

McGuire

Serving Our Nation's Heroes

Monthly



WHAT'S INSIDE:

My HealtheVet

Local OT Awarded

New Cancer Treatment

MyVA Access



McGuire VA Family and My HealtheVet Helps Veteran with Spinal Cord Injuries Achieve Independent Living

U.S. Army Veteran Michael Franks, who had been hospitalized for over a year due to spinal cord injuries, wanted to return to independent living.

"I knew that it would be challenging, but it was so important to me. It had been a long time since I lived on my own and had to manage my own health care," said Franks who didn't have family and friends in the Richmond area after relocating there more than a year ago.

Franks is a patient at Hunter Holmes McGuire VA Medical Center's Spinal Cord Injury & Disorders Center of Excellence (SCI&D COE) in Richmond, one of the largest spinal cord injury centers in the VA Health Care System. Transitioning to living on his own seemed like a daunting task until he got some help from his McGuire VA family. SCI home health nurse Bettie Rogers met with Franks and understood his desire to transition out of full-time hospital care. After consulting with occupational therapist Jenna Hanson, she thought that My HealtheVet would be a great tool to help him manage his own health care and to achieve his goal.

"I was unsure at first, because I didn't have much experience with computers. I didn't even own a computer," Franks noted.

Rogers explained the benefits of using a computer to Franks and told him how much time that he could save by using My HealtheVet. They agreed to give it a try and Rogers made My HealtheVet part of Franks' treatment plan. Her hope was that he could use it to manage his medications, supplies, follow-up appointments and communicate with his health care team on non-urgent issues.

Franks purchased a laptop and met with My HealtheVet Coordinator Gwen McMillian and My HealtheVet Volunteer Harry Brown to get started. Brown helped Franks register for a My HealtheVet account and showed him how to use all the features.

"They worked with me one-on-one until I was comfortable and confident that I could use the site myself," Franks said. His

mastery of the available resources and tools moved him closer to his goal of being discharged and living on his own.

Once Franks was discharged, his health care team followed-up with him and was encouraged to hear that he continued to explore the My HealtheVet portal on his own.

"With My HealtheVet, I can check in with my health care team and request appointments using Secure Messaging. I use the Prescription Refill feature to track and order my medications and other supplies," Franks said.

Recently, when using the Prescription Tracking feature, he noticed that he had not received a prescription refill that he placed online. He quickly notified McGuire VA pharmacist Brian Gielowski of the issue. Gielowski realized that the wrong address was on file, corrected it, and ensured that Franks promptly received his prescription refill in the mail.

Today, Franks is living independently, managing his own health care, and doing very well. His McGuire VA family, a dedicated multi-disciplinary team, is so pleased with his success! They think that others can benefit from a similar approach. •



Left to right:

Harry Brown, My HealtheVet Volunteer; Bettie Rogers, RN SCI; Jenna Hanson, OT; Michael Franks, Veteran; Brian Gielowski, Pharmacist; and Gwen McMillian, My HealtheVet Coordinator.



Gateway to Veteran Health and Wellness

Visit www.myhealth.va.gov for more information.

Revolutionary Vein Treatment Offered to Veterans, McGuire VAMC first in Central Virginia

McGuire VA Medical Center now offers one of the latest treatment options to Veterans who suffer from problems associated with varicose veins, and a more serious condition named chronic venous insufficiency (CVI).

For the past 60 years, treatment of venous disorders included anesthesia and multiple needle sticks. In some cases, conditions cause open wounds to develop. This new treatment, the first of its kind

in the Richmond area, has revolutionized vein treatment care for Veterans by offering a simpler solution with a shorter procedure and less recovery.

Veterans are more likely to develop venous disease due to prolonged standing or sitting associated with their jobs while in service. There are thousands of Veterans within our Veteran population who could potentially benefit from this new treatment, said Dr. Mack Hendrix,

Interventional Radiologist at McGuire.

This innovative treatment includes a new medical adhesive product, named VenaSeal. It is being used only at two VA hospitals across the country, including McGuire VAMC. This new method to treat varicose veins and CVI offers faster results, less pain, and easier access for Veterans, and was recently featured on the local CBS station. •



Dr. Jonathan Ha (left) and Dr. Mack Hendrix (right), perform an ultrasound.

McGUIRE VA MEDICAL CENTER: First VA Medical Center to Use a New Device for Patients Undergoing Radiation Therapy for Prostate Cancer

McGuire VA Medical Center is now using a new tool proven to improve quality of care for prostate cancer patients undergoing radiation therapy. Since September 2015, cancer doctors at McGuire have been treating prostate cancer patients with radiation therapy using the SpaceOAR® hydrogel. They were the first in the state of Virginia and in all of Veteran Health Administration (VHA) to offer this procedure. VHA takes care of 9,000,000 Veterans, including 15,000 Veterans who are diagnosed with prostate cancer each year. The hydrogel is an FDA cleared device that is designed to protect the rectum by temporarily positioning the rectum away from the prostate during radiotherapy.

Oncologist, Dr. Drew Moghanaki. “For patients who are receiving prostate radiotherapy, creating space between the prostate and rectum with the hydrogel is an important advance to help reduce the risk of injury from the treatment.”

Because of the close proximity of the prostate to the rectum, radiation therapy to the prostate can expose the rectum and sometimes cause unwanted side effects. The hydrogel creates just enough space and pushes the rectum away from the prostate to reduce the exposure of radiation to the rectum to help avoid any injury. It is placed through a small needle and injected as a liquid that quickly solidifies into a soft gel that expands the space between the prostate and rectum. The hydrogel spacer maintains this space while the prostate radiotherapy is delivered, then liquefies and is absorbed and cleared from the body in the patient’s urine.

SpaceOAR® was cleared only several months ago after a large randomized clinical trial proved it could safely reduce the exposure of the rectum to radiation.

According to the American Cancer Society and the National Cancer Institute, prostate cancer is second only to skin cancer as the most frequently diagnosed cancer in men with an estimated 220,800 new cases and 27,540 deaths in the U.S. in 2015 alone. Worldwide, prostate cancer is expected to grow to 1.7 million new cases and 499,000 deaths by 2030.

The McGuire VAMC is a national referral center that offers primary, secondary, and tertiary diagnostic and therapeutic health care services in medicine, surgery, neurology, rehabilitation medicine, transitional care, acute and chronic spinal cord injury, skilled nursing home care, palliative care, and comprehensive cancer care. It provides specialized forms of prostate cancer treatment that is unavailable in many areas in the country, and offers this care for Veterans from around the country. •

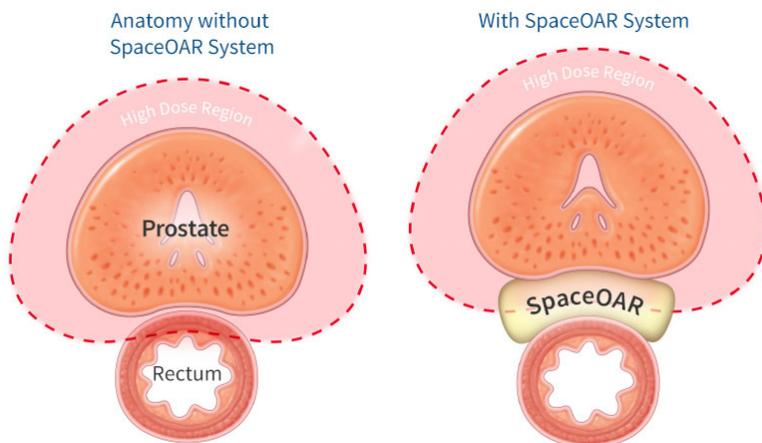


IMAGE COURTESY OF AUGMENIX INC.

“Providing the best possible treatment to each of our patients is our top priority. This is particularly important for us as we take care of Veterans who have served their country and have placed themselves in harm’s way for all Americans,” said McGuire VAMC Radiation

Local OT Receives National Recognition

Occupational therapy (OT) helps people across their lifespan to do the things they want and need to do through the therapeutic use of daily activities. VA OTs provide holistic, client-centered treatment with goals to maximize each Veteran's independence in activities of daily living, community living skills, education, work, leisure interests, and social participation. VA has more than 1,300 Occupational Therapists and Occupational Therapy Assistants combined.

One of McGuire VA Medical Center's occupational therapists, Melissa Oliver, MS OTR/L, was recently recognized by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs for leading the initiation, development, launching and execution of the "VA Innovation Creation Services." The aim of this series was to accelerate the development of personalized assistive technologies and prosthetics

for Veterans with disabilities. This two-day make-a-thon was held at McGuire in July 2015.

In addition, on April 9, 2016 in Chicago, IL at the 2016 American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) national conference, Ms. Oliver was recognized by the American Occupational Therapy Foundation (AOTF) with a National Leadership Service Commendation Award.

She was recognized for her 16 years of leadership service in the field of occupational therapy where she served as the treasurer and then president of Pi Theta Epsilon (PTE), the occupational therapy honor society, and was the first PTE President to sit on the AOTF Board of Directors as a voting member.

In the May 9 issue of OT Practice, a national professional magazine, Ms. Oliver will

be highlighted for her work as an occupational therapist utilizing innovative means to assist Veterans achieve their goals.

Ms. Oliver is a graduate of Shenandoah University where she earned her Masters of Science in Occupational Therapy. She has been an occupational therapist for 16 years where

VA OTs provide holistic, client-centered treatment with goals to maximize each Veteran's independence in activities of daily living, community living skills, education, work, leisure interests, and social participation.

Right photo: Melissa Oliver is awarded with a National Leadership Service Commendation Award. Below, from left: Assistive Technology Team; Ben Salatin, Melissa Oliver, Brian Burkhardt.



the past ten years have been at McGuire VA Medical Center. She is currently the Assistive Technology Program Coordinator.



A Teachable Moment

Dr. Danny Issa who is in the Gastroenterology Fellowship Program here at McGuire VAMC came to work with a clip-on bowtie for his clinic day. Dr. Hilton Almond, an attending physician decided to help Dr. Issa tie the real thing. Here, Dr. Almond ties Dr. Issa's bowtie with precision and care, helping him look his professional best for his patients.

"The smallest act of kindness is worth more than the greatest intention." –Kahlil Gibran

WE ARE GROWING!

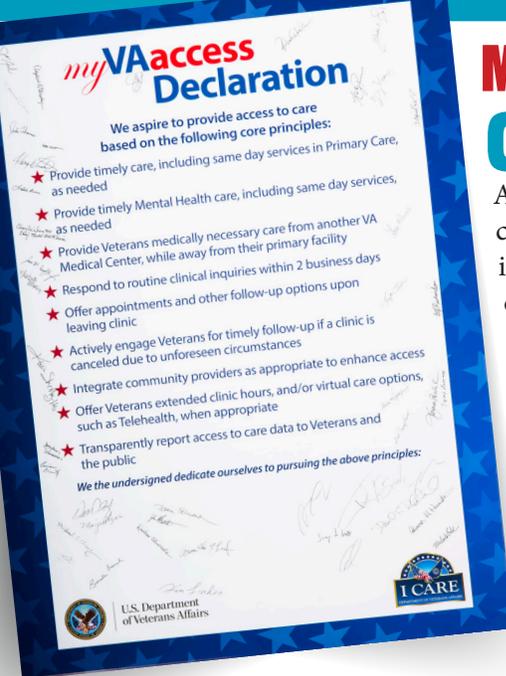
Making Way for a New Post-Anesthesia Care Unit and three new Operating Rooms.

We are excited to inform you of the construction happening for our Post-Anesthesia Care Unit and three new Operating Rooms.

With the construction, we have changed our elevator and walkway patterns for a period of time. Please note the directional signage on the first and second floors. We thank you in advance for your patience as we continue to grow for YOU.



A few members from the 6th Annual Crohn's and Colitis Benefit Walk gather for a picture at this year's event, April 24. Money raised goes to support organizations associated with Crohn's Disease and ulcerative colitis.



MyVA Access Declaration

Over the past decade, the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) has conducted numerous studies intended to identify systemic challenges and opportunities for improving access to healthcare services for Veterans. During this time, great strides have been made to enhance access for Veterans in large part due to the efforts of VHA providers and staff. However, now we are embarking upon a new journey, the MyVA Access Journey, to ensure that

we have a coordinate, cohesive and integrated system based approach to enhancing access. The two integral components include The MyVA Access Declaration, which is the commitment to the principles of improved access accompanied with The MyVA Access Implementation Guidebook, which provides the tools and resources to achieve our collective goals as the largest health system in the country. The “MyVA Access Declaration” represents the VHA’s continued dedication to enhanced access for Veterans. •



During the April Leadership Forum, along with various service chief and leaders, John Brandecker, medical center director, signs the “MyVA Access Declaration.” Left photo shows the signed poster.

MyVA 101 Reaches Milestone

MYVA 101 equips ALL VA employees with a quick reference guide of information and resources to communicate to Veterans and their families what VA does and how to find more informa-

tion. Armed with this information, employees can enhance the Veteran Experience and better understand the value they bring to the whole of VA.

The MyVA 101 Training implementation began late in 2015. The program successfully launched and took flight at McGuire!

The Department of Veterans Affairs provided training requirements for all VA sites. The requirements are listed in the graphic above and McGuire’s numbers have surpassed the set timeline. Currently our MyVA 101 Ambassadors have trained 2,015 em-

25% of target trained by July 1

McGuire met this in FEBRUARY!

50% of target trained by September 1

McGuire met this in MARCH!

75% of target trained by November 1

WE CAN DO THIS!

ployees of the 3,686 at McGuire. Our VA team is making exceptional strides towards the success of this program under the direction of our MyVA

101 site coordinator and ambassadors, who ensure that all of their efforts improve the quality of the training and leave a positive impact on all participants.

As a result of the numerous MyVA 101 sessions facilitated at this VA, staff have provided an abundance of positive, creative, and enriching feedback to all of our seasoned MyVA 101 Ambassadors and Coordinators.

Thanks to the untiring efforts of our Ambassadors who helped McGuire reach these great milestones. •



Three of the MyVA 101 Ambassadors during a class. From left: Tanisha Bowman, Assistant Chief, HAS; Antionette Chase, Cardiothoracic Admin Officer; Ruben Santos Colon, Education Training Specialist, MyVA101 Site Coordinator.

NATIONAL NURSES WEEK, MAY 9 - 13



We are proud to honor our dedicated team of professionals who serve our nation's heroes each and every day.

For more information on VA Nursing please visit usajobs.gov

During Week of the Nurse we say a very special **THANK YOU** to our incredible nursing team.