

**NORTHPORT VA
MEDICAL CENTER
PATIENT
HANDBOOK**

Including:

Telephone Directory for Patients
Transportation Choices in Nassau and Suffolk

(631) 261-4400

2006

PE # 20-06

A Special Welcome to New Patients!

We are glad that you have chosen to seek healthcare at the Northport VA Medical Center. We look forward to serving your needs. You might find the following information useful:

Page
1

Primary Care

Please bring to your first appointment:

- A list of your medical problems, past surgeries and hospitalizations
- Reports from other doctors, e.g. most recent lab test results, EKG, stress tests, physical exam, dates of immunizations

Dual Care (having healthcare providers in the VA and in the community) 3

Pharmacy Services

Eligibility

Veterans Benefits

Billing

Emergency Care

Pain Management

Classes for Patients (and Caregivers):

- Living Well with Chronic Conditions
- Diabetes Self-Management Education
- Mini-Med School
- MOVE (for overweight patients)
- Smoking Cessation Classes

VISN 3 NURSE TRIAGE TOLL-FREE PHONE NUMBER CALL ANYTIME

If you have questions about new symptoms, treatments you can do at home, your medications or tests, or want general health information, call a Nurse any time. After talking with you, the nurse will inform your team by computer that you have called with a concern and received advice.

1 - 800 - 877 - 6976

VISIT THESE VA WEBSITES:

- Northport VAMC www1.va.gov.visns/visn03/nptinfo.asp
- VISN 3 www.vaww.visn3.med.va.gov
- National VHA www.va.gov
- MyHealthVet www.myhealth.va.gov

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PAGE

I. INTRODUCTION AND CUSTOMER SERVICE STANDARD.....1

II. AMBULATORY CARE HEALTH ALLIANCE (ACHA).....1

Primary Care 1

Specialty Care 2

Dual Care - Having both A VA and a non-VA doctor 2

Women's Primary Care 4

Hoptel 4

III. PHARMACY SERVICES..... 4

IV. ELIGIBILITY..... 6

Champ-VA and Tri-Care

V. VETERANS BENEFITS..... 7

VI. BILLING 7

VII. EMERGENCY CARE..... 9

Call 911 if you have warning signs of heart attack or stroke!

VISN 3 Nurse Help line 1- 800 - 877- 6976

VIII. INPATIENT CARE.....10

Available services in the hospital 12

Discharge Planning 13

Discharge against medical advice 15

IX. CONTINUING CARE..... 15

X. EXTENDED CARE..... 18

Geriatric Evaluation and Management Program 18

Short Stay Program 18

Respite Care Program	18
Palliative Care Program	18
Nursing Home Care	19
XII. MENTAL HEALTH CARE	19
XIII. GENERAL INFORMATION.....	21
Advance Care Planning:	
Advance Directives	21
Do Not Resuscitate (DNR)	22
Organ Donation	22
Ethics Advisory Committee	22
Confidentiality/Medical Records (HIPAA)	23
Informed Consent	23
MyHealtheVet Website for Veteran patients	23
MOVE program for weight reduction	24
Pain Management	24
Patient and Family Education	25
Classes for Patients, Families and Visitors	25
Health Information on the Internet	28
Patient Library	29
Patient Advocate/ Representative	32
Patient Rights and Responsibilities	30
Speak up. Be a Partner in your Healthcare (JCAHO)	33
XIII. SERVICES.....	36
Ambulatory Surgery	36
Audiology & Speech Pathology Service	36
Canteen Service	36
Chaplain Service	37

Dental Service	37
Laboratory Service	38
Neurology Service	38
Nuclear Medicine Service	38
Nursing Service	38
Nutrition and Food Service	38
Optometry Service	39
Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation Service	39
Prosthetics and Sensory Aids	39
Radiology Service	39
Recreation Therapy Service	39
Smoking Cessation Clinic	40
Social Work Service	40
Social Protective Services	41
Surgical Specialty Services	41
VISN 3 Nurse Triage Toll-Free Phone Number	41
Visual Impairment Services	41
Voluntary Services	42
XIV. VA REGULATIONS.....	42
Parking Regulations	43
No Smoking Policy	43
Safety	43
XV. TRANSPORTATION INFORMATION FOR PATIENTS	44
Directions to Northport VAMC	44
Public Transportation Serving Northport	44
Disabled American veterans (DAV) Transportation	44

VA Shuttle	44
XVI. TRANSPORTATION CHOICES IN NASSAU AND SUFFOLK	45
XVI. TELEPHONE DIRECTORY FOR PATIENTS	49
Local Hotel Options for Patients and Families	60
Map of Buildings and Parking Lots	61

I. INTRODUCTION

Our mission is to improve your health by providing primary care, specialty care, mental health services, extended care, and related social support services in an integrated healthcare delivery system. We strive to demonstrate, by attitude and actions, the qualities of courtesy, friendliness, compassion and concern for you and your family. We will also respect your cultural, social, and spiritual values. When you review our Customer Service Standards, you will see how they reflect these goals.

In order for us to respond to your unique needs and expectations, we encourage you to be a partner – with your providers and team, in your healthcare plan. We believe that patients who understand and participate in their care achieve better results. If you have any questions about any aspects of your care, please contact your treatment team.

Customer Service Standards

1. We will treat you with courtesy and dignity.
2. We will provide you with timely access to healthcare.
3. One healthcare team will be in charge of your care.
4. We will involve you in decisions about your healthcare.
5. We will strive to meet your physical comfort needs.
6. We will provide support to meet your emotional needs.
7. We will take responsibility for coordinating your care.
8. We will try to provide information and education about your health care in ways that you will understand.
9. We will provide the opportunity to involve your family in your care when appropriate.
10. We will provide for a smooth transition between your inpatient and outpatient care.

Ambassadors (in green jackets) are stationed at the Information Desk in the lobby of the Primary/Specialty Care Pavilion to assist with directions and to provide information. Wheelchairs for use during clinic visits are available from the Ambassadors.

II. AMBULATORY CARE HEALTH ALLIANCE (ACHA)

PRIMARY CARE – BUILDING A PARTNERSHIP IN HEALTH CARE

Northport VA Medical Center's award-winning Primary Care Program provides accessible and comprehensive care that is coordinated by a team of healthcare professionals on whom you may rely for consistent, high quality treatment.

Each of the Blue, Yellow and Red Primary Care teams consist of:

Medical Physicians	Physician Assistants	Nurse Practitioners	Social Workers
Dietitians	Psychologists	Nurses	Clinic Managers and Clerks

Outpatient Clinics in the Primary/Specialty Pavilion are open Monday through Friday between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., except for Federal holidays. An evening Primary Care clinic is available on Wednesdays between 5:00 and 8:00 p.m.

How will I be able to contact my provider?

You will be assigned to one of the Primary Care teams – Red, Blue or Yellow. There is no difference between the teams; they simply provide a way for you to see the same staff on each visit.

Red Team..... (631) 754-7978

Blue Team..... (631) 754-7948

Yellow Team..... (631) 754-7973

What should I do if I can't keep a scheduled appointment?

Please call your team and cancel appointments if you cannot keep them so that another veteran may use that time.

What if I need new prescriptions or medical care?

If you need new prescriptions or medical care between scheduled visits, you may call your Primary Care Team for a prompt appointment. Should you run out of medications before your next scheduled appointment, **call the Pharmacy Call Center (631) 266-6068**. You will receive enough of the medication to last until your scheduled appointment. In order to continue to receive medications from the VA, you will have to see your Provider.

COMMUNITY-BASED OUTPATIENT CLINICS (CBOCs)

Primary Care is also available at clinics in the community, from 8:00 AM - 4:30 PM:

- Plainview Clinic** 1425 Old Country Road, Building H, Plainview Monday through Friday
- Westhampton Clinic** Gabreski Air Force Base, 150 Old Riverhead Road, Westhampton Beach
Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday
By appointment only; no walk-ins on an active military base.
- Patchogue Clinic** 4 Phyllis Drive, Patchogue. Monday through Friday

If you would prefer to receive Primary Care services at one of these sites, please discuss this with your Provider or clinic clerk. Please be aware that CBOC patients must come to Northport for specialty clinic appointments, most lab tests, X-rays, etc.

SPECIALTY CARE

The Medical Center provides over twenty-five Specialty Clinics in the Pavilion and Building 200 on weekday mornings and afternoons from 8:00 - 4:30 PM. Your Primary Care provider must refer you to these clinics. Pick up a Visitor Guide at the Pavilion Lobby desk, showing the days, times and locations of each clinic.

DUAL CARE - HAVING A VA AND ALSO A NON-VA DOCTOR.

Our goal is to make sure you receive quality care that meets your needs and is appropriate and safe. Your VA provider is willing to work with you and your non-VA doctors to provide and coordinate your health care. If you seek treatment from both the VA and a non-VA doctor, your care is called "dual care".

Your VA provider is responsible for your care within the VA system. He or she will prescribe medications for you and order the tests needed to monitor the effects of your medications.

If I want Dual Care, what do I need to do?

1. You must be enrolled in the VA and assigned to a VA Primary Care provider or specialist who is responsible for your general health care.
2. You must tell both your non-VA doctor and your VA provider that you want your care coordinated.
3. You must ensure that the VA has access to your outside health records. You will need to complete a "Release of Information" form with your non-VA doctor, who should forward your records to the VA.
4. You should provide the VA with the name, address and phone number of all your non-VA doctors. This information will be placed in your health record. You should also give your non-VA doctor the name, phone number, and address of your VA provider. A business card would be ideal.
5. You should make sure that your VA provider knows about every visit with your non-VA doctor or specialist.
6. You must continue to pay all charges for care provided by your non-VA doctor and also pay the VA co-pays.
7. Some medications involve higher risks and can only be used safely with close monitoring. Examples include warfarin, lithium, anti-arrhythmic agents, chemotherapy and new thyroid medications. The VA will only dispense these medications if you take the necessary monitoring tests.
8. These monitoring tests must be done at the VA except under unusual circumstances. If they must be done somewhere else, the VA will need written results from you so that we can be assured that the medications are being used safely.

What is the role of my VA provider in "dual care"?

Your VA provider will review the health records that you provide from your non-VA doctor.

VA providers will see you regularly as needed, to provide safe care. If your VA provider agrees with your non-VA doctor's assessment and treatment plan, your VA provider will order your medications, so long as they are on the VA drug formulary. If

you prefer to use a non-formulary drug but your VA provider believes that a formulary drug is just as good, you will have to have your prescription filled outside the VA at your own expense.

Your VA provider may advise changes in your treatment plan.

Your VA provider will not order any medication that may be unsafe for you. This could occur if you are not taking the monitoring tests or not keeping your appointments.

Your VA provider will ask you to provide updates on any care you receive from your non-VA doctor, as well as any vitamins and herbals that you take.

Your VA provider may refer you to a VA specialist for evaluation.

WOMEN'S PRIMARY CARE

The Women Veterans Health and Wellness Center includes the Women's Health Resource Room, Building 200, on the 4th Floor. It provides:

Primary Care Mammography Gynecology Women's Support Groups
Counseling for Sexual Trauma Experiences, Domestic Violence and Post Traumatic
Stress Disorder

The Women Veterans Health Program focuses on health promotion and total wellness provided through screening, education, preventive and comprehensive care, and referral to counseling services. Care is provided in a nurturing environment that maintains dignity, privacy, and confidentiality. For more information, please contact the Women Veterans Coordinator at (631) 544-5314.

Women Veteran's Advocate: Members of the Women Veterans Advisory Committee volunteer to act as special advocates for women patients. Ask a staff member to contact this advocate for you at ext.5314.

HOPTEL

The HOPTEL provides temporary lodging at the Medical Center on a short-term basis for veteran patients who are receiving time-limited outpatient medical care and who have a travel hardship. The stay is usually limited to a few nights, except for patients who are having some types of long-term outpatient medical care (e.g. radiation therapy). No medical, nursing, or other clinical staff are on-site in the HOPTEL to handle medical issues that arise; therefore, HOPTEL guests must be independent in their care, or bring their caregiver. Temporary lodging in HOPTEL is also available to family members of veteran inpatients who are traveling a great distance to the Medical Center and are from out of town, as well as families of terminally or critically ill inpatients. The Medical Center provides meals at no cost in the Veterans Dining Room for veterans and families/caregivers staying in HOPTEL. For more information, contact your unit or program Social Worker or call extension 7029.

Some local hotels are listed at the end of this Handbook, as options to Hoptel for families.

III. PHARMACY SERVICES

To receive medications from the VA, a veteran must be screened for eligibility, enrolled in the VA healthcare system, assigned to a medical team and examined by a VA provider (doctor, nurse practitioner or physician assistant).

Only prescriptions written by a VA provider can be filled at the VA Pharmacy. Your provider will enter most prescriptions into the computer and it will be mailed to your home. However, **if you are picking up a new prescription, you must speak with a Pharmacist** (in your clinic or) in the Outpatient Pharmacy waiting room in the Pavilion, area 1-D, or else your prescription will be delayed. Take a number to be served. The Pharmacist will review and process your prescription(s) and counsel you on the medications. Please wait while your new prescription(s) are filled. You can pick them up at the dispensing window when your name appears on the television monitors located in the Pharmacy waiting area and in Café 200.

Please note: The law prevents the VA Pharmacy from taking back any medications dispensed to you. Therefore, when your provider orders medications for you, be sure to let them know if you prefer to buy over-the-counter medications such as aspirin and vitamins at a local pharmacy (probably at less than the co-pay for a month's supply).

REFILL prescriptions are sent by mail and filled by our Consolidated Mail out Pharmacy (CMOP) based in Massachusetts. Refills may be requested in four ways:

- Call 1-800-799-3023. This service is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Outside of New York State, call (631) 754-4989. Allow up to 10 days for delivery by mail.
- Mail the refill slip to: Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center, PO Box 9000, Northport, NY 11768-9000.
- Drop off your refill slip in the wooden box on the wall outside of the Outpatient Pharmacy Waiting area. The refill will be mailed to you.
- Go to MyHealthVet on the internet at www.myhealth.va.gov. Register, go to 'Pharmacy', click on 'Rx Refill' and click on the prescription numbers to be refilled and mailed to you.

Please request your refills at least 10-14 days before you will run out of the medication.

Please request to pick up your medications at the Pharmacy window ONLY if you are completely out of Medication or need a NEW prescription sooner than it will come in the mail. The Outpatient Pharmacy is open from 8 AM. - 6 PM, Monday through Friday.

If you have any questions about your medications, call the Pharmacy Call Center at (631) 266-6068. There is always a pharmacist available to answer questions. Please do not call this number to order refills.

MEDICATION DO'S AND DON'TS

DO ask your doctor, pharmacist or other health care professional about your prescription. Make sure you know the name of the medication, why it is being prescribed, and how and when it should be taken. Ask about potential side effects and what you should do if you experience any sort of reaction. Ask if he/she can provide you with any written information about medications.

DO make sure to provide your doctor or health care professional with a thorough medical history. Tell them about all of the medications (prescription and over-the-counter) you are now taking and have recently taken.

DO keep phone numbers for your doctor(s) and pharmacist handy, along with the numbers of your local EMS and poison control centers. Check your area for pharmacies that are open 24 hours a day in case of an emergency.

DO be sure to take your medicine as it is prescribed and for the full length of time as directed by your doctor. **DON'T** stop taking your medication as soon as you think you feel better without first checking with your doctor.

DO talk to your doctor and pharmacist about the dosage of your medicine. Medications are sometimes given in different strengths or with different frequency. How certain drugs affect your body changes with age, so ask your doctor if it may be appropriate to reconsider dosages of drugs you've been taking for a long time.

DO contact your doctor or pharmacist immediately if you experience any unexplained side effects. **DON'T** take the next dose until you have consulted with one of these health care professionals.

DO store medications in their original containers from the pharmacy. Basic information about your medication is on the original container. Someone may accidentally take medicines that are not clearly identified. This can be dangerous.

DO keep all prescription medicines in a locked cabinet or in a spot well out of the reach of young children. Ask for child resistant safety closures and make sure that the caps of bottles are closed tightly. Teach your child that medications can be dangerous if misused.

DO ask your pharmacist how long the medication remains effective. **DON'T** take it after its expiration date.

DON'T begin taking a new prescription or over-the-counter remedy without first asking your doctor, pharmacist or other health care professional if it will interact with your other medications.

DON'T ever take another person's prescription or share your prescription medicines with anyone, even though they appear to have the same problem as you.

DON'T store capsules or tablets in the bathroom, near the kitchen sink, or in other damp places. Heat or moisture may cause the medicine to break down. Also, **DON'T** leave the cotton plug in a medicine container that has been opened, since it may draw moisture into the container.

DON'T store medicines in the refrigerator unless directed to do so. Keep liquid medicines from freezing. Also, store medicines away from heat and direct light.

DON'T take medicine in the dark, for example, when you wake up at night. You may think you know exactly what the bottle on your bedside table contains. Turn on your light to make sure.

IV. ELIGIBILITY

Enrollment in VA health care is determined annually. Most honorably discharged veterans are eligible for treatment. There may be a co-payment required based on income. For further information, please call the Health Benefits Advisor at ext. 2659 or Coordination of Benefits office, ext. 2661 or 5589.

CHAMP VA for Veteran's dependents

In 1973, the Civilian Health and Medical Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs (CHAMPVA) was established as a health benefits program for dependents of permanently and totally disabled veterans, survivors of veterans who died from service-connected conditions, or who at the time of death were rated permanently and totally disabled from a service-connected condition. Under CHAMPVA, VA shares the cost of covered medical services and supplies with eligible beneficiaries worldwide. Dependents must be 18 years and over and under 65 years of age in order to receive care at the VA. Once a dependent becomes eligible for Medicare, they are not eligible for medical care at a VA Medical Center. All services must be preauthorized by CHAMPVA prior to receiving care except for emergency treatment.

For information, call CHAMPVA toll free at 1-800-733-8387 or contact the Tricare Sharing Benefits Advisor at extension 2661.

TRICARE

Individuals are eligible for TRICARE if they are registered in the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS). The DEERS record will indicate the dates of eligibility. All uniformed service sponsors (active duty or retired) should ensure that their family status (marriage, divorce, new child, etc.) and residential address are current in DEERS. DEERS enrollment is completed in uniformed services personnel offices, not TRICARE service centers. For more information about DEERS, contact the Defense Manpower Data Center Support Office (DSO) Telephone Center from Monday through Friday, toll free at 1-888-999-5195. Or contact the VA Tricare Sharing Benefits Advisor at extension 2661.

V. VETERANS BENEFITS

Benefits Counselor/New York State Regional Office

Veterans' Benefits Counselors are available to answer questions about your VA benefits.
245 W. Houston, Street
New York, NY 10014 1-800-827-1000

New York State Division of Veteran's Affairs

(631) 266 - 6702 Fax (631) 266-6703
Monday- Friday Building 9, first floor, Room 120

Suffolk County Veterans Service Agency

(631) 853-8387 or (631) 853-VETS
100 Veterans Memorial Highway
Dennison Bldg. 3rd Floor
Hauppauge, New York 11788-0099

Nassau County Veterans Service Agency
(516) 572-8452 Information line
1425 Old Country Road, Bldg H
Plainview, New York 11803-5015

Disabled American Veterans/Northport VA Medical Center
Ext. 7260 Wednesdays 9:00 AM-2:00 PM; other days by appt only.
Building 9, first floor, Room 109

Long Island Chapter American Ex-POW's/Northport VA Medical Center
Ext. 7191 Tuesdays 9:00 AM-11:00 AM. Bldg 9, Room 107

Veterans of the Vietnam War
Ext 5459 Monday-Friday 8:30 AM - 2:30 PM Building 9, first floor, Room 116

VI. BILLING – MEDICAL CARE COST RECOVERY (MCCR)

Public Law 99-272 requires the VA to charge certain categories of Veterans for treatment and care of their non-service connected conditions. This includes co-payments for prescriptions, outpatient, inpatient and nursing home care. If the veteran is covered by medical insurance, by law the VA must seek reimbursement from the third party payer for his/her non-service connected care. Co-payments are assessed to certain veterans based on their income and eligibility.

Public Law 106-117, *The Veterans Millennium Health Care and Benefits Act*, allowed the VA to bill non-service connected medical care for service connected veterans rated 0% and certain non-service connected veterans (depending on income) a co-payment of \$15 for routine/primary care and \$50 for specialty care. Inpatients are charged the Medicare deductible for the first 90 days of care and 50% of the Medicare deduction for each subsequent 90-day periods of care. In addition, a \$10 per day is charged for inpatient care. The amount charged changes each calendar year.

Veterans referred for extended care services will also be assessed to determine if the veteran is subject to the Long Term Care Co-payment. A \$97 per diem charge is also billed for Nursing Home Care, which is based on an annual income assessment.

In 2006, veterans in Priority Group 2 through 8 pay an \$8 co-payment for each 30 day or less supply of medication. This co-pay applies to non-service connected veterans and service connected veterans rated less than 50%, when prescribed for

treatment of non-service connected conditions. Veterans in Priority Groups 2-6 will have an annual cap of \$960 for VA outpatient medications.

The law prevents the VA Pharmacy from taking back any medications dispensed to you. When your provider orders medications for you, be sure to tell them if you prefer to buy over-the-counter medications such as aspirin and vitamins at a local pharmacy, most likely for less than \$ 8 for a month's supply. Otherwise you will be billed for them.

If your medical care and prescriptions are covered by insurance, the cost of care, as established by law, is billed first to the carrier. The reimbursement received from the carrier is then credited to the veteran's co-payment. The veteran will then be responsible only for any remaining balance. Co-payment charges will remain on hold for 90 days awaiting information or payment from the insurance carrier. Please note that by law we are unable to bill Medicare; however we do bill secondary or supplementary carriers.

For more information please refer to the most current ***Billing Guidelines, Long Term Care co-payment regulations*** and other handouts in the clinic areas.

The Medical Care Cost Recovery (MCCR) staff will assist you with information about health insurance and billing by the VA. In order to serve your needs and assure that billing is appropriate and correct, please update your insurance, home address, telephone number, employment status, and financial information as changes occur.

Customer Service/ Billing Inquiries

In-Person: Building 10, Room 105
Building 200, 1st Floor next to the Co-pay Teller.
Monday to Friday from 8:00 AM – 4:30 PM
Phone: (631) 266- 6045 or 1- 888-440-9587

Coordination Of Benefits, Insurance Updates and Pre-Certification

In-Person: Building 200, First Floor, next to the Co-payment Teller
Phone: (631) 261-4400 ext. 5589 or 5520 Monday to Friday from 8:30 AM – 4:30 PM

Central Intake

To Update your address, insurance or financial information Central Intake
In Person: Building 200, Admissions Area
Phone: (631) 261-4400 ext 2661

VII. EMERGENCY CARE

If you cannot wait for your next clinic appointment because of a serious health condition, the Emergency Room (Building 200) is open 24 hours everyday. However we encourage you to contact your Primary Care team before going to the ER. Ask for the nurse to report such problems as fever, vomiting, an ear infection, a sore throat a sudden rash or insect bites. You might be able to be seen by your own provider or another member of

your team that same day or the next day. Please do not go to the ER for non-emergent problems or for new prescriptions or refills.

Do call 911 (or if you are very close to the Northport VAMC, go to the ER) with sudden difficulty breathing, severe bleeding, chest pain, seizures, deep cuts, broken bones, poisoning from chemicals, a drug overdose or sudden severe headache.

Long Island's Poison Control Center 1 -800 – 222 - 1222

Go to the ER with any mental health crisis. If not an emergency, you may call or walk in to the Mental Health clinic in Building 64 on weekdays from 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM.

(631) 261 – 4400 x 2207

If you have the warning signs of heart attack or stroke or other potentially serious symptoms, **call 911 and tell the ambulance driver that you have chest pain or signs of a stroke.** Driving yourself to the hospital or driving farther to the VA can delay care! It's too dangerous for you and other drivers.

Heart Attack Warning Signs

- Uncomfortable pressure, fullness, squeezing or pain anywhere in the chest lasting more than a few minutes
- Pain spreading to the shoulder, neck, both arms, stomach or back.
- Chest discomfort with lightheadedness, fainting, sweating, nausea or vomiting, or shortness of breath
- Chest discomfort with a feeling of doom or threat of death

Along with symptoms common to men, women may have other symptoms such as:

- Shortness of breath without chest pain
- Pain in lower part of chest

If you have any of the above warning signs **take one plain aspirin.**

Stroke Warning Signs (Not all of these signs occur in every attack)

- Sudden numbness or weakness of the face, arm, or leg, especially on one side
- Sudden trouble seeing in one or both eyes
- Sudden trouble walking, dizziness, loss of balance or coordination
- Sudden severe headache with no known cause

Sudden confusion, trouble speaking, or understanding. If you have any of the warning signs of stroke, **DO NOT take aspirin.**

Don't delay!! Don't be afraid to admit that it could be a heart attack or stroke.

Don't be embarrassed about causing a false alarm.

Call 911 if you have early signs of a heart attack, stroke, poisoning or other life threatening illness. Tell the ambulance driver to take you to the nearest hospital. Do not drive farther to the VA Emergency room! Call 911.

VISN 3 Nurse Help Line 1 - 800 - 877 – 6976

For general health information and questions about symptoms, treatments you can do at home, diseases, medications or tests, call the Nurse at any time. The nurse will inform your team by computer that you have called with a concern and received advice.

VIII. INPATIENT CARE

What to Bring to the Hospital

- Pajamas, bathrobe, non-skid slippers, toothbrush and toothpaste, an electric razor, and a list of the medications that you are currently taking.

Do Not Bring:

- Firearms, weapons, ammunition, expensive jewelry, alcoholic beverages, medications or drugs of any sort. Failure to adhere to this regulation may result in your being discharged.
- Portable television, radios, hair dryers and other electrical appliances.
- Any more than \$200.00 in cash. See Patient Funds, under Services, below.

Please note: The Medical Center cannot be held responsible for money or personal belongings that you choose to keep in your possession.

For your safety in the hospital....

We strongly encourage you to stay on your unit. Leaving the unit could result in missed or delayed visits by your care team, medications, tests, treatments or meals. You should not leave the unit if you have an IV with chemotherapy or blood, have just had a treatment, feel weak or dizzy, etc. For your safety and to assure that you receive the very best care, please inform the staff if you must leave the unit.

Infection Control

Patient Safety goal #7 is to prevent hospital associated infection. This is best accomplished by complying with hand hygiene guidelines. You should wash your hands whenever using the bathroom and before you eat or whenever your hands are dirty. Your health care providers should practice hand hygiene before and after they care for you. Some patients may be placed on isolation precautions if they have certain germs that may be spread to others and a sign will be placed outside the room stating what precautions must be taken. Please remind your visitors to wash their hands when they come to see you and when they leave.

No Smoking!

For the safety of others as well as your own, do not smoke in your room or in your bathroom or anywhere on the unit or inside the hospital buildings. For patients in acute care, non-compliance with the No-Smoking policy may result in discharge.

This may be a good time to quit smoking. Call x 2258 and ask about our **Smoking Cessation Clinic**. Receive free medications that can help you quit. There is no need to

register; just walk in. Every Wednesday afternoon at 1:00 PM in the Patient Education classroom, Pavilion area 1-D.

What to do in the case of fire

In case of fire, please follow the directions given by the staff. They will assist you in every possible way. Emergency fire exits and fire extinguishers are located throughout the Medical Center. Please review the “Safety Regulations” section of this Patient Handbook for more important safety information.

Please don't fall!

Your risk of falling is increased when you are sick and feeling weak or dizzy, in an unfamiliar place, on medications and surrounded by medical equipment. Tips to prevent falling include:

- Rise slowly from lying down or sitting. Sit for a minute on the side of your bed before standing.
- Call for help when you need something that is out of arm's reach, or need to get up and/or go to the bathroom. Go to the bathroom before you go to bed.
- Watch out for furniture and equipment in your way. Avoid leaning on furniture that might move.
- Wearing your shoes and socks rather than slippers when out of bed is recommended in order to prevent skids and injury to your feet. Use your cane or walker.
- Remember that staff want to help keep you safe. Work with us by allowing us to help you.

When someone asks you to sign a consent for treatment...

You have the right to be informed about, and to accept or refuse, any medical treatment or procedure. Be sure that you understand what the consent says. Do not hesitate to ask questions until you feel comfortable about what you are signing. If you do not understand it, ask someone to explain it to you. Do not assume that 'the staff knows what is best for you'. Make sure that you know what you are agreeing to!

Tell your doctor who your Health Proxy is, in the event that you cannot make a decision for yourself. Make sure that this person understands your wishes.

Do not take your own medications when in the hospital!

It could be dangerous to take medications that you have brought from home along with medications that are ordered for you when you are in the hospital. If you did bring medications to hospital, send them home with a visitor or give them to a nurse.

After all options are tried ... Restraints are a last resort

Illness can sometimes cause patients to become confused. Caring for someone who is confused or striking out can be difficult at times. This is especially true during hospitalization. Confused patients can fall and injure themselves, wander and get lost, or remove safety devices, tubes and IV lines. They sometimes hit or kick, injuring other patients, staff, family members and/or themselves.

Years ago nurses and doctors often placed confused patients in restraints to assure their safety. Over the years it was found that restraints themselves could cause some injuries. Now, all over the country, the standard is to limit the use of restraints.

What are restraints?

Restraints are devices used to restrict freedom of movement to prevent injury to patients or others. The most common types of restraints are:

- soft wrist restraints
- fabric vests
- a Geri-chair with a table top
- the bed with all side rails raised

Wrist and ankle restraints are used on rare occasions to control violent behavior and prevent injury. In Psychiatry, in the rare event that a patient loses control, a safe seclusion room may be used for a short period of time to protect him/her and others.

Who decides on the use of restraints?

A nurse or a doctor can make the decision to restrain a patient. Then a doctor sees the patient and writes an order for the patient to be restrained for only as long as needed.

As much as we try to be restraint-free at Northport VAMC, this is not always possible. At times, after weighing all the risks, restraints are necessary. Restraints are used only as a last resort, after all other options have been tried.

AVAILABLE SERVICES IN THE HOSPITAL

Barber Shop Lower level of Building 7 Shaves and haircuts are available for a nominal fee. Inpatients should make arrangements through the Unit Secretary.

Mail

Your family and friends may send flowers and mail to the following address:

Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center

Unit #

79 Middleville Road

Northport, New York 11768-2290

DO NOT HAVE CASH SENT THROUGH THE MAIL !!

Telephone Service

Bedside telephones are available on most units. Calls must be charged to a third party or an MCI account. You may use a calling card. Pay telephones are located on each floor of Building 200.

Television

Television service in your room in Building 200 and Day Rooms is provided at no cost to you. Choose channel 3 or 6 for VA and health information.

Visitors

Visiting hours are from 12 Noon to 8:00 p.m. Two (2) persons may visit a patient at once. Children under 12 are not permitted on the unit. Small children may wait in the Pavilion Lobby or the ER waiting area, provided an adult attends them.

Intensive Care Unit: 11:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. for 15 minutes on the hour.

Special arrangements will be made to accommodate visitors who cannot come within these hours.

Nutrition and Food Services

The diet prescribed by your physician is an important part of your medical care. The unit dietitian will counsel you about your diet during your hospital stay and at discharge.

It is important that you be on your unit at mealtime.

Any snacks from visitors or other sources should be labeled with your name and the date when placed in unit refrigerators, and will be discarded after 48 hours. Ask your dietitian for snacks that are appropriate for your diet.

The Patient Advocate and Patient Representative are available to help you and your family with problems that may occur during your hospital stay. If you are unable to resolve the problem with the staff and supervisor in the area, call ext. 5026 or 7009.

Patient's Funds – Lower Level of Building 200

You, or a family member on your behalf, may deposit funds for safekeeping in non-interest bearing accounts at the VAMC. Contact the Unit Secretary for further assistance.

Financial concerns

If you have financial concerns related to your admission or aftercare, contact a Coordination of Benefits advisor at ext. 2661 or 5589.

For **an interpreter**, contact Human Resources on weekdays, ext. 2734. On holidays, evenings, nights or weekend, call the Administrative Officer of the Day (AOD), ext. 2655.

DISCHARGE PLANNING

One of the major concerns of patients is *“what will happen when I am ready to leave the hospital?”* We understand your concern and would like to help you achieve your highest

level of recovery. We encourage you and your family to ask questions about your condition, treatment, and needs upon discharge, as partners in your continuing care.

Why is it important to plan for your discharge?

We know that patients recover faster when they know what will happen to them from the time of admission through discharge and return to home. You and your family will feel reassured knowing how your needs will be met as you move from one level of care to another.

It is never too early to begin thinking about your discharge from the hospital. Plans can be modified if your situation changes. Advance planning provides you with a chance to think about and adjust to changes that may become necessary following an illness. Starting early enables you to make informed decisions and involve those who are closest to you.

Who will help you?

Your discharge planning will be provided by an interdisciplinary group of professionals, consisting of your social worker, doctor, nursing staff, dietitian, pharmacist, and other health care staff. Team members work closely together to address your total care needs.

As the coordinator of your discharge plan, your **social worker** will assist you with any social, emotional, family and financial problems related to your illness, and will refer you and your family to community agencies, if needed. Your social worker is professionally trained and knowledgeable about community services and alternative living situations in the community. He or she can assist you to obtain these services and also address any financial concerns.

Your **doctor** will discuss your illness and treatment plan with you and your family and determine a time frame for discharge. Your doctor will:

- decide whether you will need to return to the outpatient clinic for follow-up after discharge
- write the order for your discharge from the hospital
- explain what you need to do to care for yourself after you leave the hospital
- give you phone numbers to call if you have questions after you get home
- write prescriptions and send them to the pharmacy.

Your **nurse** will teach you to do as much self-care as you are able to do at home. If you need nursing care after you leave the hospital, the Community Health Nurse Coordinator will:

- discuss home care services with a home nursing agency.
- review the plan for your care after discharge from the hospital, including your treatments.
- give you written information about your discharge plan.

- refer you to community hospice programs if needed.

Your **dietitian** will teach you about any special diet to be followed after discharge. You can also be referred to groups, classes or Nutrition Clinic for follow-up as an outpatient.

A **pharmacist** will talk to you in the Outpatient Pharmacy when you pick up your medications to take home. They will discuss your medications, how and when to take them, what to do if side effects occur, and what foods, drinks or other medications to avoid.

Going Home

The Treatment Team decides when you may go home. **Please be aware that it may be afternoon by the time you are ready to go.** Prior to your discharge, be sure that you understand all aspects of your illness, including self-care, medications, diet, and activity. Ask questions about any concerns and write down the date and time of any follow-up appointment.

Please do not leave without your medicines and having discussed them with your nurse or the pharmacist. You (or a family member) will need to pick up medicines or supplies at the Outpatient Pharmacy in the Pavilion, area 1-C near the main hallway into Building 200.

If you have questions after you get home, call this toll-free number 24 hours a day:

VISN 3 NURSE HELPLINE 1 - 800 - 877 - 6976

DISCHARGE AGAINST MEDICAL ADVICE

You have the right to leave the Medical Center against your doctor's advice. In this case, your treatment team will determine if you are competent to make this decision, and will advise you of the risks you are taking by leaving. If you leave against medical advice, this will be documented in your medical record.

IX. CONTINUING CARE

Continuity of care is provided through a variety of coordinated services – offered at the Medical Center or in the community – which eligible veterans can access in different ways depending upon the type of treatment and/or services they need. The Medical Center is committed to providing a customized treatment plan for all veterans - at the VA, through contracted health care services, or by referral to community providers at the veteran's expense.

Options for post-hospital and continuing care

Veterans often require some on-going care when they leave the hospital. Your needs upon leaving the hospital will depend on the severity and type of illness for which you

were hospitalized and who is available and able to care for you. Available services include:

- **Home Health Services** include community and private programs that provide medical, nursing and follow-up care in the home. Home care is available to veterans who are home bound with chronic diseases and/or who need assistance with daily activities such as bathing, dressing, feeding, walking etc., or need the services of a “visiting nurse” or physical or occupational therapist. The VA or Medicare/Medicaid or other third party insurance may pay for these services depending upon the coverage and criteria for either skilled or non-skilled home care.
- **Home Delivered Meals** can be provided by a social service agency or community group if you cannot cook for yourself.
- **Hospital Based Primary Care (HBPC)** is a VA program providing medical and related health care supervision to support patients in their homes (including patients with chronic conditions or terminal illness). To be eligible for this program, you must have a caregiver or can independently arrange care, be essentially homebound and live within 45 minutes of the VAMC. Participants are also eligible for respite services at the VA Medical Center.
- **Respite Care** provides supportive care to veterans on a short-term basis to give your caregiver a planned period of relief from the physical and emotional demands associated with providing care. It may help you to continue to live at home. You may receive respite care for 30 days in two-week blocks, in a given calendar year. Non Service-Connected veterans and non-compensable zero percent Service-Connected veterans may be subject to a co-payments.
- **Support Groups** at Northport VAMC offer a wide range of assistance for veterans and their families. Support groups may also be found in the community. Your social worker can assist you with referrals.
- **Comprehensive Day Treatment Services** provide intensive and supportive psychological treatment services five days a week to outpatients who have emotional and psychiatric problems. Services primarily involve group treatment and socialization in a therapeutic community atmosphere. However, individual and marital treatment is also available. The individual veteran’s needs determine the frequency of visits and the specific services.
- **Adult Day Care Programs** are community-based and provide a range of supervised activities including social, recreational and physical programs for the elderly. These services are especially useful for families unable to provide care or supervision during the day, or for those who live alone. Service-connected veterans are given priority status for acceptance into Adult Day Health Care (ADHC). The VA treatment team will review the care needs of all veterans on ADHC contracts every six months. Veterans who continue to meet eligibility criteria (need for significant personal care

services, need for skilled nursing services such as wound care, physical therapy, bowel and bladder care, etc) will continue to receive VA-paid ADHC services. Non service-connected veterans and non-compensable zero percent service-connected veterans may be subject to co-payments when the placement is paid by the VA contract.

- **Hospice/Palliative Care** is a concept of care for the terminally ill. This care at the end of life emphasizes patient comfort, offers relief from pain, emotional and spiritual support, and also education about the dying process, bereavement counseling and respite care to the family. Hospice/palliative care services can be offered in the patient's home by community agencies or at the Medical Center for those patients who meet criteria for this program.
- **Mental Health Care** provides a range of services and programs to assist veterans and their families with specialized assistance to cope effectively with emotional and psychological problems. These programs include Outpatient Mental Hygiene Clinic, PTSD Recovery Center, Substance Abuse Treatment Services, Comprehensive Day Treatment Program, Community Case Management, Health Psychology, Sexual Trauma Services and the L.I. Vets Center.
- **Residential care**
If you are unable to return to your home due to physical limitations or psychiatric disability and you have no available social supports, placement in a community home may be appropriate for you. Veterans use their own funds to pay for these placements. Veterans with insufficient funds will usually be eligible for Social Security.

Community Residences are privately operated, but are inspected and approved by the medical center for placement of veterans. The medical center refers veterans to over thirty community residences. Veterans should be able to care for themselves, but require supervision and medication monitoring. The VA monitors veteran's care in these residences.

Nursing Home Care

If you need more intensive care than can be provided at home or by family members, you may require care in a nursing home where physicians, nurses, social workers, physical therapists and other professionals provide specialized care. Your stay may be long or short term, depending upon your needs. Nursing home placements include:

- **VA Nursing Home Units:** Service-connected veterans are given priority status for these placements. VA facilities in the New York area include the Bronx, St. Albans and Northport.
(See also *Extended care*, p. 18e)
- **VA Contract Nursing Homes:** The VA may pay for up to 31 days of care for non-service connected veterans when the veteran is transferred from an inpatient unit at

the VA Medical Center. For service-connected veterans, the contract may be indefinite. You will need to apply for Medicaid to cover the cost of care following expiration of the contract. To allow sufficient time for their processing, Medicaid applications need to be initiated before you are accepted into the home. Non service-connected veterans and non-compensable zero percent service-connected veterans may be subject to co-payments when the placement is paid by the VA contract.

- ***Medicare/Medicaid or Private Payment Nursing Home Care:*** The nursing home costs are paid through either of these means depending on your situation.
- ***State Veteran's Homes:*** In our immediate NY downstate area, State homes are located in Stony Brook, and on the VA campuses at St. Albans, Queens and Montrose, NY. State Nursing Homes are certified to accept Medicare and Medicaid for payment.

Services for homeless Veterans

The VA Homeless Services Program provides an integrated continuum of housing and psychosocial services to eligible veterans who are homeless, or at risk for homelessness. Services include comprehensive assessment, client-centered treatment planning, ongoing case management, and referral to a wide variety of VA and community-based programs. Help is available in finding emergency, transitional and permanent housing, applying for VA and non-VA benefits, obtaining employment, and accessing VA healthcare. The following specialized programs and services are available within the Health Care for Homeless Veterans (HCHV) continuum of care:

- ***Contract Emergency and Transitional Housing*** at The Salvation Army Northport Veterans Residence located in Bldg. 11 on the Northport VAMC campus.
- ***Referral to the Community Based Residential Recovery Program***, a 122 - bed transitional housing program in the community offering group housing to homeless veterans completing medical center substance abuse treatment programs.
- ***Participation in the PRIDE Project***, a specialized program for veterans in VA outpatient treatment for substance abuse issues in receipt of public assistance in Suffolk and Nassau Counties and involved in the VA Vocational Rehabilitation Program.
- ***Attendance at the Legal Assistance Workshop***, a monthly program offering education regarding legal issues and legal resources for low-income veterans in our immediate area.
- ***Referral to other VISN 3 Homeless Programs*** offering specialized care and services. Your Social Worker will work with you and the hospital team to coordinate arrangements for your aftercare, whether returning home or transferring to another health care facility. Your Social Worker will advise you of the particular details of

your discharge and discuss any concerns you and your family may have about your changing health care needs or style of living.

X. EXTENDED CARE

The Geriatric Evaluation and Management Program (GEM)

The GEM program utilizes an interdisciplinary approach to evaluate and treat problems of the elderly. Its goals are to improve the veteran's level of physical and psychological function and to find and treat previously undetected problems. The veteran must have the mental capacity to learn new skills. Emphasis is placed on meeting all the veteran's needs and discharging patients to home. The usual length of stay on the GEM unit is 4 weeks or less.

Short Stay Unit (SSU)

The Short Stay Unit program uses an interdisciplinary approach to the treatment of the elderly.

Its goals are to improve the veteran's level of function, to complete initiated treatment, palliative care, and implementation of discharge plan. Emphasis is on discharging patients to home or a facility other than a Skilled Nursing Facility (SNF). The usual length of stay on the Short Stay Unit is 60-90 days.

Respite Program

The Respite program provides chronically ill veterans with short-term stays in a nursing home unit in order to support and relieve their caregivers and help the veteran to continue to live at home. Contact the Nurse Manager, NHC IV, ext. 7449 or your Primary Care team's Social Worker. (See also Continuing Care)

Palliative Care Unit

The Palliative Care program provides terminally ill patients who have completed desired and definitive treatment, with a supporting, understanding, and sustaining setting. Its goal is to help patients to live free from pain and symptoms.

For the programs above, all patients must meet the eligibility criteria for long term care and will be assessed regarding LTC co-payment prior to evaluation for the program. (Please refer to the insert in this handbook.) An exception may be made for patients requiring Palliative Care.

Nursing Home Care

The purpose of the Nursing Home Care unit is to provide compassionate and expert care in order to restore and preserve the health of the Veteran. The interdisciplinary team will develop a treatment plan with the veteran and his/her family. This plan is flexible and

will change with the patient's changing needs. Veterans must meet eligibility criteria (please refer to the Eligibility section) and demonstrate clinical need for this service.

XI. MENTAL HEALTH CARE

Northport VAMC provides a full continuum of mental health care that includes diverse inpatient, outpatient and community- based treatment programs. We recognize that each veteran's mental health needs are unique and his/her plan of care is specifically developed to address his/her personal care needs. These services include:

- Comprehensive Day Treatment Program/Center
- Health Psychology
- Vocational Rehabilitation
- Substance Abuse Residential Rehabilitation Treatment Program (SARRTP)
- Mental Health Intensive Case Management
- Acute Inpatient Services
- Emergency Treatment
- Substance Abuse Treatment

Mental Health Clinics in the Medical Center and in the Community

A team of mental health professionals, including physicians, nurses, social workers, and psychologists provide medication management, supportive therapy, and individual therapy. Support groups are available for special issues, as well as family or couples therapy. If you think the Mental Health Clinic would be helpful to you, please speak with your physician. A walk-in clinic is also available in Building 64, first floor for semi-emergent services. If you would like to schedule an appointment, please call extension 2207 or 2208.

Community-Based Outpatient Clinics (CBOC's)

Mental Health Services are also available in the community from 8:00 AM – 4:30 PM:

Lynbrook Clinic--235 Merrick Road, Lynbrook --Monday and Thursday

Riverhead Clinic--89 Hubbard Avenue, Riverhead -- Monday

Lindenhurst Clinic-- 560 N. Delaware Avenue, Lindenhurst -- Tuesday

Patchogue Clinic--4 Phyllis Drive Patchogue--Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday

Plainview Clinic--1535 Old Country Road, Plainview--Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday

Islip Clinic--39 Nassau Avenue, Islip -- Wednesday

Substance Abuse Treatment Center

Veterans who need treatment for the disease of addiction may contact the Access Care Center in Building 63 on the first floor. The Center is open Monday through Friday (excluding Federal holidays) from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Call the Center at ext. 5780.

We offer three treatment options within our Substance Abuse program - Partial Hospitalization (intensive outpatient addiction treatment), Aftercare (less-intensive outpatient addiction therapy), and outpatient detoxification. Call Psychiatry Service at extension 2785 for further information.

Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) Recovery Center

This is a unique program in which eligible patients may participate in either an intensive residential PTSD program or the less-intensive outpatient program that allows veterans to participate in day or evening group or individual sessions. To arrange a screening appointment, call ext. 2774.

We also offer specialty services such as geriatric psychiatry, consultation and health psychology programs, neuropsychological assessment, family and marital therapy; help for Ex-Pow's, Persian Gulf and Vietnam Era veterans and treatment for victims of sexual abuse.

Comprehensive Day Treatment Program/Center

We provide support and psychotherapy for veterans coping with emotional or social problems. If you think that this program may help you, please speak with your doctor.

Some groups are:

Anger Control	Coping with Depression	Psychotropic Medication
Information		
PTSD	Religion and Feelings	Therapeutic Recreation

(See also Continuing Care) For more information, please call ext. 2256.

Health Psychology

If you think you need any of the following services, speak with your provider.

- Stress Management
- Non-pharmaceutical Pain Management
- Smoking Cessation
- Diet Modification and Weight Control
- HIV counseling and support

For further information, call Psychology Service at ext. 2259

Mental Health Intensive Case Management for Veterans living in the Community

Intensive case management is for veterans with a serious mental illness who live in the community, have received 30 or more days of psychiatric hospital care during the previous year or have had three or more psychiatric hospitalizations, and would be helped by weekly follow up with a case manager. The goal of case management is to assist veterans in participating in the activities of daily living to help them recover from mental illness, live in the community and achieve the highest quality of life possible. Case managers help veterans to get needed psychiatric and medical care within the VA and the community. Please speak with your doctor.

Military Sexual Trauma

Veterans, both women and men, have experienced sexual trauma while they served on active military duty. While some of these veterans sought counseling and treatment for the aftereffects of the trauma, many have never discussed the incident or their medical or psychological condition with anyone.

VA provides eligible veterans with confidential counseling and treatment for the aftereffects of sexual trauma, helping them to better cope with the trauma experience, regain their confidence and self-esteem, and improve their quality of life. Call the Military Sexual Trauma Coordinator at ext. 5928.

Long Island Vet Center

The Long Island Vet Center at 116 West Main Street, Babylon, NY 11702, specializes in psychotherapy for war trauma. Eligibility is based on military service during specific periods of war or hostile actions and a clinical assessment that determines that such experiences remain unresolved for the veteran. The Vet Center also provides services to family members as needed.

In addition the Vet Center offers psychotherapy for military sexual trauma that occurred while on active duty.

All veterans are eligible regardless of their period of military service. There is no means test. All services are provided free. The hours of operation are irregular in order to accommodate working veterans and family members. For more information, please call (631) 661-3930.

XII. GENERAL INFORMATION

ADVANCED CARE PLANNING - ADVANCE DIRECTIVES

Advance Directives are written forms on which you can indicate what medical treatments you want or do not want, and name someone to make medical decisions for you in the event that you are unable to communicate your wishes. These forms are filled out in advance of the time that you become sick or as soon as you become sick. Having written advance directives protects your right to accept or refuse medical treatment if you should become mentally or physically unable to communicate your choices due to illness or injury. Advance Directives are carried out **only** after you are declared medically **unable** to make informed healthcare decisions for yourself.

We encourage you to name someone over 18 years of age as your **Health Care Proxy** or give him or her **Durable Power of Attorney for Healthcare** in advance of an illness or incapacity, so that they can make health care decisions in your best interest. We also encourage you to prepare and sign a **Living Will** or **Treatment Preferences**, stating your personal choices for starting or stopping certain medical treatments, requesting a **Do Not Resuscitate (DNR) order**, donating organs or using life-prolonging procedures and equipment. It is important for you to tell your loved ones and your doctor about your wishes. If you have named a Healthcare proxy or written a Living Will before admission to the VA Medical Center, please bring copies and discuss them with your VA doctor.

We will process them and honor them as long as they do not contradict VA policy and/or law.

VA Advance Directives may be written after admission to the Medical Center. Your health care team will help you in writing Advance Directives and with any ethical concerns. Your VA Advance Directives will be placed in your medical record. You may change or revoke them at any time, just by saying so. Your ability to receive care at this Medical Center will NOT be affected if you choose not to fill out the form.

If you do not have written Advance Directives and you become medically unable to make informed decisions, your health care team will inform and help your next-of-kin, legal guardian, or your Health Proxy to make health care decisions in your best interest. For more information, please contact your social worker, nurse, chaplain or doctor.

DO NOT RESUSCITATE (DNR)

You may decide that you do not want Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) and/or other procedures to be done to restore your heart beat if your heart has stopped. You may speak with your doctor, nurse practitioner or other staff members about cardio-pulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and its effects. You may request that a Do Not Resuscitate (DNR) order be written and placed in your medical record, even if you have not written Advance Directives. The order is reviewed regularly and may be cancelled at any time.

If you are medically unable to make a decision about a DNR order, your next-of-kin, legal guardian or adult over the age of 18, appointed by you to make decisions in your best interest, can request a DNR order for you.

If you are having a surgical procedure, your DNR order may be suspended during surgery and you might be given CPR. Please discuss this with your surgeon.

ORGAN DONATION

Our Medical Center participates in the New York Organ Donor Network Program. If you already have signed an Organ Donor card or wish to "give the gift of life" and be a potential organ donor should the situation ever arise, speak with your Primary Care Social Worker for more information and to complete the necessary forms.

Anatomical Donation for Medical Research

If you would like to direct that your remains be made available for medical research, contact:

The Department of Anatomical Science at Stony Brook University
Hospital Medical School
8081 Health Sciences Center, Stony Brook, New York 11794
(631) 444 - 3111

ETHICS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Ethics Committee offers help with ethical concerns, problems and patients' rights issues. An Ethics meeting is a supportive forum for talking and clarifying conflicts and uncertainties related to clinical decision-making.

Who are the Ethics Committee members?

Ethics Committee members are a diverse group of clinical and non-clinical VA staff, a representative from the community and a Veteran representative chosen to provide an impartial, sympathetic ear to the problem at hand.

How to request an Ethics consult

Please call any number below to request a consultation with the Ethics Committee.

During regular business hours contact:

The Patient Advocate – 5326
Medicine – 2667 Nursing - 2757
Social Work – 7030 Chaplain - 7204

During evenings, nights, weekends and holidays, please request to speak with the NOD by calling extension 2664 or 7100.

CONFIDENTIALITY OF MEDICAL RECORDS - HIPAA

HIPAA stands for the U.S. Government's 'Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act' of 1996. The intent of this act is to guarantee security and privacy of health information, reduce healthcare fraud and abuse, and enforce standards of electronic transmission of health information, for example health insurance and medical records. All health care activities, such as examinations, tests, treatments, procedures, consultations, and case presentations are confidential and will be conducted so as to preserve your privacy.

All records are kept in strict confidence. Your medical record both in the computer and your chart will be safeguarded and available only to those who need to know its contents in order to provide your care. Information in your health record cannot be released to you or anyone else without your written approval. Forms to request copies of your record may be obtained through "Release of Information" in Room B1-7F in Building 200 or by calling ext. 2631.

INFORMED CONSENT and REFUSAL

Your doctor, nurse practitioner or treatment team will explain your condition and any proposed treatments or procedures. Before any medical treatment or procedure is started, you will be told about the benefits and any known risks, potential problems related to recuperation, likelihood of success of the treatment or procedure, possible results of not having the treatment, and any significant alternatives to the treatment. You have the right to refuse any medical treatment or procedure. For specific treatments, procedures or surgery, you will be asked to sign a written consent.

Research studies

You also have the right to refuse to participate in any research study. Your doctor would provide information and obtain your written consent or signature as described above.

Refusing to participate in research will not affect your receiving the medical care that you need.

MyHealthVet NATIONAL VA WEBSITE FOR PATIENTS AND FAMILIES
www.myhealth.va.gov

The ultimate goal of MyHealthVet (MHV) is to enable Veterans to manage their own health using information, tools and innovative functions on the Internet. The MHV site includes three trusted sources of health information: www.myhealth.va.gov

- **Diseases and conditions**- educational and health promotion materials on health conditions of particular interest to veterans. Includes links to current VA clinical trials and VA research in the news.
- **MedlinePlus** The National Library of Medicine and National Institutes of Health resources including:
 - **Health Topics** with the MEDLINE/PubMed® search function, current news items about the topic, and links to related topics.
 - **A Medical Encyclopedia** - an extensive library of medical images as well as 4,000 articles about diseases, tests, symptoms, injuries and surgeries
 - **Interactive Health Tutorials** - programs that use animated graphics and sound to explain conditions and procedures in easy-to-read language
 - **Drug Information** - generic and brand name drugs
 - **Current Health News** - late-breaking stories about medicine and health
 - **A Dictionary** - spellings and definitions of medical terms
 - **Directories** - locations and credentials of doctors, dentists and hospitals
 - **A page focused on Veterans and Military Health and a link to Tricare.**
- **Healthwise** – a simple-to-use list of 5500 health topics from A-Z, including:
 - Topics that help people understand their symptoms.
 - Health conditions and diseases.
 - Health and wellness topics.
 - Medical tests and procedures.
 - Surgical and other treatments.
 - Prescribed and over-the-counter medications and nutritional supplements.
 - Complementary and alternative medicines.
 - Self-help and support group information.

Currently, upon registering on the MHV web page, veterans can:

- **Take a virtual tour and discover all that MyHealthVet has to offer**
- **Build a personal health record**, by entering their health and military history, self-monitors such as blood pressure, blood glucose and weight, activity (exercise), food intake, pulse oximetry readings and more.

- **Request refills of their active prescriptions** to be mailed to their home, check the status of refill orders and view their Prescription History.

Click on 'Contact MHV' to contact the Help Desk for problems in using the site.

In the future, after coming to Northport VAMC to receive their secret password, veterans will be able to:

- View their co-pay balance
- View a list of their scheduled appointments
- * Request a copy of a specific part of their medical record, to be posted in their personal secure 'e-vault' on the MHV site.

www.myhealth.va.gov

There are computers dedicated to MyHealthVet in the Patient Library in Building 12, in the Unit 23 Dayroom in Building 200, and in the Patient Education Center off the Pavilion Lobby.

'MOVE' PROGRAM

(MOTIVATE OVERWEIGHT/ OBESE VETERANS EVERYWHERE)

This is the national program designed by the VA National Center for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention (NCP) to help veterans lose weight, keep it off and improve their health and overall quality of life. Level 1 provides telephone counseling and Level 2 provides weekly classes on strategies for weight loss. MOVE classes will meet in the Multipurpose Room, Building 200 Basement near the Café 200 back door, on selected Mondays at 10:30-11:30 AM and Tuesdays at 1:30-2:30 PM. Contact your healthcare team to enroll and complete the MOVE23 questionnaire.

PAIN MANAGEMENT - AN IMPORTANT PART OF YOUR TREATMENT

As a patient, you can expect:

- Information about pain and pain relief measures.
- Caring staff who want to help prevent or relieve your pain, will believe you when you tell them about your pain and will respond quickly to your reports of pain.
- Treatments for pain based on the latest and best information.
- Care by pain relief specialists.

We expect you and your family to:

- Ask questions about your pain.
- Talk about choices for pain relief with your health care providers.
- Ask for pain relief when your pain first begins.
- Work with your health care team to make a plan for relieving your pain.

- Help your health care team to measure your pain level over time.
- Tell your health care team about any pain that will not go away.
- Follow the plan for managing your pain in the prescribed way.

PATIENT AND FAMILY EDUCATION

It is your right to receive the health information that you need to understand your health problems and health care. We want you to be a partner with your providers and caregivers in staying well and when you are ill, participating in your treatment plan. It is important for you to understand your health care options and the consequences of your choices, and to be involved in decisions about your care. The Medical Center provides a wide variety of resources for learning - pamphlets, videos, classes and support groups, an orientation class for new patients, Mini-Med School, annual Health Fair, health topics on cable TV, an American Diabetes Association- certified Diabetes Education Program, and the Patient Health Information Library (below). For information, contact the Patient Education Coordinator, ext 7773.

Classes and Groups for Patients

Chronic Disease Self-Management Program:

This very popular program in Chronic Disease Self- Management was developed by the Stanford University Patient Education Center. Graduates of this course were found to make fewer visits to the ER and Primary Care, have fewer hospital stays and participate more in their health care.

Patients with chronic diseases and caregivers of persons with chronic diseases are encouraged to attend the **‘Living Well with Chronic Conditions’** course in six two and one-half hour sessions at VAMC Northport. Topics of discussion include dealing with the symptoms common to chronic illness - fatigue, stress, pain, and difficult emotions, and also healthy eating, exercise, relaxation and talking to your healthcare provider. Participants receive a book called **‘Living a Healthy Life with Chronic Conditions’**, a relaxation audiotape or CD, and a certificate upon graduation. Each week participants make an action plan for something that they want to do and can reasonably do by the next class, and then receive feedback from the group, suggestions for success, etc.

For information, contact M. Lynn Griffith, RN, Ed.D., Patient Education Coordinator in ODE at (631) 261-4400, ext. 7773.

Diabetes Self-Management Education Program For newly diagnosed patients or those needing a refresher. A series of 4 weekly classes on Wednesday mornings from 8:15 to 11:30 AM in the Patient Education Classroom, Pavilion area 1-D. Spouses and other caregivers are encouraged to attend. Patients are accepted by consult from a primary care provider or specialist, or by e-mail from a nurse including the patient’s name and last 4 # of SS number. Co –pay for patients except for those who are exempt. Team-taught by a Registered Nurse

and a Registered Dietitian, both certified Diabetes Educators. Program is accredited by the American Diabetes Association. Participants are encouraged to attend a 3-hr Review Class about 6 months after they complete the program. For information, contact Kathy Armstrong-MacLeod, RN, CDE, ext. 7713.

Diabetes classes in Primary Care are offered monthly on selected Mondays from 10 AM -12N and 1 - 3 PM in the Patient Education Classroom, Pavilion area 1-D, Room 1-15A. Patients may contact their Primary Care clinic clerk to be registered or a nurse may e-mail Kathy Armstrong-MacLeod with patient's name and last 4 of patient's SS number.

Evening Diabetes classes 5:30-7:30 PM

A patient may contact Primary Care clinic clerk to be registered or nurse may e-mail Kathy Armstrong-MacLeod with patient's name and last 4 of SS number.

**Daytime Diabetes classes in Patchogue and Plainview community clinics
8:30 –11:30 AM**

Patients may contact Primary Care clinic clerk to be registered or a nurse may e-mail Kathy Armstrong-MacLeod with patient's name and last 4 of SS number.

Smoking Cessation Clinic - Behavioral Strategies and Support Groups

A Walk-in clinic offering patients the opportunity to work with others on behavioral strategies for quitting, have a medication prescribed if needed, and participate in weekly meetings with a support group. No appointment necessary. No co-pay for Veteran patients. Provided by Psychology Service in collaboration with Primary Care every Wednesday afternoon in the Patient Education Classroom, Pavilion, 1-D

GROUP 1 Wednesdays 1:00 -2:00 PM

An introduction to the program, an assessment of individual patients' needs and behaviors, and help in setting a quit date.

GROUP 2 Wednesdays 2:00 -3:00 PM

Group Support and Skill Building: Assessing progress, identifying supports and learning new skills to achieve goals and stay a non-smoker. Some of the topics that will be covered are:

- Identifying and Managing Triggers for Smoking Behavior
- Relaxation and Imagery to Help Manage Stress and Stay Motivated
- The Power of Positive and Negative Thinking – Taking Control
- Building and Using Social Supports for Success
- Activities That Will Help Avoid a Return to Smoking
- Controlling Weight Gain When No longer Smoking

There will be opportunity to meet with the Smoking Cessation Clinic's Physician between 1:00pm and 4:00 PM. For more information, contact Psychology Service, extension 2258.

Smoking Cessation Classes in the Community:

Suffolk County Smoke-free classes

`Learn to be Tobacco Free' classes (free to all residents of Suffolk County). One-hour classes are offered over 6-8 weeks at convenient locations. Call (631) 853 – 4017 or visit www.co.suffolk.ny.us/health for schedules, sites, and registration.

Nassau County Health Department

`Be Empowered Against Tobacco' classes (B.E.A.T) free to residents over 18 years of age of Nassau County in 5 sessions of education, behavior modification and support. Participants are advised to contact their doctors for nicotine replacement therapy. Call 516-571-2202 for locations or check the web site www.co.nassau.ny.us .

New York State

Visit the web site: www.nysmokefree.com or call the toll-free number; **1 – 888 – 697 – 8487** for a free quit-smoking kit, classes in your area and health information.

Back School

A prescribed program for patients with conditions involving chronic back pain. Access is by referral from any provider to PM&RS. Five weekly sessions including exercise and education on Thursday mornings in Building 5 Lower Level. Contact x 7428.

Cardiac Rehabilitation

Two to 3 sessions per week including class and supervised activity for patients deemed appropriate for a cardiovascular and pulmonary exercise program. Access is by referral from provider to Maureen Crowley, PT, PM&RS.

Pain Management Support Group

A program for patients with chronic pain. Access is by consult or referral by a health care provider for pain management services to Rosemarie Carlson, Ph.D., Psychology Service. Small group sessions meeting over 12-15 weeks will provide education about pain, coping skills training, relaxation/visualization techniques, cognitive restructuring, and group interaction and support. The goals will be to increase patients' sense of control over their pain and their lives, to teach specific skills for managing pain, to improve functionality and quality of life, to promote general health and wellness through improved lifestyle practices, and to increase utilization of available supports and decrease isolation.

Weekly on Tuesday mornings from 10:30 – 11:30 AM in Building 200, 2nd floor conference room, B2-2; Turn left off the elevator; enter second door on the right.

BMI / Weight Control class

BMI/Weight Control class is for patients who have been identified in the Nursing assessment as having a BMI>27, are interested in education about prevention and treatment of overweight/obesity. Referred by consult to Nutrition and Food Service. It meets on Mondays from 2:00-3:30pm in the Patient Education Classroom, Pavilion 1-D. This class serves as a screening tool for the dietitian to judge interest in individualized instruction and select appropriate patients for the Weight Management clinic.

MOVE Program for weight reduction See MOVE program.

Weight Management Clinic

The Weight Management Clinic is for patients who are sufficiently self motivated to benefit from this program. It offers 40-minute appointments beginning at 9:00 AM on Wednesdays, in Bldg 200, Room A3-3 (3rd floor office to the left of the elevator). Ask your Provider to refer you to Aimee Mattiolo, R.D., x 2448.

Health Information on the Internet

The primary VA website for the public is www.va.gov

The VISN 3 web address is www.va.gov/visns/visn03. There is a link to the Northport VAMC web page or you can go directly to www.va.gov/visns/visn03/nrptinfo.asp

The official VHA website for patients is MyHealthVet at www.myhealth.va.gov .

Be careful and critical when using the Internet to find health information. It can be difficult to decide whether that information is correct and current. To find reliable information:

- Have a trained librarian assist you in finding sites.
- Check the site's address (its URL) to learn which type of agency maintains the site. Those maintained by universities and government agencies tend to be the least biased: **.edu** is a university site; **.gov** is managed by a government agency; **.com** is the site of a commercial company; **.org** designates a not-for-profit organization or association.
- Print the information and take it to your next appointment to discuss with your doctor.

Many of the following sites have information on diseases, medications, treatments, procedures, nutrition and more.

Medline Plus

www.medlineplus.gov

American Heart Association	www.americanheart.org
American Academy of Family Physicians	www.familydoctor.org
National Institute of Mental Health	www.nimh.nih.gov
American Cancer Society	www.cancer.org
Center for Disease Control	www.cdc.gov/ncidod/diseases
Federal Dept of Health and Human Services	http://healthfinder.gov
Mayo Clinic	www.mayoclinic.org
National Health Information Center www.health.gov/NHIC/Pubs/tollfree.htm	
New York Online Access to Health	www.noah-health.org
National Cancer Institute	www.nci.nih.gov
Alcoholics Anonymous	www.aa.org
Narcotics Anonymous	www.na.org
Overeaters Anonymous	www.oa.org

PATIENT LIBRARY (PATIENT HEALTH INFORMATION LIBRARY or `PHIL')

LOCATION: Medical Library, Building 12, Room 117
HOURS: Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m.– 4:00 p.m.
(631) 261-4400, ext. 2973 or 2962

BOOKS and VIDEOTAPES: We have books and videotapes covering a wide variety of health topics. Veterans, family members, visitors and staff are welcome to browse and may take a book or tape home!

VIDEOS: A consumer health video can be shown on TV in the privacy of your hospital room. Contact the Library to request the program to be shown at the time most convenient for you!

MAILINGS: A special mailing service is provided for patients and family members. Information on specific topics of interest can be sent directly to your home.

LET US FIND IT FOR YOU! Any librarian can look for information on the computer and print it for you to take home or send it to your room.

PATIENT ADVOCATE / PATIENT REPRESENTATIVE

The Medical Center recognizes the basic rights of patients and families. In support of these rights, the facility maintains a patient advocacy program. Patient Advocates/Representatives are available to assist Veterans and their families with concerns, questions or complaints regarding services rendered by the Medical Center. We encourage you to resolve problems if possible with the staff and supervisor in the area where the problem occurs. If you are an inpatient, please ask first for the Unit Nurse Manager. If not available, please ask to speak to the Charge Nurse. Nursing Supervisors are available from 4 PM through 8 AM on weekdays, and at all times on Weekends and Holidays to answer any questions or concerns that the Unit Charge Nurse is unable to address.

In cases where additional support is needed, contact the Patient Advocates/Representatives, or ask any staff member to contact them for you. Timeframes for the resolution of complaints vary with the policy of the service involved. We strive to resolve problems as promptly as possible.

The Patient Representatives/Advocates are available at extensions 5326 or 7009 from Monday through Friday from 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM. During evenings, nights and weekends, all concerns should be directed to the supervisor of the immediate area. In the event that further assistance is needed and the concern cannot wait until the next business day, please contact the Administrative Officer of the Day (AOD) through the Admissions area, Building 200, ext 2655.

In addition to VA staff, you may also report complaints about your care at any time to the **Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO)**:

Phone **JCAHO** toll-free, from 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. on weekdays, 1 (800) 994-6610

Mail:

Office of Quality Monitoring
Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations
One Renaissance Boulevard
Oakbrook Terrace, IL 60181

E-Mail: complaint@jcaho.org

Fax: Office of Quality Monitoring (630) 792-5636

For more information, visit www.JointCommission.org/GeneralPublic/complaint

You may contact the **VA Office of the Inspector General (VA OIG)** to report suspected fraud, waste or abuse in VA programs.

Phone the **VA OIG** Hotline toll-free at 1 (800) 488-8244, from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. (ET), Monday – Friday, excluding Federal holidays.

Mail:

VA Inspector General Hotline
P.O. Box 50410
Washington, DC 20091-0410

E-mail: www.vaoighotline@va.gov

PATIENTS RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Veterans Health Administration (VHA) employees will respect and support your rights as a patient. We are pleased you have selected us to provide your health care. We plan to make your visit or stay as pleasant for you as possible. Your basic rights and responsibilities are outlined in this document. Please talk with VA treatment team members or a patient advocate if you have any questions or would like more information about your rights.

I. Respect and Nondiscrimination

- You will be treated with dignity, compassion and respect as an individual. Your privacy will be protected. You will receive care in a safe environment. We will seek to honor your personal and religious values.
- You or someone you choose have the right to keep and spend your own money. You have the right to receive an accounting of VA held funds.
- Treatment will respect your personal freedoms. In rare cases, the use of medication and physical restraints may be used if all other efforts to keep you or others free from harm have not worked.
- As an inpatient or long-term care resident you may wear your own clothes and keep personal items. This depends on your medical condition.
- As an inpatient or long-term care resident, you have the right to social interaction, and regular exercise. You will have the opportunity for religious worship and spiritual support. You may decide whether or not to participate in these activities. You may decide whether or not to perform tasks in or for the Medical Center.
- As an inpatient or long-term care resident, you have the right to communicate freely and privately. You may have or refuse visitors. You will have access to public telephones. You may participate in civic rights.
- As a long-term care resident, you can organize and take part in resident groups in the facility. Your family also can meet with the families of other residents.
- In order to provide a safe treatment environment for all patients and staff you are asked to respect other patients and staff and to follow the facility's rules. Avoid

unsafe acts that place others at risk for accidents or injuries. Please immediately report any condition you believe to be unsafe.

II. Information Disclosure and Confidentiality

- You will be given information about the health benefits that you can receive. The information will be provided in a way you can understand.
- You will receive information about the costs of your care, if any, before you are treated. You are responsible for paying for your portion of the costs associated with your care.
- Your medical record will be kept confidential. Information about you will not be released without your consent unless authorized by law (i.e., State public health reporting). You have the right to information in your medical record and may request a copy of your records. This will be provided except in rare situations where your VA physician feels the information will be harmful to you. In that situation, you have the right to have this discussed with you by your VA provider.
- You will be informed of all outcomes of care, including any injuries caused by your medical care. You will be informed about how to request compensation for injuries.

III. Participation in Treatment Decisions

- You, and any persons you choose, will be involved in all decisions about your care. You will be given information you can understand about the benefits and risks of treatment. You will be given other options. You can agree to or refuse treatment. Refusing treatment will not affect your rights to future care but you have the responsibility to understand the possible results to your health. If you believe you cannot follow the treatment plan you have a responsibility to notify the treatment team.
- As an inpatient or long-term care resident, you will be provided any transportation necessary for your treatment plan.
- You will be given, in writing, the name and professional title of the provider in charge of your care. As a partner in the healthcare process, you have the right to be involved in choosing your provider. You will be educated about your role and responsibilities as a patient. This includes your participation in decision-making and care at the end of life.
- Tell your provider about your current condition, medicines (including over the counter and herbals) and medical history. Also, share any other information that affects your health. You should ask questions when you don't understand something about your care. This will help in providing you the best care possible.
- You have the right to have your pain assessed and to receive treatment to manage your pain. You and your treatment team will develop a pain management plan

together. You are expected to help the treatment team by telling them if you have pain and if the treatment is working.

- You have the right to choose whether or not you will participate in any research project. Any research will be clearly identified. Potential risks of the research will be identified and there will be no pressure on you to participate.
- You will be included in resolving any ethical issues about your care. You may consult with the Medical Center's Ethics Committee and/or other staff knowledgeable about health care ethics.
- If you or the Medical Center believes that you have been neglected, abused or exploited, you will receive help.

IV. Complaints

- You are encouraged and expected to seek help from your treatment team and/or a patient advocate if you have problems or complaints. You will be given understandable information about the complaint process available to you. You may complain verbally or in writing, without fear of retaliation. If you have concerns about your care or treatment, please speak to the person in charge of the area.

SPEAK UP: HELP PREVENT ERRORS IN YOUR CARE

Everyone has a role in making health care safe physicians, health care executives, nurses and technicians. Health care organizations across the country are working to make health care safety a priority. You, as the patient, can also play a vital role in making your care safe by becoming an active, involved and informed member of your health care team.



An Institute of Medicine (IOM) report has identified the occurrence of medical errors as a serious problem in the health care system. The IOM recommends, among other things, that a concerted effort be made to improve the public's awareness of the problem.

The "Speak Up" program, sponsored by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations, urges patients to get involved in their care. Such efforts to increase consumer awareness and involvement are supported by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. This initiative provides simple advice on how you, as the patient, can make your care a positive experience. After all, research shows that patients who take part in decisions about their health care are more likely to have better outcomes.

To help prevent health care errors and accidents, patients are urged to "Speak Up."

Speak up if you have questions or concerns, and if you don't understand, ask again. It's your body and you have a right to know.

- Your health is too important to worry about being embarrassed if you don't understand something that your doctor, nurse or other health care professional tells you.
- Don't be afraid to ask about safety. If you're having surgery, for example, ask the doctor to mark the area that is to be operated upon, so that there's no confusion in the operating room.
- Don't hesitate to tell a staff member if you see a safety hazard.
- Don't be afraid to tell the nurse or the doctor if you think you are about to receive the wrong medication.
- Don't hesitate to tell the health care professional if you think he or she has confused you with another patient.

Pay attention to the care you are receiving. Make sure you're getting the right treatments and medications by the right health care professionals. Don't assume anything.

- Tell your nurse or doctor if something doesn't seem quite right.
- Expect health care workers to introduce themselves when they enter your room and look for their identification badges. A new mother, for example, should know the person to whom she is handing her baby. If you are unsure, ask.
- Notice whether your caregivers have washed their hands. Hand washing is the most important way to prevent the spread of infections. Don't be afraid to gently remind a doctor or nurse to do this.
- Know what time of day you normally receive a medication. If it doesn't happen, bring this to the attention of your nurse or doctor.
- Make sure your nurse or doctor confirms your identity, that is, checks your wristband or asks your name, before he or she administers any medication or treatment.

Educate yourself about your diagnosis, the medical tests you are undergoing, and your treatment plan.

- Ask your doctor about the specialized training and experience that qualifies him or her to treat your illness (and be sure to ask the same questions of those physicians to whom he or she refers you).
- Gather information about your condition. Good sources include your doctor, your library, respected websites and support groups.

- Write down important facts your doctor tells you, so that you can look for additional information later. And ask your doctor if he or she has any written information you can keep.
- Thoroughly read all medical forms and make sure you understand them before you sign anything. If you don't understand, ask your doctor or nurse to explain them.
- Make sure you are familiar with the operation of any equipment that is being used in your care. If you will be using oxygen at home, do not smoke or allow anyone to smoke near you while oxygen is in use.

Ask a trusted family member or friend to be your advocate.

- Your advocate can ask questions that you may not think of while you are under stress.
- Ask this person to stay with you, even overnight, when you are hospitalized. You will be able to rest more comfortably and your advocate can help to make sure you get the right medications and treatments.
- Your advocate can also help remember answers to questions you have asked, and speak up for you if you cannot.
- Make sure this person understands your preferences for care and your wishes concerning resuscitation and life support.
- Review consents for treatment with your advocate before you sign them and make sure you both understand exactly what you are agreeing to.
- Make sure your advocate understands the type of care you will need when you get home. Your advocate should know what to look for if your condition is getting worse and whom to call for help.

Know what medications you take and why you take them. Medication errors are the most common health care mistakes.

- Ask about the purpose of the medication and ask for written information about it, including its brand and generic names. Also inquire about the side effects of the medication.
- If you do not recognize a medication, verify that it is for you. Ask about oral medications before swallowing, and read the contents of bags of intravenous (IV) fluids. If you're not well enough to do this, ask your advocate to do this.
- If you are given an IV, ask the nurse how long it should take for the liquid to "run out." Tell the nurse if it doesn't seem to be dripping properly (that it is too fast or too slow).
- Whenever you are going to receive a new medication, tell your doctors and nurses about allergies you have, or negative reactions you have had to medications in the past.
- If you are taking multiple medications, ask your doctor or pharmacist if it is safe to take those medications together. This holds true for vitamins, herbal supplements and over-the-counter drugs, too.

- Make sure you can read the handwriting on any prescriptions written by your doctor. If you can't read it, the pharmacist may not be able to either.

Use a hospital, clinic, surgery center, or other type of health care organization that has undergone a rigorous on-site evaluation against established, state-of-the-art quality and safety standards, such as that provided by JCAHO.

- **The Northport VAMC received its full three-year JCAHO accreditation in September, 2006.**
- Ask about the health care organization's experience in treating your type of illness. How frequently do they perform the procedure you need and what specialized care do they provide in helping patients get well?
- Before you leave the hospital or other facility, ask about follow-up care and make sure that you understand all of the instructions.

Participate in all decisions about your treatment. You are the center of the health care team.

- You and your doctor should agree on exactly what will be done during each step of your care.
- Know who will be taking care of you, how long the treatment will last, and how you should feel.
- Understand that more tests or medications may not always be better. Ask your doctor what a new test or medication is likely to achieve.
- Keep copies of your medical records from previous hospitalizations and share them with your health care team. This will give them a more complete picture of your health history.
- Don't be afraid to seek a second opinion. If you are unsure about the nature of your illness and the best treatment, consult with one or two additional specialists. The more information you have about the options available to you, the more confident you will be in the decisions made.
- Ask to speak with others who have undergone the procedure you are considering. These individuals can help you prepare for the days and weeks ahead. They also can tell you what to expect and what worked best for them as they recovered.
- If you have questions about your health care after you go home, call the **VISN 3 Nurse Help line at 1 -800 - 877 - 6976.**

Source: Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations 2002

XIII. SERVICES

AMBULATORY SURGERY

Many surgical procedures can be done easily and safely in just one day. In the relaxed setting of the Ambulatory Surgery Unit (ASU), your family member can visit with you before and after your procedure. You will receive safe, expert care based on your own needs, without having to stay in the hospital overnight.

Well in advance of your procedure, you will visit the ASU Pre-Admission Testing Area. At that time, a Nurse Practitioner or a Physician Assistant will perform a complete history and physical exam. The Anesthesia and Nursing staff will also provide information and instructions regarding your procedure.

On the day of surgery, you will report to ASU, have your procedure done in the OR, spend a short recovery period in the Ambulatory Surgical Unit, and receive instructions on how to care for yourself at home after discharge. You **must** have someone drive you home after surgery.

AUDIOLOGY AND SPEECH PATHOLOGY SERVICE

Audiology and Speech Pathology Service is located on the lower level of Building 200 in Room C0-2. We provide comprehensive care to eligible veterans with hearing and speech problems on both an inpatient and an outpatient basis. Please call ext. 7381

Hearing Evaluations Devices	Hearing Aid Dispensary	Assistive Listening Devices
Speech Treatment/Evaluation	Swallow Treatment/Evaluations	Support Groups

CANTEEN SERVICE

Veterans' Canteen Service operates the Café 200 cafeteria and vending areas throughout the Medical Center:

Café 200 – Building 200 (Lower Level) Monday to Friday from 7:30 AM to 3:00 PM

- Inpatients may visit the Canteen only after receiving permission from the Nurse.
- Any food purchased at the cafeteria or from vending machines should be in line with your prescribed diet and with the knowledge of your doctor. Eating the wrong food can undermine your treatment.

Coffee Cart - Pavilion Lobby Monday to Friday from 7:30 AM - 2:30 PM

Vending areas - Building 200 - Lower Level, First Floor by ER entrance and Third Floor

Building 63 - Mental Health Clinic area, First Floor

Retail store – Building 200 Basement Open to all, tax-free. Electronics, clothes, gifts, etc.

Monday – Friday, 8:00 AM - 4:00 PM Closed on weekends

CHAPLAIN SERVICE (with Social Work Service)

Chaplains are available to minister to your spiritual, sacramental, and devotional needs. They visit medical units often and may be contacted through your unit secretary. Outpatients may call the Chaplain Service (631) 261-4400, Ext. 7204, between 8:00 am and 4:30 p.m. to speak with a chaplain. Religious services are held on Saturday (Jewish) and Sunday (Christian). Ask your unit secretary for the schedule.

DENTAL SERVICE

The Dental Service provides oral health care to eligible veteran outpatients, including oral examinations, assessment of oral health status, diagnosis and treatment of oral disease and maintenance of the function of oral structures. Consideration is also given to speech and appearance. The extent of both limited and comprehensive dental care that we can provide depends upon the patient's VA eligibility status. Please speak with your provider.

Emergency Dental Care: Emergency dental treatment for the relief of pain and control of acute dental infection will be authorized for all eligible veteran outpatients. Emergency dental treatment may be rendered to individuals not generally eligible for VA dental care, however non-eligible individuals may be billed by Medical Care Cost Recovery (MCCF) for this care.

Dental care for inpatients

The Dental Service provides such oral health care as is essential to the hospitalized veteran's medical needs in response to consultation requests from medical and mental health care providers. Oral health care for inpatients generally includes treatment of trauma, control of pain and elimination of acute infection.

Dental care for residents in Long Term Care units

Residents in the Nursing Home units are provided such dental treatment as is considered reasonably necessary to protect and maintain health. Consideration is given to speech, appearance, the resident's desire for dental care and the resident's ability to undergo care.

LABORATORY SERVICE

Laboratory services are available in the Clinical Lab area on the first floor of Building 200, Monday through Friday from 8:00 AM – 4:30 PM. Walk in.

Blood drawing for lab testing is also available at the Community Based Outpatient Clinics:

Plainview – Monday through Friday 8 – 10 AM No appointment needed.

Patchogue – Monday through Friday 8 – 11 AM No appointment needed.

Westhampton – Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday 8 – 10 AM By appointment only.

NEUROLOGY SERVICE

Neurology Service provides comprehensive care to veterans with neurological conditions on both an inpatient and outpatient basis. Patients suspected of having a neurological condition such as stroke, seizures, Parkinson's disease, multiple sclerosis or disorders of the spinal cord are referred to the Neurology Service most often by their primary care physician.

NUCLEAR MEDICINE SERVICE

Nuclear Medicine, located on the lower level of Building 200, performs diagnostic tests for both inpatients and outpatients. The tests require tiny amounts of radioactive substances, which go to body organs or tissues for "imaging" with the use of gamma "cameras." This information is valuable in making a diagnosis or planning therapy. For more information, please call ext. 7348 or (631) 266-6066.

NURSING SERVICE

The mission of Nursing Service is to improve the health of the Veteran population. Nurse Practitioners, Clinical Specialists, Registered Nurses, Licensed Practical Nurses and Nursing Assistants assist Veterans in reaching their highest level of function, independence and quality of life.

Nursing care addresses the patients' unique physical, emotional, educational, spiritual and age-related needs, the promotion of health, prevention of illness and patient advocacy, based upon mutual respect and teamwork. Nurses encourage patients to partner with their healthcare providers.

Patients are welcome to raise any concerns with the Primary Care Team's RN Team Leader, the Nurse Manager of their inpatient unit, or the Nurse of the Day (NOD) at extension 2664 or 7100 on evenings, nights, weekends or holidays.

NUTRITION AND FOOD SERVICE

Nutrition and Food Service provides nutrition counseling on a one-to-one basis to inpatients on their units and to outpatients in the Nutrition Clinic. Your primary care provider can refer you for this service.

Group patient education classes regarding diabetes management, weight control, and cardiac rehabilitation are also available. For information regarding class schedules, please call ext. 7712.

OPTOMETRY SERVICE

Optometry Service, located on the second floor of the Primary/Specialty Care Pavilion, provides:

- Comprehensive routine eye exams
- Diagnosis and treatment of eye disease
- Low vision rehabilitative services

Patients are generally entitled (based upon eligibility) to either one pair of bifocals or two pairs of glasses (reading and distance). Replacement glasses are handled on an individual basis.

For appointments, call (631) 266 - 6059.

PHYSICAL MEDICINE AND REHABILITATION SERVICE (PM&RS)

The purpose of PM&RS is to evaluate your degree of injury or impairment and restore your functioning ability to the highest level to which you are capable. Many rehabilitative services are available to each patient, including Physiatry (the physiatrist is a Medical Doctor for the disabled), Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, Kinesiotherapy, and Cardiac Rehabilitation.

If you have questions regarding Physical Medicine Rehabilitation, please speak with your primary care provider regarding a referral for rehabilitation.

PROSTHETICS AND SENSORY AIDS SERVICE

Prosthetics is a broad term covering the field of prosthetics, orthotics, sensory aids, aids for the blind, medical equipment and medical supplies. At your doctor's request, Prosthetics Service supplies prostheses, sensory aids, wheelchairs, and medical equipment to veterans based upon their eligibility and medical need. For more information, please call the Prosthetics Service office at ext. 2286. Prosthetics is located on the fourth floor of Building 200.

RADIOLOGY SERVICE

A full range of radiological services is available, including routine x-ray, GI studies, CAT Scanning, MRI, ultrasound, and interventional special procedures. Mammography for VA patients is done at designated community sites.

RADIATION ONCOLOGY SERVICE

Treatment planning, simulation, and external beam treatments are provided for palliative and therapeutic care. Brachytherapy (seed implants) patients are currently referred for treatment at the Brooklyn VA.

RECREATION THERAPY SERVICE

Recreation Therapy provides therapeutic, leisure education, and self-directed recreational activities to veterans based on assessed leisure needs. Qualified recreation therapists, a music therapist, and an art therapist are available in Geriatrics and Extended Care, Acute Psychiatry, Home Based Primary Care (HBPC), Comprehensive Integrated Inpatient

Rehabilitation Program (CIIRP) and Comprehensive Day Treatment Program. Clinicians are also available via consult for inpatient and outpatient services. A comprehensive program is available seven days per week to enhance your leisure skills and improve your quality of life during hospitalization and after discharge. A monthly schedule of all Recreation Therapy and self-directed activities are available on your unit, in Building 88, and in the Recreation Therapy Service office located in Building 6, second floor.

Recreation and Leisure Facilities include:

Fitness Center	Golf Course	Tennis Courts	Pool
Art Studio	Music Studio	Gymnasium	Miniature Golf
Course			
Picnic Areas	Outdoor Senior Plaza		

The National Veterans Rehabilitation Programs are held annually. Find additional information about participating in our National Veterans program in the Health and Wellness Center located in Building 88 or call ext. 5582.

- National Veterans Winter Sports Clinic
- National Veterans Creative Arts Festival
- National Veterans Wheelchairs Games
- National Veterans Golden Age Games
- Very Special Arts
- Bowlers to Veterans Link Bowling Tournament

SMOKING CESSATION CLINIC

The Smoking Cessation Clinic meets every Wednesday afternoon at 1:00 PM in the Patient Education classroom in the Pavilion area 1-D. The clinic offers you the opportunity to work with others on behavioral strategies to help you quit, to have medication prescribed if needed and to attend weekly meetings with a support group. There is no need to register; just walk in. For more information, please call Psychology Service, ext. 2258

Suffolk County provides 'Learn to be Tobacco Free' classes free to all residents. One-hour classes are offered over 6-8 weeks at convenient locations. Contact (631) 853 - 4017 or the web site - www.co.suffolk.ny.us/health for class schedule/sites, and to register.

Nassau County Health Department offers 'Be Empowered Against Tobacco' (BEAT) classes free to residents over 18 years of age, in 5 sessions of education, behavior modification and support. Participants are advised to contact their doctors for nicotine replacement therapy. Call 516-571-2202 for locations or check the web site www.co.nassau.ny.us .

SOCIAL WORK SERVICE

Social Workers are assigned to inpatient units, ambulatory care clinics, our VA Nursing Home Units, VA community based programs and other outpatient clinics and programs. They provide a variety of services to help you and your family deal with the emotional, social, and practical day-to-day difficulties often associated with illness or disability. They also provide assistance with family, money or housing problems, initiate referrals to needed community health and social service agencies, and plan for discharge and provide services to homeless veterans. Social Workers provide individual, family, and group counseling in support of specific veteran populations and are also available to help you access VA and non-VA entitlement programs and services. Please contact your unit, program, or clinic social worker or contact Ext. 7029 for further assistance.

SOCIAL PROTECTIVE SERVICES

If you or a family member is in need of protective services, contact your local Department of Social Services-Domestic Violence/Adult Protective/Elder Abuse Hotline. Calls are anonymous and confidential Available 24 hours/ 7 days a week. (Se Habla Espanol). In Suffolk County: (631)-854-9100 and Nassau County: (516) 571- 4819 or 4823, and after 6pm (516) 572-3143.

For situations of child abuse and neglect, call the NYS Child Abuse Hotline: 1-800-342-3720.

Other local agencies are the Nassau and Suffolk County Coalitions Against Domestic Violence: 631-666-8833 and 516-542-0404, as well as Suffolk County Adult Protective Services: 631-853-2236, after 4:30pm 631-854-9100, and Nassau County Adult Protective Services: 516-571-5819 or 4822.

It is a family offense to harass, menace, recklessly endanger and commit disorderly conduct against another family member. The Nassau County and Suffolk County protective services as well as other community agencies are there to assist you. There is help. You may also contact your inpatient or outpatient social worker or Social Work Service at ext. 7029.

SURGICAL SPECIALTY SERVICES

Surgical Specialty Services include:

ENT/Head and Neck	General Surgery	Surgical Oncology
Gynecology	Ophthalmology	Orthopedics

Outpatient clinics in the Primary/Specialty Pavilion are open Monday through Friday on selected weekday mornings and afternoons from 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM, except Federal holidays. Pick up a Visitor Guide listing the days, times and locations of each clinic, at the Pavilion Lobby desk.

Plastic Surgery	Podiatry	Proctology
Thoracic Surgery	Urology	Vascular

VISN 3 NURSE TRIAGE TOLL-FREE PHONE NUMBER

If you have questions about new symptoms, treatments you can do at home, your medications or tests, or want general health information, call the nurse any time at

1 - 800 - 877 – 6976

After talking with you, the nurse will inform your team by computer that you have called with a concern and received certain advice.

VISUAL IMPAIRMENT SERVICES

The Visual Impairment Service Team (VIST) Program assists veterans and their families to obtain health and rehabilitation services which can help greatly in adjusting to and coping with vision loss. Services include:

- Total health review, including eye and hearing examination and a review of veterans benefits and adaptive equipment
- Regional Blind Rehabilitation Center referral
- Guide dog school and state and local service agency referrals
- Support groups
- Vocational rehabilitation

For more information, please call the VIST Coordinator at ext. 2113.

VOLUNTARY SERVICES

Veterans' Affairs Voluntary Service (VAVS) provides a highly effective volunteer program in cooperation with programs across the VAMC for the purpose of:

- Locating, recruiting, training and placing volunteers in assignments that is both beneficial to VA patients and rewarding to the volunteer.
- Assisting community organizations and individuals in participating in the VAVS Program.
- Assisting VA staff in developing assignments beneficial to patients and appealing to volunteers.

Voluntary Service provides and supports:

- Guest Services
- Authority to accept and distribute gifts and donations for the benefit of the Medical Center and Patients (with the exception of gifts for research and educational purposes)
- Volunteer Recruitment, Training and Placement
- Youth Volunteer Program
- Special Events
- National Salute to Hospitalized Veterans Program/Activities
- Community Relations/Marketing/Veterans Service Organizations
- Special programs/activities/events
- Comfort items for all patients
- Medical Center shuttle program

- DAV Transportation Network

The Voluntary Service office is located in Building 9, first floor. All questions regarding Volunteering/volunteers programs and opportunities/gifts and donations may be directed to:

Voluntary Service Officer, ext. 7183

Voluntary Service Specialist, ext. 7182

XIV. VA REGULATIONS

VA Police enforce all VA regulations to ensure a safe, secure, healthy environment at the Medical Center. Staff, patients and visitors who act with caring and courtesy promote a climate of cooperation. Patients and visitors cooperate by listening to and following all instructions and by not interfering with the treatment, comfort or safety of other patients.

Violation of VA regulations will lead to disciplinary action and/or prescribed penalties in keeping with the gravity of the offense and the physical and mental condition of the offender.

These may include withholding of pass privileges, restriction to unit, disciplinary discharge, removal from the grounds, and prosecution in Federal Court.

- Possession, consumption, and being under the influence of alcohol or drugs at the Medical Center are illegal. Offenders will be discharged and may be prosecuted.
- Possession of weapons in the Medical Center is dangerous and illegal. Offenders will be discharged and may be prosecuted.
- Threats, verbal abuse or attempts at physical assault are not acceptable and are illegal. Offenders will be discharged and may be prosecuted.
- Theft or damage to government property is illegal. Offenders will be subject to fines or prosecution.

Please be aware that all patients, visitors, employees and vendors must show appropriate identification at the Police checkpoint in order to enter the VAMC grounds.

PARKING REGULATIONS

Those driving on Medical Center grounds must observe the posted speed limits and parking signs. Parking space is limited and patients' cars cannot be left during hospitalization. Since overnight parking cannot be accommodated, patients must arrange to have a relative or friend remove their vehicle. Visitors must park in designated areas and during visiting hours only. Please do not park in spaces reserved for handicapped persons without a permit. Persons who operate or park cars in violation of these regulations are subject to U.S. Court Violation notice and a fine.

NO SMOKING POLICY

The Medical Center is a ‘**smoke free facility**’. **Smoking is prohibited in ALL indoor areas and near ALL building entrances.** You may smoke only in designated outdoor smoking shelters or areas (i.e. ER smoking shelter/area and the courtyard behind Building 200). Persons found smoking in front of the Primary/Specialty Care Pavilion or ramp leading to the courtyard behind building 200 or in any area designated as “smoke free” may be subject to a federal fine up to \$500. For patients in acute care, non-compliance with the No-Smoking policy may result in discharge.

Patients should not leave a unit to use an outdoor smoking shelter without making the nursing staff aware. Leaving the unit could result in missed or delayed visits by your care team, missed medications, tests, treatments, or meals. You should not leave the unit if you have an IV with chemotherapy or blood; have just had a treatment, feel weak, or dizzy, etc. For your safety and to assure that you receive the very best care, please inform the staff if you must leave the unit.

SAFETY REGULATIONS

The safety of all patients is an important responsibility and your cooperation is needed. On occasion you may hear alarm bells for fire or disaster drills. Drills help to keep the staff prepared should a real fire occur. In the rare event of a fire or a disaster in the Medical Center, you will receive instructions from nursing and other staff. Remain calm and follow directions. For your own safety:

- Please observe all posted signs and **do not smoke** anywhere inside the Medical Center.
- Please call the nurse or other staff member if you see that another patient is in pain, confused, unsteady or has fallen.
- Please call the nurse for help when getting out of bed and never try to climb over your bed rails or walk alone in the dark or when you are feeling weak, dizzy or unsteady.
- At times, you may need special measures to prevent injury, such as putting the side rails up on your bed, or having a staff member instruct you not to get out of bed without help.
- Please use corridor handrails when walking on the unit, and be alert for other people, equipment or hazards in your path.
- Please report any spills or other safety hazards on your unit to the nursing staff. In other areas such as elevators or stairwells, ask a staff member to report spills.
- Please report any equipment, such as your bed, call button, light or TV that sparks or fails to work. Do not try to operate or repair broken equipment.
- Please do not bring in personally owned radios, televisions, or tape recorders or use any other electrical equipment that has not been approved by Engineering Service.

XV. TRANSPORTATION INFORMATION

DIRECTIONS TO NORTHPORT VAMC

From the Long Island Expressway, take Exit 53N – Sunken Meadow/Sagtikos Parkway North to the last exit before the park, Exit SM5 West (25A). Proceed west on 25A approximately 2- ½ miles to a traffic light at the corner of Rinaldo Road. Turn left onto Rinaldo Road and proceed to Middleville Road. The Medical Center’s main gate is across the street, slightly to your left.

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION SERVING NORTHPORT

Local buses, the Long Island Railroad and taxicabs serve the Northport area. Please call them directly for questions and schedules. The Hart Bus Number is (631) 427 - 8287 and the Long Island Railroad general information number in Suffolk and Nassau is (516) 822-5477.

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS (DAV) TRANSPORTATION

DAV Transportation at Northport is a volunteer service provided by veterans for veterans. The DAV office is located in Building 200, Room B1-36 and the telephone extensions are 7487, 7725, 7514, or call (631) 754-7980. Any veteran requesting DAV transport should call at least two (2) weeks before an appointment. **Transportation is provided for morning clinic appointments only.** The DAV Transportation Coordinator will determine eligibility and availability of transportation. The DAV has one wheelchair van. Since space is limited, you must be scheduled at least two weeks in advance. Please call if you have any questions. Volunteer drivers are always needed. Please consider helping other veterans by volunteering to drive a van!

VA SHUTTLE

A wheelchair lift equipped Veteran Shuttle, staffed by volunteer veterans will transport anyone to and from Medical Center parking lots and buildings. This van circles the campus Monday – Friday from 8:30 AM to 3:15 PM, and can be signaled in transit or reached by pager 226. A staff member can assist you to call the shuttle.

TRANSPORTATION CHOICES IN NASSAU AND SUFFOLK COUNTIES

The VA accepts no responsibility for the service provided by the resources below. They are listed here for your information only and may change without notice.

<p>Able Ride (Nassau County) Able-Ride is a shared ride, curb-to-curb paratransit bus service for persons with disabilities. Able-Ride provides rides for persons unable to use fixed-route bus services for some or all of their trips. Age, distance from a bus stop, not being able to drive or not</p>	<p>947 Stewart Avenue Garden City, NY 11530 516-228-4000 http://mta.info/libus/ableride/guide.htm</p>
--	--

<p>having a car is not considered a disability, i.e. does not make you eligible.</p> <p>Able-Ride operates across Nassau County:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monday – Friday, 7:00 am – 11:00 pm Saturday, 8:00 am – 9:00 pm Sunday, 9:00 am – 6:30 pm. <p>At other times, Able-Ride only provides trips that start and end within ¾ of a mile of fixed-route service that is operating at the time that you wish to travel. You may request a ride that starts or ends outside of the ¾ mile area, however your reservations will not be confirmed until 5:00 pm on the day before the trip.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You must complete an application The fare is \$3.50 (one way) per person except for your personal care aide who rides for free. Besides you and your personal care aide, one other person may ride with you but must pay the \$3.50 fare.
<p>DAV (Disabled American Veterans)</p> <p>Volunteers drive veterans to and from medical appointments at the VAMC. They begin picking up veterans about 6 AM and leave the VA at 12 Noon for the return trip. Generally no one may accompany you on the van.</p> <p>Northport VA Medical Center 79 Middleville Rd Northport, N.Y. 11768</p>	<p>631-261-4400 ext 7980</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schedule a ride by telephone or in person at the DAV office in Building 200 Pavilion Lobby entrance, at least 2 weeks in advance You must be able to walk on your own. Your appointment must be in the morning.
<p>Huntington Area Rapid Transit (HART)</p> <p>HART Bus H4 arrives at the VAMC 40 minutes after the hour between the hours of 7:40am and 6:40pm.</p> <p>Please review the bus schedule for routes.</p>	<p>144 East Second Street Huntington Station, NY 11746 631 - 427-8287</p> <p>www.sct-bus.org (bus schedules)</p>
<p>HART PARATRANSIT</p> <p>HART's paratransit program operates in full compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. This is a shared-ride, advance-request, curb-to-curb program that operates within the Town of Huntington. It is available only to eligible persons and their companions. Approved applicants will be enrolled in the program at the "ADA Paratransit Eligible" level that is recognized nationwide. Persons deemed eligible for paratransit at this level by another transit agency may use HART's paratransit program on a limited, visitor's basis. Call for more information.</p>	<p>144 East Second Street Huntington Station, NY 11746 631-427-8287</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> You must complete an application, including medical documentation of a disability, which limits you from using public bus rides. Travel must be scheduled 2 weeks in advance The fare is \$1.25 for each one-way ride Personal help is limited
<p>Lindy's taxi cab & ambulette service, linked to Medicaid</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contact Lindy's to schedule appointment Contact Medicaid to indicate appointment time Medicaid will fax information to Lindy's for 	<p>631-234-1300</p> <p>Medicaid card required. To contact Medicaid: (Suffolk) 631-854-5801 (Nassau) 516-433-1660</p>

approval	
<p>Long Island Bus Long Island Bus provides convenient service throughout Nassau County, western Suffolk County and into eastern Queens. Fifty-four routes serve 46 Long Island Rail Road stations plus colleges, museums, parks, theaters, and beaches. Monday-Friday 7am-5pm 516-228-4000 TTY 516-228-4002 http://www.lirr.org/libus/index.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The basic fare for Long Island Bus is \$2 • Exact fare is required • A transfer can be purchased for \$.25 when you board the bus and pay with coins. • Transfers are free with MetroCard. • Transfers are valid for two hours from the time indicated on the transfer and may be used only at designated points and for routes traveling in the same general direction. • Discounts rates are available for seniors and students
<p>Long Island Rail Road (LIRR) The LIRR system is comprised of over 700 miles of track on 11 different branches, stretching from Montauk to Manhattan, approximately 120 miles away. Along the way, the LIRR serves 124 stations in Nassau, Suffolk, Queens, Brooklyn and Manhattan. The LIRR operates 24-hours-a-day, 7-days-a-week, including all holidays, with service intervals varying by stations and time of day.</p>	<p>Suffolk 631-231-5477 Nassau 516-822-5477 NYC 718-217-5477 TTY 718-558-3022 Discounted rate line(s) 718-243-4999 TTY 718-596-8273 www.lirr.org</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fares vary • Discounted rates for seniors and students
<p>Smithtown HandiVan Free of charge curb to curb rides services for persons with disabilities who live in the town of Smithtown, to and from medical appointments only in the town of Smithtown Hours: M-F 8am-3pm</p>	<p>631-360-7642</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application packet must be completed • No age restriction
<p>South Hampton Human Resources Transportation Program Rides provided by Mr. William Tupper for residents of South Hampton to medical appointments in the town and beyond, including the VAMC. Wheel-chair lift.</p>	<p>631-287-5665 [Mr. William Tupper] www.HRProgram.org</p> <p>No charge for this service however donations are welcome.</p>
<p>Suffolk County Accessible Rides (SCAT) The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) mandates that Suffolk County Transit provide as part of its bus system, a curb to curb rides for people with disabilities who cannot use regular buses under certain conditions. SCAT operates in line with federal guidelines and is intended to offer roughly the same travel opportunities to the disabled as would be available on bus lines to the non-disabled public. You can travel to and from places within 3/4 mile of a bus route, on the same days and during the same hours as regular bus service. Monday-Friday 6am-8:30 pm</p>	<p>Suffolk County Office of Handicapped Services Building 158, North County Complex P.O. Box 6100 Hauppauge, NY 11788-0099 631-853-8333 631-738-1150</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application must be completed • \$3.00 (one way) per person except for personal care aid who travels with you for free • Appointments must be made 1-7 days in advance Call Monday-Friday between 8am and 4:30pm

<p>Saturday 7:30am- 8:30pm Sundays and Holidays - No service</p>	
<p>Suffolk County Transit Bus services within Suffolk County, Mondays through Saturdays. No services on Sundays, New Year's Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day or Christmas.</p> <p>631-852-5200 Monday-Friday 8am-4:30 pm www.sct-bus.org</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$1.50 fare Discounts available to students, seniors and persons with disabilities • Personal care aides ride for free • Call for information about transfers • Have exact fare ready. Driver cannot handle money. • Passengers must deposit their own fare. • Arrive earlier than scheduled departure time. • Tell driver where you want to get off. • Drivers are required to announce major Bus Stops.
<p>Town Medical Rides</p> <p>A number of towns on Long Island provide rides services to town residents 60+ years to and from medical appointments in that particular town <i>only</i>.</p> <p>1) Brookhaven 631-451-6126 Appointments must be made 3-4 weeks in advance. Call between the hours of 8am and 3:30pm Monday-Friday</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$1.00 per ride <p>2) East Hampton 631-324-4443</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residents must be unable to drive • Appointments must be made at least 1 week in advance • 50 cents donation required per ride • Hours: 6am-6pm M-F (medical appointments should be made between 9am-1pm, but will attempt to meet need for other times) • You can apply over the phone <p>3) Islip 631-224-5686</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appointments must be made 3 weeks in advance • \$2.00 contribution fare – round trip <p>4) Riverhead 631-727-3200 ext 290</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appointments must be made 3 days in advance • \$1.00 per ride 	<p>5) Smithtown 631-265-8811</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appointments must be made 1 week in advance <p>6) South Hampton 631-728-1110</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free rides for senior citizens and persons with disabilities • Appointments must be made 1 week in advance • Medical appointments must be made between the hours of 9am and 2pm <p>8) Southold 631-298-4460</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appointments must be made 6 weeks in advance • \$5.00 round trip • You can apply by phone <p>Hours: 8am-1pm</p> <p>9) Shelter Island 631-749-1059 Provides rides to residents for medical appointments beyond the town parameters. Monday to Friday Summer 9:30-1:30pm Fall thru spring 10am -2pm</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please make appointments as far in advance as possible. • \$ contributions are not required but accepted <p>Please contact your town directly for more information.</p>
<p>Veteran Service Agency (Nassau) Rides for Veterans and their family members.</p>	<p>516-572-8456 516-572-8457</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4-5 cars available • 1 wheelchair accessible van. You need to have an escort to use this van. • Cars depart at 8am for veterans with morning appointments

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cars depart at 11 am for veterans with afternoon appointments. (No later than 2:30pm) Appointments must be made 2 weeks in advance
<p>Veteran Service Agency (Suffolk) Rides to Veterans and their family members. This program functions with assistance of donations.</p> <p>Hours of operation: Monday –Friday 8am-5pm</p>	<p>631-924-8888</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Call 631-451-2372 between 10 am and 1pm to make appointments at least one week in advance. One van available

XV. TELEPHONE DIRECTORY FOR PATIENTS

<p>Access Center (Substance Abuse Programs)</p> <p>Building 63, first floor.</p>	<p>(631) 261-4400 x 5780</p>	<p>Walk in or call for information about our Substance Abuse Program, including outpatient assessment and treatment, and partial hospitalization program.</p>
<p>Ambulatory Surgery and Pre-Admission Testing</p> <p>Building 200, first floor near Radiology</p> <p>Insurance Pre-authorizations</p>	<p>(631) 261-4400 x 2812</p> <p>(631) 261-4400 x 5248 x 5523</p>	<p>A Nurse Practitioner or Physician’s Assistant will take your history and do a physical exam. Anesthesia and Nursing staff will teach you about the procedure.</p> <p>On day of surgery, report to ASU. You will have the procedure done in the OR, recover briefly in the ASU, and receive discharge instructions. In rare cases, you may need care in the Recovery Room and ICU. You must have someone drive you home after surgery.</p>
<p>Appointment Scheduling</p>	<p>(631) 754-7919</p>	<p>Call to make or change appointments with Specialty clinics (except for Ophthalmology call x 2138 & for Optometry call x 6059)</p>
<p>Audiology and Speech Pathology Service</p> <p>Lower level of Building 200 in Room C0-2.</p>	<p>(631) 261-4400 x 7381</p>	<p>All Veterans are eligible for a hearing test, subject to a co-pay unless exempt. Patients must meet eligibility requirements to receive a hearing aid. Most veterans will need a consult from their Primary Care Provider.</p>

<p>Beneficiary Travel</p> <p>Building 200 Lower level near Agent Cashier</p>	<p>(631) 266-6079</p>	<p>Patients must be wheelchair restricted and have special eligibility for ambulette transport (30% or more service-connected or low income). Call for specific information. Call to arrange a ride at least 2 days prior to your appointment.</p>
<p>Benefits and VA Services</p>		<p>Visit the MyHealthVet web site at www.myhealth.va.gov for Federal Benefits for Veterans; programs for special illnesses; VA news and special events; how to Volunteer. See also Coordination of Benefit, Eligibility and Veterans Benefits Counselor (below).</p>
<p>Billing Offices Customer Service Manager Building 10, Room 106 Monday to Friday 8 AM to 4:30 PM</p> <p>Red Team Billing Account Manager Red Team- Room E-23</p> <p>Yellow/Blue Billing Account Manager Yellow/Blue –E 117</p> <p>For Credit Card Payment</p>	<p>(631) 266-6045 1-888-440-9587</p> <p>(631) 266-6045</p> <p>(631) 266-6045</p> <p>(631) 266-6045</p>	<p>Information about Billing Guidelines, Long Term Care co-payment regulations, health insurance and customer accounts. Please report changes in your insurance, home address, telephone number, employment status, and financial information.</p> <p>To avoid waiting on the phone, please delay calling to ask questions about your account until a few days after you receive your bill.</p> <p>You may make payments at the Co-pay window Bldg 200, first floor near entrance to Pavilion.</p>
<p>Centralized Intake Monday-Friday 8:00 AM - 4:00 PM</p>	<p>(631) 486-6125</p>	<p>Bldg 200, Admissions area, Booth # 1. Patients are contacted to update their address, phone, insurance and other information.</p>
<p>CHAMPVA</p> <p>Pre-authorizations/ Insurance Information Rm C-138</p>	<p>1-800-733-8387</p> <p>(631) 261-4400 x 2385 or 5248</p>	<p>Civilian Health and Medical program for dependents (18-65) of permanently and totally disabled Veterans. After 65, dependent is covered by Medicare. Call this number for insurance and billing information for active duty personnel and families.</p>

<p>Chaplain Service</p>	<p>(631) 261-4400 x 7204</p>	<p>Sacraments are administered on the units. Religious services: Jewish- Saturday 10:00 AM Bldg 92 Roman Catholic - Weekdays 12N, Chapel Sunday 10:30 AM, Bldg 92, Atrium Protestant- Sunday 10:00 AM Bldg 92 Dining Room Services on special days of observance.</p>
<p>Compensation and Pension</p> <p>New York Regional Office</p>	<p>(631) 261-4400 x 5881, 2529</p> <p>1-800-827-1000 x 4877</p> <p>(1-800-829-4833 Hearing Impaired)</p>	<p>Contact with questions about your appointments for medical evaluation.</p> <p>Call the NY Regional Office in Manhattan with questions and concerns about the claims process and you need to do to get your claim completed.</p>
<p>Coordination of Benefits</p> <p>Medical Care Cost Fund (MCCF) Admissions Area, Bldg. 200, Booth 4</p>	<p>(631) 261- 4400 x 5248, 5523</p>	<p>Congress requires the VA to bill insurance carriers (but not Medicare) for non service-connected care. If you are subject to a co-pay, you are responsible for any part of the co-payment that is not covered by your insurance carriers. Call to update your insurance information.</p>
<p>DAV Transportation</p> <p>Building 9, first floor, Room 147</p>	<p>(631) 754-7980</p>	<p>A volunteer service provided by veterans for veterans. The DAV coordinator will determine eligibility and availability of transportation. The DAV has one wheelchair van. Transportation is provided for morning clinic appointments only. Since space is limited, you must schedule a ride at least two weeks in advance. The driver will contact you the afternoon before to confirm. Volunteer drivers are always needed! For rides to VA clinics in the community, contact Veterans Services agencies in Suffolk or Nassau (See page 10)</p>
<p>Eligibility</p> <p>Health Benefits Advisors</p> <p>Building 200, First Floor, Admissions Area</p>	<p>1-800-551-3996</p>	<p>Call for information about programs and services, enrollment, priority groups, means tests, veteran's benefits, service connection, co-pay status or eligibility for Long Term Care.</p>

<p>Emergency Room (ER)</p> <p>If you have WARNING SIGNS OF A HEART ATTACK OR STROKE, call 911 and tell the ambulance driver that you have chest pain or signs of a stroke.</p> <p>If not sure what to do, call: VISN 3 Nurse Helpline 1 - 800 - 877- 6976</p>	<p>(631) 266-6058</p>	<p>Staffed 24/7 by medical and psychiatric attending physicians. Patients with non-emergent conditions are encouraged to contact their Primary Care team rather than go to the ER. You might be able to be seen in the clinic by your provider or another member of your team that same day. Please do not go to the ER for new prescriptions or for refills.</p> <p>Go to the ER with any mental health crisis on evenings, nights or weekends.</p>
<p>Ethics Committee</p>	<p>(631) 261-4400 Patient Representative: 5326</p> <p>Medicine: 2667 Nursing: 2756</p> <p>Social Work: 7030</p> <p>Chaplain: 7204</p>	<p>Any Veteran or family member can request to meet with the Ethics Team. Issues relevant to this team include conflicts, disagreements and uncertainty in clinical decision-making. The Committee always leaves final decisions with the patient/ family and the treatment team</p> <p><i>On evenings, nights and weekends, contact the NOD, ext. 2664 or 7100</i></p>
<p>Geriatrics and Extended Care</p>		<p>Geriatrics and Extended Care is an interdisciplinary program of inpatient and outpatient care, including: Geriatric Evaluation and Management (GEM), Palliative Care, Respite Care and Short Stay Nursing Home Care Units in Bldg 92 The Silver Team on medical-surgical units Geriatric Primary Clinic: Tuesday AM; Monday and Friday PM</p>
<p>Golf Course</p>	<p>(631) 261-8000</p>	<p>Sponsored by the American Legion. Open to patients, employees and the public from mid-March to mid December, 6:30 AM to dusk, e.g. 6:30 PM. Fee with Veteran's ID: \$7 weekdays; \$10 weekends. Walk in. No reserved tee times.</p>
<p>Home Based Primary Care (HBPC) (VA Home Care program)</p>	<p>(631) 261-4400 x 2053</p>	<p>Home Based Primary Care is an interdisciplinary team of nurses, physician, social worker, dietitian, rehabilitation therapist, and recreational therapists that provides</p>

Community Health Nurse Coordinator (CHNC) Bldg 7, Room 123		individualized health care services for the veteran in his home, including home hospice. The veteran must be eligible for VA care, have an identified caregiver who will be responsible for their care or is able to direct his/her own care and be a referred by a professional health care provider. The Veteran is usually homebound.
Infectious Disease Treatment Infection Control Bldg 7, Rm 109 D	(631) 261-4400 x 7309	Specialty clinic patients may call with questions about treatment or problems, however it is recommended that you contact your provider first.
Interpreter		Employees who speak various languages are available to interpret for patients, families or caregivers so that they can participate in the patient's care. Ask a staff member to contact Human Resources, or on holidays, evenings, nights or weekends, the Administrative Officer of the Day (AOD).
Lab Testing Pathology and Lab Service Bldg 200 first floor C 176		You should contact your provider with questions about lab tests and results.
Long Island Vet Center 116 West Main Street, Babylon, NY 11702 Irregular hours to accommodate working veterans and family members	(631) 661-3930	Psychotherapy for war trauma. Eligibility is based on military service during specific periods of war or hostile actions and a clinical assessment. Services to family members as needed. Psychotherapy for military sexual trauma that occurred while on active duty. Bereavement Counseling for families of IF/OEF combat soldiers. No means test.
Means Tests Community Relations	(631) 261-4400 x 7238, 7082	Veterans who have a service-connected disability rating of over 10% are exempt from completing a means test. Call with questions.
Military Sexual Trauma Military Sexual Trauma Coordinator	(631) 261-4400 x 5928	VA provides eligible veterans with confidential counseling and treatment for the aftereffects of sexual trauma.
Optometry Service Second floor of the Primary/Specialty Care Pavilion	(631) 266-6059	Routine eye exams, diagnosis and treatment of eye disease and low vision rehabilitative services.
Patient Advocates	(631) 261-4400	We encourage patients and families to resolve

<p>Monday -Friday 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM: Wm Marengo, Patient Advocate</p> <p>Fran Maida, Patient Representative</p> <p>AOD in Bldg 200 Admissions</p>	<p>x 5326</p> <p>x 7009</p> <p>x 2655</p>	<p>problems with the staff and supervisor in the area where the problem occurs if possible. In cases where additional support is needed, contact the Patient Advocate or Representative, or ask any staff member to contact them for you.</p> <p>During evenings, nights and weekends, contact the supervisor of the immediate area.</p> <p>If further assistance is needed and the concern cannot wait until the next business day, please contact the Administrative Officer of the Day.</p>
<p>Patient Education Coordinator M. Lynn Griffith, RN, Ed.D</p>	<p>(631) 261-4400 x 7773</p>	<p>Call for information about Orientation for new patients; Mini-Med School; Annual Health Fair; MyHealtheVet, Diabetes classes.</p>
<p>Patient Health Information Library</p> <p>Within the Medical Library, Building 12 Monday –Friday 8:30 AM– 4:00 PM</p>	<p>(631) 261-4400 x 2973, 2962</p>	<p>Books, videos on loan. Health information videos can be broadcast on TV in patients’ rooms. Inpatients can request that the Library deliver educational materials to their unit or to their home after discharge. Librarians can assist patients/families/visitors to find health information.</p> <p>Health Information on the Internet The VHA website for patients and the public at large is www.va.gov The VISN 3 web address is www.va.gov/visns/visn03, with a link to the Northport VAMC internet web page. Visit the new VA initiative - MyHealtheVet at www.myhealth.va.gov (conditions, procedures, treatments, medications, drug interactions, a medical dictionary & self-care)</p>
<p>Patients’ Funds Agent Cashier Building 200 lower level, Room</p>	<p>(631) 261-4400 x 2372</p>	<p>Funds may be deposited for safekeeping in non-interest bearing accounts at the VAMC. Bank checks and money orders are cleared immediately. Personal checks take two (2) weeks to clear.</p> <p>Hours of operation: Mon thru Friday 9AM-11AM & 2 PM-3PM Exceptions to these hours will be made for patients being discharged. Mon thru Fri. between 11AM and 3:30 PM.</p>

<p>Pharmacy a. Outpatient Prescriptions Monday-Friday 8:00 AM - 4:30 PM</p> <p>b. Prescription Refills</p>	<p>(631) 266-6068</p> <p>1-800-799-3023</p> <p>From outside NY State: (631) 754-4989</p>	<p>Call with questions about your medications. Contact your Primary Care team for <u>new</u> prescriptions, renewals, and changes. Please <u>do not</u> call this number for refills.</p> <p>To order refills:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Call the toll-free number 2. Mail in the refill slip with the mailing label provided 3. Drop the refill slip into the drop-off box on wall near outpatient pharmacy. 4. Order refills online at MyHealtheVet: www.myhealth.va.gov <p>Refills should arrive in the mail in 7-10 days, from the Consolidated Mail Out Program (CMOP) in Massachusetts.</p>
<p>Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation Service (PM&RS)</p>	<p>(631) 261-4400 x 7416, 7417</p>	<p>Physiatry (the physiatrist is a Medical Doctor for the disabled), Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, Kinesiotherapy, and Cardiac Rehabilitation. Your Primary Care provider or Attending Physician must refer you.</p>
<p>PRIMARY CARE CLINICS:</p> <hr/> <p>Blue Primary Care</p> <p>Plainview Primary Care (M - F)</p>	<p>(631) 754-7948</p> <p>(516) 694-6008</p>	<p>Interdisciplinary teams of healthcare professionals meet the primary health care needs of veterans. Call your team for urgent and routine appointments, new prescriptions, test results, referrals.</p>
<p>Yellow Primary Care</p> <hr/> <p>Patchogue Primary Care (M - F)</p>	<p>(631) 754-7973</p> <p>(631) 758-4419</p>	
<p>Red Primary Care</p> <hr/> <p>Westhampton Primary Care (T, W, Th)</p>	<p>(631) 754-7978</p> <p>(631) 898-0599</p>	<p>By appointment only. No walk-ins onto military base.</p>
<p>Women's Wellness Center and Primary Care Cheryl Hansen, RN, VISN 3 Women Veterans Program Manager</p>	<p>(631) 544-5314</p>	<p>Primary Care, Mammography, Gynecology, Support Groups. Counseling by referral. Women's Health Resources Room</p>

Bldg 200, Unit 44		
Prosthetics & Sensory Aids	(631) 754-7936	Building 200, Unit 44
Mental Health Outpatient Care Mental Health Clinic, Building 64, first floor	(631) 266-6077	You may walk into the Mental Health Clinic for assessment and treatment on Monday to Friday from 8:00 AM - 4:30 PM. Call about being seen in a Satellite clinic. Go to the ER with any mental health crisis on evenings, nights or weekends.
Public Affairs Officer Building 9, first floor	(631) 266- 6074	Serves as VA spokesman and provides information about VA services and programs to all Medical Center publics.
Pulmonary & Respiratory Care	(631) 266-6076	Contact for information about Home Oxygen.
Recreation Therapy Service Building 6, second floor.	(631) 261-4400 x 7276	Recreation therapists, a music therapist, and an art therapist in Geriatrics and Extended Care, Acute Psychiatry, Home Based Primary Care (HBPC), Comprehensive Integrated Inpatient Rehabilitation Program (CIIRP) and Comprehensive Day Treatment Program. See monthly schedule of all Recreation Therapy and self-directed activities on units, in Building 88, and in Recreation Therapy Service office. Recreation and Leisure Facilities include: Fitness Center Golf Course Tennis Courts Pool Art Studio Music Studio Gymnasium Miniature Golf Course Picnic Areas Outdoor Senior Plaza
Release of Information Building 200 first floor near Escort, Room B1-7F	(631) 266-6063	Information in a health record can be released only with a patient’s written approval. Obtain forms to request copies of a record from “Release of Information” office.
SHUTTLE on VAMC grounds Monday – Friday 8:30 AM to 3:15 PM	Ask a staff member to page (by dialing 4, 226, then speak)	Driven by volunteer veterans, the Veteran Shuttle has a wheelchair lift and will transport anyone to and from parking lots and buildings.

<p>Smoking Cessation Clinic at Northport VAMC Provided by Psychology Service</p>	<p>(631) 261-4400 x 2258</p>	<p>Every Wednesday afternoon 1:00 PM Assessment and goal setting 2:00 PM Class on Strategies (6 week series) Physician onsite. Medication available.</p>
<p>Smoke-free classes in the community Provided by Suffolk County</p> <p>NY State Health Department Smokers' Quitline</p>	<p>(631) 853 – 4017</p> <p>1-888-697-8487</p>	<p>'Learn to be Tobacco Free' classes (free to all residents of Suffolk County). One-hour classes are offered over 6-8 weeks at convenient locations. See web site - www.co.suffolk.ny.us/health for schedules, sites, and to register. Visit www.nysmokefree.com for area classes and health information.</p>
<p>Adult and Child Protective Services</p>	<p>In Suffolk Co: 631-854-9100</p> <p>In Nassau Co: 516-571-4819 or 4823. After 6pm: (516) 572-3143</p>	<p>Department of Social Services-<u>Domestic Violence/Adult Protective/Elder Abuse Hotline</u>. Calls are anonymous and confidential, 24-hour availability, 7 days a week. (Se Habla Espanol). <u>Child abuse and neglect</u>: NYS Child Abuse Hotline: 1-800-342-3720. Other local agencies are the Nassau and Suffolk County Coalitions Against Domestic Violence: 631-666-8833 and 516-542-0404; Suffolk County Adult Protective Services: 631-853-2236, after 4:30pm 631-854-9100; Nassau County Adult Protective Services: 516-571-5819 or 4822. You may also contact VA Social Work Services @ 631-261-4400 x7029 for guidance/assistance.</p>

<p>Social Work Services</p>	<p>(631) 266-6078</p>	<p>VAMC Social Workers provide help with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * family, money or housing problems * discharge planning, services for homeless veterans * individual/family/group counseling * access to VA and non-VA entitlement programs, Community Residential Care programs, Mental Health Intensive Case Management Program * Nursing Home placements in VA, non VA and Contract facilities * Contract Adult Day Health Care Program * Homemaker/Home Health Aide Program * Community based Transitional * Permanent Housing, Hoptel Program * Military Sexual Trauma Program, Sexual Trauma/Assault Survivors Counseling, * Case Management for OEF & IF Combat Soldiers and Veterans.
<p>Telephone Service</p>		<p>Bedside telephones are available on most units. Calls must be charged to a third party or an MCI account. <u>You may use a calling card.</u> Pay telephones are located on each floor of Building 200. Report missing or broken phones to your Unit Secretary.</p>
<p>Television</p>		<p>Television service in patient rooms and Day Rooms in Building 200 and outlying buildings is provided at no cost to the patient. Report problems to your Unit Secretary</p>
<p>TRICARE/Active Duty</p> <p>Vanessa Brown, RN (cell)</p> <p>DOD Clinical Coordinator</p>	<p>(631) 261-4400 x 2385</p> <p>(631) 774-1707 x 2173</p>	<p>You must be in the Defense Enrolment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS) 1-888-999-5195</p> <p>Contact to check eligibility and status.</p> <p>Call for Appointment Scheduling, Pre-authorizations and Eligibility information. Bldg. 200/C1-31</p>
<p>VA Veterans Benefits Counselor</p> <p>NYS Regional office</p>	<p>1-800-827-1000</p> <p>(631) 266-6702</p>	<p>Counselors may refer callers to the NYS office:</p> <p>New York State Division of Veteran's Affairs, Building 9, first floor, Room 120</p>

Veterans Service agencies	(631) 853-8387 (516) 572-8452	Suffolk County Veterans Service Agency Nassau County Veterans Service Agency
Veterans' Canteen Service		<p><u>Café 200</u> – Building 200 (Lower Level) Monday to Friday from 7:30 AM to 3:00 PM Inpatients may visit the Canteen only after receiving permission from the Nurse.</p> <p><u>Coffee Cart</u> - Pavilion Lobby Monday to Friday from 7:30 AM - 2:30 PM</p> <p><u>Vending areas</u> - Building 200 - Lower Level, First Floor by ER entrance and Third Floor. Building 64 Mental Health Clinic, First Floor</p> <p><u>Retail store</u> - Building 89 Open to all. Tax-free. Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday 8:00 AM to 4:15 PM. Mon.-Fri. Saturday 9:00 AM to 3:30 PM. Closed Sundays & holidays.</p>
Visiting Hours	Speak with the Nurse Manager or person in charge of the unit.	<p>Visiting hours from 12 Noon to 8:00 p.m. Two (2) persons may visit a patient at once. Children under 12 are not permitted on the unit. Small children may wait in the Pavilion Lobby or the ER waiting area, provided an adult attends them.</p> <p>Intensive Care Unit: 11:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. for 15 minutes on the hour. Special times if needed.</p>
VISN 3 NURSE HELPLINE	1-800-877 - 6976	<p>An intensive care RN at the Bronx VAMC is available 24/7 to answer patients' questions. The RN will advise you to call 911, go to the nearest ER, go to the VAMC ER or call your team, as appropriate, and document your inquiry in your medical record.</p> <p>The RN may alert Northport staff about your concern.</p>
Visual Impairment Service Team (VIST) Program VIST Coordinator	(631) 266-6059	<p>Assists veterans and families to obtain health and rehabilitation services for the legally blind and those coping with vision loss. Services include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total health review, including eye and hearing examination and a review of veterans benefits and adaptive equipment • Regional Blind Rehabilitation Center

		Support groups <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vocational rehabilitation • Referral to Guide Dog School and state and local service agencies.
Voluntary Service Building 9, first floor	(631) 261-4400 x 5823	Volunteer programs and opportunities for gifts and donations.

LOCAL HOTELS – OPTIONS FOR PATIENTS’ FAMILIES

The VA accepts no responsibility for the service provided by the hotels below. They are listed here for your information only and may change without notice.

Courtesy Inn 1126 Jericho Turnpike Commack, NY 864-3500	Holiday Inn at Mac Arthur Airport 3845 Veterans Memorial Highway Ronkonkoma, NY 585-9500
Deer Park Motor Inn 354 Commack Road Deer Park, NY 667-8300	Huntington Hilton 595 Broadhollow Road Melville, NY 845-1000
Hampton Inn 680 Commack Road Commack, NY 462-5700	Sheraton Long Island 110 Vanderbilt Parkway Hauppauge, NY 231-1100