



COMMITTED  
TO VETERAN  
CENTERED CARE

VA SAN DIEGO HEALTHCARE SYSTEM  
ANNUAL REPORT

2011



**VA**  
**HEALTH**  
**CARE**

Defining  
**EXCELLENCE**  
in the 21st Century

# DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE



## Executive leadership: (l-r)

Jean Sobczak, MBA  
Assistant Director

Cynthia E. Abair, MHA  
Associate Director

Robert M. Smith, MD  
Acting Director

Sandra Solem, RN, PhD  
Associate Director,  
Patient Care Services/Nurse Executive

Kathleen Kim, MD, MPH  
Acting Chief of Staff/Medical Director

VA San Diego Healthcare System continues to be a leader in providing quality health care and services to Veterans in San Diego and Imperial Counties. In fiscal year 2011, we increased the number of patients we serve by eight percent and enrolled 4,332 Veterans from Iraq or Afghanistan, yet we have continued to focus on improving the quality of care we provide to the Veterans we serve.

We have received a number of accolades this year ranging from the recognition by The Joint Commission as a Top Performer on Key Quality Measures, to the Beacon Award for Excellence awarded to the DOU nursing staff, to the awards by the Planetree organization and by VA Systems Redesign for our Primary Care and Communications improvement efforts. We have been noted by multiple organizations for our work in recycling and green energy transformation. We are similarly recognized for our outstanding academic programs, for our research, and for disaster preparedness. These reflect just a fraction of our many accomplishments.

Despite our ongoing workload growth, our staff continues to provide topnotch clinical care and support for operations – and do so with a smile. The many awards and recognition we have received are simply a testament to the quality of staff we have. Every day, we are grateful to be able to serve America's Veterans, and we will continue to provide quality, patient-centered care in 2012.

Robert M. Smith, MD  
Acting Director, VA San Diego Healthcare System  
VA Desert Pacific Healthcare Network

**VHA MISSION** Honor America's Veterans by providing exceptional health care that improves their health and well-being.  
**VHA VISION** VHA will continue to be the benchmark of excellence and value in health care and benefits by providing exemplary services that are both patient-centered and evidence-based. • This care will be delivered by engaged, collaborative teams in an integrated environment that supports learning, discovery and continuous improvement. • It will emphasize prevention and population health and contribute to the Nation's well-being through education, research and service in national emergencies.

**VA CORE VALUES AND CHARACTERISTICS – I CARE:**  
Integrity, Commitment, Advocacy, Respect, Excellence.

# FINANCIAL REPORT & STATISTICS

## FY 2011 (10/1/10 – 9/30/11) BUDGET

<b>Operating Expenses</b>	<b>\$546,596,108</b>
Salary, Wages & Benefits	\$292,509,932
Supplies	\$70,403,229
Services	\$86,784,719
Other Expenses	\$96,898,228

## STAFFING STATISTICS

(FTE = Full Time Equivalent)

<b>Employees (FTE)</b>	<b>2,544</b>
Physicians (FTE)	218
RNs (FTE)	539
Other (FTE)	1,787
<b>Medical Residents &amp; Students</b>	<b>1,638</b>
<b>Other Clinical Trainees</b>	<b>950</b>

## VOLUNTEER STATISTICS

<b>Volunteers</b>	<b>1,178</b>
<b>Volunteer Hours</b>	<b>93,689</b>
<b>Donations (cash and non-cash)</b>	<b>\$1,024,084</b>

## RESEARCH STATISTICS

<b>Total Research Funding</b>	<b>\$55,500,000</b>
<b>Principal Investigators</b>	<b>195</b>
<b>Research Projects</b>	<b>516</b>

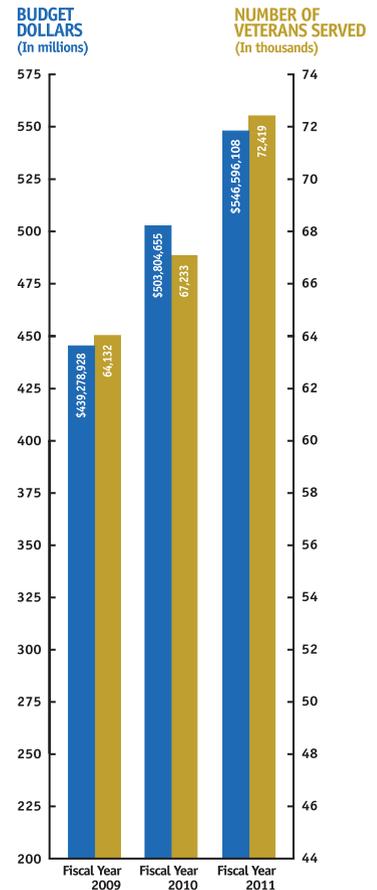
## ALTERNATIVE REVENUE

VASDHS collected \$18.1M, composed of \$16.6M Medical Care Cost Fund (MCCF), plus external sharing revenue of \$1.5M. These funds stay at our local facility to enhance services for San Diego Veterans.

## WORKLOAD STATISTICS

<b>Medical Center Beds Total (authorized)</b>	<b>256</b>
Acute	163
Community Living Center	43
Spinal Cord Injury	50
<b>Admissions Total</b>	<b>8,034</b>
Acute	7,630
Community Living Center	404
<b>Patient Days Total</b>	<b>63,899</b>
Acute	54,431
Community Living Center	9,468
<b>Average Length of Stay</b>	<b>8 Days</b>
Acute	7 Days
Extended Care	26 Days
<b>Surgeries Total</b>	<b>5,369</b>
Inpatient	2,100
Outpatient	3,269
<b>Outpatient Visits Total</b>	<b>768,279</b>
Chula Vista Clinic	23,035
Escondido Clinic	17,435
Imperial Valley Clinic	5,001
La Jolla Medical Center	531,582
Mission Valley Clinic	131,541
Oceanside Clinic	59,685
<b>Patients</b>	<b>72,419</b>
<b>Number of Veterans in San Diego and Imperial Counties (estimate)</b>	<b>235,266</b>

## BUDGET & VETERANS SERVED



## ACCREDITATION & CERTIFICATION

The Joint Commission

Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF): Spinal Cord Injury, Medical Rehabilitation, Wellness and Vocational Rehabilitation Enhancement, and Homeless Programs

College of American Pathologists

American College of Surgeons Commission on Cancer: Comprehensive Cancer Center

American College of Radiology (ACR) and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA): Mammography Program

American Association for Accreditation of Laboratory Animal Care (AAALAC)

Nuclear Regulatory Commission

American Association of Blood Banks

FDA Registered Blood Bank

Clinical Laboratory Improvement Act (CLIA)

Association for the Accreditation of Human Research Protection Programs, Inc. (AAHRPP)

**PROFILE** The VA San Diego Healthcare System (VASDHS) provides a wide range of inpatient and outpatient health services at the medical center in La Jolla, and at six community clinics located in Chula Vista, Escondido, Imperial Valley, Mission Valley, Mission Gorge Annex, and Oceanside. We provide medical, surgical, mental health, geriatric, spinal cord injury, and advanced rehabilitation services. VASDHS has 256 operating hospital beds, including skilled nursing beds, and operates several regional referral programs including cardiovascular surgery and spinal cord injury.

We are affiliated with the University of California, San Diego School of Medicine and provide training for 1,638 medical interns, residents and fellows, as well as 950 other teaching affiliations for nursing, pharmacy, dental and dietetics. VASDHS has one of the largest research programs in the VA nationally, with a budget of \$55.5 million (FY 2011), 195 principal investigators, and 516 projects.



## ANNUAL REPORT 2011 LIST OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS

### 1 THE JOINT COMMISSION

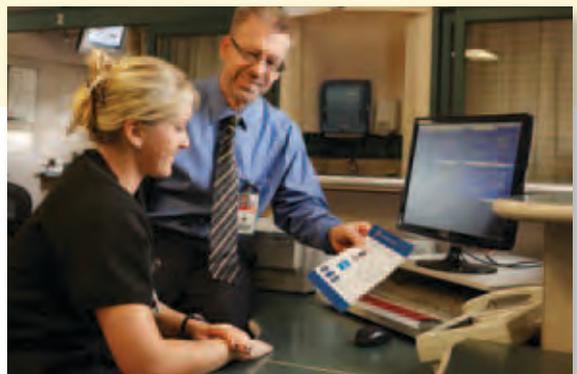
VASDHS was notified in September that we were recognized by The Joint Commission as one of the Top Performers on Key Quality Measures™. San Diego was among the top 14% of all Joint Commission accredited hospitals to receive the recognition. VASDHS received a full three-year accreditation from The Joint Commission for all services surveyed.



For the past two years, VASDHS has met or exceeded eight of nine categories of Veterans Health Administration clinical measures (diabetes, ischemic heart disease, prevention, tobacco cessation, community-acquired pneumonia, heart failure, acute myocardial infarction and the Surgical Care Improvement Project).

### 2 LAUNCH OF THE NEW ELECTRONIC MEDICAL RECORD SYSTEM (COMPUTERIZED PATIENT RECORD SYSTEM – CPRS)

VASDHS was selected as the first national pilot site for the VA's new patient record system. Initially named "AViVA," this web-enabled replacement for CPRS will feature multi-patient views, Google-like search functions, and seamless exchange of information with other organizations. It is the next generation of the computerized medical record system. The pilot program launched in July here in San Diego, with additional pilot sites to be added in 2012, and ultimately, implementation throughout all VA medical centers nationwide.





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### AWARDS

- The American Association of Critical-Care Nurses (AACN) conferred a 2011 silver-level Beacon Award for Excellence on the Direct Observation Unit at VASDHS. The award recognizes unit caregivers who successfully improve patient outcomes and align practices with AACN's Six Healthy Work Environment Standards.
- Dr. Robert Henry, Chief of the Section on Diabetes, Endocrinology and Metabolism, and Director of the Center for Metabolic Research, received the prestigious American Diabetes Association 2011 Banting Medal for Service.
- Clay King, MSW, Chief of Social Work, received the Outstanding Advocate Award from the San Diego Housing Federation at its 16th Annual Affordable Housing & Community Development Recognition Awards ceremony.
- Ron Larson, Chief Financial Officer, received the 2011 Department of Veterans Affairs CFO Award for Financial Management Innovation.
- VASDHS received the 2011 Silver Root Cause Analysis (RCA) Cornerstone Recognition Award from the National Center for Patient Safety (NCPS). The award recognizes patient safety accomplishments at the facility level.



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### GREEN AWARDS

#### VASDHS received the following Green Awards:

- 2011 VA Sustainability Achievement Award for recycling program.
- 2011 Practice Greenhealth Partner for Change Award at the Practice Greenhealth Environment Award Presentations.
- Director's Award winners in the City of San Diego Environmental Services Department's 2011 Waste Reduction and Recycling Awards Program.
- 21st Annual EARTH Award from San Diego EarthFaire nonprofit organizers of San Diego's EarthFair. This recognizes several initiatives including: cogeneration technology, upgrading the cooling replacement with non-ozone-depleting refrigerants, parking lights for optimum energy use, and the installation of an automated air conditioning control system.
- 2011 Environmental Protection Agency's Energy Star Award for our superior energy performance. Buildings that earn the distinction use 35% less energy and generate 35% less greenhouse gas emissions than similar buildings across the nation.



## ADVOCACY

Be truly Veteran-centric by identifying, fully considering, and appropriately advancing the interests of Veterans and other beneficiaries.

### GREEN AWARDS

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- 2011 VA Sustainability Achievement Award for our innovative recycling program.
- 2011 Practice Greenhealth Partner for Change with Distinction Award at the Practice Greenhealth Environmental Excellence Award Presentations.
- Director's Award winners in the City of San Diego Environmental Services Department's 2011 Waste Reduction and Recycling Awards Program.
- 21st Annual EARTH Award from San Diego Earthworks, the nonprofit organizers of San Diego's EarthFair in Balboa Park. This recognizes several initiatives including: deploying new cogeneration technology, upgrading the cooling tower, replacement with non-ozone-depleting refrigerant, replacing parking lights for optimum energy use, and the addition of an automated air conditioning control system.
- 2011 Environmental Protection Agency's Energy Star recognition for our superior energy performance. Buildings that earn the distinction use 35% less energy and generate 35% less greenhouse gas emissions than similar buildings across the nation.



### HOMELESS VETERAN PROGRAM

Our Homeless Veteran Program has been very successful at finding housing and reducing the number of homeless Veterans in San Diego.

We now offer more than 508 Grant and Per Diem transitional housing beds, 590 HUD –

VA Supportive Housing vouchers, and we received \$35.5 million to establish a residential rehabilitation treatment facility. The San Diego Homeless Veteran team of 39 staff provides a continuum of care from outreach to permanent housing.

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**RESPECT**  
 Treat all those I serve and with whom I work with dignity and respect. Show respect to earn it.

**ADVOCACY**  
 Veteran-centric by design, fully considering, and appropriately advancing the needs and interests of Veterans and their beneficiaries.



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**VA I CARE CAMPAIGN**

VASDHS launched the VA I CARE campaign for all employees to instill the VA core values of Integrity, Commitment, Advocacy, Respect and Excellence. These values are to be integrated into all interactions with patients, co-workers and the public.

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**PATIENT CENTERED CARE (PCC)**

VASDHS and its staff received several 2011 Spirit of Planetree Awards including the Program Award: Human Interactions/Systems Redesign; the Caregiver Award to Suzanne Carranza, RN; the Physician Champion Award to Dr. Arnold Gass; and the Therapy Animal Award to Wilson the dog. VASDHS also received the top Spirit of Planetree video award for their video, PCC Mambo #10.



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# RESPECT

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## 8 MY HEALTHeVET

VASDHS launched the My HealtheVet ([www.myhealth.va.gov](http://www.myhealth.va.gov)) Secure beginning in January, 2011. This program enables patients to email patient care questions and receive a response within three working days. More than 100 care teams are now active for this feature. In addition, more than 100 patients have gained expanded online access to their electronic VA health care data, check appointments and email providers) via My HealtheVet. This represents a 100% increase over the previous year for a total of 3,708 VA San Diego patients.

## 9 4TH NATIONAL VETERANS SUMMER SPORTS CLINIC

VASDHS hosted the fourth National Veterans Summer Sports Clinic the week of September 18–23, with 100 participants, and more than 280 volunteers. The clinic is a rehabilitation event designed for Veterans who have been injured within the past seven years, mainly Veterans from Iraq and Afghanistan. The clinic includes a variety of sporting events including kayaking, surfing, sailing, cycling and track & field, as well as classes on wellness and readjustment.



## 6 PATIENT CENTERED CARE (PCC)

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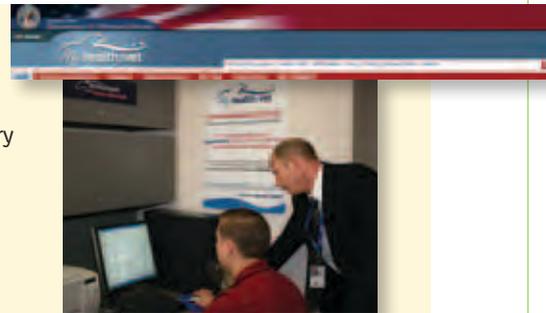
## EXCELLENCE

Strive for the highest quality and continuous improvement. Be thoughtful and decisive in leadership, accountable for my actions, willing to admit mistakes, and rigorous in correcting them.

### MY HEALTHeVET

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VASDHS launched the My HealthVet ([www.myhealth.va.gov](http://www.myhealth.va.gov)) Secure Messaging program beginning in January, 2011. This program enables patients to email their providers with patient care questions and receive a response within three working days. Nearly all primary care teams are now active for this feature. In addition, more than 1,562 local patients gained expanded online access to their electronic VA health care information (look up lab data, check appointments and email providers) via My HealthVet – representing a 143% increase over the previous year for a total of 3,708 VA San Diego patients.



### NATIONAL VETERANS SUMMER SPORTS CLINIC

VASDHS hosted the fourth National Veterans Summer Sports Clinic the week of September 18–23, with 1,500 participants, and more than 1,000 volunteers. The clinic is a rehabilitation event designed for veterans who have been injured in the past seven years, primarily Veterans from Iraq and Afghanistan. The clinic includes a variety of sporting events including kayaking, surfing, sailing, cycling, track & field, as well as classes on wellness and readjustment.



### CONSTRUCTION

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The medical center started many remodeling and construction projects this year including renovation of the clinical laboratory, research space, Veterans Transition Center, Community Living Center and Emergency Department. Design and contracting has begun for others including the new parking garages, main hallway renovation and space for the new domiciliary (Aspire Center), and Compensation and Pension physical exams (\$23.1M).



# VA SAN DIEGO HEALTHCARE SYSTEM

## MEDICAL CENTER

VA San Diego Healthcare System  
3350 La Jolla Village Drive  
San Diego, CA 92161  
(858) 552-8585  
1 (800) 331-VETS (8387)

## OUTPATIENT CLINICS

**VA Chula Vista Clinic**  
835 Third Avenue  
Chula Vista, CA 91910  
(619) 409-1600

**VA Escondido Clinic**  
815 East Pennsylvania Avenue  
Escondido, CA 92025  
(760) 466-7020

**VA Imperial Valley Clinic**  
1600 South Imperial Avenue  
El Centro, CA 92243  
(760) 352-1506

**VA Mission Gorge Annex Clinic**  
4525 Mission Gorge Place  
San Diego, CA 92120  
(619) 228-8000

**VA Mission Valley Clinic**  
8810 Rio San Diego Drive  
San Diego, CA 92108  
(619) 400-5000

**VA Oceanside Clinic**  
1300 Rancho del Oro Drive  
Oceanside, CA 92056  
(760) 643-2000

## WEB ADDRESSES

For more information, visit us at:  
[www.sandiego.va.gov](http://www.sandiego.va.gov)  
[www.facebook.com/VASanDiego](http://www.facebook.com/VASanDiego)  
[www.twitter.com/VASanDiego](http://www.twitter.com/VASanDiego)

## FREQUENTLY CALLED PHONE NUMBERS

TeleCare (24-hour Nurse Advice Line)  
1 (877) 252-4866

Enrollment & Eligibility Questions  
(858) 552-7523

Appointment Scheduling  
(858) 552-7475

## VET CENTERS

**San Diego Vet Center**  
2790 Truxtun Road, Suite 130  
San Diego, CA 92106  
(858) 642-1500

**San Marcos Vet Center**  
One Civic Center Drive, Suite 150  
San Marcos, CA 92069  
(760) 744-6914

**Chula Vista Vet Center**  
180 Otay Lakes Road, Suite 108  
Bonita, CA 91902  
(877) 618-6534

# SERVICES

- Alcohol/Drug Treatment Center
- Ambulatory Care
- Audiology & Speech Pathology
- Behavioral Medicine
- Cardiac Care
- Cardiothoracic
- Combat Veteran Services
- Community Living Center
- Chaplain Service
- Critical Care
- CT Scanner
- Dental Service
- Dermatology
- Diabetes Care Team
- Geriatrics
- Gulf War Registry Program
- Hemodialysis Center
- HIV/AIDS Treatment (Special Infectious Disease Program)
- Home-Based Primary Care
- Homeless Veterans Program
- Home TeleHealth
- Magnetic Resonance Imaging
- Mammography
- Medication
- Neurology
- Nuclear Medicine
- Nutrition Counseling
- Oncology
- Optometry
- Ophthalmology
- Pain Management
- Patient Advocates/Customer Service
- Patient Education/Patient Health Library
- PET Scanning
- Pharmacy
- Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder Program
- POW/MIA Program
- Primary Care (FIRM)
- Prosthetics and Sensory Aids Service
- Psychiatry
- Psychology
- Rehabilitation Services
- Research Opportunities
- Robotic Surgery
- Sexual Trauma Counseling
- Social Work
- Spinal Cord Injury Center Surgery
- Transition Center
- Traumatic Brain Injury Care
- Ultrasound
- Visual Impairment Services Team (VIST)
- Vocational Rehabilitation
- Women Veterans Health Care



VA DESERT PACIFIC HEALTHCARE NETWORK



MEMBER OF THE VA DESERT PACIFIC HEALTHCARE NETWORK VETERANS INTEGRATED SERVICE NETWORK 22



**VA HEALTH CARE** Defining EXCELLENCE in the 21st Century