



Patient Handbook

Department of Veterans Affairs
Southern Arizona VA Health Care System (SAVAHCS)

Tucson, Arizona 85723

(520)792-1450 or Toll Free- 10800-470-8262



Message from the Director

To our Patients, their Families and Friends:

Welcome to the Southern Arizona VA Healthcare System [SAVAHCS]! I know that coming to a new place can be exciting and intimidating at the same time. You will be introduced to a lot of new procedures and information, which can at times be confusing. Please rest assured that we really care about you and your health. We want to ensure your complete understanding of our health care system. This handbook is one of the ways we hope to develop that understanding.

We offer comprehensive healthcare and many services to our veterans. We have designed this handbook to introduce you to the many services SAVAHCS provides and how to access those services.

Our team of professionals is the best, and we enjoy extremely high satisfaction rates from patients and family members on the quality of our staff, and the services we provide. We are here to serve you. If you or your family have any questions at all about your condition, your care, your medications or our services, please do not hesitate to ask any of our staff. If they cannot answer your questions, they will find someone who can.

We value our patients and their opinion. If you have any comments about the care you receive or suggestions for improvement, please share them. All feedback is welcome and appreciated.

We look forward to working with you and becoming your healthcare provider of choice.

Sincerely,

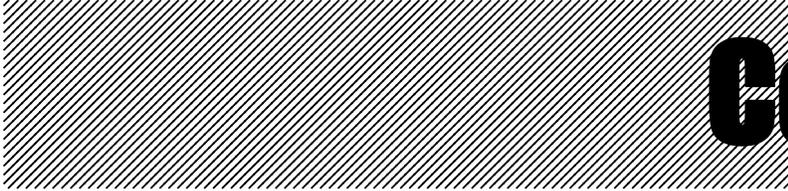


Jonathan H. Gardner, FACHE

Director

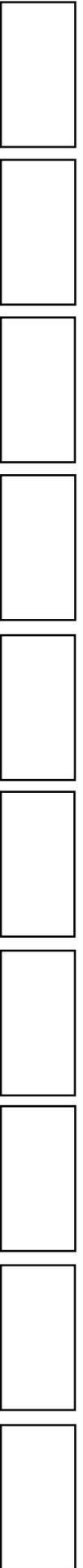
Southern Arizona VA Healthcare System





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Introduction

The Southern Arizona VA Health Care System is comprised of a teaching hospital in Tucson, Arizona, and five Community Based Outpatient Clinics located in Casa Grande, Green Valley, Safford, Sierra Vista, and Yuma, Arizona. The Medical Center is authorized 274 beds which includes medical, surgical, neurological, psychiatric, geriatrics, hospice, rehabilitation and the Southwestern Blind Rehabilitation Center beds. There is an estimated 149,000 veterans in the SAVAHCS Primary Service Area, which extends from the California border to New Mexico, and includes the southern eight counties in Arizona and one in New Mexico.

SAVAHCS is located on 116 acres of land about six miles south of Tucson. A new \$25.5 million, two-story Ambulatory Care addition was completed in November 2003. This new addition, houses SAVAHCS outpatient, and specialty care clinics.

In FY 2003, SAVAHCS treated over 7,600 inpatients and in excess of 434,000 outpatient visits. There are approximately 1500 employees many of who are veterans themselves.

SAVAHCS has affiliations with 42 academic institutions. SAVAHCS plays a vital role in Arizona health care education as the principle affiliate with the University of Arizona's Colleges of Medicine, Nursing, and Pharmacy. Each year, over 700 physicians, nurses and other health care professionals receive training at the SAVAHCS.





General Information

General Information

Patient Rights and Responsibilities

Veterans Health Administration (VHA) employees will respect and support your rights as a patient. We are pleased you have selected us to provide your health care. We plan to make your visit or stay as pleasant for you as possible. Your basic rights and responsibilities are outlined in this document. Please talk with VA treatment team members or a patient advocate if you have any questions or would like more information about your rights.

I. Respect and Nondiscrimination

- You will be treated with dignity, compassion and respect as an individual. Your privacy will be protected. You will receive care in a safe environment. We will seek to honor your personal and religious values.
- You or someone you choose have the right to keep and spend your own money. You have the right to receive an accounting of VA held funds.
- Treatment will respect your personal freedoms. In rare cases, the use of medication and physical restraints may be used if all other efforts to keep you or others free from harm have not worked
- As an inpatient or long-term care resident you may wear your own clothes and keep personal items. This depends on your medical condition.
- As an inpatient or long-term care resident, you have the right to social interaction, and regular exercise. You will have the opportunity for religious worship and spiritual support. You may decide whether or not participate in these activities. You may decide whether or not to perform tasks in or for the Medical Center.
- As an inpatient or long-term care resident, you have the right to communicate freely and privately. You may have or refuse visitors. You will have access to public telephones. You may participate in civic rights.
- As a long-term care resident, you can organize and take part in resident

groups in the facility. Your family also can meet with the families of other residents.

- In order to provide a safe treatment environment for all patients and staff you are asked to respect other patients and staff and to follow the facility's rules. Avoid unsafe acts that place others at risk for accidents or injuries. Please immediately report any condition you believe to be unsafe.

II. Information Disclosure and Confidentiality

- You will be given information about the health benefits that you can receive. The information will be provided in a way you can understand. You will receive information about the costs of your care, if any, before you are treated. You are responsible for paying for your portion of the costs associated with your care.

- Your medical record will be kept confidential. Information about you will not be released without your consent unless authorized by law (i.e., State public health reporting). You have the right to information in your medical record and may request a copy of your records. This will be provided except in rare situations where your VA physician feels the information will be harmful to you. In that situation, you have the right to have this discussed with you by your VA provider.



- You will be informed of all outcomes of care, including any injuries caused by your medical care. You will be informed about how to request compensation for injuries.

III. Participating in Treatment Decisions

- You, and any persons you choose, will be involved in all decisions about your care. You will be given information you can understand about the benefits and risks of treatment. You will be given other options. You can agree to or refuse

treatment. Refusing treatment will not affect your rights to future care but you have the responsibility to understand the possible results to your health. If you believe you cannot follow the treatment plan you have a responsibility to notify the treatment team.

- As an inpatient or long-term care resident, you will be provided any transportation necessary for your treatment plan.
- You will be given, in writing, the name and professional title of the provider in charge of your care. As a partner in the healthcare process, you have the right to be involved in choosing your provider. You will be educated about your role and responsibilities as a patient. This includes your participation in decision-making and care at the end of life.
- Tell your provider about your current condition, medicines (including over the counter and herbals) and medical history. Also, share any other information that affects your health. You should ask questions when you don't understand something about your care. This will help in providing you the best care possible.
- You have the right to have your pain assessed and to receive treatment to manage your pain. You and your treatment team will develop a pain management plan together. You are expected to help the treatment team by telling them if you have pain and if the treatment is working.
- You have the right to choose whether or not you will participate in any research project. Any research will be clearly identified. Potential risks of the research will be identified and there will be no pressure on you to participate.
- You will be included in resolving any ethical issues about your care. You may consult with the Medical Center's Ethics Committee and/or other staff knowledgeable about health care ethics.
- If you or the Medical Center believes that you have been neglected, abused or exploited, you will receive help.

IV. Complaints

- You are encouraged and expected to seek help from your treatment team and/or a patient advocate if you have problems or complaints. You will be given understandable information about the complaint process available to you. You may complain verbally or in writing, without fear of retaliation.

Patient Advocate

The Patient Advocate Program was developed to provide patients and their families with assistance in an increasingly complex and technical health care system. The advocates serve as a liaison between the patient and the VA. The Patient Rights and the Patient Advocate Program are strongly supported at this Medical Center.

You can contact the SAVAHCS Patient Advocate Monday - Friday 8:00 am to 4:30 pm (except Federal Holidays) at (520) 629-4924/4933.



The Mission & Vision of the Veteran's Health Administration (VHA)

Mission

The mission of the Veterans Health Care System is to serve the needs of America's veterans by providing primary care, specialized care, and related medical and social support services. To accomplish this mission, VHA needs to be a comprehensive, integrated health care system that provides excellence in health care value, excellence in service as defined by its customers, and excellence in education and research, and needs to be an organization characterized by exceptional accountability and by being an employer of choice.

Vision

Healthcare Value begins with VHA. The new Veterans Health Care System supports innovation, empowerment, productivity, accountability and continuous improvement. Working together, we provide a continuum of high quality health care in a convenient, responsive, caring manner and at a reasonable cost.



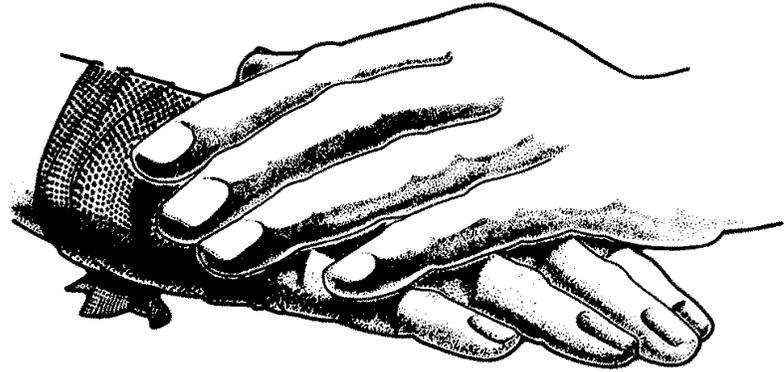
Customer Service Standards

These standards exist as our commitment to veterans and their families and outline the quality of service you can expect to receive.

1. We will treat you with **courtesy and dignity**. You can expect to be treated as the 1st class citizen that you are.
2. We will provide you with **timely access to health care**. We have talked to you, our patients, about your expectations for timeliness. You have told us that you expect to have your urgent needs met when they come up and your non-urgent needs taken care of in a reasonable period of time. You also said you understand that it may take some time for your medical facility to meet your expectations for timeliness. For that reason we have asked our medical facilities to do three things so that they eventually meet your expectations:
 - Post local timeliness standards;
 - Keep track of how well they meet those standards; and
 - Make continuous improvements in their timeliness.
3. One **health care team will be in charge of your care**. Because health care often involves many different providers, it is important that one provider or team have overall responsibility. You can expect to know whom to contact when you need help or have a problem.
4. **We will involve you in decisions about your care**. Your preferences will be met whenever possible and medically appropriate. We will listen to your concerns and discuss them with you.

5. We will strive to meet your **physical comfort needs**. This includes help with things like pain management, eating, bathing, or getting to the bathroom while in the hospital. It also includes maintaining privacy during examinations and tests when an inpatient or outpatient. We will ensure proper facilities for veterans with special needs.

6. We will provide support to meet **your emotional needs**. We will encourage you to share any anxieties and fears you may have about your condition or treatment. You can expect our staff to be sensitive to your feelings and help you deal with your health care experience.



7. We will take responsibility for **coordination of your care**. Health care can be very complicated, and many patients need to see more than one health care professional. We will ensure that all your providers talk with each other and give you clear plans for your care. If you need a specialist, you can expect us to make all arrangements to ensure one is provided for you.

8. We will strive to provide **information and education** about your health care that you understand. You can also expect us to try to answer your questions in a way that you understand.

9. We will provide opportunities to **involve your family** in your care. Whether your family is involved, however, should generally be your choice.

10. We will provide **smooth transition between your inpatient and outpatient care**. You can expect to understand what medicines you are to take, what danger signals to look out for, and what activity level you can have after discharge. You can expect to know whom to contact if you need help or advice right away, and when your first follow-up appointment is.

Advanced Directives

An Advance Directive is a general term used to say what you would want done about your health care if you could no longer decide for yourself. An Advance Directive refers to three kinds of documents:

- Living Will
- Durable (Special) Power of Attorney for Health Care
- Treatment Preferences

A *Living Will* states what you want your future treatment preferences to be if you were unable to tell your treatment team and your health care provider what you would like done.

A *Durable Power of Attorney* allows you to pick someone to make decisions about your health care when you cannot do so yourself.

A *Treatment Preference Form* allows you to make specific care choices in advance. It is best if you complete this set of documents in an outpatient setting when you are feeling well.

You can discuss your concerns with your health care provider, nurse or social worker. An Advance Directive gives you legal authority to carry out your wishes. If you decide you would like to complete an Advance Directive, ask to speak with a social worker. He/she will provide you with additional information and help you complete the forms.



Release of Information

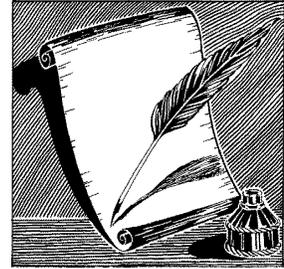
Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)

Release of Information

For your own protection, we require you to sign a consent form before we will release any information regarding your medical treatment. Release of Information is open during business hours and is located in building 80, Outpatient Pharmacy Lobby for outpatients. Inpatients may also ask the inpatient unit coordinator for assistance.

Privacy/HIPPA

According to the new HIPAA statute (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act), SAVAHCS is providing you with this VA Notice of Privacy Practice. SAVAHCS has implemented appropriate administrative, technical, and physical safeguard measures to protect your individual information against any anticipated threats or hazards to their security or integrity. VHA employees can use the health information contained in your records only while officially performing health care or administrative services. SAVAHCS may disclose information from your official VA records only with your written authorization, or when a Federal law allows it.



All requests must be in writing and must be signed. If you need to have someone to clarify any question regarding your rights to your health information or the existing privacy practice, you may contact the Release of Information Section at (520) 792-1450 or 800-470-8262 Ext. 6323, 5018, or 6923.

HIPAA Facility Directory Opt-Out Information *(Request to appear or not in the hospital directory)*

- As a patient, you may request exclusion from the Facility Directory during your inpatient stay.
- VHA must not provide any information to the public about a patient who has opted-out of the directory.
- You may change your selection at any time during your inpatient stay by notifying the Health Unit Coordinator.

My HealthVet

My HealthVet is VA's new veteran health website specifically designed for veterans, their advocates, and their families. It provides one-stop shopping for VA benefits, special programs, health information and services, and a health education library that gives up-to-date information about medications and conditions, tools for measuring your health status, and the latest health news. In the future other features will be available. For example, you could view your co-pay balance, view an appointment schedule, refill medications, and enter personal health data, including blood pressure. The final phase will allow you to view portions of your medical record, including laboratory tests. Log on to www.myhealth.va.gov today.

Facility & Local Information

Facility & Local Information

Mission

We provide Quality Health Care to Veterans in an environment of Compassion, Education, & Research.

Vision

Be a model of clinical and organizational excellence.

Core Values

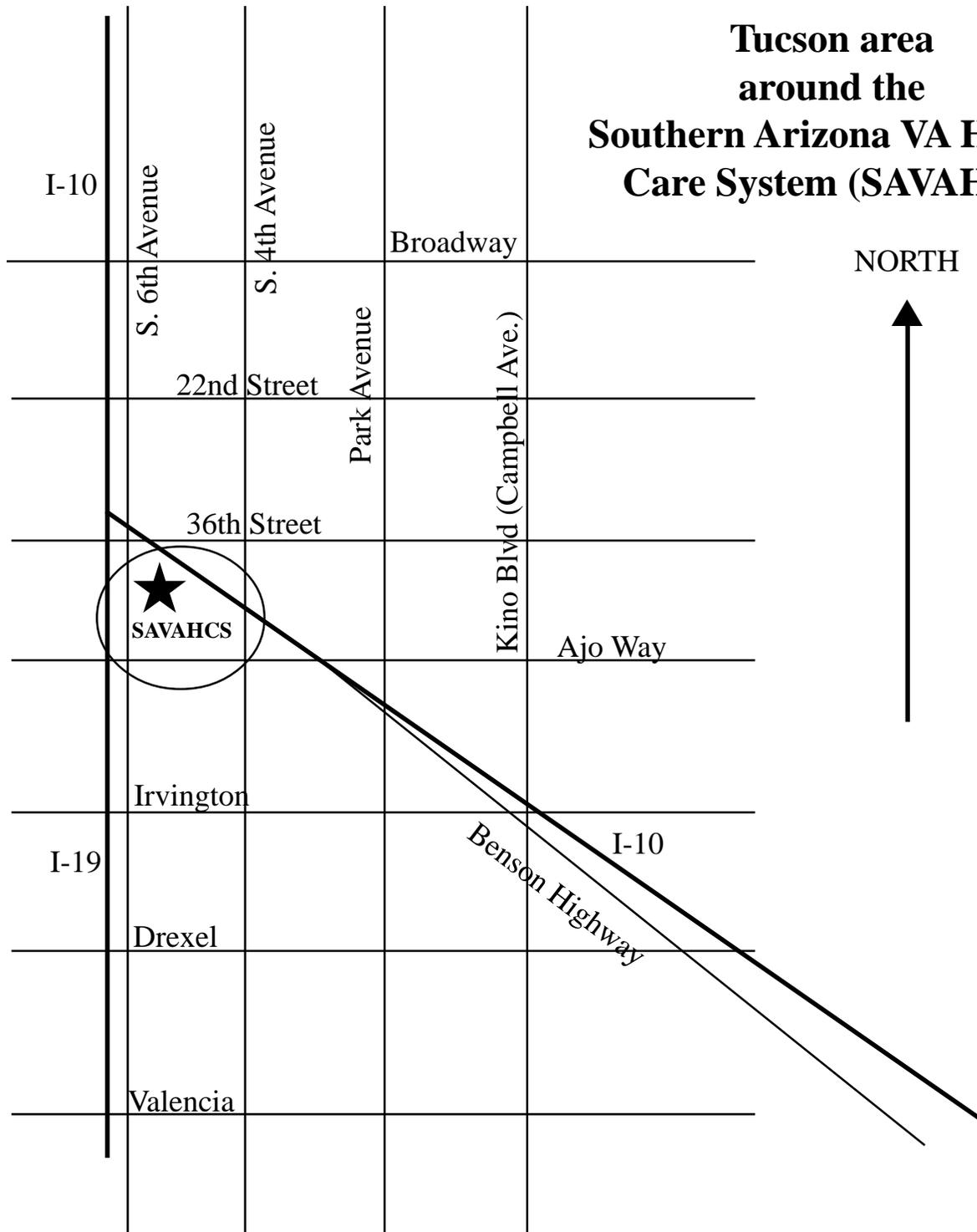
We dedicate ourselves to

Trust Respect, Commitment, Compassion and Excellence.

Maps

The maps provided in this section will assist you in navigating SAVAHCS. You may also reference additional maps of our facility and print them at the kiosk located in the lobby of building 80.

**Tucson area
around the
Southern Arizona VA Health
Care System (SAVAHCS)**

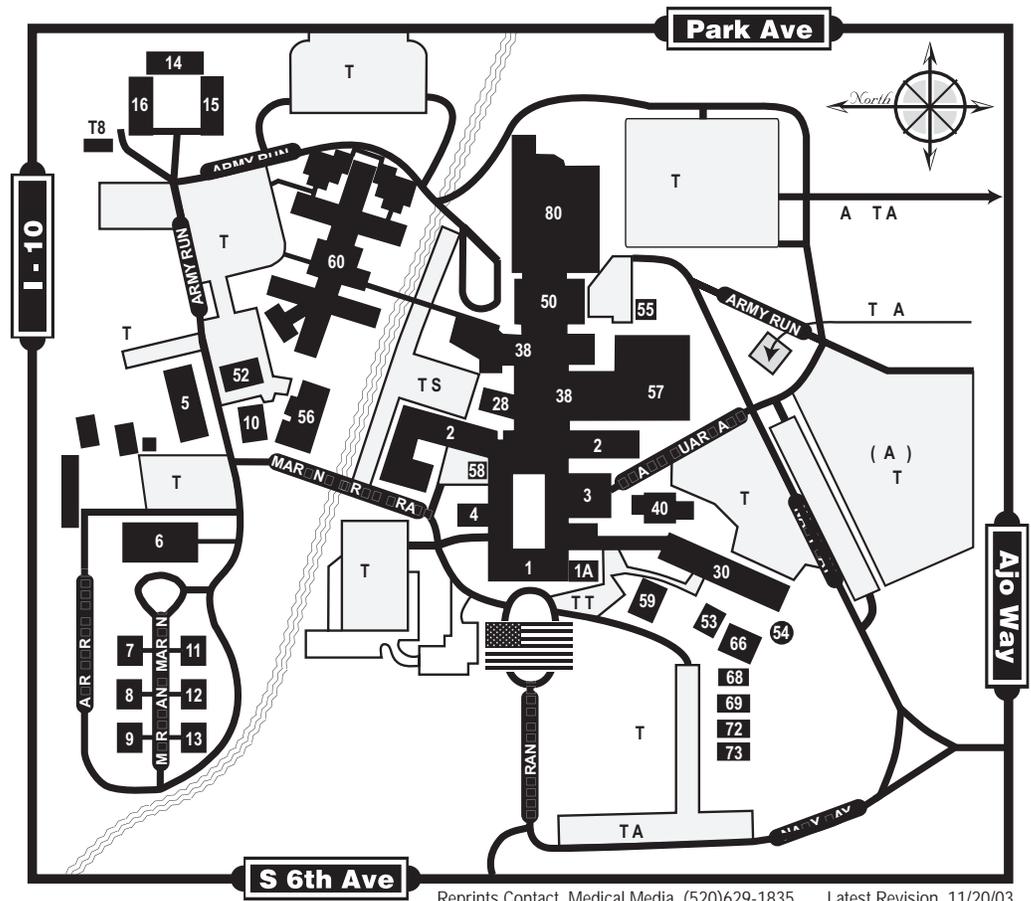


FUNCTION	BUILDING	LOT	FUNCTION	BUILDING	LOT	FUNCTION	BUILDING	LOT
Accommodation Program	60	L,K	Facilities Management	5	P	Patient Wards		
Acquisition & Materiel Mgmt.	5	P	Fiscal	5	P	- Ward -1 West	2	Q
Administration	1	Q	Geriatrics Clinic	60	L,K	- Ward -2 South	2	Q
Admissions/Referral Center	2	Q	Geriatrics & Rehabilitation Center	60	L,K	- Ward -3 East	38	Q
After Hours Admission (LSU)	2	C	GI/GU Lab	38	J,K	- Ward -3 North	2	Q
Agent Cashier	80	G,F	Hospital Based Primary Quarters	12		Patio Conference Room	4	Q
Ambulatory Surgery/OR	57	C,D,E	Hemodialysis	57	C,D,E	Pharmacy	80	G,F
American Indian Program	2	C,D,E	Homeless Program	66	B	Police/Security	2	Q
Audiology	38	G,F,J	Hospice	60	L	Prosthetics	57	C,D
Beneficiary Travel	80	G,F	Human Resources	53	B	Public Affairs	1	Q
Business/Billing Office	73	B	Information	80	G,F	Optical Shop	80	G,F
Canteen Dining	3	Q,B	Intensive Care Unit (ICU)	38	Q	Radiology/Nuclear Medicine	38	G,F
Canteen Retail Store	80	G,F	Laboratory	57	C	Recreation Sports Park	71	P
Cardiology	38	G,F,J	LSU (Life Support Unit) & Urgent Care	50	H,G,F	Rehabilitation Therapy Center	60	L,K
CHAMPVA	57	D	Medicine Specialty Clinics	80	G,F	Release of Information	50	G,F
Chaplain	4	Q	Mental Health Programs	2	R,S,Q	Research Administration	52	P
Compensation/Pension Clinic	57	C,D,E	Nuclear Medicine	38	Q	Speech Pathology	60	L,K
Conference Center	4	Q	Outpatient Lab	80	G,F	Spinal Cord Injury Clinic	60	L,K
Day Programs	7	P	Outpatient Radiology	80	G,F	Staff/Resident Education	59	B
Dental	57	C,D,E	Primary Care Teams			Substance Abuse Program	66	A,B
Director's Offices	1	Q	- Agave Primary Care Team	2	Q	Surgery Clinic	2	Q
Eligibility & Enrollment Center	69	B	- Mesquite Primary Care Team	80	G,F	S.W. Blind Rehabilitation Center	30	D,C
EKG	38	G,F,J	- Ocotillo Primary Care Team	80	G,F	TRICARE	57	C,D,E
Engineering	5	P	- Palo Verde Primary Care Team	80	G,F	Veterans Service Officer	58	Q
ENT	38	G,F,J	- Saguaro Primary Care Team	80	G,F	Vocational Rehabilitation	13	P
Employee Health	2	C,D,E	Pain Clinic	60	L,K	Voluntary Service	4	Q
Environmental Management	5	P	Patient Advocate	1A	Q	Warehouse	14	M
Eye Clinic	80	G,F,J	Patient Transportation	38	G,F,J	Woman's Health	80	G,F

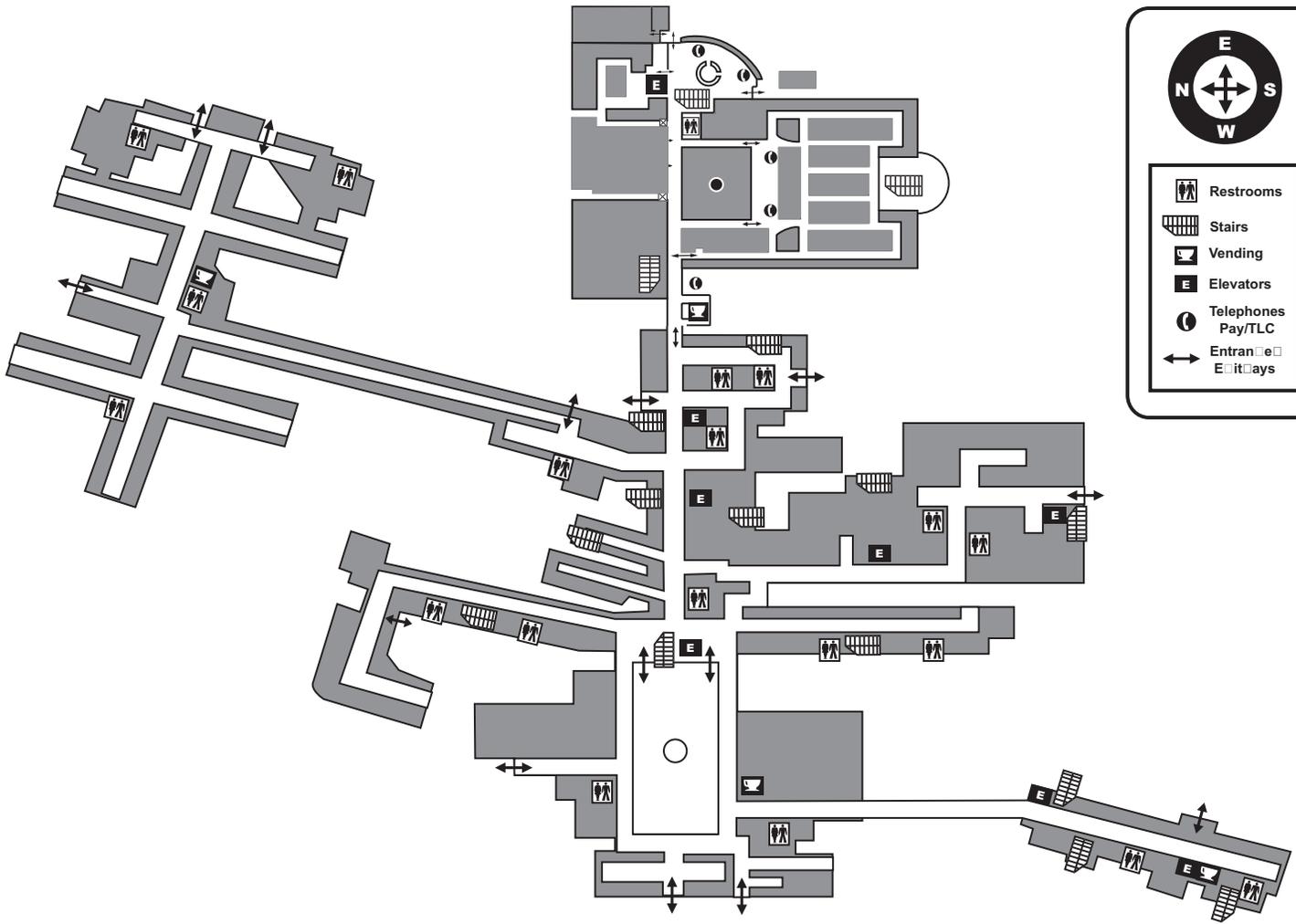


SAVAHCS
Southern Arizona VA Health Care System

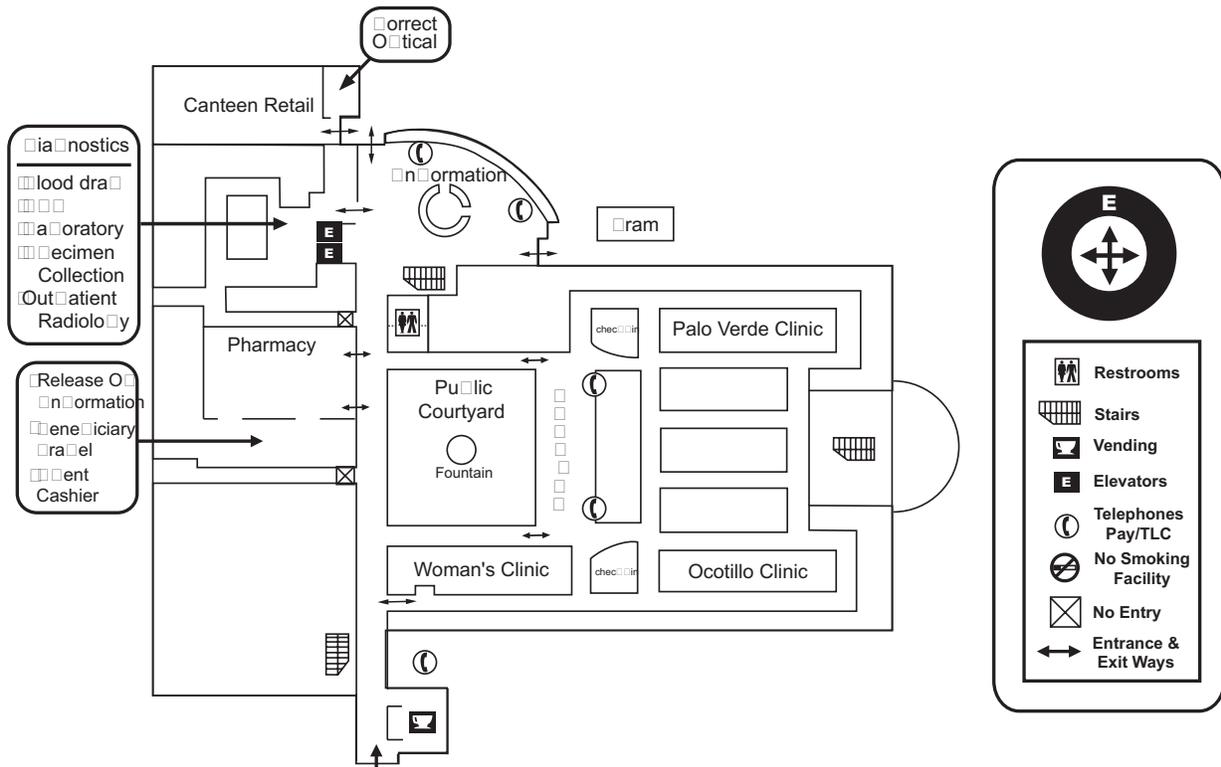
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Tucson • Arizona 85723
(520) 792-1450



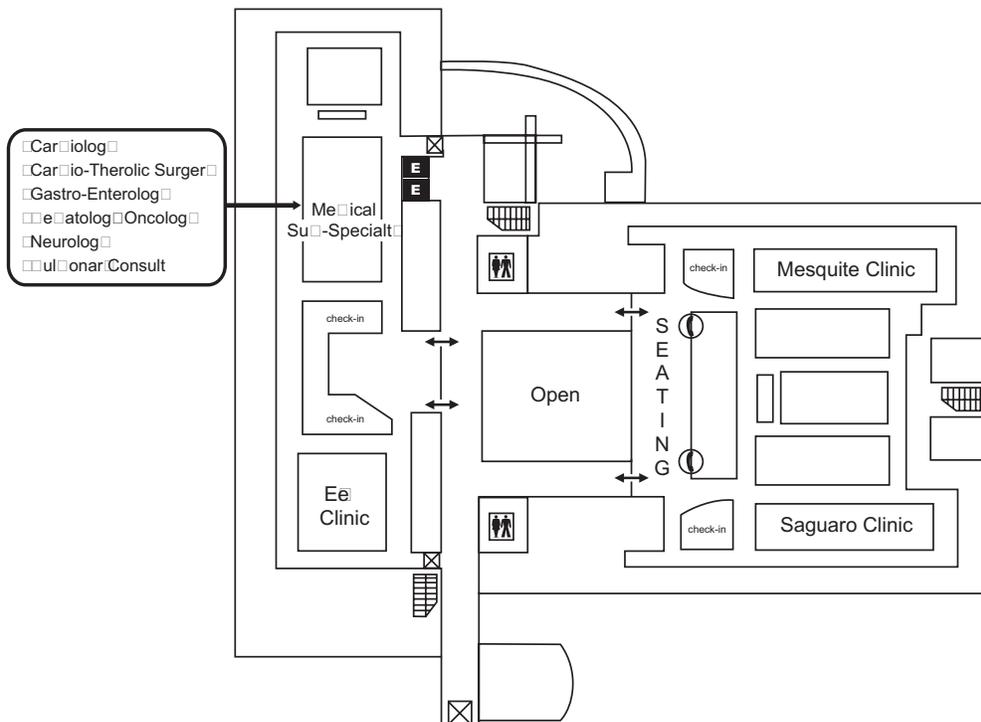
Reprints Contact Medical Media, (520)629-1835 Latest Revision 11/20/03



Building 80-1st Floor



Building 80-2nd Floor



Temporary Lodging

What is Temporary Lodging?

Temporary Lodging provides a place to stay either on the SAVAHCS campus or at a nearby hotel for all patients who live more than 75 miles away from SAVAHCS and have an appointment or procedure scheduled with a provider. ***Patients must be able to care for themselves.*** A spouse or a person who drives the patient to an appointment may be eligible for Temporary Lodging as well. Please contact the Admissions and Referral Center (ARC) directly at 800-470-8262 Ext. 6570.



How many nights are covered?

Up to 2 days are covered (one night prior to the appointment, and one night after the appointment).

How do I arrange for Temporary Lodging?

As soon as you know you have an appointment, contact the Admissions and Referral Center. They can accept requests 1 to 2 days prior to your appointment or procedure.

When is check in?

Check in time is 2 pm, and check out time is 8 am.

Where do I check in?

In the Admissions and Referral Center until 4 pm. After 4pm you must report to the Life Support Unit (LSU). The Admissions and Referral Center is located currently in Building 2, Room 196. Effective January 2005 they will be re-located to Building 50, Room 156.

Are meals provided?

Yes, meals are provided to patients who are in Temporary Lodging.

What should I bring?

All prescribed medications in addition to everything you need for your care, such as pajamas, toothbrush, toothpaste, etc.

Lodging & Food

The directory below is intended to help those who will be staying in Tucson while visiting friends and family in the hospital. The Tucson SAVAHCS receives no remuneration from the merchants, nor endorses any one of the services. The listing is provided strictly for the convenience of our visitors. It is recommended that you call for prices. Some prices are subject to seasonal changes.

What hotels are near SAVAHCS?

Best Value Inn
810 E. Benson Hwy.
884-5800

Desert Edge Motel
3562 Benson Hwy.
294-0748

Econo Lodge
3020 S. 6th Ave.
623-5881

Howard Johnson's
1010 S. Freeway
622-5871

Junction Inn
755 E. Benson Hwy.
622-4614

Knight's Inn
29th St. and I-10
624-8291

La Quinta Inn
750 W. Starr Pass Blvd.
624-4455

Lazy 8 Motel
314 E. Benson Hwy
622-3336

Quality Inn
Benson Highway & Park Ave.
1025 E. Benson Hwy.
623-7792

Vagabond Plaza Hotel
1601 N. Oracle Rd.
623-6666

Are there any RV parks near SAVAHCS?

Apollo RV Park
3356 E. Benson Hwy.
Tucson, AZ 85706
889-9422

A Bar A Campground.
9015 W. Tangerine Rd.
Tucson, AZ 85653
686-4332

Cactus Country RV Park
10195 S. Houghton Rd.
574-3000

Crazy Horse RV Campground
(I-10 & Craycroft)
6660 S. Craycroft Rd.
Tucson, AZ 85706
574-0157

Desert Pueblo Mobile Home Park
1302 W. Ajo Way
Tucson, AZ 85713
889-4130

Desert Shores RV Park
1067 W. Miracle Mile
Tucson, AZ 85705
622-4332

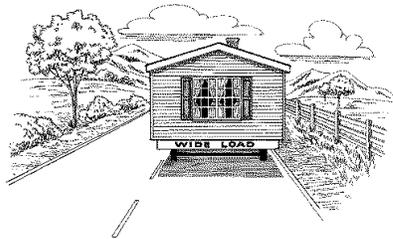
Far Horizons Trailer Village
555 Pantano Rd.
Tucson, AZ 85710
296-1234

Green Valley RV Resort
19001 S. Richfield Ave.
(I-19 Exit at Duval Mine Rd.)
Green Valley, AZ 85614
625-3900

McCormicks Travel Trailer Park
1045 W. Wetmore
Tucson, AZ 85705
887-5476

Rincon Country West RV Resort
4555 S. Mission Rd.
Tucson, AZ 85746
294-5608

Tucson Mountain RV Park
2059 W. Ajo Way
Tucson, AZ 85713
883-4485



Where can I eat near SAVAHCS?

Philly's Finest (Cheesesteaks, subs)
3760 S Park Ave.
Tucson, AZ 85713 - 5058
(520) 620-1776

Subway (Subs)
3792 S 16 Ave.
Tucson, AZ 85713 - 6079
(520) 620-1511

Taco Bell
780 W Ajo Way
Tucson, AZ 85713 - 6048
(520) 884-1243

Blimpies (Subs)
3820 S Palo Verde Rd
Tucson, AZ 85714 - 2075
(520) 295-9092

McDonald's
1001 E Benson Hwy
Tucson, AZ 85713 - 5028
(520) 628-1020

Micha's (Mexican)
2908 S 4 Ave.
Tucson, AZ 85713 - 4819
(520) 623-5307

MR. K's (BB-Q)
1830 S. Park Ave.
Tucson, AZ 85713
(520) 623-8775

Cora's Cafe
24 W Irvington Rd
Tucson, AZ 85714 - 3048
(520) 294-2146

Taqueria Pico de Gallo (Mexican)
2618 s. 6TH Ave.
South Tucson, AZ 85713-3410
(520) 623-8775



What grocery stores are near SAVAHCS?

Food City
2950 S 6 Ave.
Tucson, AZ 85713 - 4705
(520) 879-7760

Safeway
2000 E. Irvington Rd Tucson, AZ
(520) 889-2588

Fry's
2001 E Irvington Rd
Tucson, AZ 85706
(520) 294-7191







Phone Listings

Phone Listings

How To Contact Us

Our Mailing Address is:

**Southern Arizona VA Health Care System
3601 S. 6th Avenue
Tucson, Arizona 85723**

Our Business Telephone Number is:

(520) 792-1450 or Toll Free 1 800-470-8262

A

- Admission and Referral Center (520) 792-1450, Ext. 6570
- Transfer Nurse (520) 792-1450 Ext.1730
- American Indian Program (520) 629-4960
- Appointments (520) 792-1450 or 800-470-8262 Option 4
- Audiology (520) 629-1846

B

- Beneficiary Travel (520) 629-4713
- VA Benefits Office 1-800-827-1000
- Business Office & Patient Bills 520) 629-1812, Follow prompt

C

- Casa Grande Clinic (520) 792-1450 or 800-470-8262 Option 4
- Canteen (520) 629-1844
- CHAMPVA 1-800-733-8387
- Chaplain (520) 629-1843
- Community Based Outpatient Clinics (CBOCs)
Casa Grande, Sierra Vista, Yuma, Green Valley, Safford
(520) 792-1450 or 800-470-8262 Option 4

Compensation and Pension (520) 792-1450, Ext. 4662
Compensated Work Therapy (520) 792-1450, Ext. 6581
Customer Feedback <http://www.va.gov/irisinfo/>

D

Day Treatment Program (520) 792 1450, Ext. 4935
Dental (520) 629-1842
Diagnostics
 Imaging (520) 792-1450 or 800-470-8262 Option 7
 Lab (520) 792-1450 or 800-470-8262 Option 7

E

Education (520) 792-1450, Ext. 6516 or 5036
Eligibility and Enrollment Center (520) 792-1450, Option 6
Emergency Care 911
Employment (520) 629-1803
Evaluation & Brief Treatment PTSD Unit (EBTPU)
 (520) 792 1450, Ext. 1863
Eye Clinic (520) 792-1450, Ext. 6551 or 4606

F

Family Mental Health Program (520) 792 1450, Ext. 5455, 6350 or 5572
Fee Basis Unit (520) 792-1450, Ext. 6555, 6985
Financial Assessment (520) 792-1450, Option 6

G

Geriatrics & Rehabilitation Care(520) 792-1450,
 Ext. 5092 - Care Line Secretary
 Ext.5477 - Program Analyst
 Ext.5276 - Dept. Voice Messaging
 Ext.5399 - Alternate Extension
Green Valley Clinic (520) 792-1450 or 800-470-8262 Option 4

H

Homeless Program (HCHV) (520) 792 1450, Ext.†1839
Home Based Primary Care (520) 629-1838
Human Resources (520) 629-1803

I

Inpatient Detox (520) 792 1450, Ext. †1863

L

Laboratory test results (520) 792-1450 or 800-470-8262 Option 7

Life Support Unit (Emergency Care) (520) 792-1450, Option 7

After hours: 888-252-9970

Long Term Care Eligibility (520) 792-1450, Option 6

Lost and Found (520) 792-1450, Ext. 6387

M

Medicine & Primary Care Line (520) 629-1848

Medical Records (520) 792-1450, Ext. 6323,5018
or 6923

Mental Health Clinic (520) 792 1450, Ext. 5455, 6350 or 5572

Mental Health - Consult & Liaison Services (520) 792 1450, Ext. 1826

N

Nutrition and Food Service (520) 629-1841

P

Patient Advocate Office (520) 629-4924/4933

Patient Information (520) 792-1450, Ext. 0

Patient Service Center

(Appointment Scheduling) 520) 792-1450, Option 4

Patient Transportation (520) 629-4626 or 4713

Pharmacy (520) 792-1450, Option 5

Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation (520) 792-1450, Ext. 5483

Police (520) 629-1823

Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (520) 792-1450, Ext 6350

Primary Care Teams

Agave, Mesquite, Ocotillo, Palo Verde and Saguaro

(520) 792-1450, Option 4

Prosthetics (520) 629-1828

Psychiatric Inpatient Unit (520) 792 1450, Ext. 1863

Psychology (520) 792 1450, Ext. 1826

Public Affairs (520) 629-1819

R

Radiology appointments	(520) 792-1450, Ext. 1825
Radiology test results	(520) 792-1450 or 800-470-8262 Option 7
Release of Information	(520) 792-1450, Ext. 6323, 5018 or 6923
Research	(520) 629-1824

S

Safford Clinic	(520) 792-1450 or 800-470-8262 Option 4
Service Officers	
American Legion	(520) 792-1450, Ext. 6509
Masonic	(520) 792-1450, Ext. 6588
Ex-POW	(520) 792-1450, Ext. 6825
Blinded Veterans of America	(520) 792-1450, Ext. 6672
VFW	(520) 792-1450, Ext. 6635
Military Order of the Purple Heart	(520) 792-1450, Ext. 5250
DAV	(520) 792-1450, Ext. 6405
DAV Transportation	(520) 792-1450, Ext. 6565
Sierra Vista Clinic	(520) 792-1450 or 800-470-8262 Option 4
Substance Abuse Treatment Program	(520) 792-1450, Ext. 6581
Surgery Office	(520) 792-1450, Ext. 6905
SW Blind Rehab Center	(520) 792-1450, Ext. 4643

T

Telephone Linked Care (TLC)	(520) 792-1450 or 1 800-470-8262
DAV Transportation	(520) 792-1450, Ext. 6565
VA Patient Transportation	(520) 629-4626 or 4713
TRICARE	(520) 629-4728

U

Urgent Care	(520) 792-1450 or 1 800-470-8262 Option 7
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V

Volunteers	(520) 629-1822
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W

Women's Health Program	(520) 792-1450 or 800-470-8262 Option 4
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Y

Yuma Clinic	(520) 792-1450 or 1 800-470-8262 Option 4
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Outpatient Information

Pharmacy

Am I eligible for a pharmacy benefit?

Pharmacy provides medications ordered by VA providers for all eligible veterans.

Where is the pharmacy located?

In the first floor of Building 80

What are the pharmacy hours?

Monday through Friday 8:00 am - 6:00 pm,
Closed on Saturday, Sunday and holidays.

Do I pay a co-payment for prescriptions?

Non-service connected veterans pay a \$7.00 co-payment for a 30-day supply of medicine. There is no co-payment for veterans who are over 50% service connected. Veterans who are less than 50% service connected make the co-payments for prescriptions written for non-service connected problems.



How do I obtain pharmacy refills?

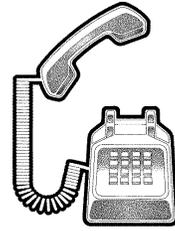
Medications are not automatically sent. You must order your refills. Refills come in the US Mail from Dallas, Texas so please order your medications at least 14 days BEFORE you run out of medicine. You may order earlier and the refill will be sent approximately 7 to 10 days before you should run out. Review all of your medications at each provider visit to ensure medications are renewed, since prescriptions may expire or run out of refills. ***Unfortunately, we are unable to refill your prescriptions at the Outpatient Pharmacy window. Please check your medicine regularly and order early. Do not present to the LSU (Life Support Unit) for routine refill requests. LSU will not refill your prescriptions.***

Outpatient
Information

Below you will find two ways to order your refills. You may choose the procedure that is best for you; you do not need to do both.

Order by Telephone

Prescriptions can be ordered through the automated refill line 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.



Use a touch-tone phone and follow the voice prompt. You will need your full 9-digit Social Security number and your prescription number(s).

- From Tucson call 629-1895. Toll free in Arizona call 1-800-470-8262
- Option 3.
- Enter your full Social Security number and press the # sign.
- Press 2 for Pharmacy Prescriptions
- Press 1 to refill the prescription or press 2 to check the status of a refill
- Enter the prescription number. (The number is in the upper left hand corner of your medicine bottle above your name. Enter the numbers only, not letters.) Then press the # sign.
- Repeat steps 4 and 5 for each prescription you need refilled.

or

Order by Mail

- If the medication has refills, sign and date the refill slip you get with each medication.
- Mail the refill slip to the pharmacy using the address label provided or address the envelope using the following address:

**Pharmacy Service
Southern Arizona VA Health Care System
3601 S. 6th Avenue
Tucson, Arizona 85723**

or

Drop off the slips at the pharmacy mail slot in the Pharmacy lobby.

If you lose your refill slip write your name, Social Security Number and the medicines you need on a piece of paper. Your prescription refills will be mailed to you when due. Please note: do not send refill slips to your provider, they need to go to the pharmacy.

What if I have a question or a problem and I need to speak to a pharmacy employee?

Please see next section for how to reach Telephone Linked Care (TLC) Pharmacy.

Telephone Linked Care (TLC)

Telephone Linked Care (TLC) is a service that is offered to veterans that allows them to call over the telephone with their health concerns —whether it is urgent, non-urgent, or just seeking health information it provides the link between the veteran and the SAVAHCS. Trained patient service assistants and registered nurses answer the calls.

When can I reach TLC Nursing?

This service is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. During administrative hours (8 am-4 pm Monday through Friday excluding holidays) the calls are answered by the SAVAHCS TLC staff. During non-administrative hours and the holidays, trained telecare nurses answer the calls. The after hour call service is currently through the Dallas VA.



How do I get in touch with TLC Nursing?

From Tucson 792-1450 (TLC is option #7)

Outside Tucson: 1-800-470-8262 (TLC is option #7)

After hour service: 1-888-252-9970

For Emergencies call -911

Telephone Linked Care [TLC] PHARMACY

What do I do if I have a question about or a problem with a prescription refill or my medication? How do I speak to a pharmacy employee?

Call 792-1450 and press option 5. Toll free in Arizona 1-800-470-8262 option 5.

TLC Pharmacy is available Monday through Friday 8 am. to 4pm.

When should I call TLC Pharmacy?

If there are no refills remaining on your prescription or the prescription has expired and you will run out of medication prior to your next provider appointment.

Unless otherwise instructed by your provider, renewal requests for narcotic medications should be requested through TLC Pharmacy 10-14 days before they are due.

Patient Service Center

What is the Patient Service Center?

The Patient Service Center is a central scheduling unit for routine non-urgent appointments.

How do I reach the Patient Service Center?

By calling 792-1450 and pressing Option 4, or long distance in Arizona 800-470-8262 Option 4.

What can the Patient Service Center do for me?

You can cancel or verify your pending appointments and verify or change your address.



Medicine and Primary Care

SAVAHCS has various primary care teams. Some are on the main campus in Tucson, others are around the state. For locations outside of Tucson please see section *Community Outpatient Based Clinics (CBOCs)*. You can think of these teams as individual doctor's offices consisting of many members helping to coordinate your care. You will be assigned to one of these teams, and to a primary care provider. The person responsible for directing your care is your *Primary Care Provider*. This person could be either a physician or a nurse practitioner. He or she is responsible for oversight of your total health care performing physical exams, ordering appropriate testing, medications, and consulting specialists. You can think of this person as your "doctor", we refer to them as "providers".



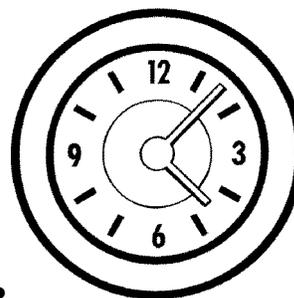
Each team consists of many members who help your primary care physician coordinate your care. These include nurses, a dietician, a social worker, clinical pharmacists, and a psychologist.

There are many advantages to the team approach including:

- Individualized care.
- All your care needs are met under one roof.
- You and your team working together to meet your health care needs.
- One provider for your general clinic appointments.
- Medical specialties available through referral by primary care providers
- Coordination of care between inpatient and outpatient settings

Primary Care teams and their locations are:

- Mesquite Second floor, building 80
- Palo Verde First floor, building 80
- Saguaro Second floor, building 80
- Ocotillo First floor, building 80
- Agave Building 2, first floor, North
- Women’s Health First floor, building 80
- Geriatric Primary Care Building 60, East wing



What are the hours of operation for each team?

Monday - Friday, 8:00 am to 12:00 pm,
1:00 pm to 4:00 pm (except Federal Holidays)

How do I get a message to my primary care provider?

Via TELEPHONE LINKED CARE or TLC. Please see separate section. The staff of TLC will forward your message to your primary care provider.

How do I get an urgent care appointment with my provider?

Urgent care appointments are available at SAVAHCS. You need to contact TLC with your health care questions and concerns. The nurses will discuss your symptoms with you, and make you an appointment if appropriate.

Is emergency care available?

Yes, the Life Support Unit (or LSU) handles emergencies. They are open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. If you have an emergency, call 9-1-1. ***You DO NOT need an appointment to be seen for an emergency in LSU.*** They are temporarily located in Building 2.

Can I just walk in and see my provider?

The primary care teams do not accommodate “walk in” patients. You must call TLC to schedule a visit for an urgent care need. Scheduling is planned to provide an appointment within 48 hours for urgent conditions.

How do I cancel an appointment?

If you know that you cannot keep your appointment, please call 792-1450 option 4 (or long distance in Arizona 800-470-8262 option 4) at least 24 hours in advance. This allows us to give your appointment to another veteran in need.

How do I make an appointment?

For routine non-urgent appointments you call the Patient Service Center 792-1450 option 4 [or long distance in Arizona 800-470-8262 option 4]. For urgent care you must call TLC [telephone linked care] 792-1450 option 7 [or long distance in Arizona 800-470-8262 option 7]

What if I miss an appointment?

You must call the Patient Service Center and schedule another appointment.

What if I am late to my appointment?

If you are late for your appointment-you may be rescheduled. Please arrive 15-30 minutes prior to your appointment to allow time for the nursing staff to take your blood pressure and elicit other information needed before seeing your provider.

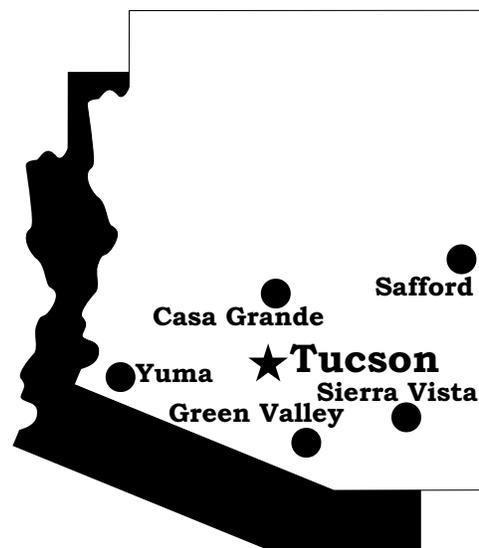
Community Based Outpatient Clinics (CBOC)

What is a CBOC?

CBOCs are primary care teams that exist around Southern Arizona to serve our veterans who don't live in Tucson. Casa Grande, Green Valley, Safford, Sierra Vista, and Yuma, Arizona are the current sites of CBOCs. A description of each CBOC and the services they offer follow.

What if I need to see a specialist and I'm assigned to a CBOC?

Because services are primary care based, if you are assigned to one a CBOC you will likely need to come to SAVAHCS in Tucson for specialty appointments.



What if I have to come to Tucson for care, how do I get there? What if I have to stay overnight?

Transportation might be available to Tucson; please contact patient travel at 1 800-470-8262 Ext. 6565 for details. If you have to stay overnight for a procedure or for an appointment Temporary Lodging will provide a place for patients to stay as well as meals. Please see the *Temporary Lodging* section at the beginning of the book.

What if I need urgent care and I'm assigned to a CBOC?

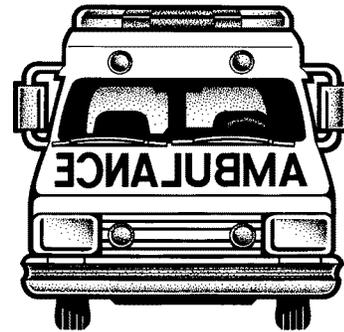
No walk in appointments are available through CBOCs. For appointments, call telephone Linked Care (TLC) at the Southern Arizona VA Health Care System (SA-VAHCS) (520) 792-1450 or 1-800-470-8262.

What are CBOC hours?

All CBOCs are open Monday through Friday 8:00 am- 4:30 pm except Thursday afternoons from 12-4 pm they are closed, and Federal Holidays

Is emergency care available at CBOCs?

Emergency care is not available at the CBOCs. For emergencies call 911.



What services are provided at the CBOCs?

The following are services that you can receive at our CBOCs:

- Health screening, promotion and maintenance
- Education
- Management of acute and chronic diseases
- Women's health
- Optometry services * **
- Mental health services
- Immunizations/skin testing
- Gynecological exams
- Dressing changes
- Dermatologic procedures
- Laboratory services by appointment only
- Radiology services **

* *Not offered at the Safford CBOC*

** *Not offered at the Green Valley CBOC*

Where do I get blood drawn if I belong to a CBOC?

Blood draws are by appointment only and are done on-site at each CBOC.

What are the addresses for the CBOCs? What areas do they serve?

Casa Grande

Plaza del Sol
Suites H & I
900 E. Florence Blvd.
Casa Grande, AZ.

Areas Served: *Pinal county and outlying areas*

Yuma

2555 E. Gila Ridge Road
Yuma AZ

Areas Served: *The counties of Yuma, Pima, La Paz and surrounding counties*

Sierra Vista

Raymond W. Bliss Army Health Center
Building 45006
Ft. Huachuca, AZ 85613

Areas Served: *Southeastern Arizona*

Safford

Co-located with Bureau of Land Management.
711 South 14th Avenue
Safford, AZ

Areas served: *Graham, Greenlee, Northern Cochise Counties of Arizona, and Hidalgo County, New Mexico*

Green Valley

380 W. Hermosa Drive, #140
Green Valley, AZ

Areas served: *Santa Cruz and southern Pima counties*

Specialty Care

What specialties are available at SAVAHCS?

- AIDS Program
- Allergy/Immunology
- Angioplasty, Cardiac Catheterization
- Cardiology
- Cardiology Center of Excellence
- Dermatology
- Endocrinology
- Gastroenterology (GI)
- Hematology/Oncology
- Infectious Disease
- Life Support Unit/Urgent Care
- Neurology
- Nephrology
- Pulmonary
- Valley Fever
- Women's Health Program

How do I get an appointment with a specialist?

Your primary care provider must refer you to a specialist. These referrals are called “consults”.

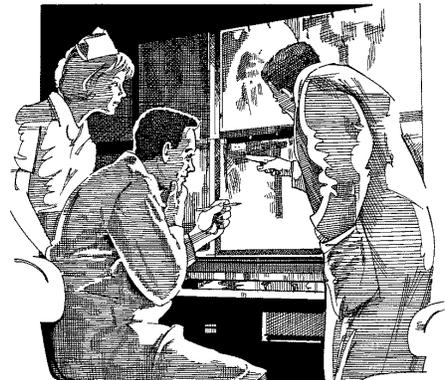
How do I check the status of my consult?

Call 792-1450 and press Option 4. For long distance in Arizona 1-800-470-8262 and press Option 4.

Diagnostic Medicine, Laboratory and Radiology

Where is Diagnostic Medicine?

Outpatient laboratory shares a lobby with Outpatient X-ray in Building 80 on the first floor.



What are Diagnostic Medicine's hours?

- Radiology 8:00 am - 4:30 pm Monday through Friday
- Laboratory 7:30 am - 4:30 pm Monday through Friday

Do I have to have an appointment to get an X-ray or a laboratory test?

No, patients are served on a first come first served basis. You must sign in for the particular area in which you need testing.

How do I obtain results of my diagnostic tests?

By calling Telephone Linked Care [TLC] at 792-1450, option 7 or long distance in Arizona 1-800-470-8262, option 7.

Do I need a written order for my laboratory tests or X-rays?

No, all the orders are electronic and should be entered by your provider before you reach Diagnostic Medicine.

Social Work

Do I have a social worker?

Yes, all eligible veterans have access to a clinical social worker who can assist them with their needs. Each primary care team has a clinical social worker as a member of that team.



Professional clinical social workers have special training to help you with various aspects of your life and health care needs.

These include:

- Assisting patients in crisis [for example shelter, food, or emotional crises]
- Supporting patients and their families through issues involving death and dying
- Supporting patients in learning about and accepting new or serious medical diagnoses
- Referring patients to community or VA support and resources

- Helping patients understand and complete VA documents (for example advanced directives or aid and attendance applications)
- Helping patients understand VA and community disability resources
- Supporting patient rights to receive or refuse health care treatment
- Education and counseling on long term care and end of life issues
- Individual, family, and group counseling
- Consultation with other health care providers
- Social work case management for patients with multiple health and social needs
- Helping patients interpret and understand VA policies and procedures

How can I see a social worker?

There are over 30 professional clinical social workers employed throughout SAVAHCS. These social workers cover a wide range of primary and specialty patient needs as well as our community based outpatient clinics. Any VA staff member can assist you in identifying a social worker who can assist you with your particular needs. Ask your care team for the name of the social worker assigned to that area.

Women's Veterans Programs

The Women's Health Program at SAVAHCS is a collaborative practice designed to provide gender specific comprehensive medical care. The incorporation of Primary Care, Internal Medicine, Gynecology, Nurse Practitioners, Psychology, Social Work, Pharmacy, Dietary, and other ancillary members, allows female veterans to receive care in a coordinated and consistent manner. The team of physicians, nurse practitioners and nurses have the immediate consultation of other members. The goal is seamless medical care to meet the special needs of females. Female providers are available for the comfort of our women veterans.

Within the Women's Health Program, comprehensive preventative services, primary care, and gynecology are available at any one patient visit. Office gynecology procedures are readily accommodated.

Is prenatal care available at SAVAHCS?

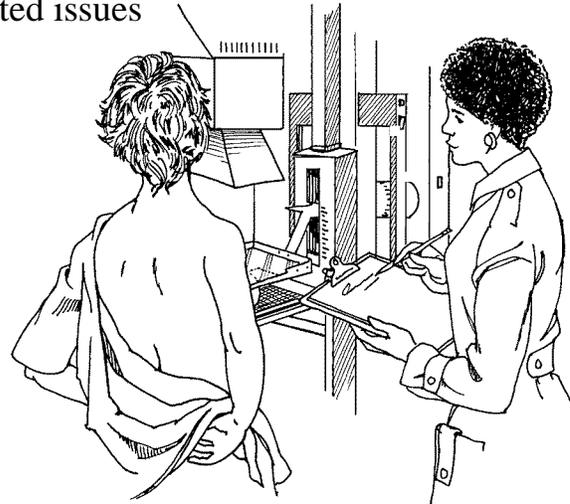
Prenatal care and infertility office services are the newest addition to the team. Scheduling is flexible allowing the patient ready access to providers.

Is obstetric care available at SAVAHCS?

At the present time all deliveries are performed at community hospitals but paid for by SAVAHCS.

What services are offered in Women's Health?

- Management of chronic disease
- Immunizations
- Counseling
- Gynecological examinations and related issues
- Health promotion
- Mammography
- Hormone therapy
- Birth control
- Gynecological surgery
- Basic Infertility
- Pregnancy
- Female Urology
- Gynecology Oncology
- Office gynecology procedures



Ophthalmology and Optometry Specialties (Eye Clinic)

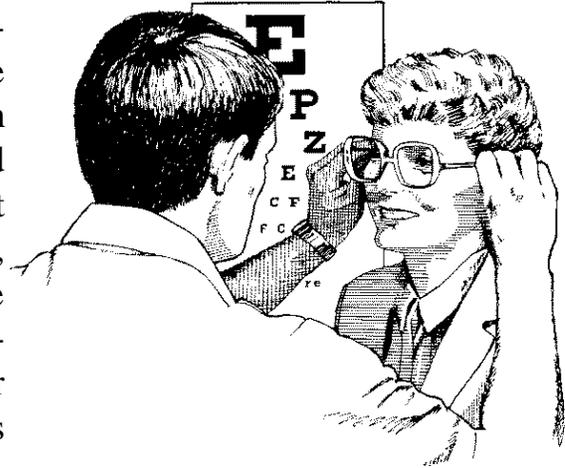
Description of Program: The mission of the Eye Clinics is to provide high quality Ophthalmology and Optometry diagnostic testing, education and general eye care for veterans in a timely and compassionate manner. Our goal is to treat each patient with respect and dignity. The Eye Clinics provide a full range of Ophthalmology and Optometry services, such as Cataract, Occuloplastics, Retinal, Corneal, Glaucoma, and Neuromuscular diseases. The Eye Clinics is affiliated with the University Of Arizona College Of Medicine and the Southern California College of Optometry. The Eye Clinics also provides optometric services at our (CBOC) community based outreach clinics in Casa Grande and Sierra Vista.

The Eye Clinics integrates the Strategic and Operational Plans of the Surgical Care Line, the Southern Arizona VA Health Care System and the Veterans Health Administration.

Hours of Operation: Monday through Friday, 7:30 am to 4:30 pm (except Federal Holidays).

Location: 2nd floor of Building 80

Other Pertinent Information: Patients requiring appointments in the Eye Clinics must be referred by their Primary Care Provider through the use of the Computerized Patient Record System (CPRS), which is an electronic consult tracking system. Under certain circumstances, providers may refer their patient to the Eye Clinic by communicating directly with the optometrist or the ophthalmologist. The health or eye technician can then schedule the patient as an add-on patient in the appropriate clinic



Audiology

Description of Program: The Audiology Clinic provides a full range of audiologic services to eligible veterans, including: hearing evaluations, hearing aid evaluations, hearing aid fittings, hearing aid repairs, Auditory Brainstem Response (ABR) evaluations, Electronystagmography (ENG) evaluations, and compensation and pension (C&P) examinations.



Hours of Operation: Office hours: Monday through Friday 8:00am thru 4:30 pm except Federal Holidays. Office visits: Monday through Saturday by appointment only (except Federal Holidays).

Eligibility: Multiple criteria. Please contact eligibility office to establish eligibility for services.

American Indian Program

Description of Program: A full time registered nurse for hospitalized and outpatient American Indian people served by the VA. This service includes weekly reservation trips; home visits and assistance with coordinating benefits counseling for processing claims applications. A Traditional Counselor is also available.

Hours of Operation: Office hours vary, a message can be left for the nurse 24 hours a day, 7 days a week at 520 446-0025 (except Federal Holidays).

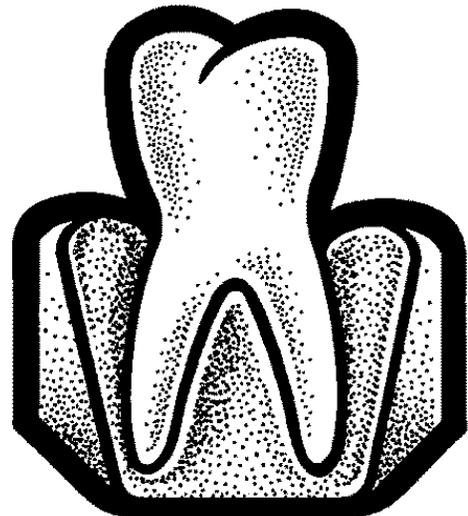
Dental Service

Description of Program: All facets of dental treatment provided to eligible veterans. Treatment can include preventative cleanings, oral cancer screenings, x-ray, restorative care and prosthetics.

Hours of Operation: Monday through Friday, 7:30 am to 4:30pm, (except Federal Holidays).

Eligibility: The eligibility laws for dental are complex. The best course of action would be to contact the Eligibility & Enrollment Center.

Co-Pay: There is a co-pay for NSC patients who meet the criteria to be seen due to a particular medical condition.



Geriatrics Rehabilitation Care Line

The Geriatric Rehabilitation Care Line focuses on the aging veteran whose health care needs cross the continuum of services of primary care, specialty care, rehabilitation and extended care. The GRCL includes three main programs:

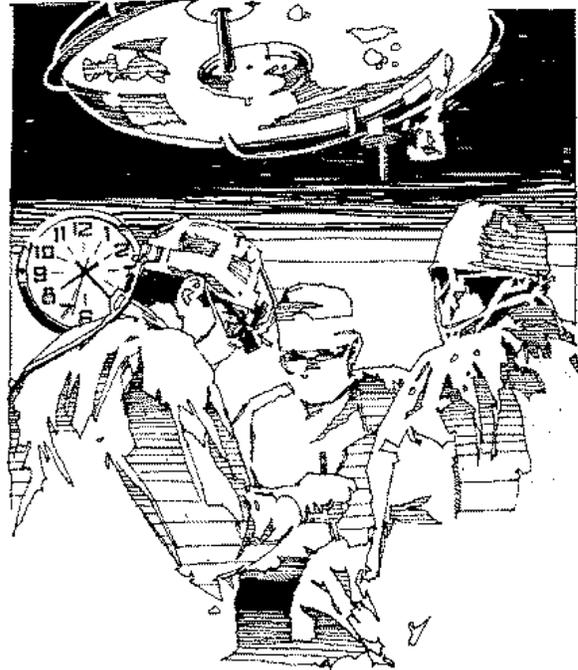
- Southwest Blind Rehabilitation Center (SWBRC)
- Home Based Primary Care (HBPC)
- Geriatric Rehabilitation Center (GRC)

The GRC has seven inpatient sub-programs as well as outpatient programs.

Surgical Care Line

Description of Program: The SAVAHCS offers a variety of surgical specialty services in treating our veteran patients. Primary Care providers must refer their patients to one of our surgical care specialties in order for them to receive care. The Surgical Care Team includes the services of surgeons, physician assistants, nurse practitioners, nurses, and licensed practical nurses. The surgery specialties within the Surgical Care Line are:

- Cardiothoracic
- Ear, Nose, and Throat
- General Surgery
- Oncology
- Gynecology
- Neurosurgery
- Ophthalmology
- Optometry
- Orthopedics
- Podiatry
- Urology
- Vascular Surgery



Mental Health

The MHCL will work with other care lines within the Medical Center to provide quality mental health services. This can be accomplished by working with Primary Care providers, as consultants for patients assigned to other care lines for the group of patients who identify mental health issues as their primary health care needs. These interventions may be psychosocial or medical. Special eligibility and co-payments may exist for these services.

Agave Primary Care Clinic

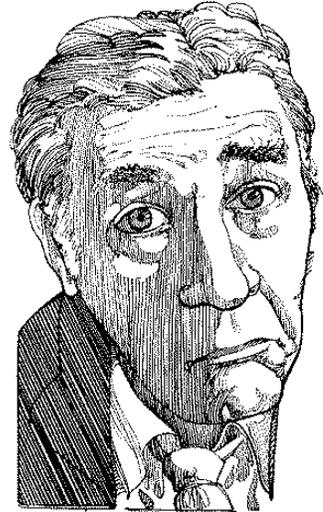
Description of Program: The Agave Primary Care Clinic provides primary care for veterans with Serious Mental Illness, and is designed to provide this special population with consolidated health care that includes case coordination. The clinic serves patients with Posttraumatic Stress Disorder, Bi-Polar Disorder, Schizophrenia, and Major Depression.

Mental Health Clinics (MHC)

Description of Program: The MHC provides outpatient mental health services for SAVAHCS patients. The Clinic is made up of four diagnostically grouped teams: The General Mood Team, the PTSD Clinical Team, the Psychosis Team, and the Geropsychiatric Team. The goal of the MHC is to address the multiple needs of mental health patients, providing not only medications but also individual, family, and group therapy, as well as assistance in dealing with crisis and social issues.

Other Psychiatric Services Offered at SAVAHCS:

- Family Mental Health Program
- Post Traumatic Stress Disorder Clinical Team (PCT)
- Day Treatment Program
- Substance Abuse Treatment Program (SATP)
- Health Care for Homeless Veterans (HCHV)
- Compensated Work Therapy (CWT)
- Psychological Assessment
- Health Psychology Clinic
- Acute Psychiatric Inpatient Care
- Inpatient Detox
- Evaluation & Brief Treatment PTSD



For additional information on any of these programs, please contact Mental Health at (520) 792 1450, Ext. 5455, 6350 or 5572.

Patient Safety

Safety in the clinic-you can make a big difference.

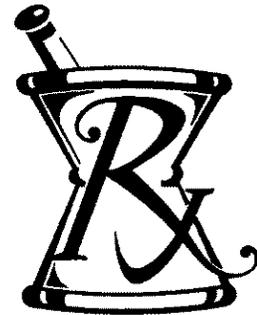
Here are some ways to help you remain safe while you are a patient in the clinic:

- Tell the doctor about your complete medical history, including past illnesses, injuries, hospitalizations, and surgeries. Your doctor will also want to know what kinds of medical problems run in your family.
- Tell the doctor about any previous allergies or medication reactions.
- Bring in all the medicine bottles of any prescription drugs, over-the counter medications, herbs, vitamins and supplements.
- Find out what the provider thinks your diagnosis may be and why.
- Ask about the tests being done: what are they for and what will they show? Get written information and brochures.
- If the provider or staff uses words you don't understand ask for explanation/s.

- Know when you are supposed to go back for a follow-up visit.
- Bring a friend/family member with you if you think you will need help to ask questions or understand what the provider will tell you.
- Understand all medical and consent forms before you sign them.
- Don't leave the clinic without expressing your concerns and getting your questions answered.
- Call the nurse or provider back if you get home and realize that you still have questions.
- Get another opinion if you remain unsure about the nature of your illness and the best treatment.

Be clear about the medications that are ordered for you.

- What are they?
- What do they do?
- What are the possible side effects?
- When should you report side effects?
- What is the dose?
- How precisely should you take the medication [for example by mouth?]
- How many hours apart should the doses be?
- Can you take different medications at the same time or not?
- For how long a period should the medication be taken?
- At the back of this book space is available for you to list your medications.



REMINDER - Ask the provider to write on the bottle the reason for each medication (e.g., “for blood pressure”). Make sure you can read the provider prescription- if not, ask for more information and to have the prescription rewritten if necessary.

AT THE PHARMACY:

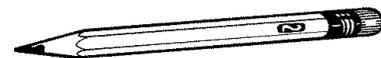
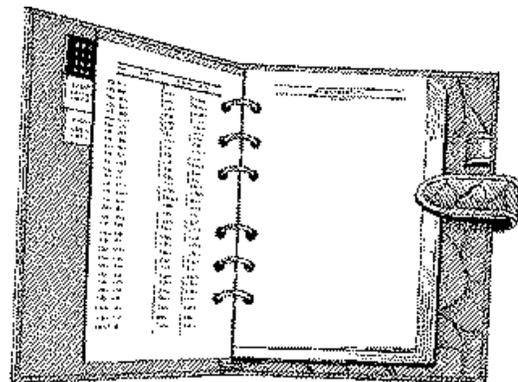
If the name of the medicine on the bottle doesn't sound like what the provider told you at the visit or what you read on a prescription, ask the pharmacist to double check. ***Do not assume you are getting another brand or the generic of the same drug.***

- When you get a refill on your usual medication-look at the pill or liquid. Does it look the same as before? ***Ask if different!***
- Make sure you understand all the directions on the bottle on how to take the medication.
- For liquid medications, ask the pharmacist about the right device to deliver the right dose.
- Obtain a written list of possible side effects.

- Bring a friend/family member to the pharmacy with you if you will need help understanding instructions about medications or asking questions.
- Do not leave the pharmacy area without having your concerns addressed and questions answered.
- Call the pharmacist if you have medication concerns and questions after you leave the pharmacy.

AT HOME:

- Throw away all outdated medication and any medication left over after you have finished the course of medication you were prescribed.
- Keep all medication out of the reach of children. Ladies, watch your purses—children love to investigate purses and take what mom or grandma is taking.
- Create a system to remind you what medications to take at what times.
- Follow your doctor’s advice on diet and activity levels with your particular medication.
- When prescribed an antibiotic, finish the entire prescription even if you feel better before the antibiotic is used up.
- If needed, get someone to remind you or help you to take your medications correctly.
- Call your doctor if you experience any significant side effects or new and different symptoms.
- Call your provider with any concerns or questions.
- Follow-up with the provider as recommended.
- Keep track of your medical history, all medications and supplements you are taking and any reactions or side effects you’ve experienced. (Keep the patient education handbook updated and have a ready reference).



PROHIBITED ITEMS:

VA regulations require that we take every precaution to protect the health and welfare of all patients. Therefore, we are unable to allow you to bring the following items:

- Guns or other weapons (includes all knives, straight-edge razors, etc.)
- Ammunition

- Alcohol
- Narcotics or drugs
- Cellular phones - in posted areas only (they can interfere with the safe operation of medical equipment and computers)
- Electrical appliances, blankets, heating pads, fans and space heaters. If you wish to bring a radio, it must be checked out for safety hazards.



Inpatient Information

Inpatient Information

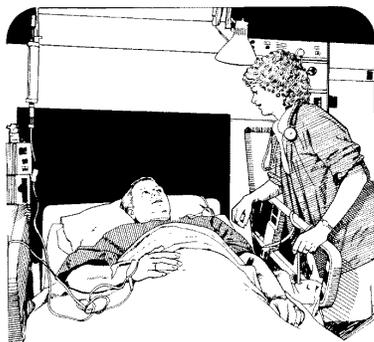
The information provided in this section will be helpful to you and your family in the event you are admitted for inpatient care at our facility.

What are the guidelines for visiting inpatients?

Visiting hours are 8:00 am to 8:00 pm

Guidelines:

Patients in the intensive care units and those who are seriously ill in other parts of the Medical Center may only have adult visitors who are members of the patient's immediate family.



Other adult visitors to the seriously ill require permission from the nurses.

Two visitors may visit at a time. Please be courteous of other patients and refrain from making noise in patient care areas and corridors.

Patient Privacy:

To respect patient privacy and confidentiality a visitor may be asked to leave the room during a treatment or during discussion with health care providers.

Infection Control:

Because of infection control concerns, babies and children under age fifteen may not visit inpatients in the medical and surgical areas. All children must be accompanied by an adult. Nurses may grant exceptions when the visit would be therapeutic to the patient.

Animals:

Service animals and animals involved with formal programs sponsoring animal assisted therapy or activities will be allowed. The person accompanying the animal must have a VA identification badge. Proof of vaccination is required. In some circumstances, a patient's pet may be permitted a brief visit if the pet's owner is an inpatient and is not expected to live.

**What items are prohibited at the Medical Center?**

See Prohibited Items section in the Outpatient chapter.

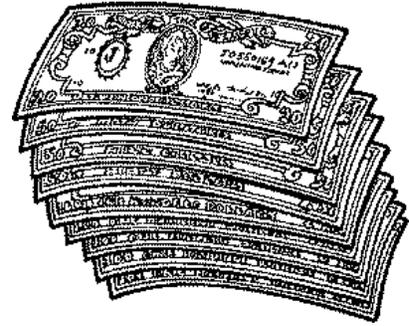
What should I bring with me if I am admitted to the Medical Center?

In all cases, bring only the items necessary for your health care. Most rooms have a small closet for clothing. Any valuables should be checked with staff when you are admitted or lodged. Do not keep more than \$5 pocket money in your room.

Please bring with you:

- A list of all current medications and dosages (DO NOT bring the actual medications)
- Insurance card or other insurance information
- Spouse's social security number
- Advanced Directives/Living will
- Personal hygiene items such as a toothbrush, toothpaste, comb, deodorant, etc.

To deposit additional funds, see the agent cashier in Building 80, first floor. After 4:20 pm and on weekends and holidays the Night Administrator in the Emergency Room will deposit your funds.



The Medical Center furnishes pajamas and robes for inpatients and 23-hour stays. Have family members take excess clothing and items of value home. If you bring extra clothing and baggage, you will be asked to store them in the clothing room.

Smoking Guidelines

Smoking is not permitted inside any VA facilities. SAVAHCS has outdoor smoking shelters on grounds. Oxygen tanks are not allowed in shelters, as they are fire risk.

Telephone Communication at the Medical Center

Bedside telephones are located in the inpatient rooms. Intensive Care unit beds and the Hotel rooms do not have bedside telephones.



To call in, your family and friends can reach you directly by dialing (520) 792-1450 or 800-470-8262 followed by your four-digit telephone extension. Extensions are posted in your room or on your telephone. The VA does not provide toll free calls to contact patients.

To make a *local call*, dial 9, followed by the number you wish to call.

To make a *long distance call*, collect, or credit card call:

Dial 9, and then follow the instructions on your calling card

OR

Dial zero, the operator will connect you to an AT&T operator

For additional assistance, dial “0” for the Medical Center Director.

Cell phones, wireless laptops, and two-way radios

Electronic devices transmit radio signals to patient monitors and can interfere with patient care. To keep our patients safe, these devices must be completely turned off on the second and third floors of Building 2. These devices transmit signals even

when no call is taking place or when they are in silent mode.

Ethical Concerns

Patients, families, and staff may request assistance from the Ethics Committee in reviewing ethical issues involved in health care decisions. Consults may be requested by staff through the electronic patient record. Urgent consults may be placed with the hospital operator.

Patient Education

Patient Education and instruction occurs throughout SAVAHCS by a variety of health care professionals. Patient education is considered vital to health and well-being. As an individual who requires medical services knowledge about and involvement in your health care aid you and your family in making important health care decisions. There is a Patient Educator available to all patients, family, and staff. Her name is *Janet Sommers*. She can be reached at extension 5036. She can provide education on a variety of health information for outpatients and those admitted to the hospital. Please see information regarding My HealtheVet on page 10.



Patient Education Resource Center (PERC)

The PERC is a place where patients and their families can go to find information about medical and health topics. In the PERC you will find:

- Books, pamphlets, and brochures
- Videos
- Computer resources (online access for anything such as e-mail, as well as a MY HealtheVet computer to access personal health information)



Where is the PERC?

The PERC is located in Building 2, in room N281. The easiest way to find the PERC is to take the main elevator in Building 2 to the second floor. The PERC is located in then north wing, past the surgery clinic waiting area.

**Patient
Education**

How do I get information from the PERC?

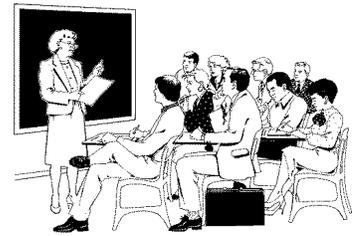
- Visit the PERC. It's open from 8 AM to 4:30 PM, Monday to Friday.
- Ask your doctor or nurse to order information from the PERC.
- Call us at 792-1450, extension 6516
- Send your questions by email at address azevedo@tucson.va.gov

Will you find answers to all your medical and health questions in the PERC?

The PERC cannot take the place of information provided by your doctor or nurse. Information in the PERC may help you better understand what they have told you. You should, of course, always discuss with them any questions you may have about what you have read or seen. A staff person can also tell you if material is available for checkout at the public library, or can be purchased at the bookstore.

Group Health Classes

All classes are open to veterans and their families who have any of the health problems listed below, whether it is a new diagnosis or a long-standing medical condition.



How to enroll for Diabetes Education, Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease, or Congestive Heart Failure Classes:

Speak with a member of your Primary Care Team. Call Patient Education Coordinator - Janet Sommers RN CDE at (520) 792-1450, Ext. 5036.

Diabetes Education Classes:

5 class series, every Thursday afternoon from 1 pm to 3 pm in classroom S301, building 2, 3rd floor. Topics include:

1. Basic Facts, Disease Process & Coping with chronic disease
 2. Medical Nutrition Therapy Part I (Sugars, Carbohydrates & Label reading),
 3. Medical Nutrition Therapy Part II (Fats, Protein, Weight management & label reading)
 4. Exercise & Medications
 5. Long Term complications, Sick Day management, Foot care & exam.
- Classes are taught by nurses, dietitians, pharmacists, a physical therapist, and a psychologist. Time is coordinated so that questions can be addressed when needed. Family members are encouraged to accompany the individual with Diabetes. Printed educational materials are provided at each class.

Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) Education Classes:

Two class series, every 1st and 3rd Friday afternoon from 1 pm to 3 pm in classroom S301, building 2, 3rd floor. Topics include:

1. What is COPD, how is it treated, steps toward control.
2. Relaxation/Exercise/Mobility.
3. Nutrition especially for those with Lung Disease.
4. Medications and COPD.
5. Breathing techniques & oxygen safety.
6. Classes are taught by a respiratory therapist, pharmacists, a dietitian, and nurses.

There is ample opportunity to ask questions, practice breathing techniques, and demonstrate correct use of inhalers. Family members are encouraged to accompany the individual with COPD. Printed educational materials will be provided.

Heart Disease and Heart Failure Education Classes:

2 class series, every 1st & 2nd Wednesday afternoon from 1 pm to 3 pm in Patio conference room. Topics include:

1. Basic heart disease information
2. diagnosis, treatment, and self management for heart disease
3. Nutrition and heart disease
4. Medications used to treat heart disease

Classes are taught by pharmacists, dietitians, and nurses with oversight from Nurse Practitioner from Cardiology. Time will be available to answer questions in the group setting or on an individual basis with each of the professionals present at the last session. Family members are welcome and encouraged to attend. Printed educational materials will be available.

Weight Management Education Class:

One class, every 4th Monday afternoon from 1 pm to 4 pm in the Patio Conference Room. Topics include:

1. Basic Healthy Weight reduction.
 2. Physical activity.
 3. Effects of overweight/obesity on diabetes, high blood pressure & heart disease.
 4. Guidance and recommendations for weight loss.
- A Registered Dietitian with special certification in weight management

teaches this class. Family members are encouraged to attend and there is time set aside for questions. Printed patient education material is provided.

How to enroll:

Your provider must request you be enrolled. Speak with your provider if you are interested. Questions may be directed toward **Sheila Sedig RD MS** at (520) 792-1450, Ext. 4659.

Smoking Cessation Group:

Four class sessions, starting the 1st Wednesday of each month, from 1 pm to 2:30 pm in the classroom S301, building 2, 3rd floor. Topics include:

1. Effects of tobacco use on health.
2. Information on various methods to stop using tobacco.
3. Group discussion about smoking/tobacco addiction.
4. Medications used in the treatment of tobacco addiction.

Classes are lead by **Dr. Robert Hall**. Nurse Practitioner Carol Chavez assesses patients for the best choice in medication to aid in smoking cessation. Time is made available for questions. Family members are encouraged to attend in support of the patient.

How to enroll:

Your Primary Care Provider or team nurse must request enrollment. Speak with your primary care team members if you are interested.

Amenities & Additional Services

A retail store and coffee shop are open to both patients and visitors and are located in Building 80. The Canteen [a cafeteria] is located in Building 3, off of the rose garden.

Hours

Retail Store Hours are Monday through Friday 8 am to 3:30 pm.

Canteen Hours are Monday through Friday, 7:00 am to 1:30 pm.

Coffee Bar Hours are Monday through Friday 7:00 am to 3:00 pm

Vending machines are available in the following locations:

Building 80, in coffee shop area

Building 2, 3rd Floor, 3E/3N waiting room

Building 57, 2nd Floor, Elevator lobby/ICU waiting room

Building 2, 2nd Floor, 2S waiting room

Building 3, next to the cafeteria

Building 60, adjacent to patient cafeteria

Building 30, Blind Rehab Center, 1st floor near patient cafeteria

Optical Shop

You can purchase any type of prescription eyewear at competitive pricing.

The Optical Shop is located inside the canteen Retail Store, and is open from 8am to 3:30 pm [closed for lunch from 12 pm to 12:30 pm, The Optical shop does not take insurance.

To reach the Optical Shop please call 838-3636 or 792-1450 Ext. 3636

Chaplains

Chaplains are available for patients and their families to provide assistance during hospital stays. Pastoral support consists of spiritual/pastoral counseling, grief and bereavement support, prayer, sacramental care, and religious support. Chaplains from Roman Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish faith groups are on staff. Regardless of your religious affiliation, the chaplains can provide spiritual and/or pastoral support while assisting you in making contact with your own religious affiliation. Chaplain Service has contacts with religious communities throughout Southern Arizona. Chaplains are available weekdays 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 pm., Saturdays 8:30 am to 12:30 pm. If you require a chaplain after hours the hospital operator can page the on-call chap-

**Amenities &
Additional Services**

lain or directly 629-1843. You may also ask your nurse or unit coordinator.

Worship Services Available Sundays:

Catholic Mass 8:45 am
Protestant Service 10:00 am
Services are located in the
Patio Conference Room/Chapel



Tuesday: Prayer Group, 7:30 am to 7:45 am, Patio Conference Room/Chapel

Meditation/Prayer Rooms: If you are looking for a quiet place to pray or meditate, there is a meditation room located next to the Chapel on the Rose Garden and one in Building 60. The meditation rooms are opened 24 hours a day and are available to anyone on the campus.

What other services are available?

Library

The Patient Education Resource Center [or PERC] is dedicated to providing current health care information to patients and their families. Books, videos, and pamphlets are available as well. The library is located in Building 2, in room N281 and is open Monday through Friday from 8:00 am to 4:30 pm. To contact the PERC you may call ext. 6516. For more complete information please see the “Patient Education” section.

End of Life Care Planning

Once a patient has a condition defined by their physician, as terminal, the special implications of this prognosis will be discussed with the patient or surrogate. Every effort will be made to ensure that this discussion is a sensitive and compassionate review of the difficult realities of the prognosis. Although each patient admitted to this facility is queried about their interest in Advanced Directives and assisted in completing them if so desired, the discussion concerning end of life care will include an additional review of Advanced Directive options.

Palliative care in addition to psychosocial and/or spiritual counseling will be offered. If death is imminent the patient and family may be offered use of the hospice suite. This suite offers a home like atmosphere, while still maintaining the ability to provide around the clock nursing care to the dying patient and their family. Should you have any questions or concerns about end of life care, ask to speak to a social worker.

Benefits



VA Health Care and the Medical Benefits Package

One of the most visible of all Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) benefits is health care. VA has about 1,300 care facilities, including 163 hospitals, 850 ambulatory care and community-based outpatient clinics, 206 counseling centers, 137 nursing homes and 43 domiciliary facilities. Due to technology and changes in national and VA health care trends, VA has evolved from a hospital-based system to a primarily outpatient-focused system over the past five years. With 25,000 fewer employees, VA provided care to one million more veterans in 2001 than in 1995.

Medical Benefits Package

In October 1996, Congress passed Public Law 104-262, the Veterans' Health Care Eligibility Reform Act of 1996. This legislation paved the way for creation of a Medical Benefits Package — a standardized, enhanced health benefits plan available to all enrolled veterans. The law also simplified the process for veterans to receive services.

Like other standard health care plans, the Medical Benefits Package emphasizes preventive and primary care, offering a full range of outpatient and inpatient services, including:

- Preventive services, including immunizations, screening tests, and health education and training classes
- Primary health care
- Diagnosis and treatment
- Surgery, including outpatient surgery
- Mental health and substance abuse treatment
- Home health care
- Respite (inpatient), hospice and palliative care
- Urgent and limited emergency care
- Drugs and pharmaceuticals

The Benefits Package does not generally include hearing aids and eye-

Benefits

glasses, unless they are needed for a service-connected disability. Although some veterans are still eligible for services that are not part of the Medical Benefits Package, veterans may need to apply for them on a case-by-case basis and special restrictions apply to each. These include:

- Nursing home care
- Domiciliary care
- Adult day health care
- Outpatient geriatric evaluation
- Outpatient respite care
- Non-VA hospitalization or health care services for veterans with special eligibility
- Limited dental care
- Readjustment counseling
- Homeless programs
- Sexual trauma counseling

Enrollment

To receive VA health care benefits most veterans must enroll. Veterans can apply for enrollment at any VA health care facility or veterans' benefits office. An official notification regarding the veteran's priority will be mailed to the veteran after VA verifies enrollment information and processes the application.

Some veterans are exempted from having to enroll, although all veterans are encouraged to enroll to help VA plan its health care needs and provide better preventive and primary services. Veterans who do not have to enroll include: veterans with a service-connected disability of 50 percent or more, veterans who were discharged from the military within one year but have not yet been rated for a VA disability benefit, and veterans seeking care for only a service-connected disability.

Priority Groups

More than six million veterans are enrolled in the VA health care system as of October 2001. When they enroll, they are placed in priority groups or categories to help VA manage health care services within budgetary constraints and to provide quality care to those enrolled. There are seven enrollment priorities of veterans, with Priority 1 being the highest. Priority 7 veterans are those who have no service-connected disabilities or have a disability that is officially rated as "noncompensable zero percent service-connected," and whose income and assets are above the established thresh-

olds. Priority 7 veterans must agree to make co-payments for most medical care and medicines.

Cost to the Enrolling Veteran

By applying for enrollment, a veteran does not give up his or her right to use other sources of care nor does the veteran have to pay any premium to VA. However, as it has for years, VA charges co-payments to higher-income veterans for medical care not related to military service.

For 2002, higher-income veterans treated for a non-service connected disability pay \$7 for each prescription for a 30-day supply. Outpatient co-payments are determined by a three-tier co-payment system. The first tier is for preventive care, laboratory tests, flat film radiology services and electrocardiograms and costs veterans nothing. This care includes flu shots, hepatitis C screenings and numerous other preventive services.† Basic (primary) care outpatient visits comprise the second tier and require a co-payment of \$15 per visit. The last tier includes specialty care outpatient visits, like outpatient surgery, audiology and optometry and costs \$50 per visit.

Currently, veterans pay \$812 for each 90 days of inpatient hospital care. In addition, there is a \$10 a day per diem charge. For each subsequent 90 days of care in the same 365-day period, the charge is half the cost of the first 90 days.

The maximum co-payment rates that can be charged for extended-care services are:

- Nursing home, inpatient geriatric evaluation, inpatient respite: \$97 per day
- Adult day health care, outpatient geriatric evaluation, outpatient respite: \$15 per day
- Domiciliary care: \$5 per day

However, under the new rule, veterans are obligated to pay the co-payment only if they and their spouse have available resources. The monthly co-payment will vary from veteran to veteran and is based on financial information submitted on a VA Form 10-10EC. Once submitted, VA can calculate the monthly long-term care co-payment using income and assets of the veteran and spouse, monthly expenses and a monthly allowance for both the veteran and spouse (currently set at \$20 a day for the veteran and \$20 a day for the spouse).

Veterans may or may not have a private insurance policy, but this does not affect their eligibility for VA care or their co-payment requirements.† While VA may bill the insurer for certain care costs above any deductible, this does not impact the veteran's health care.

For more information about enrollment and the Medical Benefits Package see:

<http://www.va.gov/elig> or call 1-877-222-VETS (8387).

Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA)

The VBA Mission

The mission of the Veterans Benefits Administration, in partnership with the Veterans Health Administration and the National Cemetery Administration, is to provide benefits and services to the veterans and their families in a responsive, timely and compassionate manner in recognition of their service to the Nation.

The VBA Vision

Our vision is that the veterans whom we serve will feel that our nation has kept its commitment to them; employees will feel that they are both recognized for their contribution and are part of something larger than themselves; and taxpayers will feel that we've met the responsibilities they've entrusted to us.† Courage, honesty, trust, respect, open communication, and accountability will be reflected in our day to day behavior.

What We Offer

VA benefits and services fall into these major categories:

- Disability Benefits
- Education & Training Benefits
- Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment
- Home Loans
- Burial Benefits
- Dependents' and Survivors' Benefits
- Life Insurance
- Health Care

Who Is Eligible

You may be eligible for VA health care benefits if you are a veteran. You may be eligible for other VA benefits if you are:

- a veteran
- a veteran's dependent
- a surviving spouse or child of
- a deceased veteran
- a member of the Reserves or National Guard

- an active duty service member

Disability Benefits

We administer two disability programs. Both pay monthly benefits to disabled veterans.

- **Disability Compensation:** We can pay you compensation if you are at least 10% disabled as a result of your military service.
- **Disability Pension:** We can pay you a pension if you are a wartime veteran with limited income and you are no longer able to work.

Time Limits: There is no deadline for applying for disability benefits.

Education and Training

We pay benefits to eligible veterans, dependents, reservists, and service members while they are in an approved training program. Our major programs are:

- ***Montgomery GI Bill:*** Persons who first entered active duty after June 30, 1985, are generally eligible. Some Vietnam Era veterans and certain veterans separated under special programs are also eligible. The bill also includes a program for certain reservists and National Guard members.
- ***Veterans Educational Assistance Program (VEAP):*** This program is for veterans who entered active duty for the first time after December 31, 1976, and before July 1, 1985, and contributed funds to this program.
- ***Survivors' & Dependents' Educational Assistance:*** Some family members of disabled or deceased veterans are eligible for education benefits.

Time Limits: Generally, veterans have 10 years from the date they were last released from active duty to use their education benefits. Reservists generally have 10 years from the date they became eligible for the program unless they leave the Selected Reserves before completing their obligation. Spouses generally have 10 years from the date we first find them eligible. Children are generally eligible from age 18 until age 26. These time limits can sometimes be extended.

Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment

We can help veterans with service-connected disabilities prepare for, find and keep suitable employment. For veterans with serious service-connected disabilities, VA

also offers services to improve their ability to live as independently as possible. Some of the services we provide are:

- Job Search: Assistance in finding and maintaining suitable employment
- Vocational Evaluation: An evaluation of abilities, skills, interests, and needs
- Career Exploration: Vocational counseling and planning
- Vocational Training: If needed, training such as on-the-job and non-paid work experience.
- Education Training: If needed, education training to accomplish the rehabilitation goal.
- Rehabilitation Service: Supportive rehabilitation and counseling services.

Time Limits: You generally have 12 years from the date we tell you in writing that you have at least a 10 percent rating for a service-connected disability

Home Loans

We offer a number of home loan services to eligible veterans, some military personnel, and certain spouses.

- Guaranteed Loans: We can guarantee part of a loan from a private lender to help you buy a home, a manufactured home, a lot for a manufactured home, or certain types of condominiums. We also guarantee loans for building, repairing, and improving homes.
- Refinancing Loans: If you have a VA mortgage, we can help you refinance your loan at a lower interest rate. You may also refinance a non-VA loan.
- Special Grants: Certain disabled veterans and military personnel can receive grants to adapt or acquire housing suitable for their needs.

Time Limits: There is no time limit for a VA home loan, except for eligible reservists. Their eligibility expires September 30, 2009.

Burial Benefits

We offer certain benefits and services to honor our Nation's deceased veterans.

- Headstones and Markers: We can furnish a monument to mark the unmarked grave of an eligible veteran.
- Presidential Memorial Certificate (PMC): We can provide a PMC for

eligible recipients.

- **Burial Flag:** We can provide an American flag to drape an eligible veteran's casket.
- **Reimbursement of Burial Expenses:** Generally, we can pay a burial allowance of \$2,000 for veterans who die of service-related causes. For certain other veterans, we can pay \$300 for burial and funeral expenses and \$300 for a plot.
- **Burial in a VA National Cemetery:** Most veterans and some dependents can be buried in a VA national cemetery.

Time Limits: There is no time limit for claiming reimbursement of burial expenses for a service-related death. In other cases, claims must be filed within 2 years of the veteran's burial.

Dependents' and Survivors' Benefits

Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) is payable to certain survivors of:

- Service members who died on active duty
- Veterans who died from service-related disabilities
- Certain veterans who were being paid 100% VA disability compensation at time of death
- Death Pension is payable to some surviving spouses and children of deceased wartime veterans. The benefit is based on financial need.
- VA Civilian Health and Medical Program (CHAMPVA) shares the cost of medical services for eligible dependents and survivors of certain veterans.

Time Limits: There are no time limits for applying for the benefits described above.

Health Care

We provide a number of health care services.

- Hospital, outpatient medical, dental, pharmacy and prosthetic services
- Domiciliary, nursing home, and community-based residential care
- Sexual trauma counseling
- Specialized health care for women veterans
- Health and rehabilitation programs for homeless veterans
- Readjustment counseling
- Alcohol and drug dependency treatment
- Medical evaluation for military service exposure, including Gulf War, Agent Orange, radiation, or other environmental hazards.

Combat Veterans- VA will provide combat veterans free medical care for any illness possibly associated with service against a hostile force in a war after the Gulf War or during a period of hostility after November 11, 1998. This benefit may be provided for two years from the veteran's release from active duty.

Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom

Returning Active Duty, National Guard and Reserve service members of Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom. We honor the opportunity to provide benefits information and assistance to eligible veterans who honorably fought and served in our Nation's armed forces. If you have any questions about benefits or health care you can contact VA toll free by dialing 1-800-827-1000 for benefits information and by dialing 1-877-222-8387 for information on health care eligibility. You may also visit the VA web site at www.va.gov. The home page link to the Iraq Freedom/Enduring Freedom web site that describes benefits for returning veterans, including current Reserve/National Guard members.

Life Insurance

Service members Group Life Insurance (SGLI) is low-cost term life insurance for service members and reservists. Generally, coverage begins when you enter the service. It is available in amounts up to \$250,000. Generally, it expires 120 days after you get out of the service.

Veterans Group Life Insurance (VGLI) is renewable five-year term life insurance for veterans. It is available in amounts up to \$250,000. You may apply any time within 1 year from the date your SGLI expires.

Service-Disabled Veterans Insurance, also called "RH" Insurance, is life insurance

for service-disabled veterans. The basic coverage is \$10,000. If your premium payments for the basic policy are waived, due to total disability, you may be eligible for a supplemental policy of up to \$20,000. Generally, you have 2 years after being notified of your service-connected disability to apply for basic coverage.

Toll-Free Service

Benefits Information and Assistance

Each VA benefit has its own eligibility requirements. For more information about specific benefits, you may visit the nearest VA office or call:

1-800-827-1000

Special Toll-Free Numbers

Health Benefits	877-222-8387
Education Benefits	888-442-4551
VA Life Insurance	800-669-8477
Office of SGLI	800-419-1473
CHAMPVA	800-733-8387
Gulf War	800-749-8387
Headstones (status of claims only)	800-697-6947
Telecommunication Device for Deaf (TDD)	800-829-4833
Direct Deposit	877-838-2778

Apply for Compensation, Pension, Vocational Rehabilitation or National Cemetery Administration benefits on line:

<http://vabenefits.vba.va.gov>

National Cemetery Administration (NCA)

Mission

The National Cemetery Administration (NCA) honors Veterans with a final resting place and lasting memorials that commemorate their service to our nation.

Vision

The National Cemetery Administration provides a lasting tribute to our Nation's veterans by being mission driven, results oriented and customer focused.

Purpose

- To provide burial space for veterans and their eligible family members.
- To maintain national cemeteries as national shrines, sacred to the honor and memory of those interred or memorialized there.
- To mark veterans' graves with a Government-provided headstone or marker and to provide Presidential Memorial Certificates <<http://www.cem.va.gov/pmc.htm>> in recognition of their service to a grateful nation.
- To administer grants for establishing or expanding state veterans cemeteries <<http://www.cem.va.gov/svc.htm>>.

Community Resources

Alzheimer's Association - (520) 322- 6601 or 800-272-3900 or www.alz.org

American Association of Retired Persons-National 1-800-424-3410

American Cancer Society-National 1-800-227-2345

American Diabetes Association-National 1-800-232-3472

American Dietetic Association www.eatright.org

American Heart Association (Heart Disease and Stroke Information) National 1-214-373-6300

American Lung Association-National 1-800-586-4872

American Parkinson's Disease Association 1-800-223-2732

Arthritis Foundation-National 1-800-283-7800

The Brain Injury Help line-National 1-800-444-6443

Centers for Disease Control/National AIDS Clearinghouse-National 1-301-654-3810

Depression Awareness, Recognition and Treatment Program-National 1-800-421-4211

Elderly Housing Choices - (303) 831-4046

Medicare Helpline-1-800-633-4227

National Association for Continence-National 1-800-252-3337

National Organization for Rare Disorders-National 1-800-999-6673

National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute-National 1-301-251-1222

National Institute of Mental Health National 1-800-443-4513

National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped-National 1-800-424-8567

Red Cross - (520) 318-6740

Senior Health Insurance Assistance-1-888-696-7213

Social Security Administration - 1-800-772-1213 www.ssa.gov

**Community
Resources**

Patient Specific Information

Patient Information Websites

www.familydoctor.org/handouts *American Academy of Family Physicians*

www.cancernet.nci.nih.gov/pdq/pdq_treatment.shtml *National Cancer Institute*

www.medicinenet.com *Medicine Net*

www.vabenefits.vba.va.gov *Veterans Benefits Organization*

www.myhealth.va.gov *My HealtheVet*

www.audiology.org *American Academy of Audiology*

www.laplaza.org/health/dwc//nadp *Diabetes Wellness Connection*

www.ada.org *American Dental Association*

www.dentalcare.com *Global Dental Resources*

**Patient
Specific
Information**

Do you have questions for your providers?

Primary Doctor or Health Care Provider

Name: _____

Telephone number: _____

Your questions: _____

Important points: _____

Eye Doctor (Ophthalmologist, Optometrist)

Name: _____

Telephone number: _____

Your questions: _____

Important points: _____

Foot Doctor

Name: _____

Telephone number: _____

Your questions: _____

Important points: _____

Dentist

Name: _____

Telephone number: _____

Your questions: _____

Important points: _____

Dietitian

Name: _____

Telephone number: _____

Your questions: _____

Important points: _____

Diabetes Counselor

Name: _____

Telephone number: _____

Your questions: _____

Important points: _____

Counselor

Name: _____

Telephone number: _____

Your questions: _____

Important points: _____

Other

Name: _____

Telephone number: _____

Your questions: _____

Important points: _____
