



Snapshot

**Skeeter:
Providing Comfort to Veterans**



Skeeter is no ordinary dog; that's why he just received the Kentucky Veterinary Medical Association Animal Hall of Fame Hero's Award for his work at the Lexington, Kentucky, VA Medical Center nursing home care unit. The 6-year-old Pomeranian arrived at the medical center a year ago. "He quickly made this unit his home," said Paula Bayer, RN, nurse manager on the VA nursing home care unit. Staff and patients cite Skeeter's unconditional love. No one can explain how Skeeter determines which patient needs his attention the most, but somehow he consistently seeks out those in need. "His ability to provide comfort to an end stage patient is remarkable," says Paula. The consulting unit psychiatrist comments that Skeeter provides emotional and psychological comfort, which affects the stability of the patient. Skeeter's Hall of Fame award celebrates the bond between animals and people, which enriches human life.



Snapshot

**VA Mobile Pharmacies:
Delivering Medicines During
Emergencies**



To support veterans and their families during major emergencies, especially natural disasters, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has begun to deploy mobile pharmacies that will provide vital medicine when patients are unable to fill their prescriptions. VA will also open up the facilities to help communities during major disasters and other emergencies.

"The mobile pharmacies give VA the ability to provide critical medications to veterans when disaster strikes," said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Dr. James B. Peake. "VA is committed to ensuring our veterans receive their care and prescriptions as soon as possible during an emergency."

Each VA mobile pharmacy is housed in a 40-foot-long solid steel trailer built to withstand winds in a Category 3 storm. The units include a satellite connection with VA's Consolidated Mail Outpatient Pharmacy system. Pharmacists can use the satellite system to obtain a veteran's prescription data to dispense the drugs on site. In addition, VA can send replacement medications during an emergency by mail or another carrier to a veteran's home or temporary address.

VA recognized the need for mobile pharmacies in 2005 after hurricanes Katrina and Rita severely damaged VA medical centers along the Gulf Coast. The Department deployed several mobile medical clinics as part of its response to the disasters.

To ensure rapid response to a wide range of emergencies, VA's mobile pharmacies will be strategically placed across the Nation.