Edith Nourse Rogers Memorial Veterans Hospital (Bedford VA)

Services for Veterans and their Families

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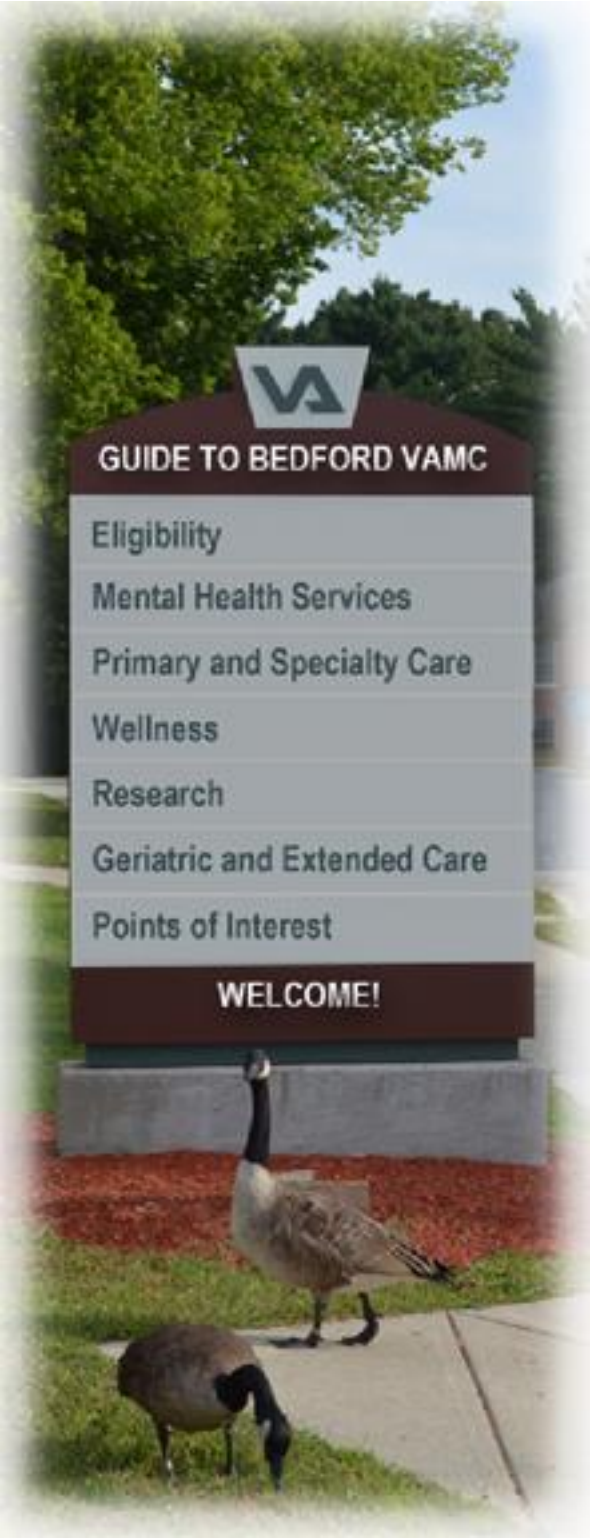
508 version

Updated December 19, 2016

VA HEALTH CARE
Edith Nourse Rogers Memorial Veterans Hospital
BEDFORD VA
200 Springs Road, Bedford, MA 01730

What's Inside



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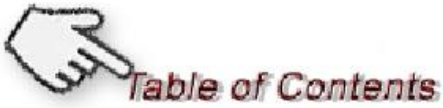
Five Tips for Using this Guide

1 This *e*-Book conserves paper and financial resources and allows us to update information without having to reprint and redistribute paper copies. **Save the link (not the guide)** and each time you come back you will be accessing our most current version.

2 This document can search for words within the text using keywords you provide. Click the "**Ctrl**" key and the "**F**" key to generate a Finder window. Enter what you are looking for. Click through the NEXT arrows until you find the page you want.

3 The **blue ribbons** on the right are linked to corresponding chapters.
Click the ribbon to jump to that section of this guide.

4 Each page has a **Table of Contents** link on the bottom right.
Click it to return to the Guide's Main Contents.
Click Chapter titles to jump there.
Click names to send an email. HINT: Do NOT send personal details in email, use MyHealtheVet for secure communication.



5 **QR Codes** (Quick Response) are included to ease sharing with smart phone users. These are scanned with smart phones and capture relevant webpages or data to facilitate the sharing of important information. Free apps are available for QR barcode readers from your favorite app store. Help our Vets reach the care they have earned! Share this information widely!

www.bedford.va.gov/guide/

Welcome, we're glad you're here!

This e-booklet takes you on an inside tour of the programs and services at Edith Nourse Rogers Memorial Veterans Hospital, (Bedford VA) to assist you in discovering what health services our facility has pledged to provide to Veterans and how to access these services. Save the link to this booklet or find it on our homepage, as it is updated frequently, and linking to it will ensure you have our latest information.

Section 1 provides information about eligibility, and enrollment with online or in person instructions.

Section 2 describes treatments available for the most common mental health problems of Veterans (such as depression, substance abuse, and posttraumatic stress disorder) and describes special programs offered for particular groups of Veterans (such as women Veterans, Veterans who are homeless or older Veterans). How to access Mental Health Services and the continuum of services is described.

Section 3 provides information about treatments available for primary care, and specialty care with resources for our returning Veterans.

Section 4 describes some of our Wellness offerings.

Section 5 is an overview of Geriatric and Extended Care Services at Bedford VA, including the Caregiver program and contact information for eligible post 9/11 Veterans.

Section 6 provides information on ground breaking research at Bedford VA.

Section 7 lists ways and opportunities to connect with us including frequently used telephone numbers and specialized 1-800 numbers that can link you to care in urgent situations. You will also find a map to programs, transportation information, and links to our website and our Facebook page. We've included descriptions of some of the annual events cherished by the Bedford VA community.

We hope you will visit us soon, in person and online at www.Bedford.VA.gov. **Welcome!**

Comp and Pen Services

Improving Veteran Access!

(left) Comp and Pen Ribbon Cutting, Oct 27, 2016 (l to r) Brad Mayes, VARO Director; Shannon Stump, Decision Review Officer; Sven Knudsen Ljaamo, MD, MPH, Administrative Medicine Care Line Mgr; Glen Gechlik, MD, Acting Chief Medical Officer, VISN1; Dan Berlowitz, MD, Bedford VA Chief of Staff; and Karen Acerra-Williams, Acting Director Bedford VA cut the ribbon on this new co-located service with VBA and Bedford VA.

Comp & Pen Service is located on the 3rd floor of Bldg. 78, Suite 302K.

General Information: Call 781-687-3402

Scheduling: Call 781-687-3754

As part of myVA's **Improving Access**, and in response to the increasing requests by Veterans for exam requests, Bedford VA has opened a new, modern, VBA-VHA co-located service on the third floor of Bldg. 78, Suite 302K.

A strong team between the VBA Regional Office (VARO) and Bedford VA is now here at Bedford to assist Veterans with service connection and claims related issues.

Robert Flammia, VBA Rating Veterans Service Representative is here Wednesdays 7:30am to 3:30pm and Shannon Stump, VBA Decisions Review Officer, is here Thursdays 7:30am to 6:00pm.

Both can be reached at 781-687-3804 during their tours.

(Audiology and Optometry Specialty Exams continue to be conducted on the same floor of Bldg. 78 in the Optometry Clinic area. Mental Health service connection medical examinations generally remain in Bldg. 9).

The new space for Bedford VA medical and administrative staff, along with our VBA partners, serves as a central location for Veterans looking for assistance with the service connection process. Plans are underway to increase the VBA presence in the future as we look to serve Veterans better than ever before!

Dr. Tom Houston Receives Worthen Award

Worthen Award Ceremony, (l-r) Dan Berlowitz, MH, MPH, Mary Anderson, RN, Alan Gifford, MD, Karen Sanders, MD, Deputy Chief Academic Affiliations Officer, (VHA Office of Academic Affiliations), Thomas Houston, MD, Michael Mayo-Smith MD, Karen Acerra-Williams, Ganga Hematillake MD, Ed Koetting.

Dr. Tom Houston received the prestigious 2016 Worthen Award, VA's highest recognition of outstanding achievement of national significance in health professions education. Dr. Karen Sanders, Chief Academic Affiliations Officer, (VHA Office of Academic Affiliations in DC) presented the award.

Dr. Houston is a primary care physician (American Board of Internal Medicine) and an American Board of Preventive Medicine board-certified clinical informatician. After receiving his MPH from Johns Hopkins, he has had a federally funded portfolio of health informatics and health services research for over 15 years. Dr. Houston is an active mentor, guiding the careers of junior faculty at UMass and VA, and serves as multi-PI of PRACCTIS, an implementation science post-doctoral program. He has been involved in education at the undergraduate, medical student, internal medicine resident, post-doctoral fellow, and continuing medical education level. He has mentored over 20 clinical and research mentees in the health sciences, been active in national faculty development, curriculum development, and has been an assistant residency program director for research. He has published in Academic Medicine and other journals on medical education innovations.

His research is at the intersection of technology and education for patients and providers. His funding has been from NIH, AHRQ, VA HSR&D, PCORI, RWJF, and the Bayer Institute for Healthcare Communication. He is Professor and Chief of the Division of Health Informatics and Implementation Science at the University of Massachusetts Medical School. Dr. Houston is also a scientist at the Bedford VA Center for Healthcare Organization and Implementation Science. Dr. Houston is an elected Fellow of the Society of Behavioral Medicine and the American College of Medical Informatics.

About the Worthen Award: The Veterans Health Administration is recognized nationally as a leader in the education of health care professionals. This contribution was greatly enhanced through the dedication of the former head of Academic Affairs, the late David M. Worthen, M.D., whom the award commemorates. Dr. David M. Worthen, a board-certified ophthalmologist and established academician, surgeon, and researcher retired from VA in 1987 after 17 years of dedicated service. Dr. Worthen left his mark in 3 distinct areas of medicine and education: government (particularly VA); American medical practice through his teaching, research, and practice of ophthalmic surgery; and health policy through his membership and leadership on national boards and commissions.

2016 VA Under Secretary of Health's Award for Excellence in Community Partnerships

Bedford VA First Responders partners were recognized as one of three top partnerships nationally. USH Dr. Shulkin's 2016 Veterans Health Administration Community Partnership Challenge spotlights successful nonmonetary partnerships with nongovernmental organizations that help meet the needs of Veterans, caregivers, survivors, and families. This year's contest theme was *Veteran Access to Health Care Services* with special emphasis on replicable partnerships.

Department of Veterans Affairs

Under Secretary for Health

Commendation

Presented to

Edith Nourse Rogers Memorial Veterans Hospital

in recognition of your winning submission to the 2016 Veterans Health Administration Community Partnership Challenge. Your partnership with Fire Fighter Military Veterans, Chelmsford Police Department, and other first responders is a proactive approach to helping Veterans gain access to care they need and deserve in a crisis situation. Your partnership brings awareness and provides tools to address circumstances involving Veterans with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and other post deployment challenges. Your commitment to excellence and service for the welfare of our Veterans, families, caregivers and survivors reflect the highest ideals of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Washington, DC
June 2016

David J. Shulkin, M.D.
Under Secretary for Health
Veterans Health Administration

Congratulations Elizabeth Price, John Rocca and team pictured above at a virtual award ceremony with USH Dr. Shulkin.

Click to read more about this important initiative and find out how you can bring this free training to your vicinity:
First Responder Training.

Bedford Green Ribbon Cutting in the News!

69 New Units of Permanent Housing for Homeless Veterans 55+

On Thursday, July 21, 2016, a ceremonial ribbon cutting marked the opening of The Bedford Green, at 100 Pride Way on the beautiful campus of the Edith Nourse Rogers Memorial Veterans Hospital.
These outstanding apartments are rapidly becoming home sweet home to its newest Veterans. See pictures of inside Bedford Green apartments on the Peabody Properties website here.

See the outstanding media coverage from the community at the links below:

Bedford Citizen "A Promise Fulfilled"

Lowell Sun

Bedford Citizen "Excellence in Partnerships to End Veteran Homelessness"

Bedford TV (Entire Ribbon Cutting Ceremony, approx. 1 hour)

Bedford Minuteman Bedford Green Opens it's Doors

Boston Globe For Veterans, Home and a Community

Merrimack Valley News (coming this month)

Bedford VA Facebook Photo Album for this event

Information about Bedford Green and VASH Housing

What's New!

Ribbon Cutting Ceremony for New Gloucester Outpatient Clinic

After several years of planning the new Gloucester Clinic to meet the growing needs of Veterans in the Gloucester/Cape Ann area, a ribbon cutting ceremony and celebration on June 1, 2016 gave a first look into our beautiful new facility to Veterans and the community. The new clinic opened officially on June 13, 2016.

The ribbon cutting celebrates the work and dedication of many in bringing this new expanded clinic to the Veterans of Gloucester and Cape Ann.

Our dedicated Gloucester staff look forward to continue the delivery of world class care to our Veterans in this new modern state of the art clinic.

The opening of our new Gloucester Outpatient Clinic is a reaffirmation of our deep commitment to serve Veterans better than they have ever been served before.

Visit our Facebook page for videos of the Ribbon Cutting and more pictures of the new clinic!

Edith Nourse Rogers Memorial Veterans Hospital Partners with Community First Responders

By VHA Office of Community Engagement

Heather Platter, M.S.

First responders such as police officers, firefighters, paramedics, and emergency medical technicians regularly interact with Veterans, but they may not be formally trained in specific Veteran needs and issues. The Edith Nourse Rogers Memorial Veterans Hospital in Bedford, MA, is changing that by partnering with a variety of first responders throughout the community.

The goal of the partnership is to increase collaboration with local first responders in the community, and to provide training and education about the unique issues facing Veterans as well as pertinent information about the VA healthcare system. The training sessions, led by a Veteran VA police officer and a VA mental health clinician, cover important issues such as suicide prevention and PTSD for Veterans.

A work group, started after the 2014 Mental Health Summit, formalized the program by creating a cohesive team that aims to help Veterans better manage their stress, access treatment, and create a culture that no longer stigmatizes mental health issues. They conduct outreach in the community, create new local partnerships, and revise the program as needed to make it relevant for different types of first responders. This unique cross-disciplinary model continues to expand by including local and state police, fire departments, emergency medical response services, park services, transit and university police, and police academies. The opportunities for growth are endless: for example, local police academies have made the training a requirement of their own training program.

Since 2014, the partnership has trained approximately 900 first responders, 225 of whom are Veterans. A participant mentioned his agency experienced a recent surge of Veteran suicides, so learning about prevention efforts to combat this challenge was welcomed. One noted he enjoyed hearing Veteran stories and experiences throughout the training and learned new ways to deal with PTSD. Another added the training gives real examples of what Veterans may experience - PTSD, isolation, and suicide – and how to work with Veterans who are experiencing those issues.

The Edith Nourse Rogers Memorial Veterans Hospital in Bedford, MA is a winner of the annual VHA National Community Partnership Challenge.

To learn more about Bedford VA's First Responder program, or to arrange a no-cost training, contact

Elizabeth Price, LICSW **781-687-3067** or

Lt.John Rocca **781-687-2402**

Announcements

2015 VA Under Secretary's Award for Outstanding Achievement in Health Services Research Awarded To Bedford VA's Acting Chief of Staff

HSR&D is pleased to announce that the recipient of VA's 2015 Under Secretary's Award for Outstanding Achievement in Health Services Research is **Dan R. Berlowitz, MD, MPH**. This award is the highest honor for a VA health services researcher. It represents exceptional achievement in improving the health and quality of care of Veterans, inspiring and training the next generation of health services researchers, and enhancing the visibility and recognition of VA research nationally.

Dr. Berlowitz is a leading health services researcher and former Co-Director of HSR&D's Center for Healthcare Organization and Implementation Research (CHOIR), located in Bedford and Boston, MA. From 2004 to 2013, he served as Director of HSR&D's Center for Health Quality, Outcomes and Economic Research, and since 2012, he has served as Acting Chief of Staff for the Edith Nourse Rogers Memorial VA Hospital in Bedford. A former HSR&D Research Career Development Awardee (CDA), Dr. Berlowitz's research relies on strong methodological expertise in the areas of quality assessment, risk adjustment, and the use of large databases. His work focuses on assessing and improving the quality of healthcare for Veterans, with particular emphasis on ambulatory and long-term care settings.

Dr. Berlowitz's research is directly applicable to the healthcare of our Veterans. For example, he examined the care of Veterans with hypertension and recognized what is now referred to as "clinical inertia" - the failure to intensify therapy when indicated. His research led to a reevaluation in how people think about the problem of uncontrolled hypertension, and VA responded through a quality improvement initiative. Hypertension control rates are now well over 70 percent, in large part due to reducing clinical inertia.

In addition, Dr. Berlowitz has worked with more than 20 Fellows and Career Development Awardees on diverse projects, with many achieving successful academic careers. He also has been supportive of trainees and junior investigators at several VA medical centers, including those in Atlanta, East Orange, Los Angeles, Providence, San Antonio, Tampa, and West Haven. In addition, he is a prolific author, with more than 170 publications.

For his dedication to improving the health and care of Veterans, Dr. Dan Berlowitz is highly deserving of the prestigious Under Secretary's Award for Outstanding Achievement in Health Services Research, and we congratulate him for this honor.

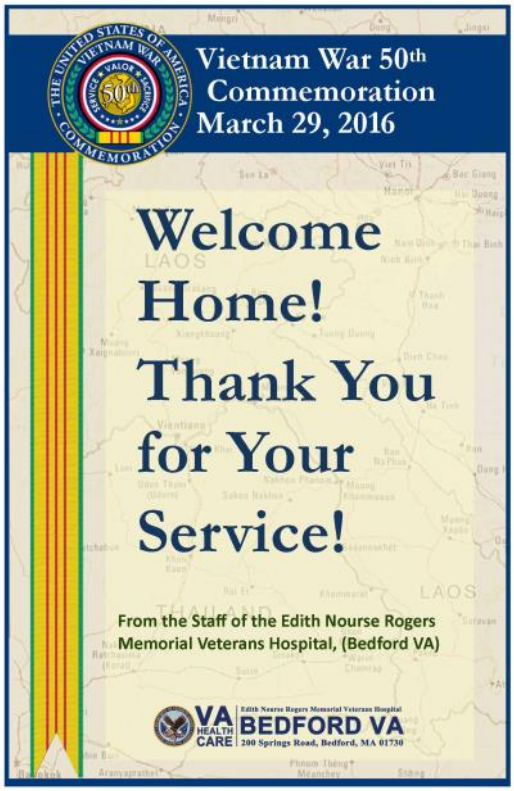
Vietnam 50th Commemoration Partner Events

220 Veterans Honored at Bedford VA's 50th Vietnam War Commemoration

The staff of the Edith Nourse Rogers Memorial Veterans Hospital, (Bedford VA), thanked and honored over 200 Veterans on Vietnam Veterans day, March 29 from the hospital and from the community at a Commemorative Ceremony to recognize the sacrifice and service of the men and women who served between November 1, 1955 and May 15, 1975, one of America's longest wars. The Ceremony is a part of the 50th Vietnam War Commemoration, a national tribute that began in 2012 and will continue through 2025. The respect, gratitude and emotion in the hall was palpable. After the National Anthem, Pledge of Allegiance and Invocation, a video tribute from VA Secretary Robert McDonald was shared.

Although not able to be present in person, Congressman Seth Moulton sent a letter of support which was read and displayed on the screen."...To veterans in attendance today, I would like to thank you for your service and your sacrifice. You stood up when our country needed you, and now it's our responsibility to ensure that you receive the respect and care that you have earned."

As the pinning ceremony began, the lines formed all the way out of the theater on both sides. Director Christine Croteau, accompanied by Bedford's leadership team, presented each of the 220 Vietnam and Vietnam Era Veterans with a Commemorative Lapel pin, a scroll depicting its meaning, and a signed thank you card. (Visit Bedford VA Hospital on Facebook to see more pictures of the event).



As an official Vietnam War 50th Commemorative Partner with the Department of Defense, Bedford VA joins with other VA's and hundreds of organizations nationwide to honor the Vietnam Veterans.

For more information visit,www.VietnamWar50th.com. The Commemorative objectives are to thank the Vietnam Veterans, welcome them home, and to commemorate this with the special pin, only to be given in a ceremonial event.

Watch for more commemorative events this year at Bedford VA including a Bedford VA Vietnam Veterans Art and Photo Exhibit in November! Want more info? Email us!

Mission, Vision and Values

VA Purpose

To fulfill President Lincoln's promise "*To care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow, and his orphan*" by serving and honoring the men and women who are America's Veterans.

VHA Mission

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

VHA 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.

VA Core Values - "I CARE"

- **Integrity** - Act with high moral principle. Adhere to the highest professional standards. Maintain the trust and confidence of all with whom I engage.
- **Commitment** - Work diligently to serve Veterans and other beneficiaries. Be driven by an earnest belief in VA's mission. Fulfill my individual responsibilities and organizational responsibilities.
- **Advocacy** - Be truly Veteran-centric by identifying, fully considering, and appropriately advancing the interests of Veterans and other beneficiaries.
- **Respect** - Treat all those I serve and with whom I work with dignity and respect. Show respect to earn it.
- **Excellence** - Strive for the highest quality and continuous improvement. Be thoughtful and decisive in leadership, accountable for my actions, willing to admit mistakes, and rigorous in correcting them.

Accreditation

Edith Nourse Rogers Memorial Veterans Hospital (Bedford VA) has earned The Joint Commission's Gold Seal of Approval. For more information visit www.jointcommission.org.

To see how we compare to non VA hospitals check here.

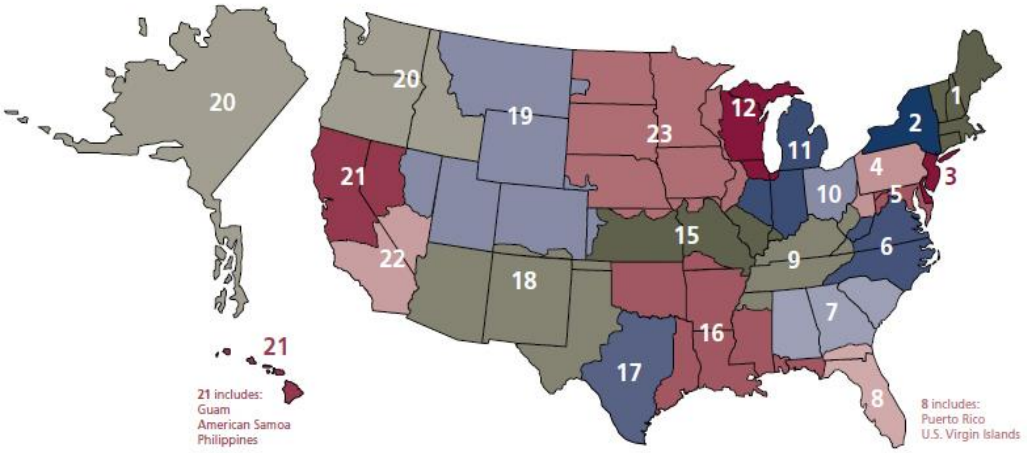
CARF International accreditation demonstrates a program's quality, transparency, and commitment to the satisfaction of the persons served. CARF International is an independent, nonprofit accreditor of health and human services. Toll free **(888) 281-6531.** Bedford VA was awarded its second consecutive Three-Year Accreditation in April 2015.

For more information visit www.carf.org.

Care Close to Home

VA is organized into Veterans Integrated Service Networks (VISNs). Each VISN has at least two medical centers, and each medical center has outpatient clinics onsite and community-based outpatient clinics (CBOCs) throughout the VISN. VA classifies these CBOCs according to size. Very large CBOCs treat more than 10,000 individual Veterans per year. Large CBOCs treat 5,000-10,000 individual Veterans per year. Mid-sized CBOCs treat 1,500-5,000 individual Veterans per year, and small CBOCs treat fewer than 1,500 individual Veterans per year. Veterans can seek care at the location closest to their home. Veterans can be referred to a larger clinic or medical center if needed.

The map shows VA VISN locations throughout the United States.



Bedford VA is in VISN 1 and includes Community Based Outpatient Clinics (CBOCs) in Gloucester, Haverhill, and Lynn, and Veterans Community Care Center in Lowell, MA

Gloucester CBOC
199 Main Street Gloucester, MA 01930
Toll Free 1-800-VETMED1 (800-838-6331)
8:00am to 4:30pm, Mon - Fri

Lowell Veterans Community Care Center
130 Marshall Road, Lowell, MA 01852
Phone: 978-671-9115
Toll Free 1-800-VETMED1 (800-838-6331)
8:00am to 4:30pm, Mon - Fri

Haverhill CBOC
108 Merrimack St. Haverhill, MA 01830
Toll Free 1-800-VETMED1 (800-838-6331)
8:00am - 4:30pm, Mon-Fri

Lynn CBOC
225 Boston St. Suite 107, Lynn, MA 01904
Toll Free 1-800-VETMED1 (800-838-6331)
8:00am - 4:30pm, Mon-Fri

Eligibility

Basic Eligibility

If you served in the active military, naval or air service and are separated under any condition other than dishonorable, you may qualify for VA health care benefits. Current and former members of the Reserves or National Guard who were called to active duty (other than for training only) by a federal order and completed the full period for which they were called or ordered to active duty may be eligible for VA health care as well.

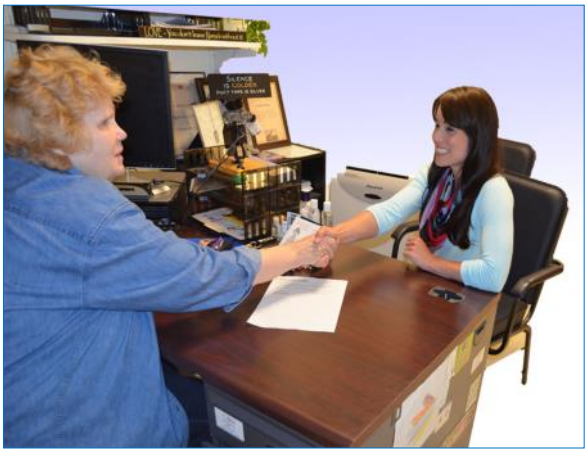
Minimum Duty Requirements

Most Veterans who enlisted after September 7, 1980, or entered active duty after October 16, 1981, must have served 24 continuous months or the full period for which they were called to active duty in order to be eligible. This minimum duty requirement may not apply to Veterans who were discharged for a disability incurred or aggravated in the line of duty, discharged for a hardship, or received an "early out."

Since there are a number of other exceptions to minimum duty requirements, VA encourages all Veterans to apply in order to determine their enrollment eligibility.

www.VA.gov/Explore

Enrolling in VA Healthcare



The first step to receive Veteran's health care is to enroll in in the VA health care system.

Why apply for VA health benefits?

1. There is no cost to apply.
2. Enroll once – comprehensive health care services will be available when and where you need them.
3. You will remain enrolled as long as you complete your annual 10-10EZr even if you don't use VA for your health care. It's never too late to enroll.
4. Enrollment in the VA health care system provides "creditable coverage" required by some health care programs, including Medicare Part D, and states requiring all individuals to have health coverage.

To begin the process, you must complete VA Form 10-10EZ, Application for Health Benefits.

Don't Wait Apply Now!

Already enrolled? Keep your financial information updated to avoid billing and copay errors.

For more information about the enrollment process at Bedford VA call: 781-687-2563, 781-687-2597, 781-687-2275 or visit us at the Admissions Office in Building 78, on the 1st Floor.

You may also enroll online at www.va.gov/healthbenefits/enroll

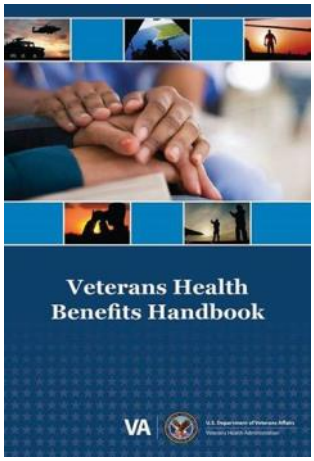
New Patient Information

Before attending your first appointment, you can learn more at www.newengland.va.gov/newpatient.asp.

If you mail in your enrollment form or completed it online, you will receive an enrollment letter instructing you to contact us at 800-VETMED (1-800-838-6331).

2014 Guide to Benefits

Download or Review online:**Federal Benefits for Veterans, Dependents, and Survivors**
Available in English and Spanish and for Kindle, iPad, iPhone, Nook, Android



VA HEALTH CARE | Defining EXCELLENCE in the 21st Century

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VA Dental Insurance Program

Eligible Veterans, plus family members receiving care under the Civilian Health and Medical Program (CHAMPVA), can now purchase affordable dental insurance.

The new program is a partnership between VA, Delta Dental and MetLife. More than eight million Veterans who are enrolled in VA health care can choose to purchase one of the offered dental plans. This three-year pilot has been designed for Veterans with no dental coverage, or those eligible for VA dental care who would like to purchase additional coverage. Participation will not affect entitlement to VA dental services and treatment.

There are no eligibility limitations based on service-connected disability rating or enrollment priority assignment. People interested in participating may now complete an application online through either Delta Dental, or MetLife, available throughout the United States and its territories. Click to learn more.

Making the Transition to VA Health Care For Recently Demobilized or Transitioning Servicemembers/Veterans

Welcome! Thank you for your Service!

Here is a short video clip for Servicemembers who are demobilizing or will soon be transitioning out of the military.

click to play

We're excited to help you access the healthcare benefits you have earned.

Please see OEF/OIF/OND Returning Veterans page for more information or call Elizabeth Price at 781-687-3067

Helpful information:

Bedford VA OEF/OIF Team Brochure

What should I know and bring my first time at the VA?

A Quick Reference and Frequently Asked Questions about VA Services

Bedford VA OEF/OIF/OND website

CLAIMS INFORMATION Veterans Benefits Administration

1-800-827-1000 a toll free number that provides information on the following VA Benefits:

Payments for service connected disabilities
Educational Benefits (GI Bill)
VA-No Down Payment Home Loans
Vocational Counseling/Employment Training for Service Connected Disabilities
Life Insurance

My Health*e*Vet

My Health*e*Vet is the gateway to web-based tools that empower you to be an active partner in your healthcare. With My Health*e*Vet you can access trusted, secure and informed VA health and benefits information at a time that works best for you.

My Health*e*Vet is VA's online personal health record. It was designed for Veterans, active duty Service-members, their dependents and caregivers. It provides you opportunities and tools to make informed decisions and manage your health care.

Specific features in My Health*e*Vet are available to you based on your account type. All users who have a Basic account are able to view their self-entered information. If you are a VA patient, you can upgrade your account to Advanced or Premium. For more information about account types and what you can view, visit My Health*e*Vet Account Types.

Among the newest features available to Veterans with a Premium Account is VA Notes. These are clinical notes that your health care team records during your appointments or hospital stays. Also available are your VA Immunization records, more detailed lab reports and a list of your current medical issues. These features are in addition to prescription refills, VA Appointments and Secure Messaging – all very popular with Veterans!

The Bedford VA MyHealth*e*Vet Program Manager can assist you in obtaining a user ID and Password to log in. For more information, please log on to www.myhealth.va.gov or contact our MyHealth*e*Vet program manager, Charles Hillman at: 781 687 3619

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- Mental Health Recovery Services
- Primary Care Behavioral Health
- Residential Treatment Programs
- Supported Education (VITAL) • GI Bill Comparison Tool
- Supported Employment
- TeleMental Health
- Vet Centers
- Veterans Community Care Center

Mental Health Services, Treatments for Specific Needs
- Community Stabilization Program (CSP)
- Community Reintegration Connections Team (see also Peers)
- Couples and Family Therapy
- Family Services, Coaching Into Care
- Gay. Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgendered Veterans
- Individual and Group Therapy and Case Management
- Intimate Partner Violence - The Safing Center
- Make the Connection (Online Resource for Veterans)
- Medication
- MH Recovery Services, Individual, Group & Case Management
- Mental Health Intensive Case Management
- Military Sexual Trauma
- Moving Forward (Online Resource for Veterans)
- Peer Services
- PTSD and Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) ~ Concussion Coach App
- Recovery Through Employment and Volunteering
- Recovery Through Supported Self Employment
- Serious Mental Illness
- Substance Abuse, Addictions and Gambling
- Suicide Prevention Services

VA and Community Partner Mental Health Resources

Homeless Services
- Case Management, Emergency Beds, Walk In Clinic
- Crescent House
- DOM (Domiciliary, inpatient)
- Grant and Per Diem
- National Call Center 24/7
- Safe Haven
- Supportive Services for Veterans and Families (SSVF)
- VASH
- Veterans Justice Outreach
- Veterans Quarters, (BVQ Building 5)

Veterans Mental Health Council

*Portions of this chapter are adapted to Bedford VA offerings from the National **Guide to VA Mental Health Services for Veterans and Families** (also available in Spanish Guia de Servicios), intended for Veterans, Veteran family members, members of Veterans Services Organizations, and others interested in VA mental health care.*

How to Access VA Mental Health Care

EMERGENCY ACCESS

In a mental health emergency, go to the nearest emergency room or CALL 911

Go to the nearest hospital emergency room or call 911 if you have a mental health emergency, *(such as wanting to hurt yourself or someone else).* If it is not a VA hospital, you may be able to move to a VA facility depending on your circumstances. If you are feeling suicidal, you can also call, text, or chat online with the **Veterans Crisis Line** to connects Veterans in crisis or their families and friends with qualified, caring VA responders through a confidential toll-free hotline, online chat, or text, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

To **speak** with a responder by phone in an **emergency,** call **1-800-273-8255** and **Press 1.**
To **chat** online go to www.veteranscrisisline.net.
To **text** with a responder, **text 838255**.

INPATIENT MENTAL HEALTH TREATMENT AND DETOX

Admission is through the **Mental Health Clinic** during normal business hours, (8-4) and Admissions Office during other hours. Both can be reached by calling **781-687-4333**

After Hours at Bedford VA go to Urgent Care first floor Building 78.

If you have a mental health problem and you are **not** near Bedford VA, call VA general information hot-line at **1-800-827-1000** or visit VA's website at www.va.gov to find the nearest VA.

Making Appointment for Non-Emergency Services

If you are already using VA medical services, ask your primary care provider to arrange for you to see a VA mental health provider. If you are new to Bedford VA the Evaluations Center will help you find the best place to begin to access mental health services for your current circumstances.

Some Veterans begin the process of finding mental health care through a VA Readjustment Counseling Service Veterans Center (Vet Center).

Veterans who are homeless can get help finding mental health care at Bedford VA's homeless walk in clinic, or a Veterans drop-in center, or by contacting the National Call Center for Homeless Veterans at **1-877-424-3838,** or by visiting the VA's Homeless Veterans website at www.va.gov/homeless.

Bedford VA Mental Health Walk-In Clinic
Building 78, 2nd Floor
8:00am to 4:00pm
After Hours through Urgent Care
Building 78, 1st Floor
781-687-4333

Types of MH Treatment Settings

■ **Short-term, inpatient care** for Veterans suffering from very severe or life-threatening mental illness

■ **Mental Health Recovery Services,** regular outpatient care, which may include telemedicine services, for Veterans during a difficult time in life.

■ **Outpatient care in a psychosocial rehabilitation and recovery center** for Veterans with serious mental illness and significant problems in functioning. **See Veterans Community Care Center.**

■ **Residential Treatment Programs** Veterans with a wide range of mental health problems (such as posttraumatic stress disorder and substance use disorders and/or rehabilitative care needs (such as homelessness, job training, and education) who would benefit from treatment in a structured environment for a period of time. At Bedford VA this program is referred to as "**The Dom**" (for Domiciliary).

■ **Primary care:** many common mental and behavioral problems are addressed within primary care by mental health experts working in the primary care team called **Primary Care Behavioral Health**.

■ **Supported work** settings to help Veterans join the work force and live well in the community. At Bedford VA this program is called "**CWT**" (for Compensated Work Therapy).

■ **Supported education** such as the **VITAL Initiative** or **Supported Education** through Compensated Work Therapy.

Different treatment settings are appropriate for different problems at different times. For example, a Veteran who is severely ill or suicidal might need inpatient treatment in a hospital for several days. VA provides short-term inpatient care with the expectation that with continuing mental health treatment, the Veteran would be offered care in the least restrictive environment. When the illness becomes less severe, he or she may return home and receive treatment as an outpatient in a VA clinic.

■ **Inpatient treatment** typically includes medication and individual and group counseling. For Veterans who receive inpatient and residential mental health treatment, VA will check on the Veteran's progress within one week after she/he leaves the hospital. This evaluation might be by telephone or, possibly, in person, just to make sure the Veteran is doing well. VA will also ask the Veteran to come back for a follow-up appointment no later than two weeks after discharge from the hospital. See **Inpatient Psychiatry**

■ **Telehealth** allows Veterans who live a long distance from the VA medical center to receive treatment remotely. Mental health providers at Bedford VA can talk with, evaluate, and provide treatment for Veterans at **community-based VA clinics** through closed-circuit video. Telemedicine services, like face-to-face mental health services, are confidential.

Treatments for Specific Mental Health Needs

Treatments for Depression and Anxiety are common among the general public and among Veterans. Treatments include:

■ **Medications** including antidepressants, anti-anxiety medications, and medications to improve sleep and other problems.

■ **Talk therapies** (also called psychotherapies), such as: Cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) to help individuals understand the relationship between thoughts, emotions, and behaviors, learn new patterns of thinking, and practice new positive behaviors (relaxation techniques, using calming tapes to improve sleep, exercising, or socializing with friends).

■ **Acceptance and commitment therapy (ACT)** to help people overcome their struggles with emotional pain and worries. It helps them recognize, commit to, and achieve what's important to them.

■ **Interpersonal therapy (IPT)** to help people promote positive relationships and resolve relationship problems.
(See Mental Health Recovery Services)

Substance Abuse problems are common in the general public and among Veterans. When Veterans have trouble readjusting to civilian life, some turn to substances to help them cope. People can misuse or become addicted to alcohol, tobacco, illegal drugs and prescription medications. Treatments for substance use disorders include:

■ **Medications** to decrease cravings for alcohol and medications to ease withdrawal ("detox") from alcohol and drugs. Medications like buprenorphine and methadone can also be used as therapeutic substitutes for illegal drugs (heroin) or addictive prescription pain medications.

■ **Talk therapies** (also called psychotherapies), such as motivational enhancement therapy may help a Veteran strengthen his/ her commitment to recovery. Cognitive behavioral therapy may help the Veteran identify the risks for relapse and learn new coping skills to avoid relapse.

■ **Opioid treatment programs** (OTPs) help Veterans who misuse Opioids. Opioids include illegal substances, such as heroin, and legally prescribed medications such as some prescription pain medications. Opioid Treatment Programs offer talk therapies and provide carefully monitored medication to help Veterans manage cravings for opioids.

■ **Residential treatment programs** for substance use disorders allow Veterans to receive intensive treatment in a supervised residential setting. This treatment environment provides support and structure to help the Veteran develop a foundation for long-term recovery.

■ **Work therapies** are commonly prescribed for Veterans to promote and support recovery.

(See **Recovering from Addictions, Substance Abuse, Gambling)**

Treatments for Serious Mental Illnesses such as Schizophrenia, Schizoaffective Disorder and Bipolar Disorder

These mental health problems are less common than others and may occur intermittently – that is, they typically improve at some times and get worse at other times. These problems can be so severe that a Veteran may lose touch with reality. VA offers a range of treatments and services for Veterans with serious mental illnesses. These Veterans typically benefit from psychosocial rehabilitation services designed to promote recovery and improve everyday functioning at home and in the community. Treatments for serious mental illnesses include:

- Antidepressant medications, mood stabilizing medications, antipsychotic medications and other medications to stabilize mood, organize thoughts, reduce hallucinations, and ease related symptoms.
- Psychosocial Rehabilitation and Recovery Services to optimize functioning
- Work therapies to promote and support recovery
- Social skills training
- Residential Rehabilitation Treatment Programs allow for intensive treatment for Veterans with severe mental illness within a structured, supervised setting

Mental Health Intensive Case Management (MHICM)

BUILDING 6
M.H.I.C.M.
Mental Health Intensive Case Management

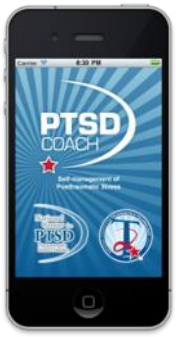
Services may be provided by a team of mental health physicians, nurses, psychologists, and social workers who treat Veterans in their homes and in the community. MHICM helps eligible Veterans experiencing symptoms of severe mental illness to manage and cope with symptoms and to live more successfully at home and in the community. The MHICM teams collaborates with families and other community resource inside and outside of Bedford VA.

For further information, or to make a referral call **(781) 687-2564** and ask for Jane Costa.

Building 6

Treatments for Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)

Posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) can occur after a person has a very serious or life threatening traumatic experience. For Veterans, this life threatening event often occurs during combat. However, other noncombat related events such a natural disasters, motor vehicle accidents, or sexual trauma can also threaten life and can result in PTSD.



A mobile telephone application, PTSD Coach, was released by VA in 2011.
It provides information about PTSD, self assessment and symptom management tools, and information on how to get help.

PTSD Coach can be downloaded for **free** from **iTunes** (iOS) or **Google Play** (Android).

Treatments for PTSD include:

■ **Medications** including antidepressant medications, anti-anxiety medications, mood stabilizing medications, and other medications to ease nightmares, irritability, sleeplessness, depression, and anxiety.

■ **Talk therapies**, VA has been a national leader in the development of talk therapies (also called psychotherapies) for PTSD.

Cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) helps Veterans understand the relationship between thoughts, emotions, and behaviors, learn new patterns of thinking, and practice new positive behaviors .

Cognitive processing therapy (CPT), a form of CBT that involves correcting negative thought patterns so that memories of trauma don't interfere with daily life. It may also include writing about one's traumatic experience. Clinical guidelines strongly recommend CPT for PTSD treatment. CPT has been shown to be one of the most effective treatments for PTSD. Watch the video on the right for more information.

See video clip about CPT

Prolonged Exposure Therapy (PE) helps people reduce fear and anxiety triggered by reminders of the trauma. This is done by confronting (or being exposed to) trauma reminders in a safe treatment environment until they are less troubling. In this way, individuals can stop avoiding and reacting to trauma reminders and live their lives more fully in the present with greater freedom from the past. Clinical guidelines strongly recommend PE for PTSD.

■ **Comprehensive Assistance to Family Caregivers of Post 9/11 Veterans**

■ **Inpatient VA PTSD Programs** are available in New England. Referrals to specialized treatment for PTSD within a structured, 24/7 care setting are available. Bedford VA can help you to evaluate your treatment options. Contact Mental Health Clinic or your Primary Care Provider for further details.

Concussion Coach

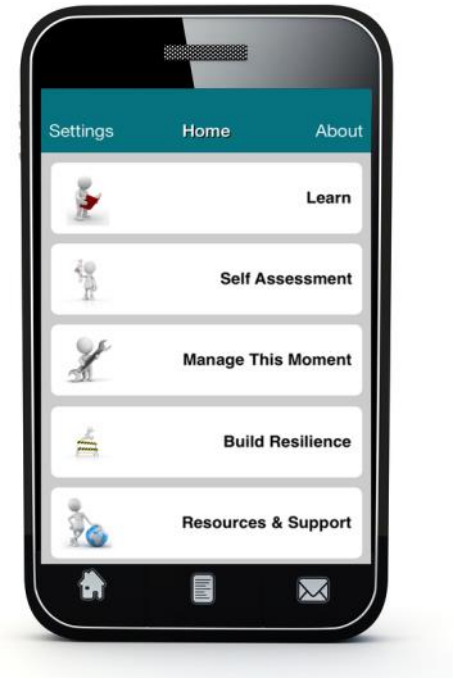
Concussion Coach is a mobile phone application for Veterans, Servicemembers, and others who have experienced a mild to moderate concussion. It provides portable tools to assess symptoms and to facilitate use of coping strategies.

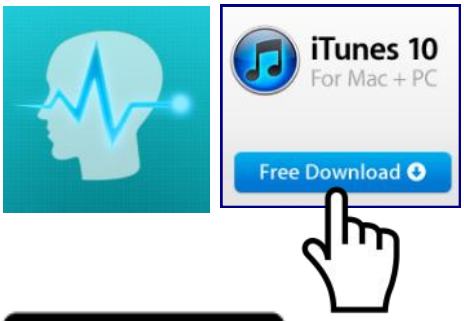
Concussions often come with physical problems (such as headaches, balance problems, and dizziness), emotional challenges (such as getting angry more easily), and cognitive problems (such as difficulties with concentration and memory). The nature and range of symptoms can cause considerable distress and frustration, and training in different coping strategies is often necessary.

The features of Concussion Coach include:

- A self-assessment tool for measuring symptoms, with feedback and a graph for tracking symptoms over time
- Symptom relief tools and relaxation exercises for managing problems associated with concussion
- Planning tools to build resilience
- Educational materials about concussion and treatment options by brain injury professionals
- Immediate access to crisis resources, personal support contacts, or professional healthcare resources

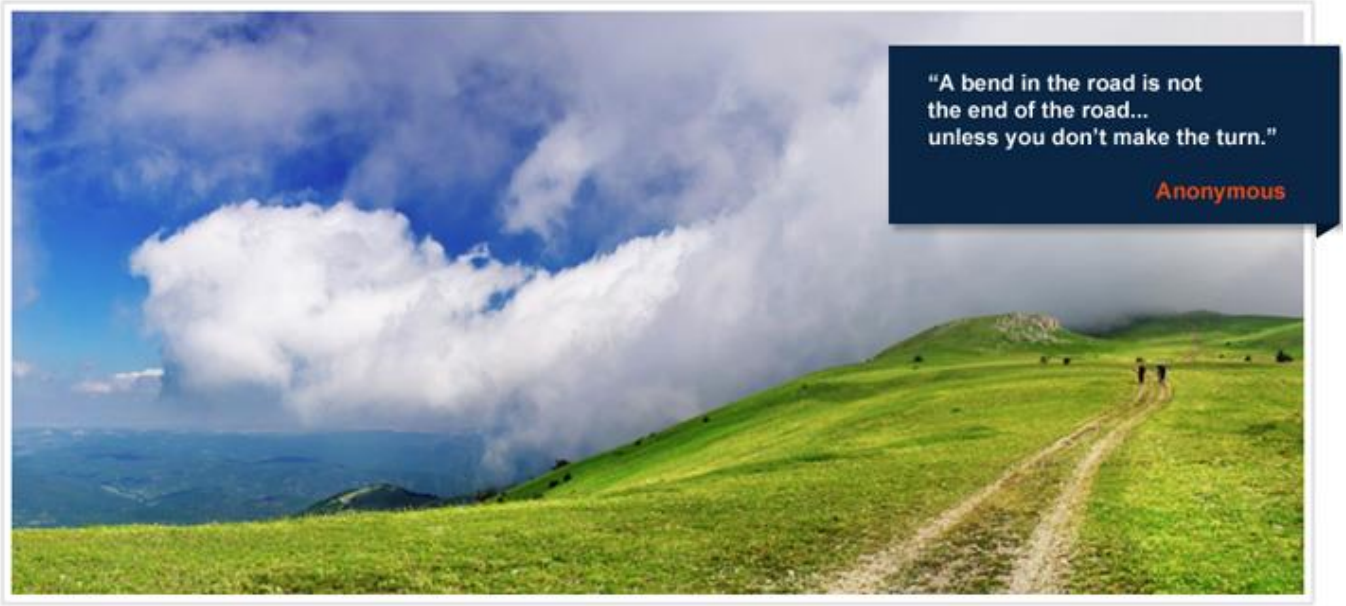
Concussion Coach is intended to support treatment with a healthcare professional by providing portable, convenient tools for the user to assess symptoms and cope with concussion-related problems. The app can also be used on its own, but is not intended to replace professional diagnosis, medical treatment, or rehabilitation therapies for those who need them. Learn more about TBI resources and Concussion Coach at www.polytrauma.va.gov





Available soon for Android

Moving Forward *(On-line Resource!)*



What is Moving Forward?

Moving Forward is a free, on-line educational and life coaching program that teaches Problem Solving skills to help you to better handle life's challenges. It is designed to be especially helpful for Veterans, Military Service Members and their families. However, Moving Forward teaches skills that can be useful to anyone with stressful problems.

Free classes and help can be found at **www.startmovingforward.org**

See Moving Forward groups under Mental Health.

See also, Wellness

Suicide Prevention Services

The Veterans Crisis Line connects Veterans in crisis and their families and friends with qualified, caring Department of Veterans Affairs responders through a confidential toll-free hotline, online chat, or text. Veterans and their loved ones can call **1-800-273-8255 and Press 1,** chat online at **www.veteranscrisisline.net,** or send a text message to **838255** to receive confidential support 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. The hotline is located in Canandaigua NY, and answered by Veterans or other staff trained in Veteran services. The call can is 100% confidential but if you choose, a consult will be put in to us at Bedford VA (or your closest VA), which will be responded to within 24 *business* hours.

Our local team is reached through our national support system day and night to provide needed support. A consult will automatically be placed if a rescue is needed.

Suicide prevention coordinators work with mental health care teams to monitor and support Veterans at high risk for suicide. A personal safety plan that helps the Veteran recognize signs that often precede his/her suicidal ideas and lists strategies that help the Veteran manage those thoughts and feelings. The plan also identifies people that the Veteran can turn to for help. Safety plans are created with the mental health provider and the Veteran (including family members, if desired). This way, a plan is designed specifically for the Veteran and his/her problem areas. At Bedford VA you can reach the Suicide Prevention team during normal hospital hours by calling

Becky Dreifuss, LICSW 781-687-2176 or Megan Mackay, LICSW 781-687-3425

Use the crisis line if you need immediate attention any time. 1-800-273-8255 and Press 1

See also How to Access Help:

Community Partner Resources

Connect with VA! We believe that the most effective care for Service Members and Veterans will come from a strong connection between the community and VA. We invite you to consider us as a member of your treatment team and to look at how VA services can supplement and support the care you are providing. Veteran status can open the door to a large number of resources, including eligibility for VA healthcare. **Enrollment** in VA healthcare can ensure that a Veteran has health coverage when he or she most needs it.

Thank you for your interest and commitment to serving Veterans!
We recognize the excellent care you provide to Veterans and invite you to check out the newest online trainings and other tools developed by VA that may support you in your practice.

Screening for Military Service A military background is not always assessed by clinicians or spontaneously shared by Veteran clients. Asking if the individual in your office has served in the military is simple, quick, and can have important implications for available benefits and care. **Learn more.**

Understanding Military Culture Membership in a military culture may be one of the most powerful and enduring determinants of a person's values, beliefs, expectations, and behaviors. All Service Members are part of a shared culture, however their individual experiences will depend on many factors. For example, experiences can vary tremendously depending upon: Military Branch Time and Place of Service Military Occupation. It is vital that you send the message to your client that you recognize the importance of their military background and have taken the time to better understand military culture. **Learn more.**

Mini-Clinics are intended to provide clinicians with easy access to useful Veteran focused treatment tools. Each mini-clinic is focused on a different mental health condition and highlights key tools in areas including assessment, training, and educational handouts. In order to support the rehabilitation and recovery of every Veteran with a mental illness, VA has identified recovery as a guiding principle for its entire mental health service delivery system. You can filter the mini-clinics by selecting a category label: Mental Health or Special Considerations. If you would like to be notified when new topics are released, please join our mailing list. Visit the **mini clinics** webpage.

Can I Receive Reimbursement for Seeing Veteran Clients? TRICARE supports providers' work with Veterans who are retired from the military and Servicemembers through reimbursement for medical and behavioral health services outside of a military treatment facility. TRICARE is a part of the Military Health System, under the auspices of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs. It covers an ever growing 9.6 million beneficiaries, including active duty members and families of the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, and Coast Guard, as well as retirees from each of the above services and their families. A critical adjunct to the active component are the National Guard and Reserve forces; these men and women have repeatedly left hearth and home for extended periods of intense combat, returning to their communities (and yours). The Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) provides a valuable roadmap for becoming a **TRICARE** authorized behavioral healthcare provider. **Learn more**.

Community Partners Toolkit is a free online resource to provide current information, screening and support for the work you do on behalf of our Veterans. **Click here.**

Learn More About Bedford VA Let us know how we can help you help our Veterans. We'd love to meet you, arrange a tour of our campus, our share information and ideas that will serve our Veterans. Contact the Director's Office at 781-687– 4999

Make the Connection

Resources and On-line Self-Assessment:

One of VA's national outreach campaigns is called Make the Connection. It helps Veterans and their family members and friends connect with information and services to improve their lives. At the user-friendly web site: **www.MakeTheConnection.net,** Veterans and their families and friends can privately explore information. Veterans and family members can watch stories similar to their own, and find information about mental health issues and treatment. They can find support and information that will help them live more fulfilling lives. Make the Connection shows true stories of Veterans who faced life events, experiences, physical injuries, or psychological symptoms; reached out for support; and found ways to overcome their challenges from Veterans of all service eras, genders, and backgrounds. VA encourages Veterans and their families to "make the connection" with strength and resilience of Veterans like themselves, with other people who care, and with information and available sources of support for getting their lives on a better track. Taking a self-assessment may indicate whether it's a good idea for the Veterans in your life to seek further treatment. Take the **self-assessment here.**

See also **How to Access Help:**

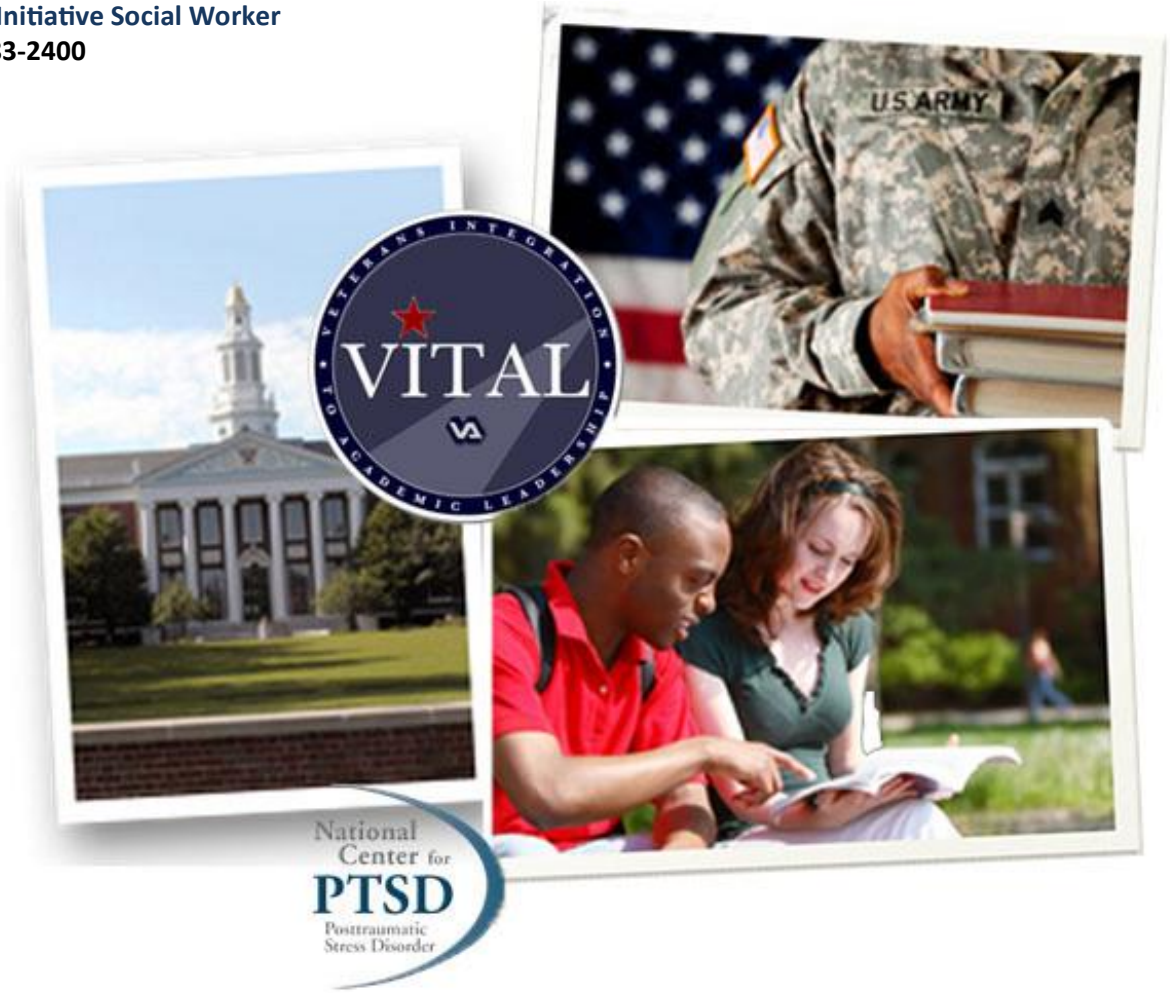
Veterans Integration to Academic Leadership (VITAL)

This initiative provides VA Outreach on college campuses. It focuses on providing services to student Veterans on their campus, such as enrollment in VA health care, referrals and linkages to resources, case management, and professional development and consultation to faculty and staff on Veteran's issues.

In conjunction with the National Center for PTSD, the VITAL initiative sponsors the VA Campus Toolkit to provide faculty, staff, and administrators resources to support student Veterans on campus. Bedford VA was one of the original five sites that launched this program in 2011 and is present on five campuses with additional sites planned. VA currently has twenty one sites nationwide.

The mission of VITAL is to provide world-class healthcare and improve the overall mental health of Veterans, while supporting their successful integration into college and university campuses, through seamless access to VA healthcare services and on-campus clinical counseling."

Contact Alisa Bennett
VITAL Initiative Social Worker
781-983-2400



GI Bill Comparison Tool

Latest version was launched August 25th 2014

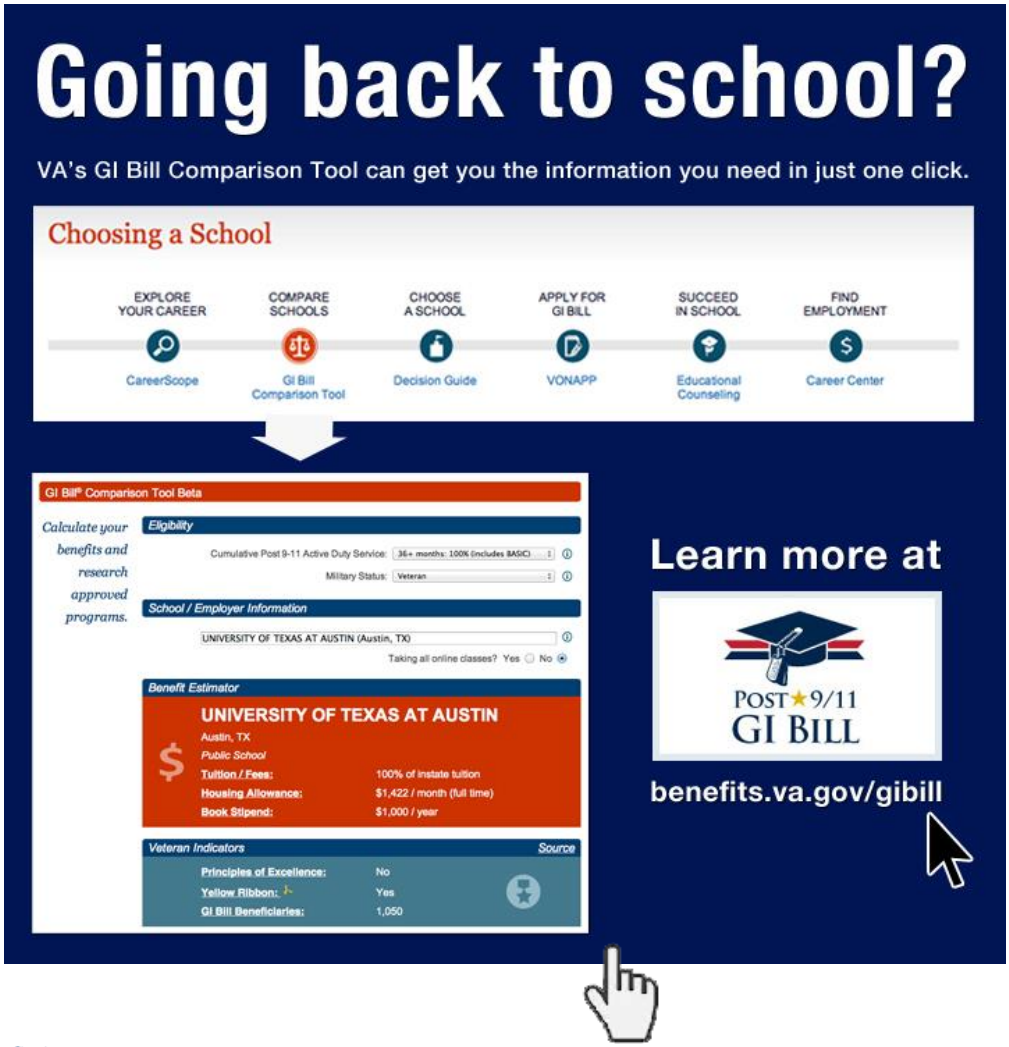
VA's GI Bill® Comparison Tool is a new resource Veterans and their beneficiaries can use to find information online about the Post-9/11 GI Bill.

The new comparison tool makes it easy to estimate Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits with just one click and find and compare information on our 10,000+ approved education and training programs, including estimated tuition and fee amounts and projected housing allowances. Also available are each school's graduation rate, student loan default rate and Yellow Ribbon participation.

The latest version prepopulates tuition and fees from the Department of Education's Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) and provides a personalized estimate of Post-9/11 GI Bill tuition and fee, housing, and book stipend payments to the student.

This version also indicates whether the school has a student Veterans group or VetSuccess on Campus program, or is an "8 Keys to Veterans' Success" participant. It also displays a link to Yellow Ribbon Agreement information.

Even more improvements are planned, including a better search capability and the ability to do a side-by-side comparison of schools.



Mental Health Clinic Hours

Monday - Friday 8:00am to 4:00pm*
Building 78, 2nd Floor
**Some services are available evenings and Saturdays, ask your mental health provider.*

Mental Health Evaluations Center

New to Bedford VA Mental Health? Help starts here!

The Mental Health Evaluations Center was created to give new Veterans in new situations a new look and a new start. The Center is designed to give Veterans who are new to Bedford Mental Health a timely and efficient entry to individualized Mental Health services and programs. A comprehensive assessment of the Veteran's needs and strengths, in collaboration with the Veteran's preferences begins the process of recommendations and referrals to the most appropriate programs and therapies at Bedford VA. The MH Evaluations Center is located in **Building 78, 2nd Floor Room 227D.** To schedule an evaluation please call the Mental Health Clinic **781-687-2347** or ask your primary care provider to refer you.

Mental Health Walk In Clinic

Psych Walk-In Clinic is an easily-accessed venue for evaluation of new or emergent mental health conditions and is open all business hours for urgent problems that cannot be handled by the Veteran's team or problems that will require admission. **Building 78, 2nd Floor Mental Health Clinic 781-687-4333.**

After-Hours Mental Health Emergencies

Bedford VA is here to support our nation's heroes day and night.

Urgent Admissions for psychiatric care can be arranged after hours through the Administrative Officer of the Day. Use the ambulance entrance Building 78. **Dial Direct 781-687-4333.**

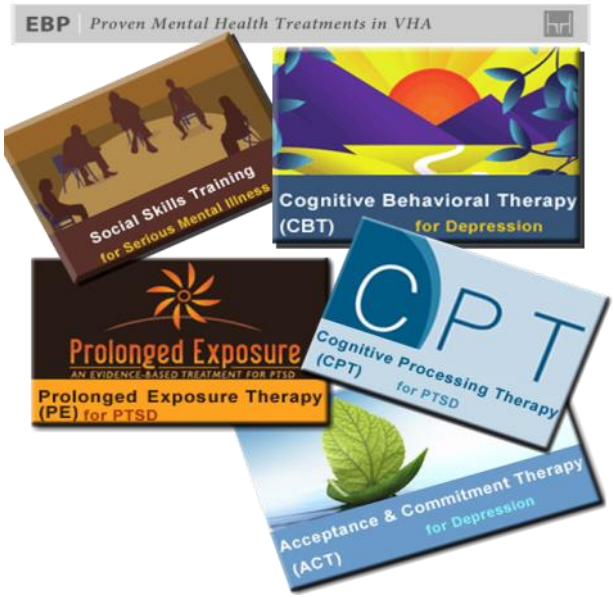
Mental Health Recovery Services

Mental Health Clinic Recovery Services is the umbrella of outpatient mental health care available through the Mental Health Clinic, including psychiatric medications, individual and group therapy, and ongoing case management. At Bedford VA, Veterans receive mental health care under a team model. Six teams: Alpha, Bravo, Charlie, Delta, Echo and Foxtrot are composed of a minimum of one prescriber (psychiatrist and/or APN), psychologist, social worker, and nurse. This streamlines continuous access to recovery oriented evidenced based services and improves the consistency and quality of care to Veterans through improved staff communication, efficiency, and inter-disciplinary collaboration.

Specialty services available include: evidence based therapies (e.g. Cognitive Processing Therapy, Prolonged Exposure, Acceptance and Commitment Therapy), couples therapy, ongoing case management, conjoint psycho-therapy and case management. Veterans may require additional evaluation before being assigned to a team, depending upon the availability of other recent, comprehensive evaluations they have received. First time at Bedford VA? **Contact Mental Health Clinic or Evaluations Center for more information.**

Individual, Group Psychotherapy and Case Management

Prior to treatment, the therapist and Veteran work together to identify problems and issues to address and then develop specific treatment goals in their assessment. A type of treatment, including individual or group therapy, or case management is chosen based on matching treatment with Veteran's needs and strengths. VA offers evidence-based psychotherapies (EBPs) to Veterans who can benefit from them for PTSD, depression, and serious mental illness. Each of the EBPs includes socialization to treatment and motivational enhancement components to promote treatment knowledge, engagement, and a collaborative therapy process.



Each of the EBP protocols places significant emphasis on the therapeutic relationship and on tailoring interventions to specific needs of the Veteran guided by a careful case conceptualization and individualized treatment plan developed in collaboration with the Veteran. Various therapies are offered at Bedford, Haverhill, Lynn, in person and via telemental health. Veterans can speak with their health care or mental health care provider for more information about beginning therapy.

See also, Wellness

Group Therapies

The following is a partial sample of evidence based groups, support groups, and peer groups offered at Bedford, Haverhill and Lynn. The group lists are updated quarterly and have different pre-requisites. Ask your treatment provider for more information or contact the ***Mental Health Clinic*** **781-687-2347**.

Therapy 101: Achieving Success in Outpatient Psychotherapy ~ Strengths Quest: A Workshop for Building Personal Strengths and a Meaningful Life ~ Mindfulness-Based Positivity Training: Building Resilience and Well-Being through Mindful Experience and Mindful Action ~ Mindful Life Training: Developing and Integrating Mindful Awareness and Mindful Action into Everyday Life ~ Overcoming Depression (CBT) ~Choices & Change (peer facilitated) ~ Mentalization-Based Therapy Group ~Advanced Mentalization-Based Therapy Group ~ Dialectical Behavior Therapy Group (DBT) ~Create Your Own Adventure Group ~ Anger Management ~ Anger Management and Conflict Resolution ~ Overcoming Depression (CBT) ~ Accountable Creativity ~ Acceptance and Commitment Therapy ~ Dialectical Behavior Therapy Group (DBT) ~ Business Training Gym ~ Art Therapy ~ Aggression Reduction ~ Mindfulness-Based Skills Workshop

PTSD Groups

Seeking Safety - for the treatment of individuals who suffer from both PTSD and substance abuse ~Cognitive Processing Therapy for PTSD ~ ning Group for Veterans Conquering PTSD ~ Understanding PTSD Drop-in Class ~ PTSD Drop-in group ~ The Many Faces of PTSD (Multi Family PTSD group) ~ Post-Traumatic Stress Spouse Support Group ~ PTSD Drop-in group

Reintegration Groups

OEF/OIF Veterans Post-Deployment Skills Training Drop-in Group ~ Desert Storm Post-Deployment Readjustment Drop-in Group ~ Operation Freedom group (returning Vets) ~ Vietnam Veterans PTSD Group

Cohort Groups

Korean Era Veterans ~ Korean War Veterans ~ Vets from WWII ~ OEF/OIF/OND Groups~ Vietnam Era Veterans Groups ~ Desert Storm ~Over 50? The Brain & Aging ~ Over 65 Group

Special Populations

Women's MST Groups ~ Gay and Bisexual Men's Well-Being Group ~ Transgender group ~ Women Veterans Drop-in Group ~ Living With HIV Group

Relationship Groups

Social Skills and Social Relationships Group ~ Social Anxiety/Social Phobia Workshop ~ Sex, Intimacy, and Relationships ~ Couples Skills ~ The Many Faces of PTSD (Multi Family PTSD group) ~ Post-Traumatic Stress Spouse Support Group ~ PTSD Drop-in group

Drop In Groups

Art Therapy ~ NAMI Support Group ~ Therapy 101: How to Make Outpatient Therapy Work for You ~ Post-Deployment Skills Training for OEF/OIF Veterans ~ Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgendered (LGBT) Peer Drop In Peer Group ~ Understanding PTSD Drop-in Class ~ PTSD Drop-in groups ~Korean War Veterans Drop-in Group ~ Women Veterans Drop-in Group ~ PTSD Drop-in group ~ Desert Storm Post-Deployment Readjustment Drop-in Group ~ OEF/OIF Veterans Post-Deployment Skills Training Drop-in

Groups at Haverhill Community Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC)

Overcoming Depression (CBT) ~Understanding PTSD ~ Create Your Own Adventure Group ~PTSD Drop-in group ~ OEF/OIF Veterans Post-Deployment Skills Training Drop-in Group ~ Korean War Veterans Drop-in Group ~ Desert Storm Post-Deployment Readjustment Drop-in Group ~ Women Veterans Drop-in Group

Groups at Lynn Community Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC)

Overcoming Depression (CBT) ~ Accountable Creativity

Peer Support Services

Peer support services is help from other Veterans recovering from mental illness who can share their experience, strength, and hope. Peers are role models who show that recovery from mental health problems is possible. Peers can teach goal setting, symptom management skills, problem solving; they can identify strengths and supports for the Veteran; and they can promote wellness. Peer Specialists are VA employees who help Veterans with serious mental illnesses and substance use disorders to successfully engage in their treatment. Peer Specialists promote recovery by sharing their own recovery stories, encouraging and instilling a sense of hope, and teaching skills to Veterans.

For more information, contact
Amy Wilson, PhD, Empowerment & Peer Services Center at **781-687-3340** or
Al Krull, Peer Specialist **781-687-3230**

(above) **Bedford VA Peer Support represented at World-wide collaboration to share Peer Support Best Practices Brussels, Belgium**

"I learned that peer support program professionals worldwide agree: trained and competent "peer providers" with lived experience, greatly enhance the quality of life for users of their programs."

-Al Krull, Peer Support Services on the world-wide Peer Support Best Practices Collaboration in Belgium

Community Recovery Connections Team

Let us introduce ourselves:

Chuck Delaney, MA, CPS
(Somerville)
781-687-2000 ext. 2911

Redger Hennah, CPS
(Lowell)
781-687- 2000 x3315

Melinda Bullock, CPS
(Haverhill/Lawrence)
781-687- 2000 x3330

Tony Russo, CPS
(Beverly/Gloucester)
781-687- 2000 x3322

Angela Taveira-Dick, Ph.D.
781-687- 2000 x3909

John Smolinsky, Ph.D.
781-687- 2000 x3473

COMMUNITY RECOVERY CONNECTIONS TEAM

CRCT are friendly, knowledgeable peers who assist Veterans receiving services to enrich connections within the communities of Somerville, Lowell, Haverhill, Lawrence, Beverly, and Gloucester (and surrounding areas) by providing guidance and bridging to community partners.

Work, Volunteering, Socializing Opportunities, Recreation, Peer Led Groups, Hobbies, Special Interests, Communities of Worship, We're with you ever step of the way!

Come to one of our Veteran Coffee Socials to learn more!

BEDFORD: Thursdays 7:30 - 9:00am

Bedford VA Canteen
200 Springs Rd. Bedford MA 01730

LOWELL: Thursdays 4:00 - 6:00pm

Santoro's Pizza

194 Gorham St, Lowell, MA 01852

SOMERVILLE: Mondays 7:30am

Mass Bay Vet Center

4 North Street, Somerville, MA 02144

GLOUCESTER: Fridays 7:30 - 9:00am

Gloucester Vet Center & DAV Building

12 Emerson Ave, Gloucester, MA 01930

LYNN: Tues 8:00 - 9:30am

117 Franklin Street, Lynn , MA 01902

VA HEALTH CARE | Defining EXCELLENCE in the 21st Century

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Couples and Family Therapy

Issues Couples May Struggle With

- Communication
- Intimacy, Sex
- Infidelity
- Trust
- Divorce
- Trauma
- Crisis Support
- Substance Abuse
- Intimate Partner Violence
- Post Deployment Adjustment

Couples counseling involves you and your spouse or partner, while family counseling involves **any or all** immediate family members which may include toddlers, children, pre-teens, adolescents, young adults, adults, elderly and everyone in between.

Couples and Family Counseling Services and Supports

- Specialized & trained therapist
- Short term treatment (8-12 sessions)
- Solution focused sessions
- Safe & healthy conversation space
- Support with outside resources, services and referrals

Participation and Eligibility Family Counseling

Participants may be members of the Veteran's immediate family, legal guardian, or someone currently living with the Veteran.

Couples Counseling

Initial individual evaluation sessions may be required. Ask your therapist for details.

Issues Families May Struggle With

- Parenting, Co-Parenting Styles
- Reintegration Home from Service
- Disruptive Behavior
- Adoption Adjustment
- Blended Family Challenges
- LGBTQ Challenges and Concerns
- Child Abuse and/or Neglect
- Divorce
- Trauma

Mental Health Clinic

Building 78 Second Floor

Already an MHC patient?
To Make or Change an Appointment

Please Call: **781-687-2347**

Thank you for calling in advance if you need to change an appointment!

Evening appointments may be available, ask your provider.

*If you would like more information or a referral to Couples or Family Counseling, please contact your VA Mental Health or Primary Care Provider or call the Mental Health Clinic at **781-687-2347***

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Family Services and Drop In Center

VA offers family services for Veterans and their family members. These include family education, brief problem-focused consultation, family psycho-education, and marriage and family counseling. Family education provides families with the information they need to partner with the treatment team and support the Veterans' recovery. For brief family consultation the family meets with a mental health provider as needed to resolve specific issues related to the Veteran's treatment and recovery. Family psycho-education is a part of recovery services for Veterans with serious mental illness. It focuses mainly on supporting the Veteran's well-being and functioning. The overarching goal of marriage and family counseling is to reduce relational distress and strengthen couple and family relationships.

Visit our **"Social Work Family Drop-In Center"** Building 9 Room 136B.
Veterans may also call the Family Resource Line **781-687-2374**

See also, Wellness

Coaching Into Care Resources

VA works with Veterans' family members and friends who notice Veterans having difficulties. VA supports their efforts to help the Veteran. Coaching Into Care is a free and confidential telephone coaching service. It helps callers discover new ways to talk with a Veteran about their concerns and about treatment options.

Callers can reach the service at **(888) 823-7458.**

More information can be found at **www.mirecc.va.gov/coaching**.

The Safing Center

What is intimate partner violence?

The term "intimate partner violence" (IPV), also referred to as domestic violence, describes physical, sexual, or psychological harm or threat of harm, including stalking behavior, by a current or former partner or spouse .

- It occurs on a continuum of frequency, severity, and coercion.

- This type of violence can occur among heterosexual or same-sex couples and does not require sexual intimacy.

Veterans are at higher risk than their civilian counterparts for both USING and/or EXPERIENCING violence in their intimate relationships:

-33% to 58% of male Veterans report using IPV in their lifetimes

- Rates increase when Veterans have co-occurring disorders or combat exposure 25% to 78% of female Veterans report experiencing IPV in their lifetimes

- Rates increase when Veterans have co-occurring mental health or medical illnesses or a history of military sexual trauma

The military term "Safing" means transitioning from combat readiness to a safe condition and signifies our commitment to helping Veterans establish safety in their relationships. Intimate partner violence (IPV), which is also called domestic violence, is common among Veterans. IPV is defined as actual or threatened emotional, physical, or sexual abuse or stalking behaviors by an intimate partner. It may happen once or be a pattern of events that gets worse over time. Intimate partner violence may occur with a current or former boyfriend, girlfriend, or spouse of any sex or gender.

We can

- Connect you with resources for you and your partner/family, including peer supports
- Help you manage stress and communicate in more positive and effective ways
- Provide individual, couple and/or family therapy

Encourage Veterans to ask for help and support if they are struggling with IPV.

For more information, or to make a referral, call the **Mental Health Clinic**, or visit the **Safing Center page** on the Bedford VA website.

You can also call the Safe Link 24 hour hotline 877-785-2020 (not a VA hotline)

Inpatient Psychiatry

Acute Psychiatry is a twenty-six bed unit, referred to as "78G," on the fourth floor of Building 78. Inpatient treatment typically includes medication and individual and group counseling. Most Veterans are admitted for brief crisis intervention, management of acute psychosis or detoxification and are discharged to independent living, or VA homeless resources. Some are discharged to less restrictive treatment programs such as the domiciliary, outpatient residential substance abuse treatment, or psychiatric group homes. Others may be discharged to a long-term care unit or nursing home.

Acute psychiatry treatment includes milieu therapy, medication, group and individual therapy, occupational therapy, recreational, rehabilitation, chaplain services and case management. Detoxification services are also offered. The unit utilizes an interdisciplinary team approach to develop individualized treatment and discharge plans.

Bedford VA checks on discharged Veteran's progress within one week after she/he leaves the hospital. This evaluation might be by telephone or, possibly, in person, to make sure the Veteran is doing well. We also ask the Veteran to come back for a follow-up appointment within a week after discharge.

Smoking cessation assistance is provided.

Eligibility

We'll verify this for you with demographic data from the patient.

Admission Process

Admission is through the Mental Health Clinic during normal business hours.

Non-urgent referrals, If possible, contact the Mental Health Admissions staff at:

781-687-4333
781-687-3514
781-687-2494
781-687-2346

After-Hours Mental Health Emergencies

Urgent Admissions for psychiatric care can be arranged after hours through the Administrative Officer of the Day. Dial Direct **781-687-4333** or through Urgent Care, Building 78, first floor.

Veterans Mental Health and Addictions Program (VMHAP)

formerly called Community Stabilization Program (CSP)

This is a five day per week, short term, all day outpatient, psychosocial, crisis stabilization program. Located on the second floor of Building 2, the focus of the program is to provide evaluation, treatment, and/or crisis intervention to Veterans whose current functional level does not require inpatient treatment. The mission of the program is to improve the Veteran's quality of life through psychosocial interventions, psycho-educational groups, job and treatment referrals.

A typical day in VMHAP includes a good morning gathering with other Veterans followed by "Set the Stage Group" where an RN guides the focus on setting the pace for the day. Veterans may then move to a variety of groups, team meetings, medication review, referrals or other treatment individualized for each participant.

Psychosocial-educational groups and events have been developed to reduce crises and tensions and to renew hope for the Veteran. Other services include temporary respite lodging with meals, job placement, transitional care, research opportunities, occupational therapy, education and more. VMHAP is an outpatient program designed to provide temporary psychosocial mooring in your lives.

Hours are Monday through Friday from 8:00am to 3:30pm.
For more information call **(781) 687-2345**

Veterans Community Care Center (VCCC)

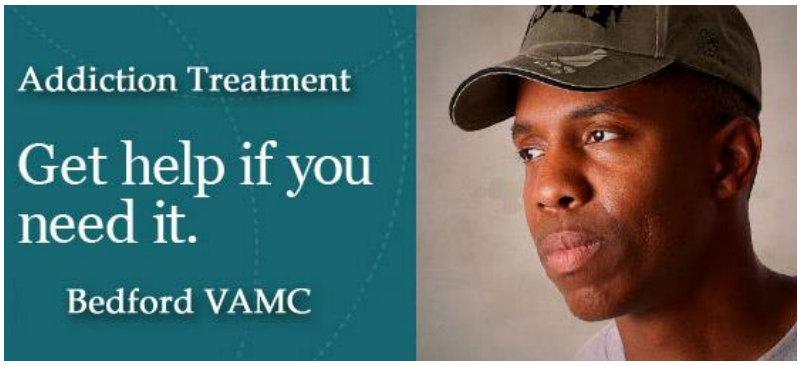
Veterans Community Care Center (VCCC) is a community based treatment program in Lowell MA. The Center provides a supportive environment for Veterans having difficulty with community adjustment, interpersonal relationships, medication management, addiction problems and vocational problems. The Center also provides transitional services for recently hospitalized Veterans, and serves as an alternative to hospitalization for individuals in crisis. The program allows Veterans to receive intensive treatment while remaining within their social and family environment.

VCCC provides:

- Multidisciplinary diagnostic assessment
Individualized treatment planning
- Biopsychosocial rehabilitation services for Veterans
who need less than intensive inpatient treatment, but more than occasional outpatient services
- Structured day activity for residential care home residents
- Transitional adjustment assistance so Veterans may return to full community participation.
- Time limited transition from inpatient treatment to outpatient treatment
- On site Compensated Work Therapy Program
- Group and individual therapy counseling
- Psychoeducational coping skills training
- Psychosocial therapies
- Pharmacotherapy
- Substance abuse relapse prevention program
- Wellness education and activities
- Rehabilitation assistance and activities (both short and long term) for Veterans with a medical situation interfering with their ability to return to normal daily activities such as employment

Contact Information: **Cynthia Yeager, RN, MSN-APRN 978-671-9115**

Addictions, Substance Abuse, and Gambling Recovery



Substance misuse problems are common in the general public and among Veterans. When Veterans have trouble readjusting to civilian life, some turn to substances such as alcohol, tobacco, illegal drugs and prescription medications. Bedford VA provides medical, social, vocational, and rehabilitation therapies to alcohol and drug dependent Veterans through various forms of treatment including detoxification, rehabilitation, and psychiatric care developed individually for each Veteran's recovery needs.

■ **Inpatient Detoxification, "Detox";** Admission is through the Mental health clinic, (after hours through Urgent Care).

■ **Intensive Day Treatment Program, (IDTP),** provides 30-35 hours of treatment per week, based upon the Veteran's needs. Overnight accommodations can be provided up to 14 days on hospital grounds while in treatment.

■ **Relapse Prevention** is a 16 hour program that serves as a refresher course for relapse prone Veterans and assists in their transition from Intensive Day Treatment to Aftercare treatment.

■ **Aftercare** is our outpatient chemical dependency program, focusing the Veteran on recovery maintenance.

■ **Medications** can decrease cravings for alcohol and can help to ease withdrawal from alcohol and drugs. Medications like buprenorphine and methadone can also be used as therapeutic substitutes for illegal drugs (heroin) or addictive prescription pain medications.

■ **Talk therapies** (also called psychotherapies), such as:

Motivational enhancement therapy to help Veterans strengthen their commitment to recovery

Cognitive behavioral therapy to help Veterans identify the risks for relapse and learn new coping skills to avoid relapse.

■ **Groups** tailored for the needs of Veterans over 50.

■ **Educational groups** are offered to teach alternative methods of pain management.

■ **Gambling Recovery** groups offer long term support and education for Veterans who have gambling problems that can complicate their recovery.

■ **Opioid treatment programs** (OTPs) help Veterans who misuse Opioids. Opioids include illegal substances, such as heroin, and legally prescribed medications such as some prescription pain medications. Opioid Treatment Programs offer talk therapies and provide medications like methadone and buprenorphine to help Veterans manage cravings for opioids. These medications are carefully monitored.

■ **Residential treatment programs** for substance use disorders allow Veterans to receive intensive treatment in a supervised residential setting. This treatment environment provides support and structure to help the Veteran develop a foundation for long term recovery.

■ **Work therapies** are commonly prescribed for Veterans to promote their recovery.

Detox arranged through MH Clinic **781-687-4333**
Intensive Day Treatment Program 781-687-2354
Aftercare Evaluation 781-687-2580
Gambling Recovery Bill Gilbert 781-687-2000 ext. **6566**

Services for Veterans Who are Homeless

VA offers programs and initiatives to help homeless Veterans live as self-sufficiently and as independently as possible. VA provides substantial hands-on assistance directly to homeless Veterans. Services at Bedford VA include programs offered under the name of Health Care for Homeless Veterans, (HCHV). Contact Program Assistant Pat Collins **781-687-2374** for more information.

Homeless Walk-In Clinic

We hold a walk-in clinic for homeless Veterans Monday-Friday 10-11am in Building 7, check-in Room 208 staffed by the HCHV team. We also host a walk in clinic at the New England Center for Homeless Veterans. Wait time is usually less than 20 minutes for homeless and unstably housed Veterans.

Critical Time Intervention

This is a case management program for homeless Veterans with chronic mental illness to assist Veterans with moving back into the community and successfully maintain their housing.

Shelter Plus Care

Shelter Plus Care provides permanent housing through the HCHV program. This is a supportive housing program for homeless individuals with a diagnosis of chronic substance abuse, chronic mental illness, and/or HIV/AIDS. Veterans receive a housing voucher and supportive case management through this program which is appropriate for Veterans who meet diagnostic criteria and who have a need for supported housing. Veterans must have lived at, or be living at the New England Center for Homeless Veterans at 17 Court Street in Boston, and be in good standing there as well as wish to live in the metro Boston area.

Outreach

Outreach services are provided at the New England Center for Homeless Veterans and at local shelters and soup kitchens by a VA Social Worker. Assessments are completed with the Veteran who is then educated about VA programs at which time appropriate referrals are made based on Veteran's preferences and fit.

Bridges

Bridges Program operates out of the New England Center for Homeless Veterans to help homeless Veterans with chronic mental illness. The goal of the program is to secure and maintain permanent housing, reduce hospitalizations and increase stability through dedicated VA and community supports. The program is a collaboration between the New England Center for Homeless Veterans, Bedford VA and Boston VA.

National Call Center and Live Chat

This toll free 24/7 hotline links Veterans to the nearest VA resources or use internet for 24/7 live chat. Call **877-424-3838.**

See Also:

DOM
Crescent House
Grant and Per Diem
Supportive Services for Veterans and Families (SSVF)
VASH
Veterans Justice Outreach
Compensated Work Therapy

For Veterans who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless, VA is here to help.

Make the Call.

Help for Homeless Veterans

877-4AID-VET

va.gov/homeless | (877) 424-3838

Confidential chat at **www.va.gov/homeless.**

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Homeless Inpatient Program "The Dom"

The Domiciliary, ("The Dom") is a fifty bed, co-ed (with seven female beds), bio-psychosocial rehabilitation program specifically designed to meet the needs of homeless Veterans who are expected to participate in various phases of treatment. The length of stay is generally one hundred days. Referrals come from the hospital or community and self referrals are accepted. We provide individual and group therapy, skill building groups and vocational rehabilitation. Veterans are provided with extensive educational and rehabilitative services in areas such as vocational training and assessment, nutrition, substance abuse, housing options, occupational and recreational therapies.

The Domiciliary women beds are located in a safe and secure area with adjoining facilities. The women's track includes groups, women Veteran peer support, women's health, relationship and recovery, including trauma related treatment, therapy groups and psycho-educational groups. For information about Women Veterans services at Bedford VA, contact Stephanie Coppolino, Women Veterans Program Manager at **781-382-5732** or the Women's Peer Support Specialist, **781-687-3351.**

The Dom is indicated for Veterans who are homeless or at risk of homelessness and who are registered at the Bedford VA/ Eligible for VA Benefits and who possess the capacity to participate in both individual and group psychotherapy and education. Veteran must possess the necessary social skills to function appropriately in a community setting. Veteran must be able to work.

For further information or to arrange a tour call Terry Dowell at 781-687-2795

The "Dom" Building 7

Crescent House

Crescent House Residence

This Transitional Residence program is a program for homeless Veterans in Lowell, MA that provides a sober environment and relapse prevention program. The program is ten to twelve months in duration and all residents must be involved in a Compensated Work Therapy program and be working toward independent living and eventual community employment. It is designed to support hospital-based outpatient treatment for homeless Veterans while they pursue the program goals of independence in housing and employment.

Programming and therapeutic support is provided by Vocational Rehabilitation Specialists or through medical and mental health services at the hospital. All participants are required to use community resources such as AA or NA, if appropriate, as part of their rehabilitation program and must be actively involved in ongoing therapeutic treatment at the hospital as well as in the community.

Crescent House is appropriate for Veterans with substance abuse and/or mental health problems looking for a longer treatment program, assistance with employment and housing and access to medical and mental health treatment at the Bedford VA.

Referral process: Self-referrals and others are welcome.

Referrals are accepted by phone, but an interview is required for admission.

Contact **Amos Worth, 781-687-4922 or Sherry Roege-Pederson 781-760-4110** for further information.

Transitional Housing (Grant and Per Diem)

The Grant and Per Diem, (GPD) program is a national VA and community-based partnership providing transitional housing and/or service centers for homeless Veterans. Bedford VA currently partners with the Veterans Northeast Outreach Center, Inc. in Haverhill MA to provide 25 homeless Veterans with transitional housing for up to two years. Meals are included and a shuttle is available Monday through Friday to the Bedford VA for Veterans who require transportation. Residential program fee is based on 30% of Veteran's income after any court ordered expenses (e.g. child support).

Residences

The VNOC also runs a service center which is funded in part through VA's Grant and Per Diem. It provides counseling, advocacy, sobriety support, outreach, benefits assistance, peer support, educational support, legal assistance and case management to Veterans on a walk-in basis. The Veterans Northeast Outreach Center has additional housing for Veterans, a Veteran food pantry, and assistance under the Supportive Services for Veteran Families Program to support very low-income Veteran families living in or transitioning to permanent housing.

Referral process: **Contact Laurel Holland, LICSW, 781-687-3486**

Outreach Center

Veterans Food Pantry

Veterans Northeast Outreach Center, Inc. Is a VA **SSVF** (**Supportive Services for Veterans and Families**) grantee. Learn more here.

Supportive Services for Veterans and Families (SSVF)

What is SSVF?

Under the SSVF program, VA awards grants to private non-profit organizations and consumer cooperatives who can provide supportive services to very low-income Veteran families living in or transitioning to permanent housing. Grantees provide eligible Veteran families with outreach, case management, and assistance in obtaining VA and other benefits, which may include:

- Health care services
- Personal financial planning services
- Transportation services
- Child care services
- Daily living services
- Fiduciary and payee services
- Legal services
- Housing counseling services

In addition, grantees may also provide time-limited payments to third parties (e.g., landlords, utility companies, moving companies, and licensed child care providers) if these payments help Veteran families stay in or acquire permanent housing on a sustainable basis.

How to Access SSVF:

SSVF is accessed through community agencies that are grantees. Some of the agencies local to Bedford VA are:

Some Current **SSVF** providers are:

Lynn Housing Authority 781-581-8620

New England Center for Homeless Veterans 617-371-1850

Volunteers of America 617-390-0232

Veterans Inc. 508-845-6176 ext. 329

Veterans Northeast Outreach Center 978-372-3626

Or **If you are a Veteran in need of help**, call **1-877-424-3838 (4AIDVET)** or click on FY 2015 SSVF Providers.

Safe Haven

The Safe Haven program provides housing for hard to reach homeless Veterans with severe mental illnesses and/or substance use disorders who are on the streets and have been unable or unwilling to participate in more traditional supportive services. Safe Haven is a VA pilot program that serves both male and female chronically homeless Veterans who are actively experiencing mental health and/or substance abuse issues. It provides short term housing to create a safe and healthy environment to support the Veterans making better decisions about their lives. Veterans are able to stay for up to 6 months with the goal to obtain housing upon discharge. The program is low demand and low threshold, meaning that there are very few conditions of residency and no requirement for sobriety. The Bedford VA Safe Haven program serves the New England region of the VA (VISN-1) and has two houses in the Boston and Metro-west areas of Massachusetts. Bedford VA has collaborated with a community partner, Massachusetts Housing and Shelter Alliance, in order to reach out to the Veterans most in-need.

Appropriate for Veterans who are chronically homeless, and who are eligible for VA services, and who are actively experiencing a substance abuse and/or mental health issue.

Program can not accommodate same day admissions. It is estimated to be less than a week for admission screen and approximately an additional week for admission decision.

Contact: **Jim Chaplin, LICSW at**

781-983-9207 for further information

Help for Homeless Veterans
877-4AID-VET
va.gov/homeless | (877) 424-3838

VA Supported Housing (VASH)

The VA Supported Housing program is a joint partnership between the VA and the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). HUD provides Section 8 housing vouchers to homeless Veterans identified by VASH to meet eligibility for vouchers. The goal of the program is to transition Veterans from homelessness to independent housing by providing supportive, community-based long term case management services. Vouchers are limited and applications are only accepted at scheduled information sessions with the exception of homeless Veterans with dependent children, who may apply at any time.

To be eligible for VASH at Bedford VA, Veterans must be

- Registered with the Bedford VA
- If inpatient, Within 4-6 weeks of graduation from program
- Clinically stable, including
  - Not in imminent danger of suicide or homicide and
  - Clean and sober
- Functionally able to live independently in the community
- In need of case management services
- Willing to participate in case management
- Willing to live within Bedford's catchment area for at least 1 year
- Homeless or at imminent risk of homelessness
- Free on inclusion on any lifetime sexual offender registry
- Within eligible income limits

(Priority is given to chronically homeless Veterans, to OEF/OIF Combat Veterans, to female Veterans and to Veterans with dependent children).
Contact **Joe Cavanaugh, LICSW** 781-983-2434 for more information.

Housing for Homeless Veterans 55+ at Bedford VA

VHA, Peabody Properties, Affordable Housing and Services Collaborative, and Windover Development and Bedford have partnered to bring Bedford Green Apartments to Edith Nourse Rogers Memorial Veterans Hospital. The community consists of 69 units of permanent, supportive housing with priority occupancy given to homeless and at risk Veterans who are 55+. This affordable housing is enhanced by world-class Veteran health care at Bedford VA, steps away from home.

Bedford Green has community and program space centrally located to offer residents the opportunity to gather and to participate in special events and activities. The building features a community room with kitchen facilities, a fitness room, a computer center, and numerous administrative offices and small meeting rooms for the management staff, case managers, and the resident service coordinator.

Bedford Green residency is through the VASH program at Bedford VA. Income guidelines and other eligibility requirements apply, contact Melanie Sarna, LICSW for more information, 781-382-8998.

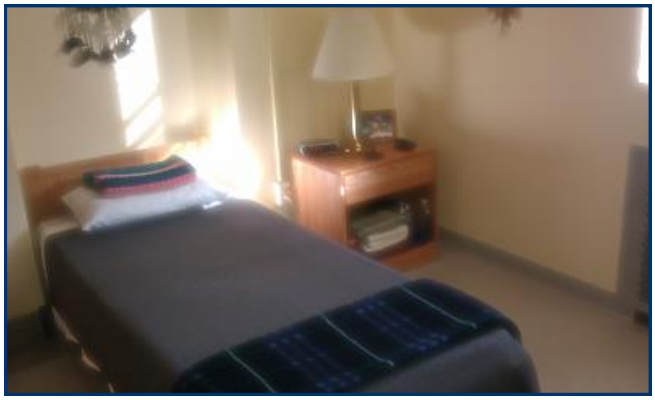
BEDFORD GREEN

Read more here: http://www.bedfordgreenveteransapts.com/

Bedford Veterans Quarters (BVQ)

Bedford Veterans Quarters (A Caritas Community)

"Caritas Communities has over 20 years of experience creating and managing single room occupancy (SRO) housing. In 2006 Caritas Communities created the Bedford Veterans Quarters to provide homeless Veterans with viable housing. Caritas began renovating a vacant building on the Bedford Veterans Hospital campus in its quest to provide Veterans with a residence along with local access to additional services. Completed in the summer of 2007, 60 homeless Veterans now call the BVQ their home. With on-site access to supportive services, the Bedford Veterans Quarters is a major step towards self-sufficiency. Each resident has his/her own room and shares several communal areas: kitchens and baths, lounges, laundry rooms, patio and full use of the attractive Bedford campus." **from BVQ website.**



BVQ is on Bedford VA campus but it is not a VA program. You can make a referral directly to them by calling **Jason Gilbert at 781-275-6296**

Application is available on their website at

BedfordVeteransQuarters.com

Services for Veterans Involved in the Criminal Justice System (Justice Involved Veterans)

An eligible Veteran who is not currently incarcerated can access VA health care regardless of any criminal history, including incarceration. Only when an otherwise eligible Veteran is currently incarcerated, or in fugitive felon status, is he or she not able to access VA health care.

VA has two programs serving Veterans across the criminal justice system. Their shared goal is to provide the earliest possible intervention to link Veterans to the full array of VA services that will promote treatment while preventing homelessness and further contact with the criminal justice system.

Veterans Justice Outreach (VJO) Program

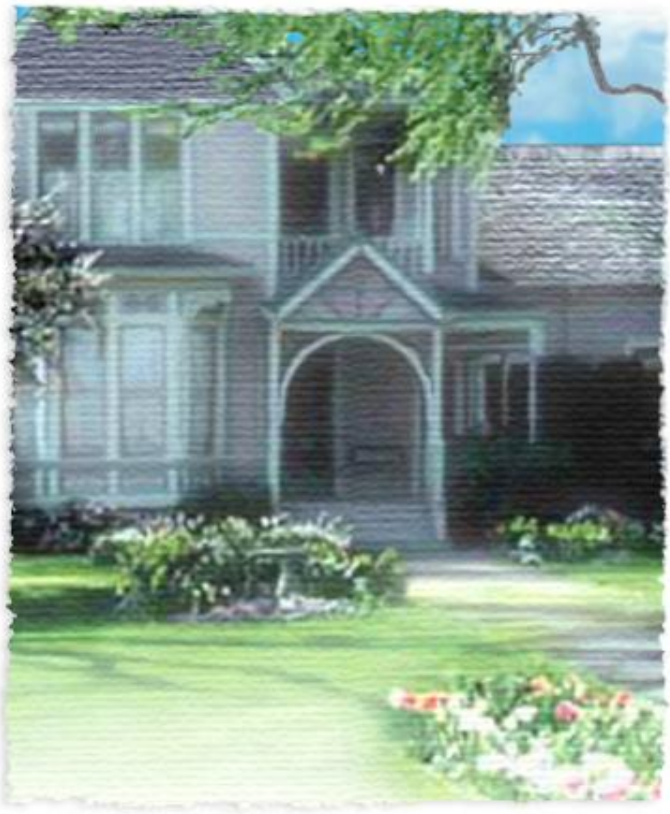
This program provides outreach and linkage to VA medical, mental health, and homeless services for justice-involved Veterans. The VJO Specialist serves as a liaison between VA and the local criminal justice system. This program provides services to Veterans who have pending criminal-related legal problems that demonstrate some correlation with their diagnosed or suspected mental health related issues. The primary goal of VJO is to build a bridge between local law enforcement, the judicial system and VA in order to prevent unnecessary incarceration of Veterans. This is accomplished by VJO working with VA and Non-VA programs to connect Veterans in need of specialized mental health service in lieu of incarceration, and provides training to local law enforcement and judicial staff on Veteran specific issues. VJO accepts referrals for from all sources for Veterans currently enrolled and not enrolled in VA services. Contact **Justice Outreach Coordinator** for at **781-879-2194** for more information.

Health Care for Re-entry Veterans (HCRV) Program

The Health Care for Re-entry Veterans (HCRV) Program is designed to address the community re-entry needs of identified incarcerated Veterans who are within six months of release from County, State, and Federal correctional facilities. HCRV Specialists assist incarcerated Veterans by providing outreach, assessment, referral, and linkage to services as they transition from incarceration to the community. Contact **Thom Baker, LICSW 781-687-3421** for more information on VA's HCRV program in New England.

Community Residential Care Program (CRC)

The Community Residential Care (CRC) is a sheltered living program for Veterans unable to live on their own because of disability or family circumstances. It provides room and board, supervision, monitoring and attention to personal care in a family like setting.



Services offered include:

- Clinical Case Management
- Interdisciplinary Care
- Medication Supervision
- Monitoring of Medical & Psychiatric Conditions
- Primary Care (medical & nursing)
- Provision of Meals and Laundry Services
- Psychiatric Care
- Self Care Supervision (if needed)
- Referral to day program and specialty clinics as needed

Clinical social workers visit the homes on a regular basis. Compliance with the program policy and guidelines are reviewed with sponsors during these visits and periodically through letters from the program manager.

Every CRC home is inspected yearly to assure compliance with the Life Safety Codes, VA and local policy, and standards of appropriate patient care. Veterans who meet eligibility criteria for VA care and whose individual needs can be met by the services provided are appropriate for admission. Each Veteran pays for their own room and board from VA Compensation, VA Pension, Social Security or other retirement or income sources. The CRC program has an established standard room and board rate, but if a Veteran has limited income, a sliding scale rate may be applied.

Referrals may be made by contacting the CRC Program Manager, **Jennifer DeMaio at (781) 687-2703.** The referring provider or family member will be requested to provide medical, psychiatric, and psychosocial information on our referral application. If a Veteran is not currently in treatment, a referral to an appropriate healthcare provider or team will be made. If a Veteran has a chronic condition that may benefit from additional evaluation and treatment, a referral will be made to one of the Bedford VA's other supportive programs.

Compensated Work Therapy (CWT)

Compensated Work Therapy (CWT) is an adjunct program to your VA clinical treatment team supporting Veterans whose employment status has been impacted by homelessness, mental health issues, or vocational displacement. We provide assistance by addressing obstacles to finding work and/or keeping work. Our mission is to assist you in defining and achieving your vocational goals; explore vocational opportunities; assess your vocational needs and interests; guide you in making vocational choices; and empower you to reach and maintain your highest level of vocational functioning and realize your personal potential.

Transitional Work Experience

The **Transitional Work Experience (CWT/TWE)** program is a one year, four phase program that provides Veterans with work experiences in a variety of community job sites. Jobs are available in fields including housekeeping, food service, and maintenance. Construction work is offered through our Veterans Construction Team (VCT). Accommodations can be made for those Veterans who need sedentary work. During this time, Veterans build skills in getting and keeping employment; address barriers in returning to community work; and work on other goals such as staying sober, saving money, paying off debts, getting driver's licenses, pursuing training/ education, etc.

Supported Employment

The **Supported Employment (SE)** program is specifically designed for Veterans who are interested in working competitively. We will work with you to find a job that matches your preferences (hours, pay, location, etc.). We will help you get information about the impact of extra income on your benefits before you start working. SE staff will provide supports to help you keep the job as long as you need them.

Supported Self Employment

Supported Self Employment (SSE) offers Business Gym classes which provide education, skill development and coaching to Veterans of all stages of small business development. *(see next page)*

Supported Education

Supported Education (SEd) offers a self-contained classroom where Veterans work with providers to identify educational goals, needs, and community resources moving towards education. The Mobile Model offers Veterans direct education services at the hospital or at the school. It to assists Veterans in choosing their educational goals and program, getting benefits and enrolling in school, and in maintaining matriculation in the education program.

Job Search Assistance

Job Search Assistance (JSA) offers access to the CWT Resource Room with computers, printers, job postings, job search and career development software, reference material and workshops. Peer support specialists provide support using their experiences in job searching as well as assisting with on-line searches, filling out applications and other job finding tasks. Veteran peers in the CWT program are available to assist with your job search, resume development, and interview preparation.

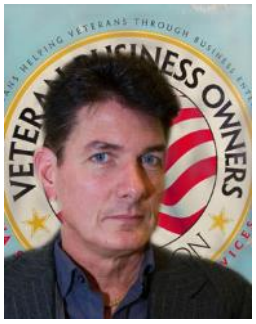
CWT Orientation is held every Tuesday at 8am in Building 80, Room 106 to learn more. Walk-ins welcome! For more information call: 781-687-2575

Supported Self Employment (SSE)

Supported Self Employment, (SSE) is a Compensated Work Therapy program that offers Business Gym classes providing education, skill development and coaching to Veterans of all stages of the small business development process from initial idea creation to mature business operation. SSE provides business mentors from the community with broad experience in your target business. The SSE partners with non-profit organization Veterans Business Owners Initiative (VBOI), which serves as a meeting ground for Veterans who are actively developing or managing a small business. The association also functions to support the growth of member businesses and provides business mentors from the community with broad experiences. For more information, contact **Jerry Pinsky** at **781-983-3728**
Some of the Veteran entrepreneurs' stories include:

Food Service: After being injured while serving in the Marine Corps, Michael Fitzgerald anxiously searched for a new career. He found himself at the VBOI and took part in the Business Gym. After completing the course, Michael continued pursuing loan opportunities and a short time later he became the successful business owner of Driver's Side Deli, an in house lunch service on the campus of Universal Technical Institute. Within its first year, Driver's Side Deli brought in $120,000 in sales. Michael Fitzgerald currently serves on the Board of Directors for the VBOI as President.

Laundromat: Colonel Andrea Gayle-Bennett graduated from VBOI's Business Gym and is planning to open a Laundromat with her husband in Lynn, MA. As a physician's assistant and leader in her National Guard roles, Andrea was honored on Veterans Day at the State Capital and was invited to President Obama's 2nd Inaugural ceremony. Andrea was uncertain about how to start a business prior to enrolling in the Business Gym, but has now made an investment which she expects to recoup and make significant profit from within three years. Andrea serves on the Board of Directors of the VBOI.



Collection Firm: Michael Caswell came to the group to improve his income. He launched Swift Recovery, a successful private detective judgment collection firm that collected $280,000 in its first five months. Michael also serves on the Board of Director's of the VBOI where his clear, concise ideas help to improve the organization.

Business Gym is held Wednesdays at 6:00pm
in Building 80, Room 106
Walk-ins welcome!
Call 781-983-3728

Readjustment Counseling Services (Vet Centers)

VA operates 300 community-based counseling Vet Centers. Many providers at Vet Centers are Veterans of combat themselves. Vet Centers provide readjustment counseling and outreach services to all Veterans who served in any combat zone or who have experienced Military sexual trauma (MST). PTSD, MST and bereavement counseling are also provided. Services are available for family members for military related issues, and bereavement counseling is offered for parents, spouses, and children of Armed Forces, National Guard, and Reserves personnel who died in the service of their country. Veterans have earned these benefits through their service, and all are provided at no cost to the Veteran or family. We've listed some of the Vet Centers closest to Bedford VA here:

There is no waitlist for services and no fee for services.

What is readjustment counseling?

Readjustment counseling is a wide range of psycho social services offered to eligible Veterans and their families in the effort to make a successful transition from military to civilian life.

They include:

- Individual and group counseling for Veterans and their families
- Family counseling for military related issues
- Bereavement counseling for families who experience an active duty death
- Military sexual trauma counseling and referral
- Outreach and education including PDHRA, community events, etc.
- Substance abuse assessment and referral
- Employment assessment and referral
- VBA benefits explanation and referral
- Screening & referral for medical issues including TBI, depression, etc.

Lowell Vet Center:
10 George St.
Lowell, MA 01852
978-453-1151

Boston Vet Center:
665 Beacon St. Suite 100
Boston, MA
617-424-0665

Brockton Vet Center:
1041L Pearl St.
Brockton, MA
508-580-2730

New Bedford Vet Center:
73 Huttleton Ave. Unit 2
Fairhaven, MA
508-999-6920

Hyannis Vet Center:
474 West Main St.
Hyannis, MA
508-778-0124

Springfield Vet Center:
1985 Main St.
Northgate Plaza,
Springfield, MA
413-737-5167

Worcester Vet Center:
691 Grafton St.
Worcester, MA
508-753-7902

Montachusett Vet Center
268 Central St. Suite A
Gardner, MA
978-632-9601

Military Sexual Trauma Treatment

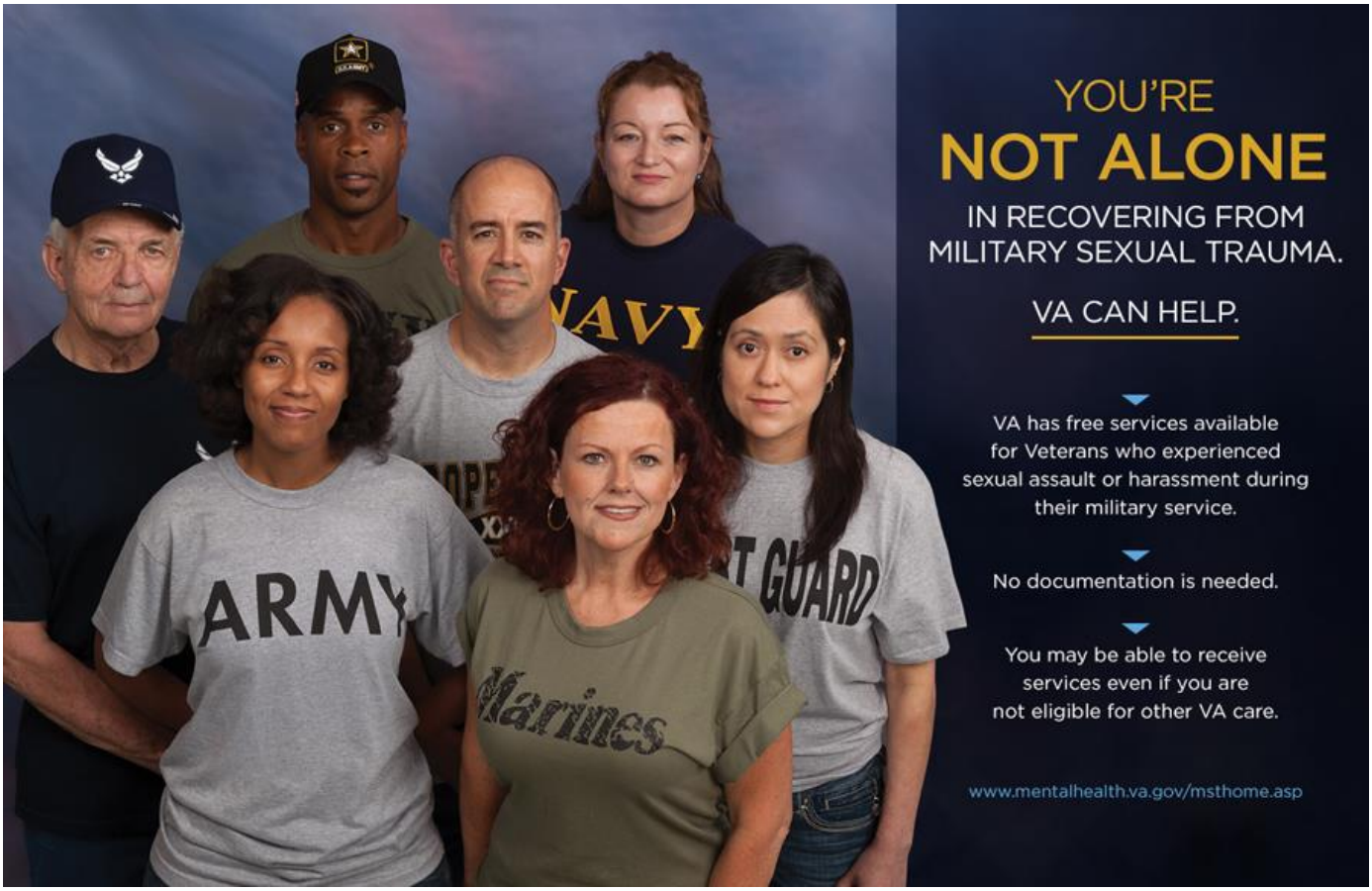
Both women and men can experience military sexual trauma (MST), and for some, the experiences can affect their health even many years later. Because MST is an experience, not a diagnosis, Veterans who experienced MST can benefit from the range of treatment options VA has available to treat conditions commonly associated with MST, including posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression, substance abuse, and others. VA also has MST-specific outpatient, inpatient, and residential services available to assist Veterans in their recovery. It's important to know that VA provides all treatment for MST-related mental and physical health conditions free of charge. A service-connected disability rating is not required, and Veterans may be able to receive MST-related care even if not eligible for other VA services. Veterans need not have reported the incident or have other documentation that it occurred.

For more information, contact
Military Sexual Trauma Coordinator,
Madeleine G. Karpel, Ph.D. 781-687-3226

Read More at: maketheconnection.net

VA Services for Military Sexual Trauma:

Help
Hope
Healing



Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgendered & Questioning Veterans SAFE ZONE!

HUMAN RIGHTS CAMPAIGN FOUNDATION 2015 2016 LEADER IN LGBT HEALTHCARE EQUALITY HEALTHCARE EQUALITY INDEX™ Edith Nourse Rogers Memorial Veterans Hospital (Bedford VA)

EDITH NOURSE ROGERS MEMORIAL VETERANS HOSPITAL SAFE ZONE Bedford, Mass.

Beginning in May 2014, Bedford VA adopted a Safe Zone Ally training program. Staff are being offered the opportunity to be trained as allies to the LGBTQ community of Veterans. This Safe Zone Ally symbol, displayed on stickers, pins, and badge holders, identifies that staff member as an ally to the LGBTQ community. This means that staff member has received a two-hour Ally training and is ready to provide affirmative support to LGBTQ Veterans. As this training is rolled out, there are also likely staff who currently function as allies but are not yet trained and therefore do not have access to use this symbol yet, so you should not assume that someone not wearing this symbol is not an ally. The Safe Zone Ally program is another way Bedford VA expresses the VA principle that "We serve all who served" and welcomes LGBTQ Veterans. Bedford VA is proud to be designated as a Leader in the Human Rights Campaign Healthcare Equality Index.

For more information, contact :
Stephen L. Gresham, Ph.D.
LGBT Special Emphasis Program Manager
Transgender Veteran Liaison
Telephone: 781-687-2000 ext. 6030
or visit **LGBT Patient Care** online.

Veterans Mental Health Council

These important groups provide a way for people (Veterans, their families, and community groups) to offer input to VA leaders about the structure and operations of mental health services. At Bedford VA, our Council may include several different kinds of members:

- Veteran consumers and family members of consumers
- Veteran consumer advocates, such as: Veteran Service Organizations (VSOs)
- Representatives from the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), and other mental health advocacy groups
- Local community employment and housing representatives

Contact **Charles Drebing Ph.D**. for more information: **781-687-2462**

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Dental
Lab Service
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Primary Care
Primary Care Behavioral Health
Rehabilitation and Adaptive Equipment
Returning Veterans
Specialty and Acute Care Services
Telehealth
Visual Impairment (VIST)
Women Veterans

You Can Now Schedule Optometry Appointments Directly

To make an Optometry Appointment for routine eye care, (eye glasses, fittings, or vision prescription adjustments) **call:**

781-687-2248 or

781-687-2246

or stop by to schedule in person: Building 78 Third Floor, follow signs for Specialty Clinics.

Enrolled Veterans may now call directly to make routine Optometry appointments.

No primary care referral needed!

Not enrolled in VA Healthcare or not enrolled at Bedford VA yet?

Call 781-687-2563 or 781-687-2587 or stop by the Admissions Office in Bldg 78, First Floor

Lab Service

The Lab Service is located in Building 2.

If you have questions or concerns please contact the service directly at **781-687-2603.**

Lab Service hours have temporarily changed.

New Lab Service hours are 7:00 a.m. —4:30 p.m.

Pharmacy

Meeting pharmaceutical needs is critical to the well-being of Veterans. We are here to take your refill prescriptions when it works best for you! Refills are available through an automated prescription refill service by calling **1-800-838-6331.** This service is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

If you prefer to come in person, our Pharmacy hours are from 7:30am to 5pm. We are located at the Bedford VA in Building 78, Room B25. For more information contact us by (fax) at 781-687-6231, or phone at **781-687-2000.**

Prescriptions may also be filled online using VA's "My Health*e*Vet Program". The Bedford VA MyHealth*e*-Vet Program Manager can assist you in obtaining a user ID and Password to log in. For more information, please log on to www.myhealth.va.gov or contact the MyHealth*e*Vet program manager at: **Charles.Hillman@va.gov** or **781-687-2981**.

Primary Care

Primary Care provides preventive care services and disease management at our Bedford VA and our Lynn, Gloucester and Haverhill Community Based Outpatient Clinics. Our preventive care includes: cancer screening, blood pressure, vaccinations, labs, obesity screening, smoking cessation and overall individual wellness needs.

Primary Care is provided through a Patient Aligned Care Team (PACT) partnership. The team includes Veterans, providers, nurses, and clerks to best meet the Veterans personal health care goals. Primary Care Behavioral Health (PCBH) and Primary Care at Bedford VA are co-located to support your same-day behavioral health needs.

In addition to meeting your Primary Care needs your PACT will provide the coordination for all your clinical needs. For example they can refer you to our fitness center, nutrition, MOVE!, rehabilitation services and any specialty or Mental Health Services you may require.

Best in Customer Service, our call center is available to support access to your PACT 24/7. A nurse or clerk is available to speak with you at any time day or night. My HealtheVet is another option to secure communicating with your PACT.

No matter when you need support, reach us by dialing 800 (VETMED1) or 800-838-6331

See also, Wellness

Primary Care Behavioral Health (PCBH)

PCBH is a patient-centered, team-based service integrating mental health and primary care. PCBH aims to identify Veterans' comprehensive health care needs, to deliver timely evidence-based assessments and short term treatments, or facilitate referrals to specialty services, thereby empowering Veterans to obtain an optimal level of functioning and to reduce stigma.

Services

The Primary Care Behavioral Health Program (PCBH) is dedicated to treating Veterans living with emotional, adjustment, behavioral difficulties, or clinical health problems. The PCBH Program collaborates with the VA Primary Care team to offer Veterans optimal mental and physical health services. To ensure that Veterans have ready access to services that can address all aspects of health & wellness, PCBH services are on-site and available directly within the primary care setting.

Services are offered to Veterans coping with any number of emotional or behavioral difficulties including:

- Anxiety and Depression
- Adjustment difficulties
- Chronic pain management
- Weight management
- Stress management
- Diabetes management
- Alcohol abuse or misuse
- Smoking cessation
- Sleep difficulties
- Difficulties coping with illness/disability
- Interpersonal losses

Screening evaluations, Assessment and diagnosis,
Psychopharmacological consultation/treatment,
Brief Psychotherapy (individual and group),
Psycho-education for veterans and families,
Coordinating referrals to specialty mental health and other services as appropriate

Typical Course of Treatment

Referral by Primary Care Provider (Self-referrals also welcome); Initial telephone or in-person screen; Brief therapy and/or medication consultation and management, depending on Veteran's treatment needs; referral to specialty services.

PCBH is available at Bedford, Gloucester, Haverhill and Lynn locations. Ask your primary care doctor for a referral or **call us at 781-603-2984.**

Serving the whole Veteran by promoting mind & body wellness

See also, Wellness

Specialty & Acute Care Services

Your Primary Care Physician can refer you to:

- Cardiology
- Dermatology
- Hepatitis C/HIV Clinic
- Neurology
- Pulmonary
- Radiology
- Rheumatology

Non-procedural surgical clinics are coordinated at Bedford for service at Boston Healthcare System in the following areas:

- Vascular Surgery
- General Surgery
- Orthopedics
- Urology

Rehabilitation and Adaptive Equipment

Rehabilitation, prosthetic and durable medical equipment enhance and/or improve the lives of the Veterans who need them.

Durable medical equipment refers to aids from walkers, scooters, grab bars, canes, and elastic shoelaces to vertical porch lifts and just about everything between! Veterans are reminded to check with us before they buy anything because it may be something we can provide. Learn what you may be eligible for before you buy. Contact Program Manager Margaret Gallagher at **781-687-3053**

We also offer aquatic Physical Therapy in our Olympic pool, and a state-of-art fitness center staffed with attentive, informed and responsive care givers. Beneficial Rehabilitation is available for stroke victims, swallowing evaluations and much more! Our team will keep you in touch; Bedford VA's speech language pathologist will assist with using technology and support education where needed.

Your primary pare provider (PCP) can refer you for all your rehabilitation, prosthetic and durable medical Equipment needs, and a visit may not be needed. In some cases, your PCP can let us know what is needed and we can ship your device directly to your home.

Our physical and occupational therapists provide in-home safety assessments to identify your specific needs. Ask your provider if this service is appropriate for you.

Radiology

The Department of Radiology is deeply committed to serving our Veterans by providing the highest quality of diagnostic imaging.

Our goal is to provide compassionate quality care to our Veterans.

Administrative Clerk
Christine x2230

Technologists
Lori R.T. (R)
Jessica R.T. (R)

Location
Building 2, 1st floor

Normal hours:
Monday - Friday, 8am - 4:30pm

Extended hours:
Saturday 8am - noon

To contact the Department of Radiology call **781- 687- 2230**

We provide the following diagnostic imaging services:

Radiographs are a reliable and accurate means of obtaining information to help your physician diagnose the cause of your pain. An x-ray examination is commonly used to determine the presence or absence of disease, a bone fracture, joint misalignment, arthritis, or cause of other painful conditions.

Patients with a doctor's order for x-rays may come to the Department of Radiology anytime on a "walk-in" basis during normal and extended hours of operation to have their x-rays performed, no appointment needed.

Bone Density Scanning is an enhanced form of x-ray technology that is used to measure bone loss. If you think you may be at risk for osteoporosis, ask your physician if a bone density test would be appropriate for you.

Bone density testing requires an appointment which can be scheduled during normal operating hours, contact Radiology to schedule an appointment at **(781) 687-2230.**

Please feel free to contact any member of our team we will be glad to assist you.

Telehealth

There are multiple Telehealth services available such as Mental Health, MOVE! Groups, Home Telehealth, Pain, OT, Smoking Cessation, Nutrition, and Dermatology.

Veterans with chronic health conditions can utilize Telehealth technologies to live independently, and to access their health care. When partnered with their health care team the Veterans have an improved overall quality of life.

Telehealth changes the location where health care services are provided. Using Telehealth brings the care you need closer to home, saving you time, money and a long ride into the hospital. Telehealth allows you to meet with your provider at the medical center using video technology.
Telehealth services are available at our Community Based Outpatient Clinics.
Ask your provider for details.

If you are interested in learning if you are medically eligible to participate in one of our Telehealth programs talk to your VA physician during your next appointment.

The Right Care In The Right Place At The Right Time through Bedford VA Telehealth Team:

Click to watch video

Facility Telehealth Coordinator
Anita Bona, 781-687-2833

Bedford Telehealth Clinical Technicians (TCT)
781-687-2656
781-687-3619

Lynn CBOC TCT
781-687-4601

Haverhill CBOC TCT
781-687-4854

Gloucester CBOC TCT
781-687-3119

Home Telehealth Care Coordinator
781-687-3363

Home Telehealth RNs
781-687-3621
781-687-3094

Returning Veterans OEF/OIF/OND Reintegration

ACCESS YOUR FREE VA HEALTH CARE BENEFITS TODAY

OEF/OIF/OND (Operation Enduring, Operation Iraqi Freedom, Operation New Dawn) combat Veterans can receive five years of cost free medical care for injuries or illness related to their active duty or military service. Comprehensive VA health benefits, including preventative care, mental health care, prescriptions, emergency and surgical care are available to all Veterans with a copay.

Who is Eligible?

Veterans, including activated Reservists and members of the National Guard

How do I Enroll?

Online at **www.oefoif.va.gov** or by phone (**877-222-VETS**), mail or in person at any VA Medical Center.
See Enrollment

The OEF/OIF/OND program can be a point of contact for newly returned Operation Enduring, Operation Iraqi Freedom, Operation New Dawn Veterans to access the VA system and establish care. The OEF/OIF/OND Program provides case management, care coordination, and outreach to Veterans and their families in the community. Veterans can be referred by various sources within the hospital, the community or self refer. The OEF/OIF/OND social worker will assist with access to benefits and care, and follow up for those severely injured or new to the system. There is an OEF/OIF/OND interdisciplinary team comprised of individuals from services across the hospital that have been identified as "champions" in the area of issues facing OEF/OIF/OND Veterans. Complex cases can be referred to this team for consultation.

The OEF /OIF/OND team also provides a Post Deployment Skills Class on Mondays 4:30PM-5:30PM in the Building 9 conference room. OEF/ OIF/OND Post Deployment Skills Class is a present focused class to address post deployment issues and coping skills as Veterans adjust back to civilian life.

Call **Elizabeth Price, LICSW** at **781-687-3067** for more information.

Visual Impairment Services (VIST)

The Bedford VA VIST Program helps legally blind and severely visually impaired Veterans and their families adjust to vision loss. The program identifies and informs eligible Veterans about services and benefits, ensures that health care and rehabilitation services are made available, and helps those Veterans cope with the devastating loss of vision.

Services include:

- VA Blind Rehabilitation Training Programs
- Community-Based Training Programs
- Computer training programs which are adapted for use by blind or visually impaired persons
- Low Vision Examination by a Low Vision Optometrist
- Library of Congress Talking Book Program
- Issuance of Blind or Low Vision Aids

Contact VIST Coordinator **Mary Fardy, LICSW** at **781-687-2705**

Veterans are often issued prosthetic/blind aids which may include optical devices such as hand magnifiers, electronic magnifiers such as CCTV, a large print or talking computer system, canes, talking watches, audible prescription readers, adapted recreational devices or other adaptive devices based on the outcome of the assessments by Low Vision Optometrist and/or the VIST Coordinator.

Any Veteran who is legally blind or severely visually impaired, even while wearing conventional glasses, and who is eligible for VA health care may participate in the VIST program. If you are unsure about eligibility for VA health care benefits, please contact the VIST Coordinator to assist in determining eligibility. Referrals can be made by the Veteran, family, health care professional or other concerned individuals.

If a Veteran requires the assistance of another person or exhibits any of the following functional problems, a referral to VIST may be indicated:

-Difficulty reading mail, newspaper, medication labels or standard size print while using conventional glasses.

-Difficulty performing activities of daily living, such as managing their medications, grooming, cooking, using the phone, telling time, etc., as a result of their visual impairment.

-Veterans who have difficulty ambulating safely and independently as a result of blindness or visual impairment.

Women Veteran Services

Our Women's Health Clinic includes a private waiting room and seating area as well as exam rooms specifically designed for female patients. Services at the clinic include primary care (including women's primary care such as cervical cancer and breast cancer screening), and specialty care (including the management and screening of chronic conditions, reproductive health care, rehabilitation and long-term care.)

Specialty mental health services are available to target problems such as PTSD, substance abuse, depression, conditions related to military sexual trauma (MST), and homelessness in treatment environments that can accommodate and support women with safety, privacy, dignity and respect. Providing world-class health care for Women Veterans is a priority. Our Veteran Women Program Manager understands your unique needs and is here to serve you.

For more information contact Stephanie Coppolino, LICSW, Women Veterans program manager, **781-382-5732**

*We are not only your grandfather's VA, we are **your** VA! At Bedford VA, our Women's Health Clinic is designed to provide female Veterans with the privacy, dignity and sensitivity our Women Veterans have earned.*

Dental

Bedford VA provides excellence in clinical care as well as oral health education. Patients are treated by compassionate and responsive dental staff familiar with the unique health care needs of Veterans. Our dental staff includes many current and former members of the U.S. Armed Forces who understand Veterans' health concerns because of their own military experience. Bedford VA uses the latest dental procedures and pain control techniques. Veteran dental care is provided in a clinical setting that adheres to the highest standards of hygiene and infection control. Take a peek into our brand new **state-of-the-art dental clinic.**

Services Provided for Veterans who have earned this benefit:

Restorative Dentistry	(fillings, crowns and bridgework)
Prosthodontic Services	(partial and full dentures, implant dentistry)
Periodontics	(management and education of gum disease)
Endodontics	(root canal)
Oral Surgery	(extractions, pathology)
Dental Hygiene	(cleanings, oral health education. management of gum disease)

Eligibility

Federal law determines which Veterans have earned dental benefits. See **VA Dental Website** for information on eligibility or call Admissions at **781-687-2275.**

Dental Insurance Program is a partnership between VA, Delta Dental and MetLife and is used outside the VA. **Learn More.**

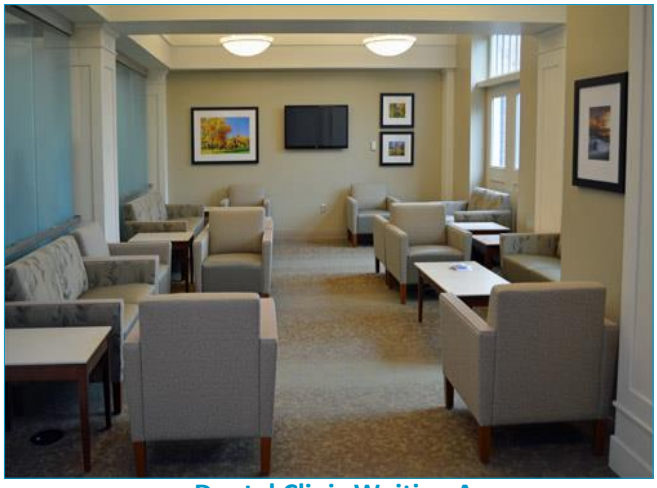
Homeless Dental Services

Dental problems, such as pain and/or missing teeth can be tremendous barriers in seeking and obtaining employment. VA's **Homeless Veterans Dental Program** provides some dental treatment for eligible Veterans in a number of programs: The Dom, Grant and Per Diem, Crescent House, Healthcare for Homeless Veterans (contract bed), and Community Residential Care. Contact the manager of any eligible program or the Health Care for Homeless Veterans program manager for more details.

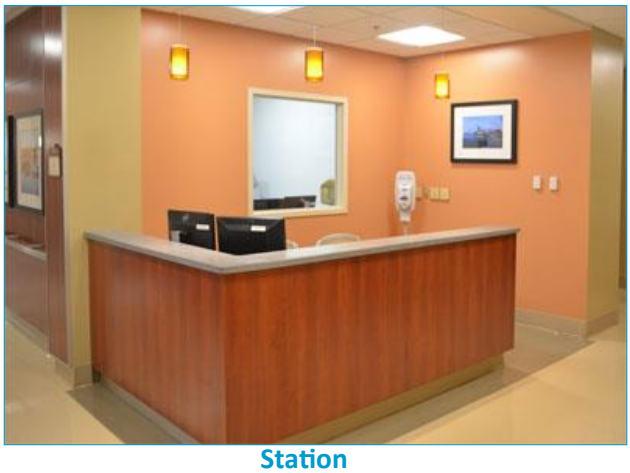
For information regarding Bedford VA Dental Service, please call: **781-687-2469**
Dental Clinic Hours: Mon. - Fri. 8:00am- 4:30pm

Look Inside Our State-of-the-Art Dental Clinic!

Check In



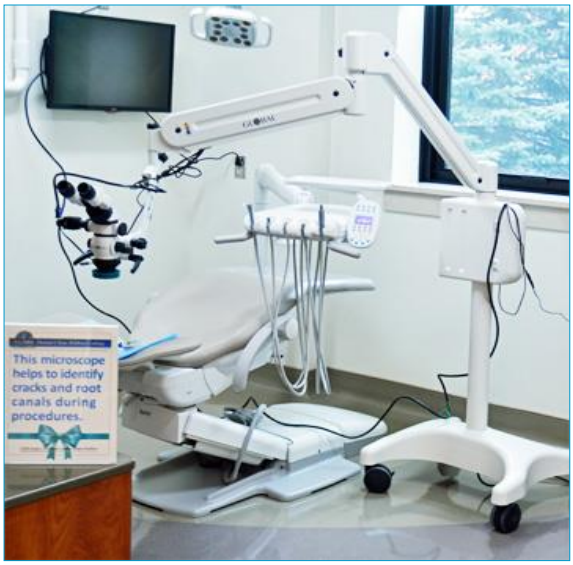
Dental Clinic Waiting Area



Station

Gleaming Hallways

Specialty chairs for Veterans in wheelchairs and for Veterans with limited mobility.



Specialty microscope used to identify cracks and canals during procedures.

Wellness and Family

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Creative Art Therapies
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Nutrition
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Family

Family Drop In Center
Couples and Family Therapy
Coaching Into Care
Delta Dental
Supported Services for Veterans and Families (SSVF)

Wellness, A Mindful Approach

Follow the diamonds to find wellness help and opportunities at VA.

Visit our Health Promotion Disease Prevention Program Resource Guide and Healthy Living pages

Visit the Veterans Health Library!

Local Farmer's Markets and Community Gardening

Click for additional community resource pages

Wellness: Community Gardening, Farmer's Markets, and More!

DISCLAMER Links here will take you out of VA and into the community. VA does not endorse or promote any of these services or sites. The links are here at the Veterans' request for convenience only.

NAMI Massachusetts Wellness

Community Garden Plots

Burlington
Carlisle (Farm and Trails)
Concord
Lexington (Farm, Trails, Dog Trails)
Lincoln

Farmer's Markets

Arlington
Bedford
Burlington
Billerica
Carlisle
Lexington
Winchester
Woburn

See also, Wellness

Community Supported Agriculture

Community Supported Agriculture. CSAs provide a way
for consumers to buy local, seasonal food directly from
a farmer other than at a farmers' market.

Wilson Farm:
Siena Farms:
World Peas:– delivers in Bedford
Verrill Farm:
Parlee Farms **(Pick Your Own and Farm Stand)**

Bedford Center for the Arts

Fitness Center

See also, Wellness

Gymnasium: Visit our gymnasium for a variety of fitness and wellness programs including individualized exercise programs, cardio/ universal weight equipment instruction, and our basketball league. Programs are based on veteran interest and availability.

Therapeutic Pool: The benefits of an aquatic therapy program are numerous, the potential include help with pain management, joint problems or individuals with difficulty engaging in a land-based program. Aquatic therapy can be useful for pain management, relaxation, reducing edema, increasing circulation and cardio capacity, reducing weight, increasing flexibility, strength, endurance, and motivation to work on goals. Engaging in aquatic exercise enables opportunities for independent movement, social interaction, and success in reaching fitness/wellness goals. Pool temperatures are maintained between 85-92 degrees for therapeutic benefits.

GYM HOURS*

Sunday	CLOSED
Monday	8:00 a.m.- 7:30 p.m.
Tuesday	8:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m.
Wednesday	8:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m.
Thursday	8:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m.
Friday	8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Saturday	8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Gym Phone: (781) 687-2118

POOL HOURS*

Sunday	CLOSED
Monday	11:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
Tuesday	11:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
Wednesday	11:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
Thursday	11:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
Friday	11:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
Saturday	11:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Pool Phone: 781-687-2297

*Please call ahead to check gym and pool hours as times are subject to change especially during holidays and changing weather conditions.

**Veterans must have Bedford VA physician clearance to utilize the gym and pool.
Questions regarding the gym and pool should be directed to Leah Palmer at **781-687-3231.**

Bedford Veterans in National Events

National Veterans Golden Age Games

Life begins at 55, at least it does for more than 600 Veterans competing in this national event, the premier senior adaptive rehabilitation program in the United States. It is the only national multi-event sports and recreational seniors' competition program designed to improve the quality of life for all older Veterans, including those with a wide range of abilities and disabilities. It is one of the most progressive and adaptive rehabilitative senior sports programs in the world, offering 14 different sports and recreational activities.

Join us for the weekly for team practices to help you prepare for your event in the Golden Age Games.

Bedford Staff Event Contact Information:
Creative Arts Festival Coordinator

Nadene Landry, MA,AT Creative Arts Therapist **781-687-3199**

MOVE!

MOVE!® is a weight management program for Veterans who want to lose weight and improve their health.

The Bedford VA offers:

Group weight management classes

Individual nutrition and behavioral health psychology assistance

TeleMOVE! including

Home Messaging which provides daily written messages using a device connected to your home phone.

Interactive Voice Response which provides audio coaching messages using your home or cellular phone.

Both versions of TeleMOVE! are supported by a Care Coordinator who will monitor your progress and call you as needed.

If you are interested, talk with your health care team. They will schedule an orientation session where you will learn more about the MOVE! weight management program and determine which participation options work best for you. There you will set your weight loss goals and begin to identify your specific plans for increasing activity and decreasing calorie intake.

You are encouraged to complete the **MOVE!11 Questionnaire**. You will be given a paper copy or you can complete it **online.** You will receive a personalized report based on your answers to help identify your specific needs. Bring this report to discuss at your next primary care visit.

For more information, speak with your primary care team, visit **www.move.va.gov,** or call the MOVE! Coordinator at **781-687-2342.**

See also, Wellness

Nutrition

Nutritional Services are available for inpatient and outpatient Veterans. Our dedicated outpatient dietitians provide nutrition education on a variety of topics, including:

See also, Wellness

- Good Nutrition
- Therapeutic Diets
- Weight Management
- Diabetes Self-Management
- Local Farmer's Markets
- MOVE!

Contact your Primary Care Provider for a referral or call Nutrition Services 781- 687-2685.

Recreational Therapy

The purpose of recreational therapy is to improve or maintain physical, cognitive, social, emotional, and spiritual functioning in order to facilitate full participation in life.

Outpatient recreation offerings include:

- Indoor Rock Climbing Monthly
- Racquetball Monthly
- Walking Club Twice Weekly
- Adaptive Golf Weekly
- Pottery Club Weekly
- Open Art Studio Twice Weekly
- Yoga Weekly
- Ping-Pong Weekly
- Circuit Training Weekly
- Archery Twice Monthly
- Women's Art Group

To get involved call **781-687-3199** or email Nadene Landry for the current Outpatient Recreation Therapy Events Calendar

The recreation therapy staff members in our Community Living Centers and inpatient mental health program are here to provide and help Veterans create daily meaningful leisure opportunities. Veterans have the chance to engage in programs from group sing-alongs to community integration trips. Residents can speak to the unit secretary to find out who your recreation therapist is.

See also, Wellness

Creative Art Therapy

Creative arts therapies include art therapists, drama therapists, and music therapists. Creative arts therapists offer various arts modalities and use of the creative process to promote wellness, alleviate pain and stress, foster healthy expression and understanding of emotion, enhance cognitive abilities, learn new skills, relax, experience pleasure and provides unique opportunities for social interaction and connection. For more information contact Creative Arts Therapist Nadene Landry **781-687-3199.**

See also, Wellness

Tobacco Cessation

Thinking of Quitting?

Did you know that you can double your chances of successfully quitting by…

Using medications to help you deal with withdrawal symptoms and smoking / tobacco urges?
Getting expert counseling to help you quit and prevent relapsing after you quit?

Tobacco Cessation Counseling offers support, coping skills, and coordination of tobacco cessation medications using:

- Group counseling
- Individual counseling
- Telephone counseling
- Telehealth smoking cessation counseling
- Tobacco Cessation Peer Support Group
- Evaluations for smoking cessation aids including medication

Employee Tobacco Cessation Group offers support for quitting smoking.

Contact the Tobacco Cessation Program at **781-687-2250** or **781-687-3317.**

Download Tobacco Cessation Schedule

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Home-Based Primary Care (HBPC)

Home Health Aide Services

Hospice and Palliative Care

Respite

Skilled Nursing Care

Caregiver Program

VA has a number of services designed specifically to support you in your role as a Family Caregiver. VA values your commitment as a partner in our pledge to care for those who have "borne the battle," and we have several support and service options designed with you in mind. The programs are available both in and out of your home to help you care for the Veteran you love and for yourself.

Caregiver Support Coordinator

Your local Caregiver Support Coordinator is a licensed professional who can support you by matching you with services for which you are eligible, and providing you with valuable information about resources that can help you stay smart, strong and organized as you care for the Veteran you love. Below are links or descriptions of various services available to Family Caregivers of Veterans. If you'd like additional information or are interested in signing up for any of the services listed below, Contact **Andrew Leonard LICSW 781-687-3319**

Adult Day Health Care (ADHC) Centers
Home-Based Primary Care
Homemaker and Home Health Aide Program
Hospice /Home Hospice Care
Respite
Skilled Home Care
Telehealth program enhances and extends care management to you, the Family Caregiver. Home Telehealth services can include education and training or online and telephone support groups. Please contact your Caregiver Support Coordinator to discuss which telehealth programs are available at your VA.

Caregiver Tool Box

Whether you are new to family caregiving or looking for fresh tips and resources, VA has created a **Caregiver Tool Box** to help you find tools that work for you. This online toolkit offers resources and information to help you stay on top of things and manage the daily stresses of family caregiving. Features include: Care Sheets by Diagnosis, Everyday Tips and Checklists, Staying Organized, RESCUE Website for Caregivers of Veterans who have had a stroke.

Caregiver Support Line

CAREGIVER SUPPORT LINE
1-855-260-3274

Our sole purpose is to help you – the wife or husband, mother or father, sister or brother, daughter or son, or loving family member or friend – who cares for a Veteran. VA's Caregiver Support Line has licensed caring professionals standing by. We can:

- Tell you about the assistance available from VA.
- Help you access services and benefits.
- Connect you with your local family Caregiver Support Coordinator at a VA medical center near you.

Just listen, if that's what you need right now.

VA's Caregiver Support Line Call toll-free to 1-855-260-3274
Monday- Friday 8:00 a.m. – 11:00 p.m. ET, Saturday 10:30 a.m. – 6 p.m. ET

Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers of Post 9/11 Veterans

Under the "Caregivers and Veterans Omnibus Health Services Act of 2010," additional VA services are now available to seriously injured post-9/11 Veterans and their Family Caregivers through a new program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers. VA is now accepting applications for these services.

Who Is Eligible?

Veterans eligible for this program are those who sustained a serious injury – including traumatic brain injury, psychological trauma or other mental disorder – incurred or aggravated in the line of duty, on or after September 11, 2001. Veterans eligible for this program must also be in need of personal care services because of an inability to perform one or more activities of daily living and/or need supervision or protection based on symptoms or residuals of neurological impairment or injury.

To be eligible for the Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers, Veterans must first be enrolled for VA health services, if not enrolled previously.

Services Available to Family Caregivers through this Program

The law will provide additional assistance to primary Family Caregivers of eligible post-9/11 Veterans and Servicemembers.

Services for this group include:

Monthly stipend
Travel expenses (including lodging and per diem while accompanying Veterans undergoing care)
Access to health care insurance (if the Caregiver is not already entitled to care or services under a health care plan)
Mental health services and counseling
Comprehensive VA Caregiver training provided by Easter Seals
Respite care (not less than 30 days per year)

Contact **Andrew Leonard LICSW 781-687-3319**

Community Living Centers (CLCs)

A Community Living Center (CLC) resembles "home" as much as possible. There are activities for Veterans of all ages. There are family friendly places for visiting. Veterans are invited to decorate their rooms, and pets are allowed to visit or live in the Community Living Center.

Veterans may stay for a short time or, in rare instances, for the rest of their life. Here Veterans can receive nursing home level of care, including help with activities of daily living (e.g., bathing and getting dressed) and skilled nursing and medical care. CLC home settings are available in Buildings 2, 4, and 78.

The mission of the Community Living Center is to restore each Veteran to his or her highest level of well-being, to prevent declines in health and to provide comfort at the end of life.

Eligibility is based on clinical need and setting availability. The VA will provide Community Living Center (VA Nursing Home) care IF you meet certain **eligibility** criteria involving your service connected status, level of disability, and income.

Learn more at Va.gov or contact or call **781-687-2732** or **781-687-2743**

Inpatient and Home Based Services

GERIATRIC EVALUATION MANAGEMENT: Our 31 day inpatient rehabilitation program is specifically designed to help service connected Veterans return to living an independent and active lifestyle as quickly as possible. Skilled physical, occupational, speech, and recreational therapists evaluate and treat Veterans to support maximum independence.

SKILLED NURSING CARE: The Skilled Home Care service provides a medical professional who comes to your home to help care for a homebound Veteran. Some of the care a Veteran can receive includes basic nursing services and physical, occupational, or speech therapies. To be eligible for this service, a Veteran must be homebound, which means he or she has difficulty traveling to and from appointments and so is in need of receiving medical services at home. The Skilled Home Care service is similar to Home-Based Primary Care, but it involves VA purchasing care for a Veteran from a licensed non-VA medical professional. We provide up to 90 days of 24 hour nursing, medical care, and assistance including; Clinical supervision and assistance, Medication Administration, monitoring and management, wound care, ostomy care, intravenous therapy and nutritional management and tube feedings.

RESPITE: If a Veteran requires a Caregiver, you are eligible to receive respite services. The care can be offered in a variety of settings including at your home or through temporary placement of a Veteran at a VA Community Living Center, a VA-contracted Community Residential Care Facility, or an Adult Day Health Care Center. Staying strong for your Veteran means staying strong yourself. Our goal is to provide family caregivers temporary relief from the routine daily care of their chronically ill or disabled Veteran at home. A planned respite admission begins on Thursday and may be from one to two weeks depending on the caregiver needs. Respite is not available on an emergency basis.

Adult Day Health Care (ADHC) Centers are a safe and active environment with constant supervision designed for Veterans to get out of the home and participate in activities. It is a time for the Veteran you care for to socialize with other Veterans while you, the Family Caregiver, get some time for yourself. ADHC Centers employ caring professionals who assess a Veteran's rehabilitation needs and help a Veteran accomplish various tasks so he or she can maintain or regain personal independence and dignity. The Veteran you care for will participate in rehabilitation based on his or her specific health assessment during the day (ADHC centers are generally open Monday through Friday during normal business hours). The ADHC Centers emphasize a partnership with you, the Veteran you care for and Centers' staff.

Homemaker and Home Health Aide Program is designed to help a Veteran with personal care needs. Your local VA medical center can help arrange for a home health aide who will come to your home on a regular schedule to allow you time to take care of your own needs. Caring for yourself helps you stay strong for yourself and the Veteran you care for.

Social Work Service can assist you with referrals and eligibility requirements to these programs.
Call **781-687-2375** to be directed to the appropriate program.

Geriatric Research Education and Clinical Center (GRECC)

The purpose of the Geriatric Research Education and Clinical Centers is to increase the basic knowledge about the aging process and how diseases of the elderly are best managed, to transmit this knowledge to healthcare providers, and to improve the quality of care delivered to elders.

At Bedford VA, our GRECC Center supports state of the art care to elderly Veterans and supports improved methods of health care delivery.

Additionally, when the need for nursing home care extends beyond the Veteran's eligibility; our social workers are available to help identify possible sources for financial assistance. Our staff will review options with Veterans and their loved ones.

Contact our **GRECC** social work office at **781-687-2701** for assistance.

Geriatric Psychiatry Unit (GPU)

Bedford VA has a very long tradition of providing outstanding Geriatric and Mental Health services to Veterans.

In response to increasing demand for short stay acute, geriatric-psychiatric services, Bedford VA is proud to offer the specialty services of our new Geriatric Psychiatry Unit (GPU).

Designed to meet the needs of the aging Veteran population, this new unit brings this service to New England Veterans, addressing the behavioral and psychiatric treatment needs of elderly Veterans.

Through the work of many, including Bedford VA's Geriatric Service, Psychiatry Service, Nursing Service and the GRECC, (Research Service Geriatric Research, Education, and Clinical Center), our vision to provide truly world class Geri-Psychiatric has been realized.

Our Geriatric Psychiatry Unit (GPU)) is a short-stay, locked unit for treating psychiatric and behavioral problems of Veterans residing in the community. The GPU is an interdisciplinary service that conducts an in-depth psychosocial evaluation and provides a full spectrum of pharmacological and non-pharmacological therapies to address psychiatric and behavioral symptoms.

The clinical team in the GPU consists of Specialty Nursing, Social Work, Geriatric Psychiatry, Geriatric Medicine, Neurology, Neuropsychology, Rehabilitation Therapies. This unit is appropriate to treat geriatric Veterans with delirium, psychosis, psychotic depression, dementia, and other behavioral disturbances that require treatment for the Veteran to remain in the community.

The Geriatric Psychiatry Unit is not appropriate for Veterans with acute medical problems or substance abuse needs, suicidal intent, homicidal intent, extreme aggression, or who are candidates for long term care.

The GPU is not an entry point into VA Long Term care; Veterans must be returned to the referral source when the GPU determines that treatment is completed.

For more information, please call 781-687-2731 or 781-687-2293

Home Based Primary Care (HBPC)

HOME SAFE and SOUND

Home Based Primary Care is health care services provided to Veterans in their home. A VA physician supervises the health care team providing the services. Home Based Primary Care is for Veterans who have complex health care needs for whom routine clinic-based care is not effective. **The program's primary goal is to assist with management of health care needs and to support Veterans living safely at home.**

Home Based Primary Care is for Veterans who need skilled services, case management, and assistance with activities of daily living (e.g., bathing and getting dressed), or instrumental activities of daily living (e.g. fixing meals and taking medicines); are isolated or their caregiver is experiencing burden. Home Based Primary Care can be used in combination with other Home and Community Based Services.

Let us help you be *home safe and sound*. To learn more about the VA HBPC contact the HBPC Director Kendra Valuzzi, LICSW 781-687- 2451

Hospice and Palliative Care

Hospice is a comfort based form of care for Veterans who have a terminal condition with 6 months or less to live.

Palliative care is a form of treatment that emphasizes comfort care but does not require the Veteran have a terminal condition. Hospice is a comfort based form of care for Veterans who have a terminal condition with 6 months or less to live.

Since Hospice and Palliative Care are part of the VHA Standard Medical Benefits Package, all *enrolled Veterans* are eligible **IF they meet the clinical need for the service.** Copays are NOT charged for Hospice and Palliative Care, whether they are provided by the VA or an organization with a VA contract.

Hospice and Palliative Care provides treatment that relieves suffering and helps to control symptoms in a way that respects your personal, cultural, and religious beliefs and practices. Hospice also provides grief counseling to your family.

You and your family are assessed by a care team and a plan of care is developed to meet your medical, social, spiritual and psychological needs. This care is available to Veterans in their home, community, outpatient or inpatient settings.

Your physician or other primary care provider can answer questions about your medical needs. If Hospice or Palliative Care seems right for you, your VA social worker can help you locate and coordinate those services.

Springtime Sunrise at Bedford VA

Become a Hospice Volunteer so that No Veteran Dies Alone

No Veteran Dies Alone is a volunteer program that provides the reassuring presence of a volunteer companion to dying patients who may otherwise be alone. Companions are able to help provide patients with a most valuable human gift: a dignified death.

For more information, call **781-760-6768**

Research

Center for Healthcare Organization and Implementation Research (CHOIR)

During the past decade, the VHA has been at the forefront of promoting research to improve health services through innovation and emphasis on operational partnerships. Investigators at Bedford VA and at the VA Boston Healthcare System are very pleased to announce the award of a 5 year, multi-institutional VA Health Services Research & Development (HSR&D) Center of Innovation (COIN), funded to support a strong research environment, to train a new generation of health services researchers, and to support VA operations by generating knowledge about health systems, and creating sustainable interventions to improve Veterans' lives.

This new Center for Healthcare Organization and Implementation Research (CHOIR) is among the first and largest of a handful of VA Centers funded nationally to bring together scholars and clinicians from numerous disciplines to improve care. The Boston and Bedford medical centers have each been home to long-standing and highly successful HSR&D-funded health services research centers. With this award, the centers have merged, forming a single center of 70+ core investigators and 20+ affiliated investigators.

For Center information call **781-687-2872**

eHealth QUERI Program Team

Center for Evaluating Patient Centered Care (EPCC) Team

HIV/Hepatitis Quality Enhancement Research Initiative Team

Ground-breaking Research at Bedford VA benefits Veterans as well as the General Public

Ann McKee, MD **Bedford VA Neuropathologist and Game Changer**

World renowned research neuropathologist, Ann McKee has spent the last 26 years studying brains at Bedford VA. Since 2008, Dr. McKee has been Quarter-backing neuropathology at The Center for the Study of Traumatic Encephalopathy (CSTE). CSTE is a collaborative venture between Boston University School of Medicine and Sports Legacy Institute (SLI). The mission of the CSTE is to conduct state-of-the-art research on Chronic Traumatic Encephalopathy (CTE) through the study of its neuropathology, pathogenesis, clinical presentation, disease course, genetic and environmental risk factors, and ways to prevent this progressive dementia.

Brain-bank tissue study may offer clues on ALS—A team led by Ann McKee, MD, with medical students at the Bedford VA CTE Brain Bank, found pathological evidence of a link between repeated head injuries—such as those experienced by athletes in contact sports such as boxing, football and hockey—and a motor neuron disease that resembles amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), also known as Lou Gehrig's disease.

Dr. McKee's work has changed the game when it comes to sports, but this work reveals so much more, such as the wounds unseen in our Military Men and Women.

Thomas Houston, MD, MPH

Thomas K. Houston, MD MPH is a CHOIR Core Investigator and is Director (Research Coordinator) for the VA eHealth QUERI. He is also Professor of Quantitative Health Sciences at the University of Massachusetts Medical School. In 2010, Dr. Houston was named as a Fellow of the Society of Behavioral Medicine.

Dr. Houston's primary research interests are health informatics, smoking-cessation, communication, and behavioral science. Prior to coming to CHOIR, Dr. Houston was Associate Professor of Medicine at the University of Alabama, Birmingham (UA) where he directed research at the Center for Outcomes and Effectiveness Research and Education and served as Co-Director of the HSR&D Research Enhancement Award Program (REA) at the Birmingham VA. He joined CHOIR in 2009. Dr. Houston was recognized with the prestigious Worthen Award in 2016, VA's highest recognition of outstanding achievement of national significance in health professions education.

MIRECC

The Mental Illness Research, Education and Clinical Centers (MIRECC) were established by Congress with the goal of researching the causes and treatments of mental disorders and using education to put new knowledge into routine clinical practice in the VA.

Mission Statement

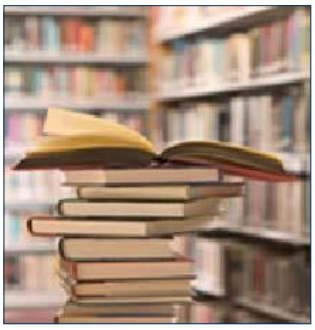
To generate new knowledge about the causes and treatments of mental disorders, apply new findings to model clinical programs, and widely disseminate new findings through education to improve the quality of veterans' lives and their daily functioning in their recovering from mental illness.

The **VISN 1 New England MIRECC** focuses on Veterans with co-occurring substance use disorders and mental illnesses as well as related issues such as VA-compensated disabilities, homelessness, criminal justice histories, and medical co-morbidities. We aim to:

- Better understand the prevalence and consequences of co-occurring substance use disorders and mental illness
- Improve the treatment of dually-diagnosed Veterans by developing innovative new treatments
- Devise more effective ways to deliver established treatments
- Create more effective programs by training VA service providers in with proven efficacy.

Research

Publications



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Newsletters

A national newsletter that is written by collaborators from the MIRECCs, Mental Health Centers of Excellence, and the National Center for PTSD

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Bedford Green Ribbon Cutting in the News!

69 New Units of Permanent Housing for Homeless Veterans 55+

BEDFORD GREEN

On Thursday, July 21, 2016, a ceremonial ribbon cutting marked the opening of The Bedford Green, at 100 Pride Way on the beautiful campus of the Edith Nourse Rogers Memorial Veterans Hospital.
These outstanding apartments are rapidly becoming home sweet home to its newest Veterans. See pictures of inside Bedford Green apartments on the Peabody Properties website here.

See the outstanding media coverage from the community at the links below:

Bedford Citizen "A Promise Fulfilled"

Lowell Sun

Bedford Citizen "Excellence in Partnerships to End Veteran Homelessness"

Bedford TV (Entire Ribbon Cutting Ceremony, approx. 1 hour)

Bedford Minuteman Bedford Green Opens it's Doors

Boston Globe For Veterans, Home and a Community

Merrimack Valley News (coming this month)

Bedford VA Facebook Photo Album for this event

Information about Bedford Green and VASH Housing

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For more information, please call 781-687-2732 or 781-687-2293

Ribbon Cutting for Bedford VA's State-of-the-Art Dental Clinic

April 9, 2015 Director Christine Croteau welcomed a packed lobby of excited visitors to the Dental Clinic Ribbon Cutting Ceremony on April 9th. "I'm thrilled to have all of you here. For me this is a day of Bedford moving forward to serve Veterans like we've never served them before. I think you are going to be blown away by this new clinic. There are too many people to thank, but Dr. Komyati, the dental staff, engineering and all, thank you so much."

Dr. Stephen Komyati (left) and Christine Croteau (right), cut the ribbon while staff look on at the Dental Clinic Ribbon Cutting Ceremony.

The tour of the dental clinic amazed every visitor with gleaming floors, gorgeous interior design, and above all, the state-of-the-art technology. Dr. Stephen Komyati, Chief of Dental Service, welcomed Veterans and visitors, "This dental clinic has been planned and designed with an emphasis on ease of access, comfort and integration of the latest technologies. One of the primary goals of the ENRM VA Dental Service is to provide our patients with outstanding, state of the art, oral health care services in a comfortable professional environment. We are dedicated to delivering comprehensive, patient-centered care to all the Veterans who have trusted us with their oral health. We are humbled by the confidence and trust you have placed on our staff and are looking forward to be able to treat you soon in YOUR new facility here at Bedford."

Some of the technology on display to serve Veterans included:

-a wheel chair tilting device designed for patients who rely on a wheelchairs to eliminate the need to transfer the patient as well as to allow the dental staff to provide sit down dentistry

-specialty microscope to help identify cracks and to locate canals during root canal procedures

-special dental chair that allows maximum access for patients with limited mobility

-dental laboratory where repairs, partial dentures and full dentures are fabricated

-the cone beam CT which allows dental staff to view images in 2D and 3D

-intra and extra oral camera that allows the patient to view what the dental provider sees during an evaluation. "A picture is worth a thousand words..."

See more pictures of the new **Dental Clinic**

Dr. Chuck Drebing Honored with APA's Michael S. Neale Award

Dr. Chuck Drebing, Chief of Mental Health Service, was honored to receive the 2015 Michael S. Neale Award at the American Psychological Association Conference. This award is presented to an individual whose commitment to serving those with serious mental illness is demonstrated in a body of work expressed through advocacy, research, program development, or service delivery. This recognition was noted by Under Secretary for Health, Dr. David J. Shulkin in his all employee video message, as he highlights a few examples from the field of what's going well, including Dr. Drebing's work and award.

Congratulations Dr. Drebing!

Chaplain Service

Mission Statement: Honor America's veterans by integrating the spiritual dimension of health into all aspects of patient care while protecting the patients' free exercise of religion.

Scope of Service: The ministry of Chaplain Service encompasses a full range of patient care activities. This includes a ministry of spiritual and religious support through pastoral care, counseling, ward visitation, sacramental rites and chapel services. As well as Hospice/Palliative Care and Homeless Veterans Services. Chaplain Service contributes in an active collaborative effort to the Medical Center's concept of clinical pastoral care and holistic health.

Services Chaplains Provide

- We are a resource for help with Ethical issues.
- We provide inspirational reading material on a variety of subjects.
- We provide Holy Communion and Sacramental ministry, both at the bedside and in the Chapel.
- The Sunday Catholic Mass is broadcast on Channel 41 Sundays at 10:00 a.m.
- The Protestant Worship Service is broadcast on Channel 41 on Sundays at 9:00 a.m.
- We provide for the anointing of the sick or bed-side pastoral prayer.
- We provide a weekly Spiritual Group on various units
- We provide Ministry to families in grief.
- We are a resource for help with the PTSD Team.
- Provide marriage counseling to individuals Veterans and family members

See also, Wellness

Sunday

9:00am **Protestant Worship Service** - Chapel/Units
10:00am **Catholic Mass** - Chapel
**Both Services are telecast to all the wards on Channel 41*
10:30am **Interfaith Worship Service** -Community Center(4C/D) Dining Room
1:00pm **Interfaith Worship Service** at 78G

Saturday

4:00-4:30pm Catholic Mass - Chapel

Weekdays

11:30am - 12:00pm Catholic Mass (Monday-Friday) - Chapel

***Call for Holy Day Mass Times**

Wednesday
Holy Hour
12:00pm - 1:00pm
Eucharistic Chapel

Confession
(Sacrament of Reconciliation)
available before Mass or any time upon request.

Chief Chaplain
Fr. Sebastian Ugochukwu
Pager: 781-983-2347
Office: 781-687-2385

Staff Chaplain
Fr. Isaac Mensah
Pager: 781-983-3530
Office: 781-687-2587

Staff Chaplain (*Tuesday only*)
Rabbi Richard Messing
Pager: 508-612-8790
Office: 781-687-2587

Staff Chaplain
Fr. Augustine Tufail
Pager: 781-983-2367
Office: 781-687-2391

Protestant Clergy
Pager: 781-983-3299
Office: 781-687-2581

For more information contact: **Samantha Grant** at **781-687-2384**

Community Links

DISCLAMER Links here will take you out of VA and into the community. VA does not endorse or promote any of these services or sites. The links are here at the Veterans' request for convenience only.

MassVetsAdvisor is **THE** comprehensive website for information for State and other benefit information for Veterans, their spouses and children who live in Massachusetts. While you are visiting this extraordinary resource, register for "**At Ease!**" the official monthly newsletter of Mass VetsAdvisor.org.

Massachusetts Department of Veterans' Services

Statewide Advocacy for Veterans' Empowerment (SAVE)

Local Vet Centers

PVA New England Chapter

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration

Small Business Association (SBA)

Social Security Administration

National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)
NAMI WELLNESS

DAV

Veterans Rehabilitation and Education VBA

Narcotics Anonymous
Alcoholics Anonymous

Stay Connected!

Edith Nourse Rogers Memorial Veterans Hospital

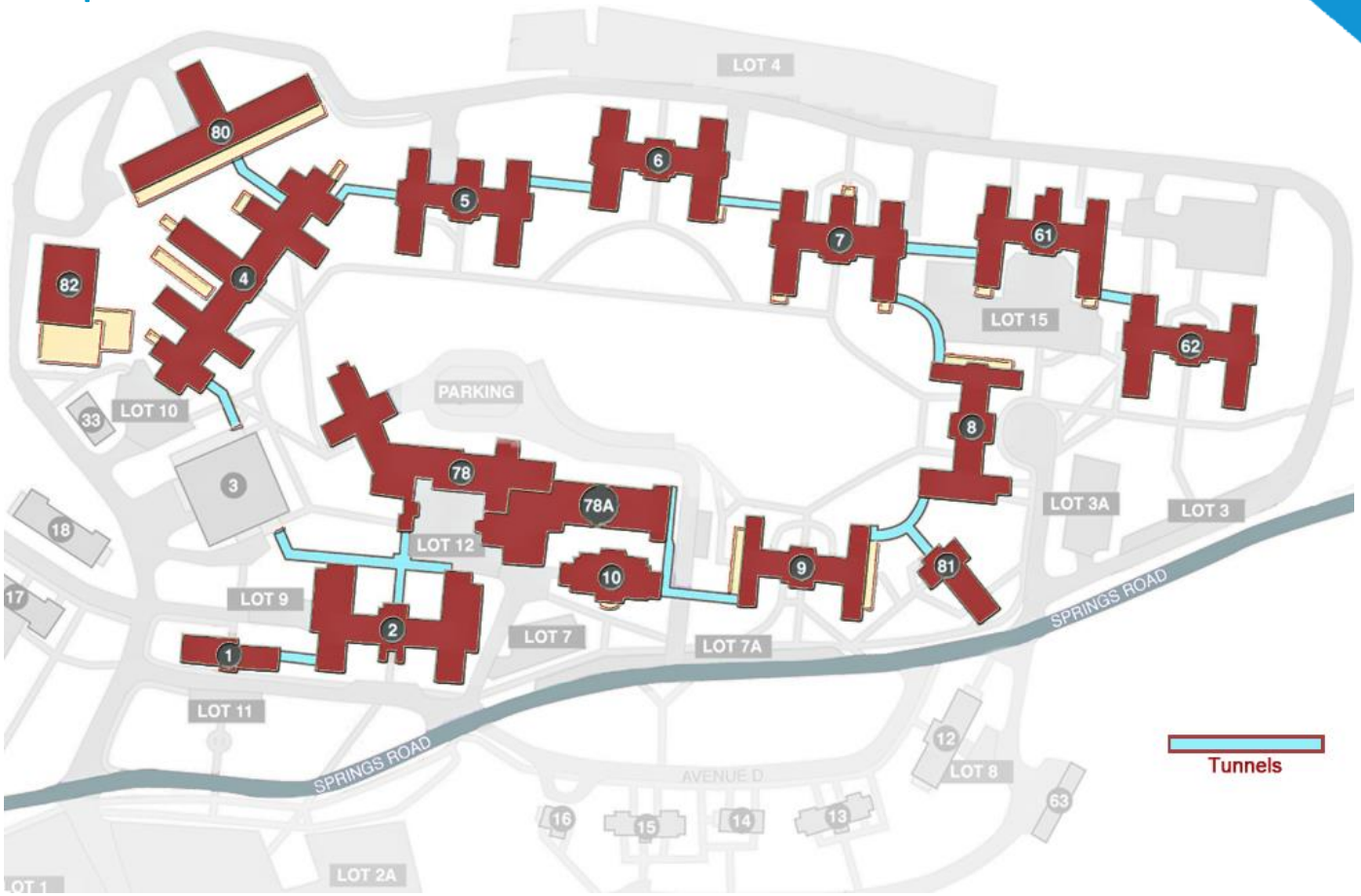
(Bedford VA) 200 Springs Road Bedford, MA 01730

Bedford VA Phone Directory

Quick Reference to Frequently Dialed Numbers

Main Numbers 781-687-2000 or 1-800-838-6331 (800-VETMED1)
Fax 781-687-2101
After Hours Mental Health Admissions 781-687-4333
Benefits (Health Care) 1-877-222-8387
Coaching Into Care (888) 823-7458
Homeless Hotline 877-424-3838 (877-4AID-VET)
Human Resources 781-687-2085 or 781-687-2219
Mental Health Appointments, Inpatient Evaluations 781-687-2347
MOVE! 781-687-2342
Patient Advocate 781-687-2612
Pharmacy 781-687-6231 or 781-687-5210
Public Affairs 781-687-4999
Returning Veterans OEF/OIF/OND 781-687-3067
Shuttle Reservations 781-687-2505
Smoking Cessation 781-687-2250 or 781-687-3317
Urgent Care 781-687-2000 or 781-687-2275
Veterans Crisis Line 800-273-TALK (800-273-8255) PRESS 1
Voluntary Service 781-687-2352
Women Veterans Program 781-687-3021

Map of Grounds (condensed)



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Patient Advocate

Ms. Claudio is a U.S. Navy Veteran who served as a Hospital Corpsman for 5 years on shore and sea. She transitioned to her civilian employment first at the Naval Station Newport, RI Medical Clinic before joining the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) in 2008. She has supported Veterans in the areas of Patient Services, Eligibility, Admissions, Primary Care, Police Service and the VISN Network Office. Tracy is friendly and kind to her fellow Veterans, always willing to help where she can and a great resource for information.

Feel free to call or stop by her office if you have any issues to discuss.
781-687-2612 Building 2, Room 117
Office Hours Monday through Friday 8 AM to 4:30 PM

Tracy Claudio
Patient Representative

Tours, News, Events & Media

Ready to be of assistance, Public Affairs is here to share information and to support your interest in our programing, subject matter experts, ground breaking research, tours and events. This office will support and assist members of the media with:

- Fact sheets and statistical information
- Interviews
- Photographs and digital images
- Responses to stories in the media
- Special Events
- Subject matter experts

** Please note media outlets requesting interviews or filming will require lead time to secure approvals.

The Office of Public Affairs is the designated Congressional point of contact.

How can Public Affairs serve you?

Public Affairs Office **781-687-4999.**
Edith Nourse Rogers Memorial Veterans Hospital (Bedford VA)
200 Springs Road, Building 1, Room 206
Bedford, Massachusetts, 01730

Outreach Coordinator

Our Community Relations Coordinator is here to advance knowledge of our Veteran programs and services. If you would like to have Veteran services represented at your event please contact Jacque Holliday **781 687-3348**

Jacque Holliday
Outreach Coordinator

SHUTTLE SCHEDULE Mon-Fri (excluding Federal Holidays)

Call **781-687-2505** to reserve seating.

Bedford/Jamaica Plain

LEAVES		ARRIVES	
Bedford	8:00 a.m.	Jamaica Plain	9:15 a.m.
Jamaica Plan	10:30 a.m.	Bedford	11:15 a.m.
Bedford	12:15 p.m.	Jamaica Plain	1:15 p.m.
Jamaica Plain	2:00 p.m.	Bedford	3:15 p.m.

Bedford/Lynn Shuttle

LEAVES		ARRIVES	
Bedford	7:30 a.m.	Lynn	8:45 a.m.
Lynn	9:00 a.m.	Bedford	10:00 a.m.
Bedford	1:00 p.m.	Lynn	1:45 p.m.
Lynn	2:00 p.m.	Bedford	3:00 p.m.

Bedford/Haverhill Shuttle

LEAVES		ARRIVES	
Bedford	7:30 a.m.	Haverhill	8:45 a.m.
Haverhill	9:00 a.m.	Bedford	10:00 a.m.
Bedford	1:00 p.m.	Haverhill	1:45 p.m.
Haverhill	2:00 p.m.	Bedford	3:00 p.m.

Bedford/Gloucester

LEAVES		ARRIVES	
Bedford	7:30 a.m.	Gloucester	8:45 a.m.
Gloucester	9:00 a.m.	Bedford	10:00 a.m.
Bedford	1:00 p.m.	Gloucester	2:00 p.m.
Gloucester	2:15 p.m.	Bedford	3:15 p.m.

Bedford/Lowell/VCCC

LEAVES		ARRIVES	
Crescent	7:30 a.m.	Bedford	8:00 a.m.
Bedford	8:30 a.m.	Lowell VCCC	8:30 a.m.
Lowell VCCC	9:30 a.m.	Bedford	10:00 a.m.
Bedford	12:15 p.m.	Lowell VCCC	12:45 p.m.
Lowell VCCC	1:00 p.m.	Bedford	1:30 p.m.
Bedford	1:30 p.m.	Crescent	2:00 p.m.

OTHER LOCAL TRANSPORTATION:

Disabled American Veterans 781-687-2999

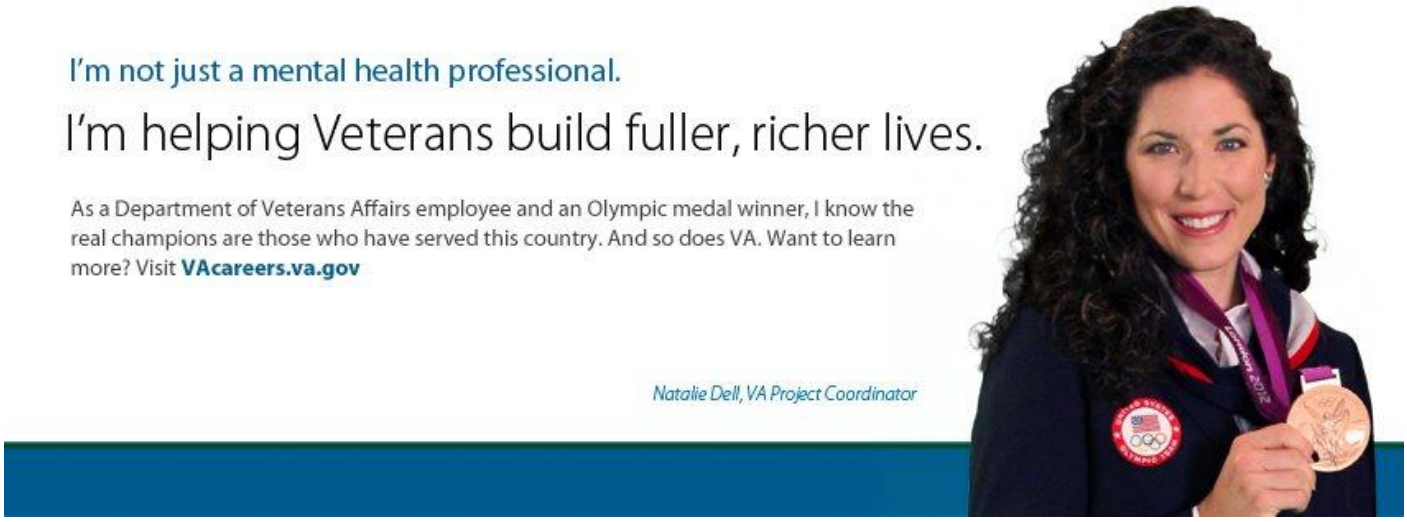
Lowell RTA **978-459-0152**

Massachusetts Veterans Transportation Link

NE Chapter of Paralyzed Veterans 508-660-1181

T Disability Pass

VA Careers



Olympian medalist, Natalie Dell attributed her flexible work schedule at Bedford VA as instrumental in helping her to reach her Olympic dreams. Learn how to join our diverse and exceptional team.

Visit **VAcareers.va.gov** to learn about exciting opportunities to serve our nation's heroes.

CANTEEN

Monday-Friday

Patriot Store
7:30am-4:00pm

Patriot Cafe
7:00am-3:30pm

Starbucks
6:30am-6:00pm

Saturday
7:30am-1:00pm

Canteen Acting Chief

Robert Harden 781-687-2413

Volunteer or Give

Bedford VA benefits from the services of over 700 individual volunteers each year. Over 75 volunteers are on duty each day helping to make this a health care center of excellence. We are always seeking assistance from volunteers of all ages and life experiences to support Veterans here at Bedford.

There are a wide variety of Volunteer Opportunities available to suit your individual interests during the day, evenings and weekends. Some examples for volunteering include support at the Veteran Information Desk, Greenhouse, Escorting Veterans to events and Chapel services, office administration, drivers, Adopt a Veteran or a ward programs, support recreational activities, and to share coffee with our Veterans.

Volunteer opportunities are great and the needs are ever-evolving. For more information please call Voluntary Service at 781-687-2356 or go to www.bedford.va.gov/giving/index.asp.

Donating just got easier!

Volunteers Support Veterans!

(Left to right) Ed Koetting, Associate Hospital Director; Mary Anderson, Nurse Executive; Hockey Great, Bobby Orr, and Christine Croteau, Hospital Director

Bedford VA's Summer of Service Event brought a significant turnout of new volunteers who would like to share their time making a difference in the lives of Veterans! Thank you!

Those who were lucky enough to join us today learned more about Bedford VA, Volunteering, Enrollment, and even got to meet Hockey Legend Bobby Orr who graciously volunteered his day greeting Veterans, guests and staff.

Thank you to all who came, who passed the word along, or who volunteer to help our Veterans!

If you missed the event but would like to learn more about volunteering click here.

Vettes To Vets

Each year on the last Sunday of September, Bedford VA hosts the Annual Vettes to Vets Event.

The event serves as a Welcome Home to our Military Men and Women, features a caravan of corvettes, color guard presentation, live music and a Veteran's Benefit Fair. Veterans are encouraged to bring their DD214 and enroll for their earned health care benefits.

Vettes to Vets, began in 2004 when Ron Morneau, a proud corvette owner and member of the Second Corps Cadets Veterans Group, asked the Corvette community to help support sick and injured troops who have given up so much.

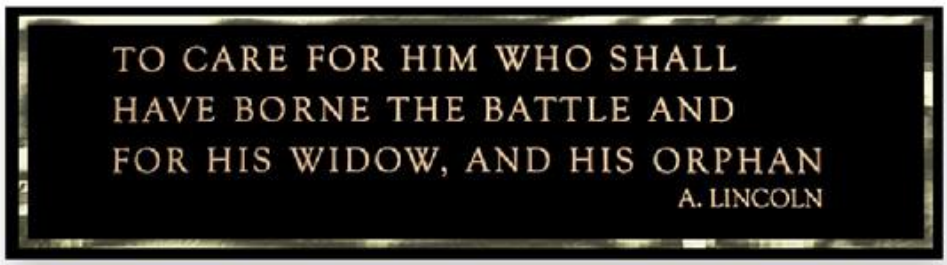
Over the years Vettes to Vets has grown and raised more than a half a million dollars for Veterans at the Bedford VA. The proceeds from this program are donated to improve the quality of life for Veterans at Bedford. Some examples include improvements to the Homeless Veterans Domiciliary and to the Veterans Greenhouse located at the Bedford VA.

Please consider supporting our nation's heroes. For more information on volunteer opportunities visit www.bedford.va.gov/giving/index.asp

Our Mission

Our Servicemembers and Veterans have sacrificed to keep our country - and everything it represents - safe.

We honor and serve those men and women by fulfilling President Lincoln's promise "to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow and his orphan."

We strive to provide Servicemembers and Veterans with the world-class benefits and services they have earned, and will adhere to the highest standards of compassion, commitment, excellence, professionalism, integrity, accountability, and stewardship.

Thank you for your service.
Now let us serve you.