

Community Resources

Blinded Veterans Association PR Regional Group, Inc.

787-641-7582 ext 21128

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VIST COORDINATORS

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ext. 31291

Maria Montalvo—West and South of
PR
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**VA Caribbean Healthcare System
Blind Rehabilitation Center (124)**

10 Casia Street

San Juan, Puerto Rico, 00921

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www1.va.gov/visn8/sanjuan

Blind Rehabilitation Center, San Juan, Puerto Rico



Photo: Veterans who participated of the Blind Rehabilitation Program

Blind Rehabilitation Center San Juan, Puerto Rico

The Blind Rehabilitation Center is designed to provide a high quality of care in a timely and appropriate manner, enabling blind and visually impaired veterans to acquire the skills and capabilities necessary for the development of personal independence and emotional stability.

This is achieved through the provision of a continuum of care to the blind or visually impaired veteran, extending from their home environment to the local VA facility and to appropriate community settings. These services includes but are not limited to:

- Adjustment to blindness
- Counseling
- Veteran and family education
- Benefit analysis
- Comprehensive inpatient training
- Outpatient Rehabilitation Services
- Provision of assistive Technology
- Referrals to community resources
- Medication management and Self-Medication Program.

Eligibility Criteria

- Legally blind, being defined as either central visual acuity of 20/200 or worse in the better eye with the use of corrective glasses or a visual field deficit in which the widest diameter of peripheral field is 20 degrees or less.
- Low Vision, being defined as central visual acuity between 20/70 and 20/160 in the better seeing eye with corrective glasses.
- Functional visual impairment, defined as functional loss that interferes with activities of daily living as caused by acquired brain injury.
- Have a desire and willingness to participate in the Blind Rehabilitation Training Program.
- Patients who are medically stable with no significant vision changes in the last 6 months.
- Have potential for rehabilitation.

Location

The Blind Rehabilitation Center of the Veterans Caribbean Healthcare System is located in the West Wing of Building #10 of the VA Medical Center in San Juan, Puerto Rico.

We share this building with the Community Living Center. The Offices and classrooms are located on the first floor. The rooms and dining area are on the second floor.



Service Capacity

Our Center facility provides a residential area with 10 bedrooms (2 of them are semi-private), with capacity for 12 patients, . Each participant has his/her own bed, desk, closet and some share bathroom. and the multipurpose dining/living areas.



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Estimated Training Duration

The Training duration will depend on the veteran's individual medical and visual condition, as well as the goals that the veteran has established based upon practical, emotional, and motivational needs and interests. The average length of stay is approximately 3 to 4 weeks.

How to Access Services VIST Coordinator

(Visual Impairment Service Team)

The VIST Coordinator is a case manager who has major responsibilities for the coordination of all services for visually impaired veterans and their family. Duties include providing and /or arranging for the provision of the appropriate treatment modalities (e.g. referrals to Blind rehabilitation Center (BRC) or Blind Rehabilitation Outpatient services (BROS) in order to enhance the visually impaired veterans functioning level.

Who are the VIST Coordinators?

*Eastern and Northern areas of PR,
including San Juan, and Virgin Islands*



Evelyn Cancel
VIST Coordinator

(787) 641-7582, x 31291

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West and South of PR



María Montalvo

VIST Coordinator

Ponce (787) 812-3030, X-44362

Mayagüez 1-800-569-2356, X- 48047

Outcomes History

- During Fiscal Year 2011 the Blind Rehabilitation Center provided services to 155 veterans. The average age for this group was 73 years. The average length of stay in the regular program was approximately 25 days.

Outcomes History (cont.)

- During fiscal year 2011, 100% of patients rated the service as excellent. Also 100% percent indicated that they would recommend the program to other patients.
- According to the surveys conducted, participants in the Blind Rehabilitation Program reported less difficulty to perform activities of daily living, reading and mobility after having completed their training.
- During Fiscal Year 2011 the waiting time to enter the regular program was 68 days. This was reduced significantly during the first half of Fiscal Year 2012 to 34 days, which is less than the average of national programs.

María Nevárez,

BRS Chief

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