



The Volunteer Promise

Voluntary Service (603/135)
VA Medical Center
800 Zorn Avenue
Louisville, Kentucky 40206

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THE FLU VACCINE IS HERE!

Occupational Health is offering vaccination against influenza, at no cost to employees and volunteers. Seasonal influenza is a viral infection that causes more than 200,000 Americans to be hospitalized each year. In addition, it results in approximately 36,000 deaths each year in the United States. By immunizing yourself against influenza, you protect yourself, your family, and the veterans to whom you provide care. Flu vaccinations will be offered during the following days and times:

October 14	7:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. and 1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.
October 15	7:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. and 1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.
October 16	7:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. and 1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.
October 20	7:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. and 1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.
October 21	7:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. and 1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.
October 22	7:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. and 1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.
October 23	7:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. and 1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Flu vaccinations will continue during the following days and times throughout the remainder of the year, Monday thru Friday, 8:00 a.m. - 9:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

If you need to schedule an appointment at a more convenient time or have any questions regarding the flu vaccine, please contact Nyoka M. Emily, Occupational Health Nurse, at ext. 54413.

Some employees will have their flu vaccination done at an outside facility or primary care clinic. Please contact Occupational Health at ext. 55048 if you received your vaccination elsewhere or without signing VA Form 10-5549, Influenza Vaccine Consent Form due to tracking requirements from Central Office.

FLU VACCINE MYTHS AND FACTS

Myth: You are not at risk for getting the flu because you're healthy, and as someone who works in a healthcare environment, you've been exposed to so many germs that you're immune to everything.

Fact: Healthcare workers can have an increased risk of exposure to the flu due to the nature of the job.

DATES TO REMEMBER

Wednesday, October 22

Stand Down for the Homeless

Old Male High School
8:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Thursday, October 23

VAVS Committee Meeting
VAMC Room D010, 3PM

Tuesday, November 4

Election Day

Tuesday, November 11

Veterans Day
VA Admin Offices Closed

Thursday, November 27

Thanksgiving Day Holiday
VA Admin Offices Closed

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Introducing - Heroes to Hometowns Program

The Heroes to Hometowns program is designed to welcome home Service Members who, because of injuries sustained, can no longer serve in the military. In creating a positive transition home, Heroes to Hometowns inspires community growth and establishes a support network for Service Members and their families that allows them to ease into their hometown or new surroundings.

Every veteran and families needs something different. Some may not want any tangible assistance or a welcoming celebration, but knowing that there is support and recognition in the community can make an enormous difference in their lives. Some of the things they may need:

- Organize a welcome home celebration
- Help secure temporary and/or permanent housing
- Assist in adapting a home or vehicle to accommodate their physical or mental challenges
- Assist with finding employment and educational opportunities
- Assist with obtaining veterans benefits.

Our community can help provide:

- Childcare
- Financial Support
- Transportation
- Family Support
- Entertainment options

Louisville VA Medical Center has been selected as one of ten sites nationwide to establish the Heroes to Hometown Assistance Program. In this program, a volunteer coordinator works within the Operation Iraqi Freedom/Operation Enduring Freedom Program to help bridge the newest service members needs with community assistance and donations.

To support the efforts of this program, a new General Post Fund (GPF) account has been established. You can support the program by making your donation to GPF 511.

VA Voluntary Service Year in Review

Hats off to our VAVS Team! In 2008 volunteers and partnering organizations provided a tremendous wealth of services, goods, and funds to support the veterans we serve. Take a look at these numbers:

Total Volunteers: 796 volunteers
 Total Hours: 155,346 (valued at more than \$3 million in service!)
 Material donations: \$300,763
 Monetary Donations: \$107,737
 Total value of ALL contributions: \$3,439,300





Tuesday, November 11, 2008, is Veterans Day. This is a day set aside to honor those who have served our country in military uniform. During this time, individuals and groups take time to come to the medical center to visit hospitalized veterans. Ceremonies honoring veterans will take place throughout the community. Let each of us take the time to honor or to simply thank a veteran. Many of our volunteers are veterans. From our hearts to yours, "Thank you for your service!" There are those who may ask...

Veterans Day - What's the Point?

On this Veterans Day, please remember:

It is the veteran, not the preacher, who has given you freedom of religion.

It is the veteran, not the reporter, who has given you freedom of the press.

It is the veteran, not the poet, who has given you freedom of speech.

It is the veteran, not the liberal protesters, who has given you freedom to assemble.

It is the veteran, not the lawyer, who has given you the right to a fair trial.

It is the veteran, not the politician, who has given you the right to vote.

It is the veteran, who salutes the Flag, who serves under the Flag.

Let us honor them all on this day.

And that's the Point.

---Author Unknown

Christmas for Homeless Veterans



You are cordially invited to help spread the goodwill of the holiday season by participating in a holiday project to benefit homeless veterans. Voluntary Service, in conjunction with the VA Homeless Veterans Program, is sponsoring a Christmas Gift Tree. We have over 120 homeless veterans who need our help to keep warm this winter. This year the program will also assist two families. A Christmas tree will be set up in the medical center at the West Entrance beginning on Monday, December 1. Each ornament will represent a clothing item for a homeless veteran or family member of a homeless veteran.

Individuals wishing to participate in the project should choose a name and purchase items indicated on the ornament. Remember, this is a Christmas project; gifts should be limited to **new items only**. Gifts should be delivered **UNWRAPPED** to Voluntary Service, Room A008 no later than close of business on December 12.

If you have any questions or if you would like additional information, contact Voluntary Service at (502) 287-6221.

SPOT-LIGHTING OUR NEWEST VA HEALTHCARE CENTERS**VA HEALTHCARE CENTER, GRAYSON**

A dedication and ribbon-cutting ceremony for a new Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) healthcare center in Clarkson, Kentucky took place on Friday, September 19, with more than 200 veterans, legislative officials, staff and community members in attendance. In addition to the dedication and ribbon cutting ceremony, there was also be a special tribute to honor POW/MIA Recognition Day.

This new VA Healthcare Center, located at 619 W. Main Street, Clarkson, Kentucky, 42727, brings care closer to veterans living in Grayson County and the surrounding areas. The clinic provides primary care, mental health care and other preventative and ancillary services. A team of 36 VA health care professionals staff the clinic, which is open Monday – Friday between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. (CST), with the exception of holidays.

With over 8,000 square feet of newly renovated and constructed space, the clinic features 12 exam rooms, several private offices, a teleconference room, and a group room to provide for the more than 8,000 veterans residing in the area. Examination rooms are equipped with computer terminals that directly interface with the computer system at the VA medical center in Louisville ~ placing important medical information at the fingertips of the providers. We are very proud to partner with the Kentucky Department of Veterans Affairs (KDVA) to ensure Kentucky veterans and their families receive all the benefits and services they have earned. A KDVA representative will be on-site, 4 days per week, to provide benefits counseling and establishment of all claims, privileges, and rights which they may have under federal, state or local laws.

VA HEALTHCARE CENTER, CARROLL

On September 26, the new VA Healthcare Center, Carroll opened its doors at an interim location within Carroll County Hospital. VA Healthcare Center, Carroll will provide primary care and mental health services, **by appointment**, to veterans residing in Carroll County and the surrounding areas.



Carroll County Hospital is located at 309 Eleventh Street, Carrollton, KY 41008. Veterans may call (502) 287-5046 or (502) 287- 5047 for additional information or to schedule an appointment.

It is anticipated that renovations to the permanent clinic location at 1901 Highway 227, Carrollton, KY will be complete by the end of the year. At that time, the VA Healthcare Center, Carroll, will provide primary care, mental health care and other preventative and ancillary services. A team of approximately 25 VA health care professionals will staff the clinic, which will be open Monday – Friday between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., with the exception of holidays.

VA HEALTHCARE CENTER, SCOTT

On September 30, the new VA Healthcare Center, Scott opened in an interim location at 279 N. Gardner Street, Scottsburg, IN. The VA Healthcare Center, Scott will provide primary care and mental health services.

Veterans may call (812) 752-8375 for additional information or to schedule an appointment.

It is anticipated that renovations to the permanent clinic location at 1467 N. Scott Valley Drive, Scottsburg, IN will be complete by spring 2009. At that time, the VA Healthcare Center, Scott, will provide primary care, mental health care and other preventative and ancillary services. A team of approximately 40 VA health care professionals will staff the clinic, which will be open Monday – Friday between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., with the exception of holidays.

VA Healthcare Center, Scott brings the total number of Louisville VAMC's Community Based Outpatient Clinics (CBOC's) to eight.

Volunteers Transporting Veterans

The DAV firmly believes that no individual who has served our country and sacrifices a limb, eyesight or good health should be denied proper medical care just because he or she can't reach a VA facility. No veteran should have to sacrifice food, or money, or be required to cut down on living expenses. Nor should vets have to neglect their health because they can't afford to pay for transportation. In response to a very real need for assistance, the DAV worked with the Department of Veterans Affairs to create the Volunteer Transportation Network (VTN). Since its beginnings in 1987, the VTN has grown to include members of other veterans' service organizations and has saved countless veterans from such sacrifices.

The Louisville VA Medical Center's VTN is one of the largest and most active in the nation, offering free transportation to veterans seeking medical treatment at the medical center or one of the Community Based Outpatient Clinics. In 2007, drivers traveled 416,776 miles to transport 18,550 veterans. With the recent donation of two new vans, compliments of the DAV and Ford Motor Company, the program can only grow stronger.



PLEASE HELP RECRUIT VOLUNTEER DRIVERS!

Know anyone who recently retired or has plans to retire soon? That is the time when many people are looking for opportunities to give back. This is also the ideal group to recruit for the Volunteer Transportation Network!

The need for qualified volunteer drivers is increasing with the expansion of the transportation program. The Transportation Network's DAV Hospital Service Coordinator reported that she is currently declining an average of five or more veteran transportation requests per day. We currently need volunteer drivers for the grounds, for local transportation, and throughout the extended community. Drivers should be available to drive one or more full days per week and must have current driver's license and proof of insurance. Prior to receiving a driving assignment, volunteer applicants must have a TB skin test and must pass a physical examination. These are provided free of charge by the VA.

To learn more about the transportation program or to offer your services, contact Voluntary Service at (502) 287-6221.

Volunteer Help Needed

Volunteers provide a unique brand of support for the Louisville VA Medical Center, assisting staff with a variety of activities that support the care and treatment of veterans. Volunteers may provide clerical support, direct or indirect patient care, mechanical support, transportation support or grounds maintenance support. Assignments are available throughout the medical center and interested individuals may contact Voluntary Service to discuss their personal interests. Some of the more critical needs at this time include:

Clerical Support Activities, with or without Computer Skills: Multiple clinical and administrative services are among the areas needing assistance. There are a variety of different assignments in this category and Voluntary Service looks forward to matching your skills and interests with medical center needs. **Current priority needs include: Community Based Outpatient Clinics, Nursing Education, Education Service and Human Resources.**

Community Volunteer Activities - Help the veterans in your own neighborhood or in one of the many nursing homes located in Kentuckiana by extending a hand in appreciation and support. The variety of opportunities available is endless. For example, visit a veteran in a nursing home, adopt a veteran in the community, develop an e-mail pen pal friendship, or help a veteran in need.

Shuttle Transportation Drivers – Drivers are needed to operate the VA Medical Center's Grounds Shuttle. The drivers in this program remain on the VA property and offer transportation assistance to veterans moving to and from their automobiles and the medical center entrances. This assignment gives volunteers an opportunity to make a difference for veterans who find navigating difficult.

MONETARY AND MATERIAL NEEDS FOR VETERAN PROGRAMS

Patient Comfort Items: Donations to this account will be used to support the Comfort Cart, a program in which volunteers provide personal hygiene items to hospitalized veterans. Donations for this purpose should be directed to GPF #515.

Social Work Service Emergency Fund: Donations to this account support patient emergency needs in situations not covered by medical center resources. These include certain travel expenses and clothing needs for patients upon discharge from the medical center. Donations for this purpose should be directed to GPF #502.

Operation Iraqi Freedom/Operation Enduring Freedom (OIF/OEF) Accounts:

Heroes to Hometowns OIF/OEF - Donations to this account will be used to benefit those veterans receiving services/treatment through the OIF/OEF Program. Expenses may include meeting the special needs of veterans returning from active duty, supporting transportation or temporary financial needs, providing support to families, and other areas of assistance. Donations for this purpose should be directed to GPF #511.

Welcome Home OIF/OEF - Expenses associated with this account include sponsoring an annual "Welcome Home" event for OIF/OEF Veterans. Donations for this purpose should be directed to GPF#532.

Television Fund: Donations are needed to support the purchase of televisions for patient bedsides. Donations for this purpose should be directed to GPF #505.

National Veterans Sporting Events: Funds are needed to support patients wishing to participate in the National Veterans Wheelchair Games and the National Veterans Winter Sports Clinic. Both programs combine the thrill of competition and therapeutic support to veterans who would otherwise not be able to compete. Contributions to support local veteran participation in either of these events should be directed to GPF #508.

National Veterans Creative Arts Program: Donations to this account are used to support the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival and the local competition. Funds are used for transportation costs for patients who are invited to participate in the national festival. Funds may also be used to pay for one attendant accompanying a veteran artist invited to the out-of-state event if deemed necessary and ordered by that veteran's attending physician. Donations for this program should be directed to GPF #509.

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If you would like to receive your newsletter in full color via electronic mail, please drop us a line and let us know your e-mail address.

We welcome your thoughts about this newsletter and your ideas for articles. Contact Voluntary Service to share your suggestions.

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