Edith Nourse Rogers Memorial Veterans Hospital (Bedford VA)

Services for Veterans and Their Families

Click To see What’s New!
Bedford VA welcomes Joan Clifford, New Director

Clifford Brings Leadership, Proven Experience to Bedford VA

Bedford VA welcomes Dr. Joan Clifford as the new director of Edith Nourse Rogers Memorial VA Medical Center (Bedford VA).

“It is a privilege to join the Bedford VA; a team full of talented individuals doing great work for our nation’s heroes. Throughout my entire professional career I have worked for the Veterans Health Administration, and after working at the national level I am excited to be back in Massachusetts, my home state, where I will join you in serving Veterans every day. As a nurse, I am also thrilled to return to a hospital setting where I will be able to work with patients and staff to advance VA’s health care,” said Dr. Clifford.

Dr. Clifford most recently served as the Deputy Assistant Deputy Under Secretary for Health for Access to Care, Veterans Health Administration – Central Office (VHA-CO), Washington, DC. Clifford has held positions of increasing complexity within the Veterans Health Administration over the past twenty years, mostly within the VA Boston Healthcare System, recently as the Deputy Nurse Executive in the VA Boston multi-site tertiary care system. Clifford has served in several acting positions, tapped for her experience and leadership to fill critical vacancies.

Clifford is certified in healthcare management as a Fellow in the American College of Healthcare Executives (FACHE) and is also certified as an advanced nurse executive by the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC)

Clifford received a Doctor of Nursing Practice from Massachusetts General Hospital Institute for Health Professions, a Master of Science in Management from Emmanuel College in Boston and received a Bachelor of Science in Nursing from Salem State College, Salem, Mass.
Ambassador Program

Ambassadors are volunteers who are customer service specialists. Part of the Patient Experience initiatives nationally, they are the first in line to honor our Veterans and visitors, greeting them at the door, assisting with way finding and wheelchair transport.

If you need assistance, our Ambassadors will know how to help (or who to call if they don’t!) Consider becoming a volunteer ambassador today!

Contact Voluntary Service, 781-687-3076 or visit bedford.va.gov/giving
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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!
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, cut the ribbon on this new co-located service with VBA and Bedford VA.

Veterans who wish to video conference may visit Bedford VA’s Compensation Medical Exam Service 3rd floor of Bldg. 78, Suite 302K.

Scheduling:
Call 781-687-3801

Beginning, Wednesday, March 1, 2017, Bedford VA will provide access to Veterans Benefits Administration Veterans Service Representatives for service connection and compensation inquiries via video conferencing.

Representatives from the Boston Veterans Service Center (VSC) will be virtually available to provide general information and assistance on the claims process for Veterans. During the video conference, Veterans may receive information about the status of a submitted claim, ask questions regarding service connection/disability ratings, submit new claims, and print copies of their documents.

Veterans wishing to participate in a video conference may visit Bedford VA’s Compensation Medical Exam Service in building 78, room 302, Wednesday and Thursday from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. Veterans may also visit the Boston Veterans Service Center (VSC) for in-person assistance Monday –Friday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., no appointment necessary. The Boston VSC is located on the 16th floor of the JFK Federal Building at 15 Sudbury Street, Boston, MA.

To schedule an appointment with a Veterans Service Representative, or for general information about the Compensation and Pension program at Bedford VA, call 781-687-3801.
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 2016 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.

Contact Elizabeth Price for more information and schedule for next training: 781-687-3067.
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, 2016 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.

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](http://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.

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."
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](http://www.jointcommission.org). To see how we compare to non VA hospitals [check here](http://checkhere.com).

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](http://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

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

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 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.

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](http://www.va.gov/healthbenefits/enroll)

New Patient Information

Before attending your first appointment, you can learn more at [www.newengland.va.gov/newpatient.asp](http://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).

2016 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
To give Veterans, their families, and their caretakers yet another one-stop way to access VA information they need, we launched MyVA 311 (that’s 1-844-MyVA311), the new national VA toll free number for Veterans and their families. While existing VA numbers will remain active, the future vision is MyVA311 as the one-stop information service platform for all VA services.

At 1-844-MyVA311 (698-2311), Veterans, families, and caregivers can access information about VA services like disability, pension, health care eligibility, enrollment, and burial benefits, in addition to a self-service locator for the nearest medical center facility. And if they’re looking for help for homeless Veterans or Veterans in mental health crisis, MyVA311 will link callers to homeless Veteran help lines and the Veterans Crisis Line.

VETS.GOV

Vets.Gov (a work in progress), is improving Veterans’ access to their VA care. Naturally, VA worked with Veterans to design Vets.Gov and developed Vets.Gov “in the open” and new features are added weekly. Vets.Gov is in plain language, it’s 508 compliant by design to improve the VA experience for blind Veterans, and Vets.Gov is completely accessible with mobile devices many Veterans prefer.
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.

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 HealthVet

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

My HealthVet 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 HealthVet 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 HealthVet 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 MyHealthVet 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 MyHealthVet program manager, Charles Hillman at: 781 687 3619
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- 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 Guía 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 AT BEDFORD VA**

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 hotline 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**.

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**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**

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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)*
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)

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 team 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.
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 as 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.

  **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 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
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.
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.

MiniClinics 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 Public Affairs Office at 781-687– 4988.
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.

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

(left) Karen Acerra-Williams, cuts the ribbon with Jeff DeSilva, Certified Peer Specialist, at the new Education Resource Center that opened in February.

Also pictured, Dr. Dan Berlowitz, Chief of Staff; Donna Crossman, PhD, VITAL psychologist; Alisa Bennett, LICSW, VITAL Program Manager; and Dr. Charles Drebing, Mental Health Service Line Manager.

The Education Resource Center, is located in Building 80, Room 102A, and provides Veterans with access to educational resources.
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 psychotherapy 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.


PTSD Groups
Seeking Safety - for the treatment of individuals who suffer from both PTSD and substance abuse ~ Cognitive Processing Therapy for PTSD ~ Beginning 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

Drop In Groups

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 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

“\textit{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
Let us introduce ourselves:

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

Tony Russo, CPS
781-687-2000 x3322

Steve Hines
781-687-3173

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

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

CRCT peers are friendly, knowledgeable Veterans who assist other 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 every step of the way!

Community Recovery Connections Team

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
Couples and Family Therapy

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

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

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

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.
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.

Coaching Into Care Resources

Need a hand helping a Veteran get into care? Reach out to us.

1-888-823-7458

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.
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) 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 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 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.
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 781-687-3426.

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
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 Cheryl Coviello, 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 partners with the Veterans Northeast Outreach Center, Inc. (VNOC) 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).

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 through the Supportive Services for Veteran Families Program to support very low-income Veteran families living in or transitioning to permanent housing. Referral process: Contact Kristi Ayer, 781-687-2506

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
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, OEF/OIF Combat Veterans, female Veterans and Veterans with dependent children). Contact Ed Fleming, LICSW 781-687-2375 for more information.

You fought for our homes.

We’ll fight for yours.

The words homeless and Veteran should never be used together.

Call VA’s toll-free hotline:

1-877-424-3838
(1-877-4AID-VET)

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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.

Read more here: http://www.bedfordgreenveteransapts.com/
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 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 at 413-992-7326 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. Call 781-687-3421 for more information about 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.

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 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.

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**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.

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

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

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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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 are 7:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. so please do not arrive later than 4:15 p.m. Thank you!
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 HealtheVet Program". The Bedford VA My HealtheVet 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](http://www.myhealth.va.gov) or contact the My HealtheVet 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
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, 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 care 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:**

- **Facility Telehealth Coordinator**
  - Anita Bonna, 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, 781-687-3426.

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

Table Of Contents: Wellness and Family

Wellness
A Mindful Approach to Wellness
Local Farmer’s Markets, Community Gardens
Creative Art Therapies
Fitness Center
Golden Age Games
MOVE!
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Recreation Therapy
Smoking / Tobacco Cessation

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!

DISCLAIMER 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 external links are here at the Veterans’ request for convenience only.

Bedford VA and Greater Boston Food Bank are pleased to host a monthly free produce market for Veterans! Participants are encouraged to pre-register for the market by filling out a form in your clinic or by calling at 781-687-2342. There is no income restriction for participation in the free market. Please bring reusable grocery bags, baskets, or a cart to carry your food. See you there!

Local Farmer’s Markets

Arlington | Bedford | Burlington | Billerica | Carlisle | Lexington | Winchester | Woburn

Community Garden Plots

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

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

Bedford Minuteman Bikeway
Trail Map

See also, Wellness
Fitness Center

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.

*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.

### GYM HOURS*
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<tr>
<th>Day</th>
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<tr>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td>CLOSED</td>
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<td>Monday</td>
<td>8:00 a.m. - 7:30 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Saturday</td>
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Gym Phone: (781) 687-2118

### POOL HOURS*
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<tr>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td>CLOSED</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>11:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday</td>
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</table>

Pool Phone: 781-687-2297

*See also, Wellness*
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 Stillings, MA, AT  Creative Arts Therapist 781-687-3199
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](http://www.move.va.gov), or call the MOVE! Coordinator at 781-687-2342.

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

- Good Nutrition
- Therapeutic Diets
- Weight Management
- Diabetes Self-Management
- Bedford VA’s Free Monthly Farmer’s Market
- Local Farmer’s Markets
- MOVE!

See also, Wellness

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

Eat a variety of foods including vegetables, fruits, and whole grains.
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 Stillings 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 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 Stillings 781-687-3199.
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.
Geriatrics and Extended Care (GEC)

Table of Contents: Geriatrics and Extended Care

Adult Day Health Services
Caregiver Program
  Post 9/11 Caregivers
Community Living Centers (CLCs)
Geriatric Management Evaluation (GEM)
Geriatric Research Education & Clinical Center (GRECC)
Geriatric Psychiatry Unit (GPU)
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

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

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 781-687-3124
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 the 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.

**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

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

Ann McKee, MD Bedfords 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.
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

Education

Fellowship

Newsletters

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

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Mission
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!
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 non-governmental 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.

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.

Next Trainings are in Concord MA
Feb 21, or Feb 23, 017. Contact Elizabeth Price
For more information: 781-687-3067
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  “Building a Life” November 2016
Bedford VA Facebook Photo Album  for this event

Information about Bedford Green and VASH Housing
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 781-687-2732 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.”

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 wheelchair 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
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

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<tr>
<th>Sunday</th>
<th>9:00am</th>
<th>Protestant Worship Service - Chapel/Units</th>
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<tr>
<td>10:00am</td>
<td>Catholic Mass - Chapel</td>
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<td>10:30am</td>
<td>Interfaith Worship Service - Community Center (4C/D) Dining Room</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:00pm</td>
<td>Interfaith Worship Service at 78G</td>
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| 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

DISCLAIMER 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)

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

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<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Main Numbers</td>
<td>781-687-2000 or 1-800-838-6331 (800-VETMED1)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fax</td>
<td>781-687-2101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After Hours Mental Health Admissions</td>
<td><strong>781-687-4333</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benefits (Health Care)</td>
<td>1-877-222-8387</td>
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<tr>
<td>Coaching Into Care</td>
<td>(888) 823-7458</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homeless Hotline</td>
<td>877-424-3838 (877-4AID-VET)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Resources</td>
<td>781-687-2085 or 781-687-2219</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental Health Appointments, Inpatient Evaluations</td>
<td>781-687-2347</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MOVE!</td>
<td>781-687-2342</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patient Advocate</td>
<td>781-687-2612</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pharmacy</td>
<td>781-687-6231 or 781-687-5210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Affairs</td>
<td>781-687-4988</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Returning Veterans OEF/OIF/OND</td>
<td>781-687-3067</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shuttle Reservations</td>
<td>781-687-2505</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smoking Cessation</td>
<td>781-687-2250 or 781-687-3317</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urgent Care</td>
<td>781-687-2000 or 781-687-2275</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veterans Crisis Line</td>
<td>800-273-TALK (800-273-8255) PRESS 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voluntary Service</td>
<td>781-687-2352</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women Veterans Program</td>
<td>781-687-3021</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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. See also Patient Experience Liaisons

Feel free to call or stop by her office if you have any issues to discuss.
781-687-2612 Building 2, Room 139
Office Hours Monday through Friday 8 AM to 4:30 PM

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, groundbreaking 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, 781-687-4988.
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
Patient Experience Liaisons

The Service Line Patient Experience Liaison (SL-PEL) is available to help resolve service-specific concerns at Bedford VA. Veterans and family members are encouraged to call the liaisons by phone first in case they are not available at the location listed below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area of Responsibility</th>
<th>Phone</th>
<th>Location</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Billing (Non-CHOICE)</td>
<td>781-687-2805</td>
<td>B.15, 1st floor (No handicap access)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>781-687-2216</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comp and Pen</td>
<td>781-687-3754</td>
<td>B.78 Room 302K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>781-687-3802</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compensated Work Therapy</td>
<td>781-687-3192</td>
<td>B.9, Room 215A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>781-687-2785</td>
<td>B.9, Room 204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decedent Affairs/Commitments</td>
<td>781-687-2998</td>
<td>B.78 Room B08A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dental Clinic</td>
<td>781-687-2382</td>
<td>B.2, 2nd floor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domiciliary/Crescent House</td>
<td>781-687-2795</td>
<td>B.7, 2nd floor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eligibility</td>
<td>781-687-2597</td>
<td>B.78 Room 123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fee Basis (Non-CHOICE)</td>
<td>781-687-2996</td>
<td>B.15, 1st floor</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>No handicap access, call ahead</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Records/Release of Information</td>
<td>781-687-2097</td>
<td>B.78 Room B08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit 78G</td>
<td>781-687-3235</td>
<td>B.78, 4th floor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental Health Inpatient</td>
<td>781-687-2122</td>
<td>B.78, 2nd floor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental Health Outpatient</td>
<td>781-687-2122</td>
<td>B.78, 2nd floor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MyHealthVeT</td>
<td>781-687-4660</td>
<td>By Appointment Only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nutrition (Inpatient)</td>
<td>781-687-2259</td>
<td>B.4 Room B28B, B28D</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>781-687-2685</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Pharmacy</td>
<td>781-687-3556</td>
<td>B.78 Room B16</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>781-687-5210</td>
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<tr>
<td>Primacy Care/CBOC</td>
<td>800-838-6331 Option 2</td>
<td>B.78, 1st floor or CBOC</td>
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<tr>
<td>Privacy Officer</td>
<td>781-687-2109</td>
<td>B.15, 2nd floor</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>No handicap access, call ahead</td>
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<tr>
<td>Police</td>
<td>781-687-2404</td>
<td>B.78 Room B-9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Work Service HUD-VASH</td>
<td>781-687-2355</td>
<td>B.7, Room B15A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>781-983-3700</td>
<td>B.9, Room 136A (T &amp; Th)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialty Clinics</td>
<td>781-687-2395</td>
<td>By Appointment Only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homeless Veterans Walk-in Clinic</td>
<td>781-687-2374</td>
<td>B.7 Room 208</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VMHAP/Roger's House</td>
<td>781-687-2030</td>
<td>B.2, 2nd floor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Women's Health (non-GYN concerns)</td>
<td>781-687-3426</td>
<td>B.78 Room 302G</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If further assistance is needed or the Service Line Patient Experience Liaison is unavailable, concerns may be directed to: **Tracy Claudio, Patient Representative Building 2 Room 139. 781-687-2612**
# SHUTTLE SCHEDULE

Mon-Fri (excluding Federal Holidays)

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

## Bedford/Jamaica Plain

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEAVES</th>
<th>ARRIVES</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>8:00 a.m.</td>
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<td>Jamaica Plain</td>
<td>9:15 a.m.</td>
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## Bedford/Lynn Shuttle

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<td>Lynn</td>
<td>8:45 a.m.</td>
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## Bedford/Haverhill Shuttle

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<td>8:45 a.m.</td>
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## Bedford/Gloucester

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## Bedford/Lowell/VCCC

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<tr>
<td>Gloucester</td>
<td>2:00 p.m.</td>
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## Bedford/Lowell/VCCC

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<tr>
<td>Bedford</td>
<td>1:30 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jamaica Plain</td>
<td>1:30 p.m.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Bedford/Lynn Shuttle

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEAVES</th>
<th>ARRIVES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bedford</td>
<td>2:00 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lynn</td>
<td>3:00 p.m.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Bedford/Haverhill Shuttle

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEAVES</th>
<th>ARRIVES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bedford</td>
<td>2:15 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haverhill</td>
<td>2:00 p.m.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Bedford/Gloucester

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEAVES</th>
<th>ARRIVES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bedford</td>
<td>2:15 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gloucester</td>
<td>3:15 p.m.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Bedford/Lowell/VCCC

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEAVES</th>
<th>ARRIVES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Crescent</td>
<td>2:00 p.m.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## 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

I’m not just a mental health professional.
I’m helping Veterans build fuller, richer lives.

As a Department of Veterans Affairs employee and an Olympic medal winner, I know the real champions are those who have served this country. And so does VA. Want to learn more? Visit VAcareers.va.gov

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 Chief
Alex Loverme  781-687-2576
Bedford VA benefits from the services of over 500 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. We currently need Ambassadors for our Greeting, Escort and Information Desk and Escorts for Special Events to bring the Veterans from their room to special performances.

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

Donating just got easier!

Make a difference: E-Donate
Contributions can now be made via any online connection or click here! THANK YOU!
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 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.