career Achievement in Educational Excellence for her contributions to education and training in the area of geriatric medicine. The Worthen Award recognizes a VHA employee from any health care discipline who has made contributions of national significance to education in the health professions.

Charles Martinez, Au.D., was awarded the 1LT. Frank B. Walkup IV Distinguished Service Award. This award is presented to Association of VA Audiologists (AVAA) members in recognition of special contributions made to AVAA or to VA Audiology through VA-related activities.

Chaplain Mark Munson, received the 2013 Planetree Caregiver Award for having a positive influence in the way compassionate, personalized health care is delivered.

Greg Serpa, Ph.D. and Sara Duman, Ph.D., received the 2013 Planetree Evidence Based Treatment Award for their mindfulness program outcomes.

Callie Wight, R.N., MA, was named Nursing Excellence Award Regional Finalist by Nurse.com, for outstanding clinical knowledge and nursing expertise in caring for patients in settings outside the hospital in professional home care nursing, home hospice, subacute and intermediate, or in other ambulatory community, industrial, or school nurse roles.

VAGLAHS Police Department achieved a HIGHLY SATISFACTORY rating from the VA Central Office of Security and Law Enforcement inspection visit conducted January 14-18, 2013. Of the 154 facilities that receive site visits, only 8 or 10 will receive a HIGHLY SATISFACTORY rating. This is the first time in VAGLAHS’s history of these inspections that they have received this rating.

Team-based Care & Provider-Veteran Partnership

- Homeless Patient Aligned Care Team (HPACT) now provides a 24-hour access phone line. Veterans can also use this line to stay connected with their families while receiving emergency care and treatment.
- Pharmacists are now integrated into PACT.
- Community Care and HPACT have established shared medical appointments for patients with chronic pain and diabetes.

Nutrition and Food received a 96% TruthPoint satisfaction score for food services. In addition, Joint Commission highlighted B300 inspection as “cleanest kitchen seen in any hospital.”

Enhance IT Informatics and Analytics to Improve Care and Tracking Outcomes

- Deployed bladder cancer tracker to ensure patients with bladder cancer get appropriate surveillance studies enhancing outcomes and preventing recurrences.
- Implemented FIT+ tracking system which allows primary care to generate notification letters to patients regarding their test result (meets the 14-day requirement for notification) and allows VAGLAHS to track patient’s diagnostic colonoscopies and whether it is being done in a timely manner. This system avoids “losing” patients who need further testing to evaluate for colon cancer.

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The Greater Los Angeles Fisher House Foundation in partnership with VAGLAHS, presented a free concert featuring Mark McGrath of Sugar Ray to Veterans, service members and their families during “A Day for Heroes” tribute.

Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti joins Donna Beller at the official opening of two permanent housing facilities located at SACC for formerly homeless and disabled Veterans.

American Legion site visit.

Celebrity bedside visit with Mr. T.