

Celebrating 40 YEARS

of Serving Veterans
March 1972 - March 2012

VA San Diego Healthcare System

On March 15, 2012, VA San Diego Healthcare System will celebrate 40 years of service, innovation and growth as one of the best Veteran health care networks in the nation. While we have changed significantly since opening, our mission remains universal and steadfast: to provide the best possible care for all Veterans in our facilities. We are proud to offer service in an area with over 230 thousand former armed service members and their families, along with the largest population of Veterans from the Iraq and Afghanistan conflicts.



Milestones since 1998:

1998-

- Opened new Mission Valley Clinic collocated with VBA Regional Office.

1999-

- Opened Chula Vista Clinic
- Implemented Computerized Patient Record System (CPRS), an electronic record system, allowing the availability of patients' charts at time of visit.
- Launched VA San Diego intranet site.
- Introduced digital Radiology services.
- Opened consolidated critical care unit.
- Acquired PET scanner.

2000-

- Launched Internet site.
- Launched Bar Code Medication Administration (BCMA) technology for dispensing medication.
- Vista Clinic opens in Aug. 2000.

2001 –

- Opened Escondido Clinic Spring 2001.
- Opened Cardiac Electrophysiology Unit.

2002-

- Dr. Douglas Richman, HIV/AIDS researcher,

receives 2002 William S. Middleton Award, the highest honor for scientific achievement in the Department of Veterans Affairs.

2003 –

- Implemented multidisciplinary musculoskeletal clinic to enhance access to non-surgical therapies.
- Initiated multidisciplinary obesity program, Managing Overweight/Obesity for Veterans Everywhere (MOVE.)
- Veterans Medical Research Foundation (VMRF) building opens in May 2003.

2004-

- Introduction of MyHealthVet on-line services for Veterans.
- Launch of OEF/OIF Transition Case Management Program.

2005-

- Telehealth introduced, featuring remote monitoring and management of chronic disease from a Veteran's home.
- Purchased new Magnetic resonance imaging (MRI)

and Computed Tomography (CT) machines.

- Earthquake retrofitting project begins Nov. 2005.

2006 –

- VASDHS recognized as one of the best places to work for 2006 by Employers Group and San Diego Magazine.
- Dr. Roland C. Blantz, researcher in renal physiology and pathophysiology, receives William S. Middleton Award.

2007 –

- VASDHS opens Heroes Internet Café for Veterans.
- San Diego selected as first of four sites for the VA Nursing Academy Pilot Program.

2008 –

- Opened new Imperial Valley Clinic in June.
- Launched patient-centered care “Planetree” program.
- Veterans Healing Gardens created on second floor.
- First National Veterans Summer Sports Clinic hosted in San Diego.
- Earthquake Retrofit project completed in April.
- VASDHS is the first VA medical center in Southern California and sixth VA in nation to offer robotic surgery.
- Electronic Information Boards and E-news introduced.

2009-

- Launched Inpatient Palliative Care Program (Inpatient and Outpatient)

2010 –

- Implemented first private sector-federal sharing of health care data with Kaiser-Permanente.
- Launched the first U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Veterans Homelessness Prevention Demonstration Program in 2010.
- Oceanside Clinic opened on July 23, 2010.

2011-

- VASDHS Launches My HealthVet Secure Messaging program, enabling patients to email their providers with patient care questions and receive a response within three working days.
- In concert with the Beacon Project, introduced Virtual Electronic Lifetime Record (VLER) program, in which government medical center can exchange patient information with private-sector institutions.

How the world of the VA, health care and Veterans have changed in the last 40 years:

Servicemembers are no longer drafted: Starting in 1973, U.S. military service became all-voluntary.

Dress has changed significantly: In 1972, uniforms were very much the normal for nurses and staff. The introduction of scrubs nationwide toward the mid to late 70s provided nurses with a much more comfortable, flexible attire that allowed them to respond to emergencies much quicker than before.

Average time of stay for inpatients at a VA hospital has decreased greatly: In VA hospitals, the average stay in 1972 for patients under 65 was 21.8 days. The average system-wide length of stay in fy2009 for Acute Inpatient Medical/Surgical procedures in VHA hospitals was 5.4 days. Sources:
<http://www.cbo.gov/ftpdocs/91xx/doc9173/77doc582.pdf> ;
<http://www.va.gov/health/docs/HospitalReportCard2010.pdf>

There were no faxes, copy machines, or computers at our medical center in 1972. Since then, computers have changed nearly every aspect of health care, from patient medical records, administrative tasks to communications, surgery and research.

Since the end of the Vietnam War, the total number of Veterans has decreased. The population in the U.S. in 1975 was estimated at 29.9 million. The Veteran population in 2010 was 21.8 million. Sources:
<http://www.infoplease.com/spot/veteranscensus1.html> ;
<http://www.cbo.gov/ftpdocs/91xx/doc9173/77doc582.pdf>

Since opening, the need for Veteran services across the country has greatly increased: In 1972, there were 308,000 veterans with service-connected disabilities. In 2009, 3.3 million Veterans were projected to have a service connected disability. Of that number, 652,000 have a rating of 70% or higher. Sources:
http://www.va.gov/opa/publications/archives/docs/history_in_brief.pdf
http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/DatasetMainPageServlet?_program=ACS&_submenuId=&_lang=en&_ts=

The term ‘Veteran’ has become less gender specific since the hospital’s opening:

In 1973, for example, 55,000 women were in the active duty military, making up 2.5 percent of the armed forces. Now women make up 15% of all active-duty servicemembers. In 2008, VA provided healthcare to nearly 281,000 female Veterans, a number that will continue to increase in the future. VA San Diego currently has 13 percent female Veterans. Sources:

http://www.va.gov/womenvet/docs/womenvet_history.pdf <http://iava.org/content/women-military/>; <http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d09884t.pdf>

Fun Facts on VASDHS

- Ground was first broken on May 30, 1969 for new hospital.
- American flag was first raised over building on Aug. 30, 1971.
- Dedication ceremony was held on Mar. 15, 1972.
- Since 1972, there have been four names for the Veterans Healthcare System in San Diego: Veterans Administration Hospital, Veterans Administration Medical Center, Veterans Affairs Medical Center and VA San Diego Healthcare System.
- The first hundred patients were admitted to the hospital on Feb. 7, 1972.
- Our medical center surgery has shifted from 100% inpatient surgery in 1972 to 61% outpatient today.
- The oldest employee is Dr. Lawrence Sweeney, at 81 years old. The youngest employee is Mark Aragon, at 21 years old.

- The median age for PAID employees is 47 years old, while the average age is 46.5.
- The longest currently serving employee is Dr. Joshua Fierer, who joined the San Diego VA Medical Center on June 1, 1971.

Other employees who have been with us since opening include:

- Lewanna Betts: March 27, 1972 ; Medical Administration Officer
- Roland Blantz: June 6, 1972 ; Physician
- Russell Cain: September 5, 1972; Supervisor Nuclear Medicine
- Leonard Deftos: May 17, 1972; Physician
- Linda Parker: May 25, 1972; Social Worker
- Delores Pickle: Nov. 28, 1971; Secretary/OA
- Bruce Weigand Jr: April 30, 1972; Nursing Assistant

VASDHS Demographics

1972	2012
Number of unique patients seen during fiscal year: 800	Number of unique patients seen during fiscal year 2011: 72,419
Research Funding: \$300,000	FY2011 Research Funding: \$55,500,000
Number of research projects: 5-10	Number of research projects FY2011: 516
Number of planned staff: 1,600	Number of Staff in FY2011: 2,544
Operating budget: \$15,000,000	Operating budget FY2011: \$546,596,108
Authorized Hospital Beds: 811	Authorized Hospital Beds: 256

Other Cultural Differences

1972	2012
Top song on March 15, 1972: Neil Young, Heart of gold	Top song week of Feb. 25, 2012: Kelly Clarkson, Stronger
Popular Jeans: Bellbottoms	Popular Jeans: Skinny Jeans
U.S. Population 209,896,000	U.S. Population 313,053,000
Avg. Price of Gas/Gallon in Calif.= 34 cents	Avg. Price of Gas/Gallon in Calif. on Feb. 21= \$4.04
Popular women’s footwear in 1972: Boots	Popular women’s footwear in 2012: Boots

VASDHS Innovations since Opening

- Introduction of cogeneration plant as a means to save energy and allow independence from grid (1986.)
- Partnered in development of Stand Down Program for Homeless Veterans now used nationwide (1988.)
- Piloted Computerized Patient Record Systems in VISN 22 (1998.)
- First Positron Emissions Tomography (PET) scanner in San Diego (1999.)
- Pilot site for next generation clinical reminders in (1999.)
- Pioneered research and development of minimally invasive endovascular Abdominal Aortic Aneurysms (AAA) surgical procedure (2000.)
- Piloted online/digital access to electrocardiograms within electronic medical record (2002.)
- First VA to place nursing patient lift system in all areas of the hospital (starting in 2003.)
- Pilot site for Needle Stick Prevention Program (2003.)
- Pilot Site for Federal Health Information Exchange “Remote Data.”
- San Diego-based principal investigator for national VA cooperative study starts trials for experimental shingles vaccine (2005.)
- Selected as one of four pilot sites for VA Nursing Academy.
- National Veterans Summer Sports Clinic – held in San Diego since 2008.
- First site in VISN22 for robotic surgery (2008.)
- Launched Virtual Lifetime Electronic Record (VLER) system (2010.)
- Launched the first U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Veterans Homelessness Prevention Demonstration Program (2010.)
- VA San Diego Healthcare System was named by The Joint Commission as one of the nation’s Top Performers on Key Quality Measures for 2010. This was the first year they conferred this award and VA San Diego was one of only two San Diego medical centers receiving the recognition.
- Development site for next generation of VA computerized medical record “Health Management Platform” in 2011.

VA San Diego Leadership

Directors

- Turner Camp, MD
- Robert Brawley, MD
- John Ditzler, MD
- Barbara Small
- Thomas Trujillo
- Leonard Rogers
- Gary Rossio
- Stanley Johnson

Associate Directors

- Andrew Montano
- Tom Stranova

- Kent Green
- Jule Morevac
- Robert Rynearson
- Norman Hensley
- Tom Arnold
- Jan Boss
- Cindy Abair

Chiefs of Staff

- William Coppage, MD
- Seymour Dayton, MD
- Jacqueline Parthemore, MD
- Robert M. Smith, MD

Nurse/Nurse Executives

- Margaret Harris
- Ronald Norby
- Verna Nickel
- Janet Jones
- Sandra Solem

Assistant Directors

- Jean Sobczak

Deputy Chiefs of Staff

- Kathleen Kim, MD

Academic Affiliations

A.T. Still University, Arizona School of Health Sciences: Master's Degree in Occupational Therapy

Arizona School of Health Science: Audiology (Au.D.);

Boston University: Clinical Psychology

Brigham Young University: Recreation Therapy; Clinical Psychology

California College, San Diego: Respiratory Therapy

California State University, Dominguez Hills: Bachelor of Science in Nursing; Nurse Practitioner; Occupational Therapy Masters Fieldwork

California State University, Fresno: Masters of Physical Therapy

California State University, Long Beach: Master's Degree in Nursing / Nurse Practitioner; Masters of Physical Therapy; Bachelor of Science in Nursing; Recreation & Leisure Studies

California State University, Sacramento: Recreation Therapy

California State University, San Marcos: Bachelor of Science in Nursing

Clark State Community College: Medical Laboratory Technician

Colorado State University: Health and Exercise Science

Concorde Career Institute: Medical Laboratory Assistant; Respiratory Therapy

Dakota State University: Health Information Management

Dominican University of California: Occupational Therapy

East Tennessee State University: Audiology Program

Eastern Washington University: Therapeutic Recreation

Gallaudet University: Audiology - Au.D.

Grossmont College: Respiratory Therapy

Husson College: Occupational Therapy, Masters

Indiana University: Therapeutic Recreation

Ithaca College: Therapeutic Recreation

Kaplan College: Vocational Nursing; Therapeutic Recreation

Kent State University: Therapeutic Recreation

Loma Linda University: Clinical Psychology; Radiologic Technologist Advanced Placement

Missouri State University: Communication Sciences and Disorders

Mt. Saint Mary's College: Physical Therapy

National University: Associate or Bachelor of Science in Nursing

Naval Hospital Camp Pendleton: Family Medicine Residency

Naval Medical Center San Diego: Clinical Pastoral Education; Graduate Medical Education

Palomar College: Associate's Degree in Nursing

Phlebotomy Plus: Vocational Medical Training School: Phlebotomy Student

PIMA Medical Institute: Radiography, Associate of Occupational Science

Point Loma Nazarene University: Bachelor of Science in Nursing; Master's Degree in Nursing

Saint Louis University Doisy College of Health Sciences: Nurse Practitioner

Salus University: Audiology - Au.D.

Samuel Merritt College: Master of Occupational Therapy

San Diego Mesa College: Medical Assistant; Physical Therapist Assistant Program; Health Information Technology;

Radiologic Technology;
San Diego State University: Bachelor of Science in Nursing; Master's Degree in Nursing; Communicative Disorders; Clinical Psychology; Recreation Therapist; Speech-Language Pathology; Clinical Nurse Specialist

SDSU/UCSD Joint Doctorate: Social Work Internship

Santa Barbara City College: Health Information Technology

Shenandoah University: Occupational Therapy

Sonoma State University: Licensed Vocational Nurse to Bachelor of Science in Nursing

Southwestern Community College: Central Service Technology; Registered Nurse

Springfield College: Master of Occupational Therapy

Temple University: Therapeutic Recreation, B.S., M.Ed.

Texas Tech University: MS Occupational Therapy

Towson University: Occupational Therapy; Doctor of Audiology (Au.D.)

University of Arizona: Speech, Language and Hearing Sciences

University of Buffalo: Occupational Therapy Program

University of California, San Diego: Pre and Post-Graduate Medical Education; Pre and Post-graduate Pharmacy Education

University of California, San Francisco: Pharmacy Students

University of Cincinnati: Clinical Laboratory Science Program; Communication Sciences and Disorders

University of Colorado at Boulder: Clinical Psychology

University of Denver: Clinical Psychology

University of Florida: Communicative Disorders

University of Illinois at Chicago: Clinical Psychology

University of Iowa: Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders

University of Louisville: Audiology

University of Maryland: Clinical Psychology; Hearing & Speech Sciences, AU.D.

University of Memphis: School of Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology

University of Michigan: Clinical Psychologist

University of Minnesota, Twin Cities: Occupational Therapy; Speech-Language-Hearing Sciences

University of New England:

Occupational Therapy

University of North Dakota:

Bachelor of Science in Nursing/MS

University of North Texas ;

Audiology Externship

University of Pennsylvania School of

Nursing: Nursing, Doctor of Philosophy

University of Phoenix, (at San

Diego): Master's Degree in Nursing

University of Puget Sound:

Occupational Therapy

University of Redlands:

Communicative Disorders

University of San Diego: Master's

Degree in Nursing/MEPN/PhD; Marital and Family Therapy Program

University of Southern California:

Pharmacy Doctor of Pharmacy Clinical Rotations; Physical Therapy; Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy

University of St. Augustine for

Health Sciences: Doctorate of Physical Therapy (DPT)

University of Tennessee Health

Science Center: Audiology

University of Texas at Dallas:

Audiology Residency

University of the Pacific: Advanced

Pharmacy Practice Experience Program

University of Utah: Division of

Physical Therapy, Clinical Education

University of Wisconsin, Madison:

Department of Kinesiology: Communicative Disorders

University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee:

Occupational Therapy

Utah State University: Clinical

Psychology

Utica College: Occupational Therapy, MS

Vanderbilt University: Doctor of

Audiology

Wake Forest University School of

Medicine: Physician Assistant Program

Washington University, St. Louis:

Clinical Psychology: Occupational Therapy; Communication Sciences

Western Michigan University:

Occupational Therapy

Western University of Health

Sciences: Physical Therapy: DPT Program

Worcester State College:

Occupational Therapy

VA Voluntary Service Affiliations (Representative)

National Society Colonial Dames XVII Century: *Joanne Adams*

American Ex-prisoners of War: *Francis Burger*

Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary: *Joan Christensen*

Women Marines Association: *Gail w. Hanna*

American Legion Auxiliary: *Phyllis Holmberg*

Help Hospitalized Veterans: *Julia I. Marine*

Supreme Cootiette Club of the United States: *Oscar G. Polster*

Military Order of the Purple Heart: *Patricia J. Sanborn*

Forty & Eight: *Mark Stephenson*

Daughters of Union Veterans of the Civil War: *Helen Barber*

Disabled American Veterans: *John Campbell*

Archdiocese for the Military Services: *Linda Colletti*

Women's Army Corps Veteran

Association: *Mary A. Harrington*

Paralyzed Veterans of America: *Done Hyslop*

American Legion: *Franklin C. Manthei*

Paralyzed Veterans of America: *Glen P. Middleton*

Masonic Service Association of North America: *Roy B. Ramos*

Twilight Brigade: *Steve M. Sarian*

Fleet Reserve Association: *Hugh M Thomason Jr.*

Pearl Harbor Survivors Association: *Allen Bodenlos*

Benevolent & Protective Order of the Elks: *Birney L. Carter*

Marine Corps League: *Edward F. Corbett*

Veterans of Foreign Wars, Ladies Auxiliary: *Sara Hawks*

Fleet Reserve Auxiliary: *Velda Larsen*

Military Order of the Louse: *Adrian Marine*

Victory Ensured Thru Service POB 997: *Kurt M. Nielson*

Ladies Auxiliary to the Military Order of the Purple Heart: *Myrna Ringen*

National Society Daughters of the American Revolution: *Jennifer M. Smith*

Disabled American Veterans: *Randall Treadway*

Military Order of the Cootiette Auxiliary: *Betty Turner*

Jewish War Veterans of the United States of America: *Gerald Wilkinsky*

Veteran Service Officers

Bill Rider, American Combat Veterans of War

Frank Burger, American Ex-Prisoners of War

Ralph Kling, American Ex-Prisoners of War

William Trayer, American Legion

Josie Grafilo, American Legion

Donald Franklin, American Veterans

Robert Keller, Blinded Veterans Association

Tracy Greenmayer, California Dept of Veterans Affairs

Richard Randolph, Disabled American Veterans

James Galliher, Disabled American Veterans

Michael Mullen, Military Order of the Purple Heart

Shirley Pratt, Military Order of the Purple Heart

Al Wagner, Military Order of the Purple Heart

Glen Middleton, Paralyzed Veterans of America (Cal-Diego)

Robert Kamei, PVA San Diego VARO

Mark Barrett, Veterans of Foreign Wars
Terry Jensen, Veterans of Foreign Wars

Marylin Maxwell, Veterans of Foreign Wars

Community Affiliates

County Veteran Service Officer
Elected Representatives
United Veterans Coalition
United Veterans Council
Veterans Home of Chula Vista
Vietnam Veterans of San Diego