New Geri-PACT Care Team for Elderly Veterans In Place at N. Idaho CBOC

In order to meet the care needs of aging Veterans with complex health issues including dementia, frailty, incontinence or impaired cognition, to name a few, Mann-Grandstaff VAMC has opened a new Geriatric Patient Aligned Care Team (Geri-PACT).

“The goal of Geri-PACT, said Dr. Rina Missirian, “is to maximize the quality of life as people age.” Dr. Missirian has more than a dozen years of working at VA facilities in Reno, Boise, and Montana. Dr. Stephanie Jamison joined MGVAMC in October of 2017, in anticipation of the roll-out of the new Geri-PACT program for Veterans. She and Dr. Kimberly Morris rotate their schedules to assist their elderly Veteran patients.

Geri-PACT is a hybrid outpatient clinic for older Veterans with chronic conditions requiring specific geriatric care. “Our practice [places] emphasis on managing the complex health issues that are inherent in the care of older adults to maximize independence and decrease the adverse impact of Geriatric syndromes, such as falls and memory issues,” said Dr. Missirian.

MGVAMC’s new Geri-PACT program is based at the North Idaho Community Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC) in Coeur d’Alene, ID and developed by Dr. Kimberly Morris, Chief - Geriatrics, Rehab & Extended Care (GREC) to decrease hospital admission rates and promote the health of Veteran patients. Please follow this link for full story!

MGVAMC Leadership Profile: Meet Dr. Scott Nye - Chief of Staff

In the continuing effort to profile the talented leadership team at Mann-Grandstaff VA Medical Center, we introduce Dr. Scott Nye. With a hometown of Helena, MT, Dr. Nye graduated from Carroll College before embarking on medical school and his career in surgery.

Dr. Nye was appointed Chief of Staff at Mann-Grandstaff VAMC in July 2016, after choosing VA following success in the local, private health care industry as a surgeon and Chief Executive Officer.

Dr. Nye received his medical degree from the Ohio State University College of Medicine and ultimately, his Residency in Surgery from OSU in 1999.

“I believe in the mission of VA,” he said. He also foresees opportunity ahead as VA continues to advance Electronic Health Record Modernization (EHRM) and positive momentum and support of undergrad and Graduate Medical Education (GME) here. “It’s a great opportunity for MGVAMC to show how adaptable we are in helping design modernization in VA as we know it.”

Dr. Scott Nye, MD, FACS
Chief of Staff

VA Geri-PACT Care Team now in place at North Idaho CBOC in Coeur d'Alene.
(L-R): Dr. Stephanie Jamison, MD; Tosha Bradbury, LPN; John Bartlett, RN; Elaine Baker, PharmD; Peter Lister, MSA; and Dr. Rina Missirian, MD.

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Dr. Kimberly Morris, MD
Chief - Geriatrics, Rehab & Extended Care
A MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARY

The Department of Veterans Affairs announced the release of its new access standards as part of VA’s Mission Act of 2018. Public comment is now open for the standards designed to give Veterans the choice to use Community Care at VA expense.

Following the announcement, VA joined many Veterans pleased to see a review of the proposed new standards produced a full endorsement by the Wall Street Journal in a published editorial.

In its editorial from February 5, 2019, The Journal asked one “question is why would anyone oppose the plan” as it helps Veterans get care faster and closer to home. The Journal underscored that “the competition will put pressure on the VA to reduce wait times which will matter in the incentive to seek outside care.”

In addition, VA’s press release acknowledging The Journal’s endorsement also looks further into the political debate over privatization. “Behind all this, is a debate about privatizing VA, “ integrating Veterans into the private health care system makes sense for them and everyone else... The VA is especially competent at certain types of care like trauma recovery, and that’s what the VA hospitals and treatment centers could focus on... Yet if the VA is providing excellent care to Veterans, competition won’t matter.”

Dr. Erica Burns: MGVAMC’s new Orthopedic Surgeon is also a WSU School of Medicine Faculty Member

Erica Burns, MD is the newest physician joining the team at Spokane’s Mann-Grandstaff VA Medical Center!

Dr. Burns is an Orthopedic Surgeon specializing in repairing shoulder injuries. She is also active with MGVAMC’s ongoing efforts to train future physicians by leading third year Medical School students as a WSU faculty member and Preceptor here.

Following her training and medical residency at Creighton University and University of Nebraska-Creighton Medical Center in Omaha, Dr. Burns went on to complete a year-long Surgical Fellowship at the University of Washington.

A Yakima, WA native, Dr. Burns is a married, mother of four. She completed her undergraduate degree at Central Washington University in Ellensburg. At present, Erica is working a part-time schedule at MGVAMC— but wants staff to know she’s “excited to be here and serve Veterans” and looking forward to advancing health care options for our patients and aspiring med students.

VA To Welcome Apple’s iPhone App to Assist Veterans in Summer 2019

This summer, VA will release new capabilities to provide Veterans who receive VA care with the ability to access their personal medical data using a new smart-phone application feature: Health Records on iPhone.

“Our Health API represents the next stage in the evolution of VA’s patient data access capability,” said VA Secretary Robert Wilkie.

Read the full VA press release at this link. “We have great admiration for Veterans, and we’re proud to bring a solution like Health Records on iPhone to the Veteran community,” Apple CEO Tim Cook said in a release.

EHRM News/Update:

MGVAMC’s conversion to Cerner Corp’s. Electronic Health Record Modernization (EHRM) received news this week that a new Project Manager has been assigned to Spokane. Mr. Dave Sabin is replacing Crystal Monteer who has moved onto another position within the EHRM effort. (Click here for EHRM info).

Sabin and several other Cerner staff will be on-station at MGVAMC this week—before the next round of workshops to integrate Cerner’s new “Millennium” software begins in mid-March. For questions, please contact MGVAMC’s on-site project leads: Eddie Steetle or Donna Vreeland, our Clinical Applications Coordinators!
MGVAMC joins VFW Post 1435 as host for veterans town hall mtg

Dr. Robert J. Fischer, Medical Center Director addresses nearly two-dozen Veterans who turned out for the first Veterans Town Hall meeting of 2019 at VFW Post 1435 in the Spokane Valley on February 27th.

Dr. Fischer and VA staff shared updates on the facility’s Strategic Plan; EHRM progress; the open comment period underway right now for the 2018 Mission Act’s new Care in the Community (CITC) access standards and proposed urgent care provisions (follow this link).

MGVAMC also provided a demonstration of VA’s new “VA Video Connect” smart-phone application whereby Veterans can connect with their VA provider remotely—with a smart phone.

Other topics presented include an update on VA’s local and national Suicide Prevention efforts by MGVAMC’s Shannon Dunkin, HCHV to ensure a “continuum of care” and support is always available to Veterans.

Dunkin was joined by fellow VA panelists including Will Haley, Melanie Ball, Kaylie Ecker, and Bennett Traylor. Ball facilitated the VA Video Connect presentation with Ray Golden and Josh Dehlar who was physically at the medical center, while talking on screen with Melanie at the newly renovated VFW Post in Spokane Valley.

Did You know?: Eating disorders affect many of the Veterans that we see in VA; however, the presence of problematic eating frequently goes overlooked and untreated, which can have devastating consequences. Click here for more info as MGVAMC’s Nutrition and Food Service is educating Veterans and staff on the benefits of healthy living and eating. Also happening in March here are healthy teaching kitchen demonstrations for Veterans, and the return of 2nd Harvest Foods of Spokane Call 434-7241 for details!
MGVAMC & 92nd Medical Group Studying Feasibility of Adding Primary Care for VA Enrolled Retired Veterans at FAFB

Already slated as among the first VA and Department of Defense sites for Electronic Health Record Modernization, MGVAMC and Fairchild AFB’s 92nd Medical Group leaders are exploring options for Veterans, by considering a new VA-staffed Patient Aligned Care Team (PACT) inside the base’s medical clinic. The site visit took place in mid-February after VA released details of the 2018 Mission Act which seeks to add health care access for VA-enrolled Veterans.

Above and at right, Lt. Col. Robert Barrientos, Deputy Commander, 92nd Medical Group welcomes MGVAMC’s Dr. Scott Nye, Chief of Staff; Chief Nurse Executive Darci Rashke, AD-PCS; Dr. Rebecca Meiers, Deputy COS; Mr. Rick Richards, Assoc. Director and several members of the VA team, who toured the clinic to assess space, conversion options, and the feasibility of providing additional care to military retirees.

WELCOME HOME VIETNAM VET EVENT

WHEN
March 26th, 2019
10am - 1pm

WHERE
Spokane Vet Center
13109 E Mirabeau Parkway
Spokane Valley, WA

ALL VETERANS & THEIR FAMILIES WELCOME!
Bring your friends and family members along!
We’ve got plenty of food!

LUNCH IS SERVED
We will be serving a BBQ at 11am. Bring your appetite!
Sharing her proud African American heritage—and why cultural diversity is important now more than ever, Ms. Stephy Nobles-Beans, Associate Chaplain at Spokane’s Whitworth University graciously accepted an invitation to return to Mann-Grandstaff VAMC to honor and celebrate Black History Month in February.

Bennett “Tray” Traylor (USAF Ret.) a Veteran Enrollment & Eligibility specialist (pictured below right) invited “Ms. Stephy” back after her powerful oratory and singing during MGVAMC’s Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day ceremony in January. “We could not serve Veterans without the proud diversity we have in the VA, just like we have in the military,” explained Traylor.

Ms. Stephy eloquently spoke and sang (follow link to facebook) the outpouring of love she happily shares from her heart, “facing the rising sun, let us march on... until Victory is won.” She spoke of the rise of Black History into mainstream teachings in the U.S. by 1937. She also challenged the audience to understand people of color are also stewards of “the heavy price your ancestors paid for you to go to school, to be good stewards, and to give back.”

MGVAMC SharePoint Redesign & Migration Includes Events Calendar

Extensive redesign work continues for each of the service lines, programs, and information used by employees and contained in the facility’s SharePoint site. At left, is an arrow pointing to the internal and external (Employee and Veteran events) calendar that can help MGVAMC staff better understand when on-site events involving VA are taking place here - or in the local community! A screen shot of the calendar is pictured below.

The initial SharePoint migration has been completed and SharePoint Site Owners have been contacted to review their migrated sites,” explained Kristi Young, SharePoint Administrator. Responses are due by Close of Business this Thursday, Feb. 28th. *Tentative on March 8th: SharePoint sites will be placed into “read-only” mode. On Sat-Sun, March 9-10th: Start of final incremental migration to SharePoint online is scheduled to take place. For more info call ext. 7784.
Veterans Happy As MGVAMC Welcomes Local Dignitaries, Celebrities, and Community Organizations for VA’s National Salute to Veteran Patients Week February 11-15th!

Heavy snow couldn’t dampen all the enthusiasm that brought leaders including Spokane Mayor David Condon, Fairchild AFB Commanders, KAYU-Fox TV personalities, Spokane’s Lilac Foundation Royal Court, Soldiers Angels, VFW Post-51, and others making VA’s National Salute to Veteran Patients Week a success!

“I admire all of them for finding the time to remember and honor our service,” smiled Air Force Veteran and former medic Thomas Crawford (pictured below) while receiving a bedside greeting from Colonel Derek Salmi, Fairchild AFB’s Commander with Col. Kurt Tuninga, 141st ANG Commander, and CMSgt Mills.

They joined many in visiting patients in clinic waiting rooms, bedside, our Community Living Center and our Hospice Unit! Thank you to all!