

Phoenix VA Health Care System

Monthly Stakeholder Report



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Veterans Health Administration
Phoenix VA Health Care System

September 2022

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT



September 8, Congressman Mark Takano Committee on Veterans' Affairs Chairman and Congressman Greg Stanton met with PVAHCS leadership to discuss expanded access to care for Veterans.

The Phoenix VA Health Care System continues to strive in putting forth a diligent effort to support all Veteran groups throughout our community and rural areas

across the state of Arizona. The list below were events where the PVAHCS attended and provided support and resources.

- August 27 - San Carlos Apache 4th Annual Veteran's Celebration, Peridot, AZ
- August 27 - 2022 Military & Veteran Women's Experience Estrella Mountain Community College, Avondale, AZ
- August 27 - Rim County Stand Down, Payson, AZ
- September 7 - White Mountain Apache Housing Authority Veterans Symposium, Show Low, AZ
- September 16 - White Mountain Apache Veterans Stand Down and Celebration, Show Low, AZ
- September 24 - Glendale Stand Up of Veterans, Glendale, AZ



In addition to the outreach events in community, we held or were involved in:

- September 10 - Adopt a Street, cleaning up the downtown Phoenix from 7th Street to 7 Avenue.
- September 9 - 12 - Tetra Sports Watercraft Event



Kimberly Kolstad along with our Adaptive Sports team partnered with TRAILS and Tetradapt to provide a day for local Veterans to test out the new Tetra Watercraft.

The Tetra Watercraft is the world's first hybrid watercraft that can be *independently* sailed or electrically propelled by people with complex spinal cord injury or disease (quadriplegia), including those requiring mechanical ventilation.

Medical professionals were also given an opportunity to try the equipment and Mr. Michael Welsh along with Dr. Nandita Keole, PMRS Chief went out on Friday.

- September 13 - Veggies for Veterans, gave out 600 bags of fresh fruit and veggies
- September 21 - Be Connected Mental Health Summit, Dr. Leslie Lockridge, Deputy Medical Center Director represented the Phoenix VA Health Care System during 2022 Be Connected Mental Health Summit along with Northern and Southern Arizona VA Health Care Systems and the Arizona Department of Veterans Services.
- September 21 - Women Veterans Program held their first tele-townhall using the Broadnet services reaching over 1700 local Women Veterans. The Womens Veterans Program and the executive leadership team along with other key members in the healthcare system came together to talk about new and important items along with answer questions.
- Dr. Leslie Lockridge represented the PVAHCS at the Be Connected quarterly update meeting alongside our counterparts at Northern and Southern Arizona Health Care Systems, VBA, Arizona Coalition for Military Families, and Arizona Department of Veterans' Services to talk about suicide prevention and our Veteran community.
- The Executive Leadership Team and HUD-VASH has been working diligently with Senator Sinema's office along with other local elected leaders to talk about ways to find homes and improve the homeless situation in Arizona.
- Phoenix and Prescott Health Care Systems came together to update Senator Sinema's office on the ATLAS project in Wickenburg. The ATLAS project provides much needed access to Veteran Affairs in a rural area. ATLAS represents a first-of-its-kind opportunity for Arizona veterans to access the care and benefits they've earned, no matter where they live.
- Executive Leadership Team is always busy making their rounds to check up on various departments, clinics, programs, staff, and Veteran patients. They even make sure to visit all our community-based outpatients' clinics even the ones located outside the Phoenix Metropolitan area. We have clinics located in Show Low, Payson and Globe where they also met with concerned Veterans.
- Phoenix VA Health Care System has been partnering with local tribal leadership and Indian Health Services to ensure our Native American and often rural Veterans receive care and services.
- Joint Commission Mock Survey results from the visit were positive. No real issues, however, we do have some work to do, just some minor fixable items.



AROUND THE FACILITY

- September 7 & 9 - Phoenix VA Health Care System Strategic Planning Meeting, Phoenix VA Executive Leadership and all department service chiefs came together to share their plans for 2023.
- September 20 - SAW and LITE Graduations, we have 13 employees graduate in 6-month self-improvement courses offered by the PVAHCS.
- September 20 - Phoenix 32nd Street VA Clinic we held our second PHASER Phest. Veterans came together to learn about the PHASER program and how it can help improve their medication effectiveness by looking at a Veterans specific genetic profile.
- September 27 - 29 the Phoenix VA Health Care System hosted a groundbreaking new employee experience called "Tour of Duty."



The Tour of Duty course is intended to orient federal civilian employees to the life of the military member. The training is designed to enrich each staff member's depth of understanding of the person in front of them, on the phone, or at the other end of an email. It hopefully brings them a little closer together.

ToD is different, exciting, and interactive. It celebrates active military, Veterans, and civil servants, noting their unique call to service and duty to the Constitution of the United States. It also helps break down barriers and improve empathy through discussions of complex topics such as Veteran stereotypes, diversity and equity, demographics, and other subjects that can be difficult to discuss without context.

- Dr. Shakaib Rehman was awarded the EACH Fellowship in the International Association for Communication in Healthcare on September 6, in Glasgow, Scotland.
- VRC and ERC are being looked at as a best practice to possibly implement in the future VHA wide.
- The CLC is currently under renovation. While the residents are out, we are taking the opportunity to make updates to plumbing along with other items to make the best possible living area for our Veterans.



VETERAN REMINDERS

Masking Update:

- We continue to require FDA-approved Medical Procedure masks for all who enter our facilities. VA will issue a disposable mask when you arrive on campus if you do not have one. This applies to all patients, visitors, employees, contractors, and volunteers and applies to all buildings in which PVAHCS employees are working.

Visitor Policy:

- All visitors will be screened according to CDC guidelines and will be required to wear a mask.
- Our visitor policy has returned to pre-COVID hours.
- No visitors under age 15 on inpatient units.
- Visitors are now allowed in our Community Living Center in a limited capacity based on community positivity and transmission rates.

Screening Changes:

COVID-19 screening hours at the Emergency Department entrance have been reduced from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. This will not impact facility services. Carl T. Hayden VA Medical Center entrance hours:

- Emergency Department Entrance: 24/7, COVID-19 Screeners 6 a.m. - 6 p.m. only
- North ACC Entrance: M - F, 6 a.m. - 4 p.m., COVID-19 Screeners throughout
- South ACC Entrance: M - F, 6 a.m. - 5 p.m., COVID-19 Screeners throughout

Vaccinations:

Flu and COVID-19 vaccinations can keep you from getting sick this season and reduce the risk of being hospitalized. Getting a Flu and COVID-19 shot is especially important for people with health conditions such as diabetes and heart disease. Pregnant women and young children should also get a flu shot.

Getting vaccinated yourself may also protect people around you, including those who are more vulnerable to serious flu and COVID illness. Go to any VA facility and get your COVID booster and Flu shot or visit one of our community partners.

COVID-19 Novavax Vaccine:

Novavax COVID-19 vaccine is here! Novavax is a traditional protein-based vaccine, like annual flu vaccines. The Carl T. Hayden VA Medical Center now offers Novavax to unvaccinated Veterans, employees, spouses of Veterans, caregivers, and CHAMPVA recipients. To learn more about COVID-19 vaccines at VA, visit <https://www.va.gov/health-care/covid-19-vaccine/>



No Booster

No walk-ins -Veterans must schedule an appointment with the call center at 602-277-5551 ext. 2251.

Unvaccinated individuals (they never had any type of COVID vaccine)

Novavax COVID-19 Vaccine is the first “protein subunit” COVID-19 vaccine available for use in the U.S. With this COVID-19 vaccine, the spike protein itself is injected into the body to induce an immune response. This type of vaccine has been used in the U.S for more than 30 years. It is the same type of vaccine as some of our current shingles and flu vaccines. For more information visit [Understanding Protein Subunit COVID-19 Vaccines | CDC.](#)

On the Move:



The Phoenix VA General Mental Health clinic, formerly known as Jade/Opal Clinic, has moved to the Phoenix 32nd Street Clinic, located at 400 N. 32nd Street, Phoenix, AZ 85008.

Mental Health services are located on the 2nd floor, and include General Mental Health scheduled appointments, Walk-in Clinic, and the PTSD Clinic. The old location on the first floor of the main hospital no longer provides walk-in services.

Veteran Crisis Line:

This shorter, three-digit number provides an easier-to-remember way to access help for those who need it.

Access to Care Website:

VHA has launched an updated Access to Care website [Accesstocare.va.gov](https://www.accesstocare.va.gov). This improved site is a resource for Veterans and their caregivers, providing them with an improved user experience, additional access and satisfaction information, and improved wait times that better align with their experience when scheduling appointments.

LOOKING FORWARD

Blood Drive:



October 7 we will be holding a blood drive from 6:30 to 11:30 a.m. near the ACC south entrance flagpoles.

Every two seconds, someone in the U.S. needs blood. This could be a little girl in the ICU or a mother with Stage 3 leukemia. If you're worried about needles, don't be—most blood donors compare the experience to a mild, split-second pinch! The entire process is very safe and very fast, and you will feel amazing knowing you potentially saved up to three people.

In the Media:

Mr. Michael Welsh along with Mr. Chris Norton, Phoenix Regional Office Director, will be on a local PBS talk show Arizona Horizon on October 5 to speak on the PACT Act.

Hiring Efforts:

The Phoenix VA Health Care System will be holding a Hiring Fair on Saturday, October 22 from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Phoenix 32nd Street VA Clinic located at 400 North 32nd Street, Phoenix, AZ 85008

To attend the Hiring Fair, applicants must first apply to at least one of the job announcements listed below on [USAJOBS](#). Applicants meeting minimum qualifications for VA employment will receive an invitation to RSVP for the Hiring Fair. We ask that all applicants complete the RSVP form to confirm their appointment at the Hiring Fair.

If potential job applicants attend the Hiring Fair without first applying for VA employment positions listed below on [USAJOBS](#), we cannot guarantee an appointment at the Hiring Fair.



All VA employment candidates must check-in room 1B101. All attendees of the Hiring Fair must enter off 32nd Street and follow the signs that state "Applicant Parking".

The Phoenix VA Health Care System is hiring for the following positions, directions to apply for the each of the position are in the links:

- [Advanced Medical Support Assistant](#)
- [Diagnostic Radiologic Technologist](#)
- [Environmental Service Tech \(Housekeeping Aid\)](#)
- [Food Service Worker](#)
- [Licensed Practical Nurse](#) **Incentive available*
- [Materials Handler](#)
- [Medical Support Assistant](#)

- [Nursing Assistant](#) **Incentive available*
- [Pharmacy Technician](#)
- [Psychologist](#) **Incentive available*
- [Registered Nurse](#) **Incentive available in OR & ICU*
- [Senior Social Worker](#) **Incentive available for inpatient care*
- [Social Worker](#) **Incentive available for inpatient care*
- [Supply Technician](#)

For questions about the Hiring Fair, please contact the Phoenix VA Health Care System Human Resources Department at V22StaffingSSUTeamE@va.gov

LOCAL CONTACT INFORMATION

- Phoenix VA Health Care System Main Line 602-277-5551
- Caregiver Support Program x7777
- Community Care x6049
- Eligibility and Enrollment Section x6508
- Homeless Program CRRC 602-248-6040
- Mental Health Clinic x2752
- Patient Advocate Office x2774
- Communications Department (Public Affairs/Medical Media) x2667
- Release of Information Office x3267
- Voluntary Services x7045
- Billing and Insurance x2173

VA NATIONAL CONTACT INFORMATION

- 1-800-MyVA411 (1-800-698-2411) questions about care, benefits, and services
- General VA Billing Questions 1-866-400-1238
- National Caregiver support line 1-855-260-3274
- National Memorial Cemetery Phoenix 1-480-513-1412
- Phoenix Regional Office (VBA) 1-800-827-1000
- VA Billing and collections Consolidated Patient Account Center (CPAC) 1-866-802-6819
- VA Desert Pacific Healthcare Network Nurse Advice Line 1-877-252-4866
- VA Health Care 1-877-222-8387 (VETS)
- Veterans Crisis Line 9 Press 1, text 838255, or chat VeteransCrisisLine.net/chat



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