

Hunter Holmes McGuire Veterans Affairs Medical Center



Patient Handbook A Guide to Patient and Visitor Services

Dear Veteran:

I want to take this opportunity to thank you for choosing the Richmond VA Medical Center for your healthcare needs. It is an honor to serve you. Our goal is to meet your needs and to exceed your expectations; please let the Service Level Patient Advocate for your unit know if there is anything we can do to improve your experience.

Thank you for serving our Nation, and now it is our privilege to serve you.

Sincerely,



Charles E. Sepich
Director,
Richmond VA Medical Center

Frequently Called Numbers

Main hospital 804 675-5000

Group Practice Clinics

Green.....5536
Yellow.....5542
Red5543
Orange5680
Blue.....5680
Drug Rehab Clinic5410
Mental Hygiene Clinic.....5411
PTSD Clinic3495
Rehabilitation Clinic.....5330, 5331
Blood Lab.....4883
Compensation & Pension.....4665
Fisher House6601
Health Benefits.....5611
Home Based Primary Care6766
Medical Specialty Clinics5602

Oxygen.....4352
PADRECC (Parkinsons).....5931
Patient Representatives5246, 5545
Police.....5132, 5278
Pulmonary Sleep Lab6738
Supplies5724
Surgical Clinics5752

Community Based Outpatient Clinics

Charlottesville 434-239-3890
Fredericksburg..... 540-370-4468

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Welcome

We would like to welcome you and your family to the Richmond VA Medical Center (Richmond VAMC). This handbook was created to help you become familiar with the services we offer. We exist to provide you with excellent health care in an atmosphere of caring, compassion and respect. As part of the nationwide VA Healthcare System, we strive to meet the needs of our Veterans. We are a patient-focused organization committed to delivering quality service. No population is more deserving of the finest health care available. Whether you served us at war or in peacetime, on battlefields around the world or in cities and towns closer to home, we work hard to provide you with the highest quality health care. Your satisfaction is a key measure of our success. At VA Healthcare, we strive to provide you with outstanding services.

McGuire VAMC Mission and Vision

Mission: Honor America's Veterans by providing exceptional health care that improves their health and well-being.

Vision: To be a patient-centered integrated health care organization for Veterans providing excellent health care, research, and education; an organization where people choose to work; an active community partner; and a back-up for national emergencies.

Admission To The McGuire VA Medical Center

Inpatient Care - Your Stay at the Medical Center

If you have questions or concerns any time during your stay at the Richmond VAMC, ask a member of your health care team. Your health care team consists of your licensed clinician (physician, physician's assistant, nurse practitioner, psychologist), nurse, social worker, dietitian, or pharmacist. Health care teams may also include other health care professionals depending on the setting, such as addiction, vocational rehabilitation, recreation and rehabilitative therapists. Your health care team will help you find the health care professional who can best address your needs.

Agent Cashier

The Agent Cashier helps Veterans with check cashing, travel funds, and cash co-payments. Families are encouraged to obtain coupon books at the canteen/retail store for patient use.

Blood Donor Program

If you are having surgery at the Richmond VAMC, it may be possible to pre-donate your own blood for the procedure. For questions about blood donation, speak with your health care team.

Cellular Phones

Cell phones are prohibited from use as a communication device in restricted patient care areas as well as any area with critical medical equipment (i.e., room with patient on ventilator).

Patients and visitors are allowed to use cell phones in non-patient care areas and are reminded to turn off cell phones when entering restricted patient care areas to avoid disturbing patients or interfering with medical equipment. If the device is on and in use in a restricted patient care area, one warning is issued. Ignoring a warning may result in fines and/or criminal penalties.

Clothing

Most patients are expected to wear pajamas, robes, and slippers or shoes. Patients are asked to keep one set of clothing and footwear for discharge. In some areas such as the Community Living Center, Psychiatry and Polytrauma units, patients are encouraged to wear their own personal clothing.

You should bring the following items with you when you check in: toothbrush, toothpaste, shaving kit, deodorant, toiletries, glasses, dentures, and canes. We encourage you to label all of your personal belongings.

Fire/Disaster

For the protection and safety of patients and staff, Richmond VAMC has its own fire and disaster plan. If you discover a fire, tell a staff member right away. If you are on a unit that needs to be evacuated, follow the instructions from the staff. Exit signs show the location of emergency exits. Fire alarms are near each exit.

Identification (ID) Wristbands

Upon admission, you will be given an ID wristband. Wristbands are to be worn at all times. Lost ID wristbands should be reported to your health care team.

Mail

Mail will be delivered to you on your unit. All mail received after you are discharged will be forwarded to your home address. Please be sure that we have your current address. Mail should be addressed as follows:

McGuire VA Medical Center
Your Full Name and Unit
1201 Broad Rock Blvd.
Richmond, VA 23249

Medications

If you will be a short stay (less than 24 hours) surgical patient, you must bring your own medications with you, (enough for 24 hours) as they will not be provided. Your doctor will order any pain medication you need during your stay and upon discharge.

If you are admitted for more than 24 hours, any medications that you bring will be given to a family member or caregiver to be returned to you or they will be mailed to you at home.

Off Unit Notification

For your safety, if you leave the unit, please sign out at the nurse's station and sign back in upon returning.

Pain Management

We are committed to helping you get the best possible pain relief. Only you can describe your pain. You will be asked to rate the amount of pain you have on a “0 to 10” scale. Zero means no pain and ten describes the worst pain you could imagine.

Prohibited Items

For your safety, patients are not allowed to have alcoholic beverages, narcotics, firearms, ammunition, knives, other weapons, lighter fluid, non-safety matches, straight edge razors, or any medication from home. Televisions, radios, and personal computers are also not permitted.

Restraints

We strive to keep the Richmond VAMC free of restraints. Occasionally, restraints may be necessary. The least restrictive method will be used to ensure that your needs, rights, and dignity are maintained. If you have any questions, please talk to your health care team.

Smoking Policy

The Richmond VAMC is a smoke-free facility. For your safety and the safety of staff, visitors, volunteers, and other patients, you may not smoke anywhere indoors, or within any exits or entranceways. Smoking is allowed in designated areas outside of the building. The VA Police may issue tickets or summons, which can result in fines being imposed, if the smoking policy is not obeyed. Please follow the signage and be considerate of non-smokers.

Telephones

Pay phones are available throughout the Richmond VAMC. Outside callers may call the switchboard operator (main hospital phone number - 804-675-5000) and ask for you by name and unit. If you do not wish to receive calls, you may request that your name not be included in the Facility Directory. You can call long distance by calling collect or using a calling card. Bedside telephones are provided in all units with the exception of the psychiatric unit.

Valuables

For safekeeping, you are asked to leave your valuables at home. The medical center is not responsible for money or other valuables that you keep in your room. We ask that you limit your on-hand cash to \$10. Any additional cash should be deposited with the Agent Cashier. Coupon books and phone cards may be purchased at the canteen/retail store.

VA Police

VA Police are on duty 24 hours/day for your care and protection. If you need assistance, or your family/friends need an escort to their car, contact the VA police at extension 5280. **For emergencies, dial 4567.**

Zero Tolerance for Violence

To maintain a safe environment for patients, staff, visitors, and volunteers, our medical center has zero tolerance for violence. Behavior that is disruptive, threatening or violent will result in immediate action.

General Information

Absentee Voting

You may vote by absentee ballot while you are hospitalized. Arrangements must be made approximately two weeks in advance. Consider this option if you are expecting an extended admission. Contact your social worker or Voluntary Service for assistance. For information about voter registration in general, contact **Voluntary Service at (804) 675-5135**.

Barbershop/Barber Services

These services are available to hospitalized Veterans on a fee-for-service basis. Cash or canteen book coupons are used for payment. Hours vary by location. Ask a member of your health care team for specific hours at your facility. Please see a member of your health care team or a clerk to schedule these services.

Hours are: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday - 8 am – 1 pm
Wednesday - 9 am - 1pm
Closed on weekends and holidays

Canteen/Cafeteria

The canteen (Café VA) offers a varied daily menu at reasonable prices.

Hours are: Monday – Friday - 7 am – 3 pm
Closed on weekends and holidays

In addition, Mocha Delights offers coffee and pastries.

Hours are: Monday – Friday - 6:30 am – 4:30 pm
Saturday - 11 am - 3 pm

Chaplain Service

Chaplain Staff provide spiritual care to all patients and their families and staff. Our chaplains use a holistic approach when offering pastoral/religious/spiritual care. The chaplains staff not only offer pastoral support for the seriously ill, the terminally ill, as well as bereavement counseling but also Sunday worship (Protestant/Catholic) services, daily meditations, prayers, sacraments, liturgies, counseling services and religious literature. Chaplains may be contacted through the hospital operator, nursing staff and/ or the main chaplain phone number. You are welcome to visit our Main Chapel on the first floor- room 1X-104. **Main Chaplain Telephone: (804) 675-5125.**

Hospitality House

Provisions for overnight stay, at the Hospitality House, may be available to families of patients receiving treatment at the Richmond VAMC. Referrals must be made through your social worker.

Interpreter Services

These services are available for hearing and/or speech impaired, and non-English speaking Veterans/family members. Please contact your health care team to arrange for interpreter assistance.

Notary Public

A Notary Public is available at Richmond VAMC. If you need this service, ask a member of your health care team for assistance.

Parking

Parking areas are designated for visitors, employees, volunteers, outpatients, and the handicapped. Please obey posted signs and pavement markings. Inpatients are requested to keep their cars at home. If this is not possible, VA Police should be notified. The speed limit on medical center grounds is posted 25 mph. The VA Police enforce all regulations and will issue warnings and tickets to drivers who violate the rules.

Patient Representative (Advocate)

If you have a concern, do not hesitate to ask for help from anyone on your health care team. Issues should first be addressed with the supervisor/manager of that area or with one of our Patient Advocate Liaisons (PAL). If you remain dissatisfied or need additional assistance, please contact our Medical Center Patient Advocates. These individuals help Veterans and their families get answers and solve problems. **Patient Advocate Telephone Numbers: (804) 675-5246 or 675-5545.**

Pharmacy

Inpatient Pharmacy

Richmond VAMC has its own pharmacy and pharmacists. They work with hospital staff as part of your health care team. Only prescriptions written by VA doctors can be filled at the VA pharmacy. You will be given drug information about any new medication. Pharmacists also provide information about dosage and possible side effects. They are available to review your medications with you before discharge. Any medication you will take home will be filled in the pharmacy. Your nurse will tell you where to pick up your medications before you leave.

Outpatient Pharmacy

Only prescriptions written by VA doctors can be filled at the VA Pharmacy. VA Outpatient Pharmacy service is available to Veteran patients who are not using the TRICARE health plan. TRICARE patients must use a TRICARE approved pharmacy.

Refill Policy

Your doctor will decide how many times you can refill a prescription. You can request refills by mail, automated prescription refill telephone line or by computer using the **My HealthVet** pharmacy refill option. All refilled and renewed medications **must** be received through the mail. Please order 10 to 14 days ahead of time.

Release of Medical and Administrative Information

If you need copies of your lab or x-ray report, hospital records, disability and/or insurance forms, please go to the Release of Information (ROI) office for assistance. **ROI is located in Central Registration, Room 1B-232.**

Retail Stores

These stores offer retail sales, newspapers, photo developing services, and a wide range of other services for your convenience.

Hours are: Monday – Friday - 8 am – 4:30 pm
Saturday - 9 am – 4 pm

Social Work

Social workers are assigned to all inpatient units and outpatient teams. They are available to help you with personal or family problems. Our social workers can provide valuable information regarding community agencies and resources that may be of help to you and your family. The social worker can help you get ready for discharge and can help you plan for your needs after you go home.

Television Health Information

A variety of health information resources can be found on televisions throughout Richmond VAMC. Ask a member of your health care team for assistance.

Vending Machines

Vending machines are located throughout the facility for your convenience.

Visiting Hours - Rules and Guidelines

Your family and friends are welcome to visit you at the medical center.

General visiting hours are: 11:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m.

MICU/CCU/SICU visiting hours are at the discretion of the medical staff, taking into consideration the condition of the patient.

The Hospice Unit allows families to visit at anytime, depending on the patient condition.

Behavioral Health visitors should report to the nurses' station on the unit.

Lounge areas are available throughout the medical center. Please ask staff for the nearest lounge. Televisions and reading materials have been placed in lounges for your enjoyment.

Some precautions may be necessary because of risk of infection to both you and your visitors. We ask that you follow posted signs. Visits may need to be kept short. We ask that guests be respectful of all our patients. Patients in the ICU may be limited to one or two visitors for up to 15 minutes at a time. Special arrangements may be made through your health care team.

Visitors may not bring food or beverages to patients without permission from staff members. Visitors are asked not to eat in patient rooms.

Children under age 12 are generally not permitted to visit. Visits by children may increase the risk of infection to you and other patients, and to the child. If you have a child who would like to come visit you, let a member of your health care team know so that special arrangements can be made ahead of time.

Program Services

Disabled American Veterans Volunteer Transportation Network (DAV VTN)

The DAV VTN is available to transport ambulatory Veterans to medical appointments at VA facilities. Try to notify the DAV VTN of your needs at least two weeks before your appointment, as space may be limited.

Homeless Veterans Coordinator

The goal of the Health Care for Homeless Veterans (HCHV) Program is to end homelessness among Veterans through outreach efforts and community partnerships. Veterans are engaged in treatment and rehabilitation programs to enable them to achieve a better quality of life.

Patient Education Resource Center (PERC)

Location: 1B-217 (in the hallway with the Clinics)
Hours: Monday - Friday 7:30 am -3:00 pm

At the PERC patients may learn about different diseases and conditions. A staff member is available to assist patients and family members in finding health related information and resources. The PERC is equipped with two computers and printers which are available for Veterans to use **My HealthVet**. My HealthVet is a web based computer program developed to educate and improve health care for ALL Veterans via the web. These computers do not connect to the internet.

Telecommunications Device for the Deaf (TDD)

TDD is available at the Medical Center. Ask a member of your health care team for assistance if you need to use this service.

Veterans Benefits Counselors

Veterans Benefits Counselors are available at the medical center to help you with matters about your VA benefits (compensation, pension, government insurance, education, GI loans, and vocational rehabilitation). If you need information or assistance contact the Veterans Benefits Counselor at your facility or call the **national toll free number at 1-800-827-1000**.

Veterans Service Center (VSC)

The VSC provides one-stop services for Veterans who need to update their insurance or home address, complete a financial assessment, or ask billing questions, etc. Veterans benefits counseling is also available. VSC staff can provide information about eligibility, outpatient care, and appointments. **The toll free number for VSC is 1-888-823-9656**.

Visual Impairment Services Coordinator

Patients with visual impairments will be referred to the Visual Impairment Services Coordinator for information about special services. Visually impaired patients who are hospitalized are entitled to prosthetics for the visually impaired. The coordinator also provides follow-up for visually impaired patients after discharge.

Voluntary Service

Voluntary Service provides opportunities for individuals, Veteran service organizations, and community, corporate and faith-based groups to give voluntarily of their time and resources to benefit hospitalized Veterans. Volunteers assist and visit in nearly every area of the medical center. Voluntary Service provides toiletries and comfort items to patients in need, books and reading materials, and support for patient recreation. **Voluntary Service Telephone: (804) 675-5135.**

Women's Health Center

The Women's Health Center (WHC) is available to meet the unique health care needs of women Veterans. Its purpose is to provide comprehensive health care through health promotion and disease prevention. Services in the WHC are provided by a nationally certified nurse practitioner whose expertise is in women's health. The Women's Health Center is available for care of women Veterans Monday through Friday from 8:00 am-4:00 pm. Services include pelvic examinations, breast cancer screening, menopause management and counseling, referral and counseling to other specialty clinics. The Women's Health Nurse Practitioner can be reached at (804) 675-5382. Further information may also be received from the Women Veterans Program Manager at (804) 675-5389.

Outpatient Care

Access to VA Care

We have taken steps to provide easier access to outpatient care by reducing waiting times for appointments. We have involved more disciplines in team care delivery and do more work over the phone or in groups. We try to see patients the same day if an urgent need arises.

Ambulatory Surgery

Surgery or other diagnostic tests will be completed on an outpatient basis whenever possible. The ambulatory surgery staff will manage your surgical care, pre-operative teaching, and post-operative follow-up.

Clinic Appointments

Clinic appointments are pre-scheduled outpatient visits. You should make every effort to keep your scheduled appointment. However, if you must reschedule your appointment, please call your primary care team. **Appointments may also be cancelled by calling (804) 675-6310.**

Dental

Dental care is provided to eligible Veterans. Most outpatients must be 100% service connected or recently discharged from the military or have a service connected rating for specific teeth to qualify. You may also check with the Eligibility Clerk in the Centralized registration Unit regarding your entitlement. Talk to the Veterans Service Center for more information about dental eligibility.

Emergency Care Services

Emergency care is available at Richmond VAMC. If you have a life-threatening condition and you do not live near the medical center, go to the hospital closest to you. Do not delay treatment for financial reasons. Veterans with no other means of payment are encouraged to submit bills for emergency services for payment under the Millennium Health Care Act if payment is denied after routine review. All claims for private medical care not authorized in advance must be submitted to the Salem Fee Section (04), Dept of Veterans Affairs, 1970 Roanoke Blvd., Salem, VA 24153. **Telephone inquiries may be directed to 1-800-936-7540.**

Outpatient Primary Care

Upon discharge, your health care team will arrange for outpatient follow-up. All patients are encouraged to enroll in a primary care program to benefit from a wide array of outpatient health services. Your care is coordinated in primary care, including referrals to specialists.

VA Telecare

This is a toll-free program that can be used whenever you need help. A VA representative is available 24 hours a day to assist you with medical and health care questions. If you need emergency care, you will be instructed on where to receive immediate attention. If you need to be seen for non-emergent care, you will be given a prompt appointment. **To reach VA Telecare: 1-888-838-7890.**

Significant Care Issues

Advance Directives

You will be asked at different times about your health care decisions. You have the right to accept or refuse medical care. We respect your wishes. Please let us know in advance what you want done. An advance directive or living will can protect this right if you ever become mentally or physically unable to choose or state your wishes due to an injury or illness. If you would like information on advance directives (living wills, health care proxy, etc.) please ask your health care team for assistance. If you have a living will, or durable power of attorney, tell our staff. We will need a copy for your file. If you have completed an advance directive and you wish to change it, please tell our staff right away. You do not have to complete an advance directive to receive treatment.

Do Not Resuscitate (DNR)

DNR means cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and/or other aggressive health or life prolonging measures will not be started when cardiac or respiratory arrest occurs. After talking with your doctor, you can make the DNR decision. If you are too ill to make that decision, your family, or power of attorney for healthcare, can make that decision with your doctor. The DNR order is not permanent. It can be stopped if you change your mind or your family changes their mind. Inform your health care team. The health care team's concern for your medical needs and comfort will stay the same. You will be given whatever is needed to relieve pain and make you comfortable. You will also have the option of limiting other aggressive treatments.

Ethics Program

Sometimes patients or their caregivers have trouble making choices about care (i.e. performing aggressive measures on a patient at end-of-life, if a terminally ill person should have a feeding tube, etc.). Ethics consultants meet to discuss these problems and make suggestions when the need arises. If you or your family has questions about the ethics of any treatment or other issues, talk to your health care team. If you still have concerns, you may ask for a review of issues with the Ethics Consultation Team. To request this review, ask your health care team for a referral to the Ethics Consult.

Organ Donation

Richmond VAMC provides Veterans the opportunity to make organ, eye, tissue, body, and other anatomical gifts. Talk to your family members about organ and tissue donation so they know your wishes. Donations will always be handled with discretion and sensitivity. We will respect your beliefs and desires. Under no circumstances will a patient or family member be pressured into being a donor. As you consider this opportunity to participate in the organ donation process, please carefully indicate your wishes on the Organ Donation portion of the Consent to Care form as you are being admitted to the hospital. Discuss this with a member of your health care team if you wish to donate.

Discharge from the Medical Center

Discharge Procedures

Early in your stay, your health care team should talk to you about your after hospitalization care/ needs, your anticipated discharge date, and any needed follow-up with your primary care doctor. Your social worker will assist you if you need counseling or assistance with aftercare facilities such as a nursing home, a residential care facility, or a boarding facility.

You will be given a scheduled date and time for your discharge appointment. Your medications and other supplies will be discussed with you prior to discharge. You may ask questions and receive an individual consultation from a pharmacist at the outpatient pharmacy area. Other supplies may be brought to you on the unit or you

may need to make a special stop. **Check with your nurse when you get your discharge instructions before you leave the hospital.**

Remember to pick up your VA identification card from the nursing station. We will work with you to have all of your discharge arrangements made at least one day prior to your discharge. If you require help in arranging transportation home or other special needs, your social worker can assist you.

If you are on a special diet, a dietitian will counsel you and your family on how to follow your diet at home. Let your health care team know if you wish to speak with a dietitian before discharge.

Make sure you have collected everything from your bedside area before you are ready to leave. If you have any money on deposit in patient funds/Agent Cashier, plan to withdraw your balance.

If you have funds and are not physically able to get to the Agent Cashier, tell a member of your health care team. Remember, if you are being discharged on a weekend, you will need to do this ahead of time.

Lost and Found

If you lose any personal items during your stay, tell your health care team. If needed, contact the clothing room clerk in Room 1B-218. Please take any items you find while at the medical center to your health care team or the clothing room. **Clothing Room extension 4632 - 8 am - 4:30 pm. Other times, weekends & holidays contact Emergency Services Area at extension 5527.**

48-Hour Post Discharge Survey

You may be contacted for feedback about your stay once you are discharged. Your comments will help us continue to improve our services. It is important that we have your correct phone number at time of discharge.

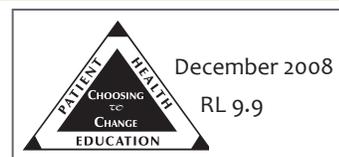
Home Care Services

Home care services are available for eligible Veterans who need assistance after being discharged from the hospital. A social worker will coordinate services with your health care team before your discharge. The social worker will make arrangements for you with Home Based Primary Care (HBPC), Contract Adult Day Health Care (CADHC), HomeMaker/Home Health Aid (H/HHA), or Purchased Skilled Home Health (PSHH) staff or a community based agency. Any VA doctor can make these referrals.

Nursing Home (Community Living Center)

Social workers can help you and your family resolve problems affecting your care, discharge planning, and VA and/or community resources. If you need counseling or assistance with locating a care facility (nursing home, residential or boarding facility) see the social worker assigned to your ward or clinic. They are here to help you with any concern.

Thank you for this opportunity to serve you and provide for your health care needs. If there is anything we can do to make your experience at McGuire more comfortable please let us know!





Education Service Line
McGuire VAMC
Richmond, Virginia