

Illiana News

"Proudly Serving Those Who Served"



Department of
Veterans Affairs

Illiana Health Care System

May/June 2013

Illiana Serves

Thanks to Katasha Butler from Pharmacy Service for her theme being selected: Illiana Serves and David Boerst, Medical Media, for designing the logo. There were over 40 theme submissions from employees. In the coming weeks, you will begin to see Illiana Serves in many formats. As you go about your day to day duties think what you would say as to how **YOU** serve Veterans and VA Illiana Health Care System.



Integrity ★ Commitment ★ Advocacy ★ Respect ★ Excellence

Executive Corner



We were able to celebrate and recognize our volunteers who work tirelessly to support our mission and serve our Veterans in an amazing way! We had a reception in the SAR to honor our volunteers during National Volunteer Week, which was April 21-27. The theme for the reception was: Sweet Rewards of Volunteering -- A Celebration for Volunteers. Over 75 volunteers attended the reception.

We currently have over 650 volunteers that donated 46,029 hours last year. This is equivalent to 22 full-time employees or over \$1M in salary.

Throughout the VA system there are more than 87,000 dedicated volunteers who give Veterans and their families the support, dignity and compassion they have earned through their service to our country.

Volunteers play a key role to help provide the service and care needed for our Veterans not only at the Danville VA campus, but also at our community based outpatient clinics in Decatur, Mattoon, Peoria, Springfield and West Lafayette.

I encourage all of our employees if you see a volunteer here take a moment to go up to him or her and thank them for what they do. Many of them are Veterans as well, so thank them for their volunteer service and service to our country.

We had the annual volunteer awards program and banquet to formally recognize and honor our volunteers on May 23rd at Turtle Run in Danville.

I want to also express my sincere gratitude and let you know I appreciate what each and every one of you do to support our Veterans, Volunteers, the mission and each other. You are making a difference and impacting the lives of others!

Emma Metcalf
Director

Calendar of Events

Heimlich Maneuver Introduced (1974)

June 1

National Headache Awareness Week

June 1 - 7

National Cancer Survivors Day

June 2

World Environment Day

June 5

D-Day Anniversary (1944)

June 6

Alcoholics Anonymous Founded (1935)

June 10

Men's Health Week

June 10 - 16

Flag Day

June 14

U.S. Army Established (1775)

June 14

Father's Day

June 16

Summer Begins

June 21

Battle of Okinawa Ends (1945)

June 21

GI Bill Signed into Law (1944)

June 22

Korean War Begins (1950)

June 25

United Nations Charter Signed (1945)

June 26

National HIV Testing Day

June 27

Simulation Education Center Open House

The Education & Research Department is pleased to announce the opening of the new Simulation Education Center (SEC). Simulation is a multi-faceted education tool; a stage to integrate evidence into practice in a safe environment. Simulation provides a learning environment for diagnostic and clinical procedures and is a perfect setting to practice critical thinking and communication skills to support quality care and best possible outcomes for our Veterans.

Simulation is an active learning process accomplished by using multiple levels of mannequins or Human Patient Simulators. The VAIHCS SEC is equipped with a SimMan3G, a high fidelity mannequin capable of portraying a patient who is healthy, acutely ill, or chronically ill. He provides the opportunity to practice multiple airway skills, breathing complications, cardiac issues, circulation problems and vascular access to name a few.

SEC has Out of OR Airway Management (OORAM) task trainers to provide practice opportunities for difficult airway management as well as medium fidelity mannequins for simpler skills and tasks.



Mike Olson, Anesthesiologist, gives instruction to staff on how to insert a breathing tube. Pictured left to right is Mike Olson, Tara Hackard, RN and Patty Vice, RN.

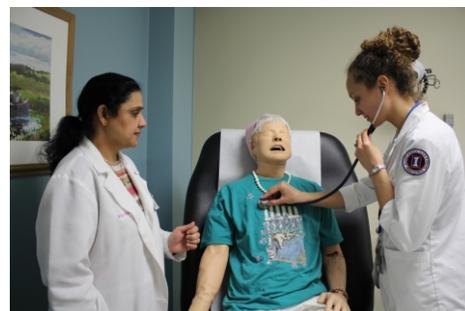
SEC utilizes portable cameras that allow participants to be videotaped for debriefing purposes at the conclusion of their scenario. Debriefing includes an open discussion that may include errors and safety concerns leading to the goal of improved clinical practice and improved patient safety.

Robert A. Petzel, Under Secretary for Health, stated “The VHA-wide use of clinical simulation will be one of the most important and significant advancements VHA has seen in education and training in years”. VAIHCS Leadership embraces this vision and has been the catalysts for this project implementation. We now have the opportunity to move from concept to reality, transforming into a new and complex realm of education.

**Randelyn Talkowski, RN
Clinical Educator**



Front row (L to R): Anu Mani, MD, ACOS for Education; Emma Metcalf, Director, VAIHCS; Randelyn Talkowski, RN, Clinical Educator; Mimi Skinner, RN, Clinical Educator; and Harminder Chani, MD, Chief of Medicine Service. Back row (L to R): Diane Buss, MSN, RN, Designated Learning Officer and Jim Cullum, Chief, Engineering Service.



(L to R): Dr. Anu Mani, ACOS for Education and Bernadette White, University of Illinois Medical Student.

Clean Hands Award

The Springfield Community Outpatient Center (CBOC) has done it again! They have once again exceeded all others in a Veteran Care issue. They are the quarterly winners of the Clean Hands Award, making them Super Stars and making Illiana safer.

We often don't think about our hands keeping us safe, at work, at home, everywhere we go. We can all site that our hands keep us safe by using them to lock doors, put on seat belts, but washing our hands, that may seem to some to be a bit of a stretch. But not to the Springfield CBOC staff. They are aware of the need to wash their hands, so as not to spread bacteria and germs to others, and to other items, helping to maintain a clean healthful environment. Hand washing is imperative prior to and immediately after touching a patient, even if gloves were used. It is also imperative to wash hands before and after handling food. Using the restroom is another place we must use proper hand washing. There are numerous opportunities throughout the day to use good hand washing techniques to keep ourselves, our peers, and co-workers as well as the Veterans safe. Springfield CBOC staff provide a healthy environment, comforting hands, skilled hands, and hardworking hands. They do plan on winning the trophy next quarter through their diligence and continued efficacy in the area of hand washing and a clean clinic.



(L to R): Danielle Fitzgerald, MAS; Amy Clayton, LPN; Cathy Beiler, LPN; Susan Dicks, RN, BSN; Connie DeGroot, LPN and Leesa Kay Reed, MSW.

Paula Siegel

VA Illiana Health Care System Welcomes New Chief of Logistics

Adam T. Brann recently was appointed as the new Chief of Logistics. Before arriving at VA Illiana Health Care System, Adam worked at the Ohio Air National Guard as an Intelligence Officer/Chief, Wing Plans and Programs in Springfield, Ohio.

Adam received his Bachelors of Arts in Interdisciplinary Studies at the University of Texas and his Masters of Science in Management from Troy State University. He has been in the United States Air Force since 1989 and holds the rank of O-4/Major.

Adam is married and has two children.

Please join us in welcoming Adam to VAIHCS!



Adam Brann
Chief, Logistics Service

Integrity ★ Commitment ★ Advocacy ★ Respect ★ Excellence

The Falls Prevention Workgroup is proud to announce the 2nd Quarter, FY13 winner of the . . .

Fall Prevention and Reduction Traveling Trophy

Selection is based on the following criteria:

1. The committee looks at which neighborhood has the lowest fall rate per 1000 patient days.
2. Creative strategies used by the neighborhood to prevent falls will be considered.
3. Neighborhood representation at the committee meeting is reviewed.
4. Neighborhood should submit reports monthly

The traveling trophy was presented to Community Living Center (CLC)-1 on Tuesday, April 23, 2013 by Sharon Buchanan, Chief CLC and Sandy Hart, Patient Safety Manager. CLC-1 has maintained a fall rate below the target and has achieved the lowest fall rate in the CLC for the 2nd quarter. CLC-1 team attributes the decrease in falls by actively implementing the neighborhood based fall prevention plan. Staff ensure they meet the needs of the residents; checking with the residents frequently; assisting with their toileting/hygiene needs, offering snacks and fluids, evaluating their plan, and offering meaningful activities. During the hours of sleep, staff position themselves throughout the halls to promptly meet the needs of the residents. The poster and trophy are proudly displayed on CLC-1, reminding our staff of the excellent care they provide.

Congratulations CLC-1!

***Sandy Hart, RN, BSN, CPPS
Patient Safety Manager***



Representing CLC-1 are:

(seated) Tyler Lawlyes, RN
(standing) Stephanie Green, RN;
Annie Cleveland, NA; Karie
Drollinger, NA; Shayla Wallace, NA;
Peggy Robinson, LPN; Sheila Allen,
NA and Diane Meers, RN

Health Information Professionals Week

Health Information Management (HIM) celebrated Health Information Professionals Week on March 17-23, 2013 with a staff luncheon and prizes throughout the week. Health Information Professionals Week is a showcase for the thousands of HIM professionals who perform their duties masterfully throughout the year. HIM professionals work collectively to deliver quality healthcare through quality information.

HIM is organizationally located within Medical Administration Service. The administrative management of health records is the responsibility of HIM. HIM is instrumental in obtaining accurate and complete documentation for compliance with accrediting bodies such as Joint Commission, federal laws, and VA and VHA procedures and policies; provision of future patient care; and success of the revenue cycle for obtaining timely and accurate reimbursement for services provided. HIM includes the following services:

- ★ **Medical Record Administration:** Responsible for provision of records for legal cases; coordination of Medical Record Committee and Forms Subcommittee; Joint Commission Record of Care, Treatment and Services and Information Management chapters; and correction of record errors.
- ★ **Records Management:** Provides for the control of all medical and administrative records maintained in each service at the facility, their storage and destruction.
- ★ **Document Scanning:** Scans all administrative and medical paper documents into VISTA Imaging for availability for future patient care.
- ★ **Record Analysis:** Identifies and obtains completion of unsigned documentation and assures records meet accreditation guidelines.
- ★ **Transcription:** Transcribes accurate medical documentation for the facility, with assurance that documentation meets accreditation requirements.
- ★ **Coding:** Completes ICD-9, CPT and HCPCS coding for all billable encounters for the facility; multiple audits for facility, VISN and VACO; and provision of education to clinicians on appropriate code assignment, documentation issues and changes in procedures.
- ★ **Cancer Registry:** Abstracts data for all cancer cases found at our facility and completes annual follow up.
- ★ **Release of Information:** Processes all first and third party requests for information for the facility and the CBOCs, applying The Privacy Act, HIPAA, and all other Federal laws.

**Julie Wahls, RHIT
Chief, HIMS**



Get REdi!

Thanks to the REdi Initiative, we now have the ability to provide staff with free key codes for CPR and ACLS renewal. With this code, staff can log into the American Website and take the interactive class online. The amount of time to complete this course varies depending on the

staff member. It does not require a dedicated amount of time; the learner may exit from the course and it will stay bookmarked for the next session to begin. We will supply the key code and instructions just before the learner is ready to take the course. We are extremely happy to have the ability to offer this to our staff but need to ensure the renewal takes place before expiration. Please feel free to contact Randi Talkowski at extension 44305 or Mimi Skinner at extension 44364 with any questions.

**Randi Talkowski, RN
Clinical Educator**

Integrity ★ Commitment ★ Advocacy ★ Respect ★ Excellence

Welcome VALOR Students!

We are very pleased to have three outstanding students, Judy Leong, Casey Powers and Joslyn Saleda, participating in the Nursing VALOR Summer 2013 Program at our Medical Center.

The VALOR (VA Learning Opportunities Residency) Program is designed to provide opportunities for outstanding BSN (Bachelor of Science in Nursing) students to develop competencies in clinical nursing while at an approved VA health care facility. This is an educational opportunity for them to function in an expanded role under the guidance of a BSN prepared clinical preceptor, as well as participate in a variety of interdisciplinary learning experiences. The clinical focus of the Nursing VALOR Program at our facility this summer is both Acute Care Nursing and Geriatric Nursing. Students are appointed on a full-time or part-time basis for 10 weeks during the summer months.



Pictured left to right: Judy Leong, Joslyn Saleda and Casey Powers.

The students have completed their junior year in an accredited BSN Program and have documented academic excellence. VALOR students must have a minimum CGPA (cumulative grade point average) of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale, with no grade lower than a "C" in any nursing course. They must be enrolled as full-time students, and anticipate graduation within 1 year after entry into the VALOR Program. Students must submit an application for federal employment and a letter of nomination from the Dean or Director of their School of Nursing.

Judy is assigned to 58-3 with Carolyn Garrison as her clinical preceptor. Judy attends the University of Illinois in Urbana, IL and plans to graduate in May 2014.

Casey is assigned to 58-2 with Tamara Moore as her clinical preceptor. Casey attends Purdue University in West Lafayette, IN and plans to graduate in May 2014.

Joslyn is assigned to 58-4 with Susan Martin as her clinical preceptor. Joslyn attends the University of Illinois in Urbana, IL and plans to graduate in May 2014.

We hope they have an exceptional summer internship here and will consider our Medical Center when seeking employment after graduation.

Gina George, RN
Clinical Educator



Integrity ★ Commitment ★ Advocacy ★ Respect ★ Excellence

VAIHCS Celebrates National Nurses Week --

May 6th - 10th!

This year's theme for National Nurses Week was "Nurses: Delivering Quality & Innovation in Patient Care". VAIHCS had several activities to highlight Nurses Week including the annual poster contest sponsored by the Nursing Workforce and Workplace Enhancement Committee and the Sacred Cow Contest sponsored by the Clinical Nurse Practice Committee. These Excellence in Nursing Awards and Recognition Program was held on Friday, May 10th. VA Illiana Director, Emma Metcalf delivered the keynote address. The ceremony concluded the week with a formal gathering to recognize the 2013 Excellence winners as well as Nursing staff that have obtained a new degree &/or VA recognized certifications. Nursing units and work groups from Danville and the CBOCs celebrated with staff carry-ins and theme days throughout the week.

VAIHCS is proud to honor the Secretary's 2013 Excellence in Nursing Award winners:

Joyce DeBoer, RN in Expanded Role (local recipient)

Pam Van Leer, RN in Clinical Role (local & VISN 11 recipient)

Rita Mitchell, LPN (Local and VISN 11 recipient)

Daphne Osborne, NA (local recipient)



Rita Mitchell, LPN



Pam Van Leer, RN



Joyce DeBoer, RN



Daphne Osborne, NA

Special thanks to all of VA Illiana's nursing staff members who take pride in caring for our Nation's Heroes and can be described as "the compassionate backbone of VA's world-class health care system."

Faculty Choice Outstanding Clinical Preceptor Award

was presented to Dr. Sampath Kulasekhar by the St. Louis University Physician Assistant Program faculty members. Pictured (left to right) is Dr. Sampath; Dr. Christine Werner, Associate Professor, Saint Louis University; and Sister Mary White, Associate Professor, Saint Louis University.

Dr. Sampath is a staff surgeon in Surgical Service.

Congratulations Dr. Sampath!



Integrity ★ Commitment ★ Advocacy ★ Respect ★ Excellence

What Creates a Culture of Safety? (part 7)



Patient Involvement

Patients and their families/caregivers can help expand the organization's perspective, as they can "feel" the gaps in the systems. Even if they can't name the cause, they are able to describe the symptoms. This will help to identify problems.

- Patient input will help keep providers attuned to reality as felt by the people receiving the care--a reality check.
- Staff can be motivated to initiate or implement changes due to patient feedback. It is an added incentive to provide quality care for people who receive and appreciate it.
- Multiple groups with interest and expertise in patient safety (IOM, IHI, and Leapfrog) have recommended patient-centered efforts for effective change.

An Example of Patient Involvement

At a monthly staff meeting, Tim heard about patient feedback. At first he was surprised to find out there was actually a discussion just to address patient concerns and compliments. The only time he recalled hearing anything about patient comments in the past was when a patient had a complaint regarding long wait times. He had been told to monitor his patient scheduling and keep his time with each patient below 15 minutes. Now he was part of a team addressing each issue as if it were something that they all needed to solve. One of the nurses suggested that they pull together a small group of patients to poll them about perceived issues and potential solutions. He thought that seemed excessive, but he saw people nodding around the table. The director indicated that the nurse would write the proposal and they would act on it.

Sandy Hart, RN
Patient Safety Manager



Lori Carlson, MS, RD, LDN
Young Dietitian of the Year

Young Dietitian of the Year!

VA Illiana's TeleMOVE! Dietitian Lori Carlson, MS, RD, LDN was recently honored as a Recognized Young Dietitian of the Year by Illinois Dietetic Association. Her dedication to integrate evidence-based research and emerging food trends has helped Illiana become one of the leading MOVE! programs. Lori is able to use her culinary arts degree to enhance interactive education through Healthy Teaching Kitchen cooking demonstrations. As the lead of the My HealtheVet/Health Teaching Kitchen Workgroup for the NFS Marketing & Nutrition Informatics Subcommittee, Lori facilitated the creation of Yummy Benefits, a healthy recipe resource for RDs and Veterans. Lori's passion for the dietetics profession also shows in her leadership and organization of community events as President of the Eastern Illinois Dietetic Association. She is looking forward to working further on enhancing program opportunities to better serve Veterans.

National Time Out Day: Recognized by The Joint Commission and AORN



The Joint Commission and the Association of Perioperative Registered Nurses (AORN) urged health care practitioners and organizations to recognize National Time Out Day to help draw attention to the time out as a tool for the prevention of

wrong-site, wrong-side and wrong-procedure or wrong-person surgery. In honor of National Time Out Day, members of the surgical team and VAIHCS commit to conducting a safe, effective time out for every patient, for every surgical procedure.

A wrong-site surgery should never happen and when it does it can be devastating for the patient, the surgical team and the health care organization. National Time Out Day, an annual event is meant to heighten awareness of the importance of the "time out", the process a surgical team utilizes prior to the start of a surgical procedure to prevent a wrong-site, wrong-procedure or wrong-person surgery.

An effective and well-executed time out is an important part of the multi-layered defense against wrong-site surgery. We know that a time out without full participation by all key people in the operating room increases the risk of wrong-site surgery, but tackling other contributing factors that increase the risk for wrong-site surgery is equally important. These contributing factors vary by organization and by event and may occur at every stage of the surgical process, starting with the scheduling of the procedure. It is imperative to understand the specific contributing factors that increase risk in each organization so that appropriate solutions can be targeted to reduce the specific risks in the organization's processes.

VAIHCS surgical team takes advantage of National Time Out Day to better understand vulnerabilities and prioritize the perioperative process improvement activities. It is an opportunity to set an example as an advocate for patient safety by encouraging a strong culture of safety with the reminder that everyone on the surgical team is obligated to speak up if they think anything is wrong.

Sandy Hart, BSN, RN, CPPS
Patient Safety Manager

Quarterly Unit Peer Leader

Congratulations to **Marie Williams**, our Quarterly Unit Peer Leader (UPL). Marie is an outstanding UPL who protects her patients and co-workers from injury, while providing skin protection and strengthening. Marie continuously champions the Safe Patient Handling (SPH) program, facilitates knowledge transfer, and monitors the SPH program at the unit/area of practice level. She also ensures the competencies of her co-workers, problem-solves, monitors and recommends equipment, liaisons with the SPH Coordinator during purchasing and maintains an expansive knowledge base. She has gone above and beyond by implementing LEAN concepts and organizing slings in her area. She has provided training to staff on the use of SPH equipment. She has also provided insight into remedying a battery depletion issue with the Golvo lifts across all clinics and worked with Biomed to ensure each CBOC and the main campus have a spare battery and charger available in case the Golvo is not charged. Marie has gone above and beyond in practicing as a UPL and is the winner of our Quarterly UPL!

Thank you for all of your hard work and congratulations!

Amanda Stevens, RN, BSN, MSN
Safe Patient Handling Coordinator

Are You Prepared?

Tornadoes are violent by nature. They are capable of completely destroying well-made structures, uprooting trees and hurling objects through the air like deadly missiles. A tornado is a violently rotating column of air extending from the base of a thunderstorm down to the ground. Tornado intensities are classified on the Fujita Scale with ratings between F0 (weakest) to F5 (strongest). Severe tornadoes are more common in the Plains States.

Know the Difference:

Tornado Watch - Tornadoes are possible in and near the watch area. Review and discuss your emergency plans, and check supplies and your safe room. Be ready to act quickly if a warning is issued or you suspect a tornado is approaching. Acting early helps to save lives!

Tornado Warning - A tornado has been sighted or indicated by weather radar. Tornado warnings indicate imminent danger to life and property. Go immediately under ground to a basement, storm cellar or an interior room (closet, hallway or bathroom).

Prepare:

- ☁ During any storm, listen to local news or a NOAA Weather Radio to stay informed about tornado watches and warnings.
- ☁ Know your community's warning system. Communities have different ways of warning residents about tornados, with many having sirens intended for outdoor warning purposes.
- ☁ Pick a safe room in your home where household members and pets may gather during a tornado. This should be a basement, storm cellar or an interior room on the lowest floor with no windows.
- ☁ Practice periodic tornado drills so that everyone knows what to do if a tornado is approaching.
- ☁ Consider having your safe room reinforced. Plans for reinforcing an interior room to

provide better protection can be found on the [FEMA](http://www.fema.gov) web site (www.fema.gov).

- ☁ Prepare for high winds by removing diseased and damaged limbs from trees.
- ☁ Move or secure lawn furniture, trash cans, hanging plants or anything else that can be picked up by the wind and become a projectile.
- ☁ Watch for tornado danger signs:
 - Dark, often greenish clouds – a phenomenon caused by hail
 - Wall cloud – an isolated lowering of the base of a thunderstorm
 - Cloud of debris
 - Large hail
 - Funnel cloud – a visible rotating extension of the cloud base
 - Roaring noise



Respond:

- ☁ The safest place to be is an underground shelter, basement or safe room.
- ☁ If no underground shelter or safe room is available, a small, windowless interior room or hallway on the lowest level of a sturdy building is the safest alternative.

***Mobile homes are not safe during tornadoes or other severe winds.**

***Do not seek shelter in a hallway or bathroom of a mobile home.**

- ☁ If you have access to a sturdy shelter or a vehicle, abandon your mobile home immediately.
- ☁ Go to the nearest sturdy building or shelter immediately, using your seat belt if driving.
- ☁ Do not wait until you see the tornado.

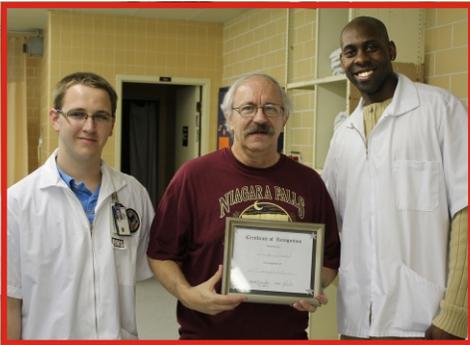
(continued on page 12)

Are You Prepared? (continued from page 11)

Recover:

- ☛ Continue listening to local news or a NOAA Weather Radio for updated information and instructions.
- ☛ If you are away from home, return only when authorities say it is safe to do so.
- ☛ Wear long pants, a long-sleeved shirt and sturdy shoes when examining your walls, doors, staircases and windows for damage.
- ☛ Watch out for fallen power lines or broken gas lines and report them to the utility company immediately.
- ☛ Stay out of damaged buildings.
- ☛ Use battery-powered flashlights when examining buildings – do NOT use candles.
- ☛ If you smell gas or hear a blowing or hissing noise, open a window and get everyone out of the building quickly and call the gas company or fire department.
- ☛ Take pictures of damage, both of the building and its contents, for insurance claims.
- ☛ Use the telephone only for emergency calls.
- ☛ Keep all of your animals under your direct control.
- ☛ Clean up spilled medications, bleaches, gasoline or other flammable liquids that could become a fire hazard.
- ☛ Check for injuries. If you are trained, provide first aid to persons in need until emergency responders arrive.

Jill Anderson
Emergency Manager



Pictured L to R: Nick Schueing KT, Veteran Philip Olmstead and Brandon Greene, KT.

Weight Loss Success Story!

When Philip Olmstead turned 59 years old he knew that his weight was out of control. He watched his Father slowly kill himself with complication due to extreme obesity. Philip weight 294 pounds and wore size 44 pants and 2X shirts. His primary care doctor, Dr. Gowda, set him up with a nutritionist and the pool for exercise. Philip learned how to eat and how to exercise. He has also began to run, getting in 3 ½ to 7 miles each run.

After 19 months, Philip is proud to report that he has lost 106 pounds and now wears a size 34-36 pants and a size large shirt! He will tell you that he is 60 ½ years old and feels like he's 30 years old again! His goals is to lose another 25 pounds.

Mr. Olmstead gives this advice, "Anyone who can accept the excellent help available and is willing to apply themselves could surely achieve goals that are best for them".

Construction/Renovation and Infection Control

I'm sure many of you have noticed all of the construction and renovation activities that have been occurring at some of our VA Illiana Health Care System (VAIHCS) locations. Did you know that some construction or renovation activities can cause infections, especially in people that have a compromised immune system (the body's defense system to fight off infections)? Organisms such as Legionella (spread by water) and Aspergillus (can be spread by dust) can infect immunocompromised patients in healthcare settings and can cause illness and even death. As a result of this risk in healthcare settings, organizations such as the Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology (APIC), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Joint Commission and others have published guidelines and requirements to follow for infection control during construction or renovation activities. The Veterans Health Administration (VHA) also published a directive on safety and health during construction activities to ensure a safe environment for patients, employees and others during construction activities that include infection control requirements.

So, what do we do at VAIHCS in an effort to protect people from infection during these types of activities? Our Infection Control, Safety and Engineering staff work closely together regarding all projects, big and small, in-house or contracted, to put into place appropriate infection control measures to prevent dust, debris and other possible sources of infection from affecting patients, employees and others during construction activities. An Infection Control Risk Assessment (ICRA) is completed before work begins and takes into consideration where and what type of activities will be occurring. The ICRA is required to be posted at the worksite. If you come upon a project area, you can look at the posted ICRA to see what type of requirements should be put into place for that particular project.

Infection Prevention is every employee's responsibility and we all need to work as a team to keep our Veterans safe. If you have any questions, please contact Infection Control at extension 44804.

Alissa Sandefer, RN
Infection Control Nurse

Veterans Experience 2013 Art Exhibit

Through the efforts of the Danville Art League and VAIHCS Recreation Therapy Service, the 2013 Veterans Experience Art Exhibit was a huge success. Any Veteran receiving services (inpatient or outpatient) through VA Illiana Health Care System and the CBOCs were encouraged to participate. The Artist Reception was held at the Danville Art League on April 23rd.

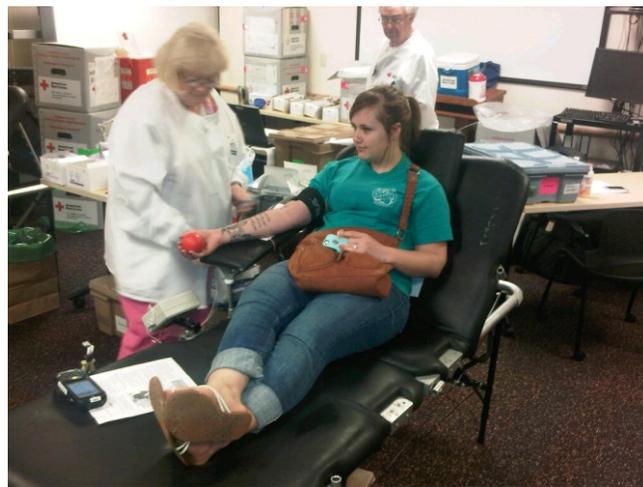


Suzi Robinson, Recreation Therapist is pictured with a Veteran.

Blood Drives at Peoria and Springfield Community Based Outpatient Clinics

Over a month ago, Ms. Mary Beth Wertz, the clinical nurse manager for the Bob Michel VA Outpatient Clinic, had reached out to the American Red Cross to kindle interest in a blood drive that could be hosted at the outpatient clinic located in Peoria, Illinois. Johnah Sahr and his family were the sponsor family for the blood drive. Ms. Kelly Belinger-Sahr, a Department of Veterans Affairs employee in Peoria and the mother of Johnah Sahr, a 4 year old boy who is battling neuroblastoma (cancer of the brain) and has received many blood products over the course of his treatment.

The blood drive was operated by the American Red Cross at the Bob Michel VA Outpatient Clinic on Thursday, May 30, 2013. The American Red Cross provided all the equipment, supplies and labor force needed to process donors and put the donors to ease during the blood draw. VA nursing staff assisted with the monitoring the blood donors and snacks were offered in the clinic's canteen area. The Meat-In Place mobile restaurant was also on-hand, staged out of the adjacent parking lot, to offer tasty grilled meals such as Italian beef and hand-cut butterfly pork chop sandwiches, for paying consumers.



Ms. Candy McClain, American Red Cross employee, drawing blood from Veteran/donor, Ms. Sarah Hutchison at the Bob Michel VA Outpatient Clinic.

The blood drive continued at the Springfield VA Outpatient Clinic on June 4, 2013. For this event, the American Red Cross deployed its Blood Mobile, a large RV with the capacity to accept four donors at once, staged out of the clinic's adjacent parking lot.

The results of Ms. Wertz and her staff's coordination of this event are best explained by their outcomes. Twenty-eight pints of blood were harvested from 22 VA employees and 6 Veterans/patients at the Peoria VA clinic on May 30th. Eleven pints of blood were obtained from 7 VA employees, 1 Veteran and 3 community patrons at the Springfields VA clinic on June 4th. There were five first-time donors which is significant since there is an increased likelihood that these benevolent individuals will donate again in the future as a result of experiencing the ease of donating blood and the satisfaction that one feels after donating. Considering the total yield of thirty-nine (39) pints over the course of both events and that according to the American Red Cross representatives, each pint of donated blood has the potential to save 3 lives, the blood products obtained have the potential to save 117 lives!

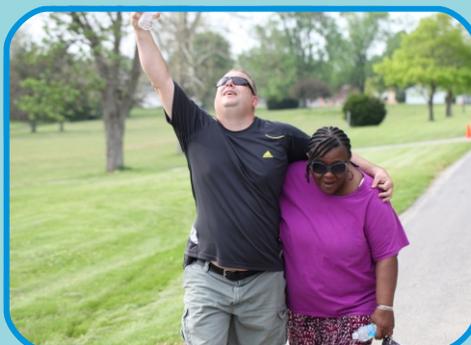
To find an American Red Cross operated donation opportunity nearest to you, use the following link to search for both blood drives and donation centers: www.redcrossblood.org/make-donation

Calvin H. Carter, MHA
Supervisory Administrative Officer for CBOCs

Integrity ★ Commitment ★ Advocacy ★ Respect ★ Excellence



2K Walk + Roll!





Nursing Workforce and Workplace Enhancement
Committee is proud to present:

CLC 1-7/8 in the Nursing Spotlight

The following letter was received from a family member . . .

Dear Ms. Hackerd,

I am writing to you today to express our gratitude for the services we received at the VA Medical Center in Danville, Illinois. My father was recently a patient there in the dementia ward beginning in July of last year and remained at the VA Medical Center until his death in October 2012.

Our family had no experience with the medical center though many of my parent's friends and acquaintances spoke very highly of the treatment their loved ones received there. From the very start when my father first became a patient of the doctors there many years back, the doctors, nurses, administration, pharmacists and others were very kind, compassionate and helpful. The details of my father's care were explained carefully so that my 80 year old parents thoroughly understood what was happening and what they might expect as my father's illness advanced.

When he was admitted in July when his disease made it necessary to do so for his own safety, the nurses were so compassionate and respectful of both him and my mother. Dad had some trouble settling into the new environment for the first few weeks and a nurse was next to him almost around the clock. I never witnessed a flicker of annoyance, frustration, or anything negative and it was though they embraced him with the same respect they would for their own parents. I cannot tell you how much easier it made it for my mom. She visited him twice a day, since she lived there in town, and became familiar with the staff. They greeted her always with a hug and daily answered her questions about dad.

When he was no longer able to stay in that particular ward due to complications due to his dementia and was moved somewhere for additional care, the nurses from his first ward came to visit him and my mom there. And when he last was moved to the unit where he would eventually pass away, the nurses from his previous ward still came to visit. One nurse even came on her day off! They came one after another to say goodbye to him on his final days and to speak a word of comfort to my mom, my brothers and me.

How can I thank you for what this staff did for us? How they eased his pain and comforted him. How they literally embraced my mom with kindness over and above anything we could have imagined. I know you have the power to thank all those who gave so much to my family and hope that you will do so. And please continue supporting them as you are able. The VA Medical Center is valuable not only for its medical services but because the people who work there do so wholeheartedly and make an enormous difference to the families of the patients there.

I am sending this letter to the Illinois Senators Durbin and Frerichs, Congressman Johnson and others including Dr. Usha Paruchuri to be sure they know that you and your staff should be applauded.

Thank you for all you do to enhance the quality of service at the VA Medical Center.

Sincerely, Anne (Albert) Gregorie
For the family of Charles F. Albert

Memorial Day at Danville National Cemetery



Kenekuk Road Runners Memorial Day Race



Integrity ★ Commitment ★ Advocacy ★ Respect ★ Excellence

Volunteers Honored at Banquet

It was a night fit for the stars as Volunteers walked the red carpet at the Turtle Run Banquet Center for the Annual Volunteer Recognition Program. Seventy-two volunteers and their guest attended the banquet.



Volunteer Monty Kern walks the red carpet!



Joe Guggemos was honored as the Outstanding Youth Volunteer of the Year!



Bob Barrett, DAV Volunteer, received the 15,000 Hour Award



Emma Metcalf, Director, VA Illiana Health Care System (left) presents "Outstanding Voluntary Supervisor of the Year" to Susan Nelson of Logistics Service.



Musical entertainment was provided by Christian Cunningham



Accepting a "Special Contribution" award for American Legion Auxiliary Volunteer, Ramona Hendricks was former VAIHCS employee John Deck.



(L to R): A **BIG** thank you to Debbie Luster, Secretary for Voluntary Service and Jennifer Sheehan-Wells, Voluntary Specialist for all their hard work in organizing the banquet.



June is PTSD Awareness Month

Post traumatic stress disorder, or PTSD, is an anxiety disorder that can occur after someone experiences or sees a traumatic event such as combat exposure, sexual/physical assault or abuse, terrorist attack, serious accident or natural disaster. Most people have some stress related reactions after a traumatic event but not everyone gets PTSD. Fear, sadness, guilt, anger, intrusive memories, and sleep problems are common. If these reactions don't go away over time and they disrupt your life, you may have PTSD.

Experts believe PTSD occurs in 11-20% of Veterans of the Iraq and Afghanistan wars; in as many as 10% of Desert Storm veterans; and in approximately 30% of Vietnam Veterans. Another source of PTSD in the military can be military sexual trauma. This is any sexual harassment or sexual assault that occurs while in the military. Statistics indicate 23/100 women reported sexual assault and 55/100 women and 38/100 men have experienced sexual harassment while in the military.

The Illiana VA outpatient PTSD clinic has been offering services since 1993. The clinic offers assessment and treatment services for Veterans with military related PTSD as well as readjustment counseling for OIF/OEF Veterans. Families are included in treatment. Treatment options include individual and group therapy as well as referral for medications if needed. All clinicians are trained in the use of evidence based therapies which are the most effective treatments for PTSD.

If you or someone you know is in need of treatment, please contact us (217-554-4257) and remember, getting help is not a sign of weakness, it is taking control of your life.

***Timothy Kohlbecker, MSW
PTSD Program Coordinator***

Annual Veterans Concert Held at DHS

Danville High School had their annual Veterans Concert to thank all Veterans for their service.



Emma Metcalf, Director at VAIHCS is pictured pinning a boutonniere on Veteran Harold "Sparky" Songer.



Volunteer Karen Graves was proud to pin a boutonniere on former POW Charles Dukes.



A Veteran receives a boutonniere from Diana Carranza, Associate Director, VAIHCS.

Integrity ★ Commitment ★ Advocacy ★ Respect ★ Excellence

Great Employees Doing a GREAT Job!



Marvin Lamm, Engineering Service



Gregory Heberling
Engineering Service



Max Hand
Engineering Service



Ed DeMoss
Engineering Service



George Dudich
Engineering Service



Patsy Green
Ambulatory Care



(L to R): Anbrisha Smith and Joanna Morris
Nutrition and Food Service

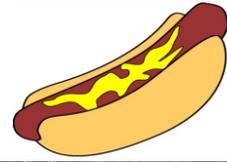


Carlos Cunningham, Clinic Clerk
Station 7

**Integrity ★ Commitment ★
Advocacy ★ Respect ★ Excellence**



Annual Picnic!



Anthony Brown, Chief of Environmental Management kept cool while grilling hotdogs thanks to Jim Cullum, Chief of Engineering Service.



Emma Metcalf, Director; Alesia Coe, Associate Director; and Nirmala Rozario, Chief of Staff greeted staff as they arrived at the picnic.



Grill Master Aaron Cain, Administrative Support Assistant (Engineering Service) worked up a sweat at the grill. Thank goodness Jim Cullum was around to wipe his brow!



Great Job Ladies! Pictured left to right: Tracy DeWeese, Jill DeBord, and Julie Wilson.



It was a beautiful day for a picnic. L to R: Donna Hodge, Jayne Galyen and Debra Dobson all of Utilization Management.



Employees enjoyed the picnic. Pictured left to right: Brandy Moulton, Laura Auter and Alex Sanchez.

vcs PatriotStore
VALUE • CONVENIENCE • SERVICE
Now Open Sunday's
9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

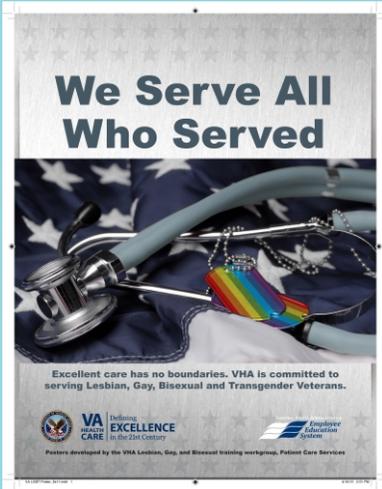


www.vacanteen.va.gov
 Friend us on Facebook 
 Follow us on twitter 



Check This Out!





2013 LGBT Diversity Event - HUMAN PRIDE

VA Illiana Health Care System had their first Lesbian Gay Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) program. As part of educating our staff and community about Diversity in the workplace and continued awareness VA wide, we were proud to be part of a national push in LGBT awareness month. Our focus at VA Illiana through our Diversity Committee is to educate staff, Veterans, and community on the different special emphasis committee we have at the facility.



St. Soukie De La Croix, Keynote Speaker



(L to R): A BIG thank you to Katherine Ashby, Secretary to Pathology and Laboratory Medicine and Timothy Grider, Radiologic Technologist for all their hard work in organizing this event!



(L to R): Musical entertainment was provided by Eszdee Darnell and VAIHCS employee Ben Jenkins of Pharmacy Service.



Damian Foley, Mental Health Service receives a "rainbow tattoo" by a representative of the Vermilion County Rape Crisis Center.



Organizations from the surrounding communities provided information. Pictured is a representative from the Up Center of Champaign County.



David Groves, VISN 11 EEO Manager, gave opening remarks.

Kathasha Butler, Inpatient Pharmacy Supervisor and Chair, Diversity and Inclusion Committee presented a certificate of appreciation to Soukie De La Croix.



BRAVO Award Recipients



Associate Director/PCS

Alesia Coe
Brooke Heckerson
Cindy Liffick

Director's Office

Jonathan Hall

Ambulatory Care Service

Julie Edwards

Contracting

Kevin Adkins

Education Service

David Boerst (2)

Engineering Service

Flash Gardner
Jennifer Kupcik (2)
Dennis Lecount
Casey Phillips

Environmental Management Service

Andre Bascom
Barton Gutteridge

Fiscal Service

Christina Gossett

Geriatrics and Extended Care

Dwight Marxman

Human Resources Services

Freddy Bullock (2)
Janis Harmon-Colby
Lana Foley (5)
Regan Bensyl (2)
Stacie Bartlett

IRM

Rick Castle (2)
Dave Perry

Logistics Service

Joel Ferren

Medical Administration Service

Debbie McCool (2)
Judy Cain
Judy Miller (2)
Kim Bergthold
Kris Bell
Lesley Grayson
Lisa Wallace
Marcie Wright (2)
Pat Toth
Patricia David
Sandy Crabtree
Candy Thacker
Lisa Utkin
Shauna Tohey (2)
Jennifer Lane
Ashley Strebing (2)

Medicine Service

Tawnia Gustolise

NCCPAC

Patricia Spalding

Nutrition & Food Service

Brenda Lindquist
Charles Cunningham
Joanne Morris
Robin Meek
Lori Flessner
Lori Carlson
Valerie Leek
Peggy Brewer
Joanne Morris
Melvina Halthon
Tim Hamilton
Chris Bell
Mike Pastrikos
Ericka Hoskins

PCS/Nursing

Christina Kraemer
Cynthia Elkins (2)
Erica Johnson (2)
Jenny Shannon
Karen Hodges (2)
Karen Whitley
Kevin Rosborough
Linda Gibson
Robin Gordon

Shelly Collom
Steven Allen
Tina Forshier
Sheri Brown
Laurel Hanetho
Meghan Davis
Rhonda Christian
David Pratt
Sarah Marble (2)

Pathology & Laboratory Services

Wendy Rivera

Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation Service

Don Owens
Mary Seyfert
Tywana Wiles
Shoba Raj-Underhill

Police Service

Jill Anderson
Robert Foster

Quality Management

Donna Hughes
Winnifer Nelson
Tammie Ritter

Social Work Service

Suzanne Brandon
Megan Swartz-Foley

Veterans Canteen Service

Mark Heath
Joanna Hillsman
Eddie Heath
Carlos Cunningham

Voluntary Service

Bryan Lock
Teresa Ard

Gains

Larry J. Augle - Carpenter Helper - Engineering Service
Douglas J. Benjamin - Carpenter - Engineering Service
Adam T. Brann - Chief - Logistics Service
Laura T. Kuras - Medical Technologist - Pathology & Laboratory Service
Michael A. Shapiro - Physician - Medical Service

Losses

Maxwell Arancon - Police Officer - Police Service
Kathleen Bailey - Secretary - Ambulatory Care Service
Brandi E. Burke - Psychologist - Mental Health Service
Ritika Chopra - Pharmacist - Pharmacy Service
Adam R. Hall - Physician Assistant - Medical Service
Tasha C. Howard - Student Trainee - Social Work Service

***Illiana News - Proudly
 Serving Those Who Served***
 Committee Members
 David Boerst
 Tasha Draper
 Jaime Kanger
 Doug Shouse
 Bob Sprouls

Service Pins

40 Years

Brenda K. Morris
 Nursing Service

35 Years

Pauline J. Phillips
 Nursing Service

30 Years

Richard A. Graves
 Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation Service

25 Years

Robert M. Foster
 Police, Safety & Emergency Management Service

Janette D. Meers
 Nursing Service

Kenneth A. Richter
 Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation Service

15 Years

Vijay Batura
 Surgical Service

Rhonda F. Davis
 Medical Administration Service

Tisha R. Harvey
 Human Resources Service

Jeffery S. Romig
 Ambulatory Care Service

Barbara Shanks
 Nursing Service

Geraldine T. Wirth
 Ambulatory Care Service

Keith B. Worley
 Pharmacy Service

10 Years

Brian K. Martin
 Police Service

William H. Roberts, III
 Pathology & Lab Service

Delbert F. Siegmund
 Pharmacy Service

Sreedevi Venkatesh
 Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation Service

Carl E. Wise
 Engineering Service

