

VA



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

Voice of the Veteran

Veterans Signals Customer Feedback Program

The Veterans Signals program provides VA's customers a feedback channel to share compliments, recommendations, or concerns. VA has received surveys from [5M+ Veterans](#) since June 2017. As of April 30, 2020, 68% of comments have been complimentary, 18.9% have been concerns and 13.3% have been recommendations. VA's Veterans Experience Office shares this feedback at the national, regional, and local levels to drive improvements in the way VA provides care and services.

September 23, 2020

Our Veterans are on a journey with us and we must ensure that we walk with them the entire way, guiding them through the system and showing our commitment. The staff at the Hunter Holmes McGuire Hospital, Virginia showed their commitment by guiding the journey for this 81 year old male Veteran! ***"I recently moved from New York from Virginia to live with my daughter. Due to my age and health concerns, living alone was no longer a viable or safe option for me. Throughout this moving process, both the Albany VA and Virginia VA have been helpful and expeditious to assist me with obtaining my needed oxygen, new PCP and much needed appointments. I am very pleased with McGuire VA."***

WECARE is an acronym for the actions and behaviors we all do every time in each interaction. Welcome, Explain, Connect, Actively Listen, Respond and Express Gratitude. ***"I would like to compliment my primary care doctor, nurses, medical specialist and technicians on their professionalism and excellent bedside manners while caring for my medical needs. When a VA staff member tells me, "Thank you for your service". I sincerely feel respected & appreciated. Therefore, I would like to thank the VA staff for their service."*** By thanking this 55 year old Veteran for his service, the staff at the Mission Valley OPC, CA have exemplified these WECARE behaviors!

September 10, 2020

In order to build trusted relationship with our Veterans, they have to know that we care for them and that they are more than just a number or “patient” to us, they have to believe that we see them for who they are as unique and special individuals. **“Dr. Pikal provided me with a thorough and professional eye exam as a follow-up to cataract surgery. She fully explained all the testing and evaluation procedures, and also demonstrated genuine concern in my eye health and in meeting my visual needs. The initial eye technician I saw was “John” and he was also very personable and professional.”** (61 year old Male from the West Palm Beach VA Medical Center, FL)

It's these moments that matter and how we guide our Veterans journey thru the entire process that builds those trusted and lifelong relationships. It's these relationships that ensure that our veterans continue to choose the VA! **“We were greeted by a very kind and professional woman. She gave all the information we needed and showed us how the hearing aids worked and should be used. Very pleasant experience”.** (73 year old Female from the Aurora VA Clinic, IL)

When we build those trusted, lifelong relationships with Veterans, their families and supporters, they continue to want to be part of the organization that provides them with the care they need. When they trust their care team, as this gentleman does, they continue to choose VA! **“Dr. Thiagaragan (psychiatrist) at the Texas City, TX clinic is wonderful and caring. She has made my life better. Dr. McGowen (primary care dr) at the Texas City, TX clinic is an amazing man who cares very deeply for me as a patient. He is very involved in my healthcare. All the nurses like James Ware, at the Texas City, TX clinic go above and beyond the call of duty to give great healthcare.”** (51 year old Male from the Texas City VA Clinic, TX)

September 2, 2020

One of VA's top goals is to deliver exceptional customer service and a world-class Veteran experience. The staff at Hunter Holmes McGuire Hospital, VA (652) embody this goal! **“Thanks, to all staff for being so nice. The staff was also very friendly. Thanks, to all of Dr's specially Dr. Sweeney she was very professional. She was outstanding on point. She also, help my daughter get FMLA. To take care of me at home. I love her for all her help. God bless you and your family.”** 71 year old female Veteran.

A Veteran's journey with in VHA is not just one touchpoint, it is the sum of all interactions, shaped by the organizations culture, that influences Veterans' and their families' perceptions along their healthcare journey. This 59 year old Veteran stated **“I have used the VA in Murfreesboro, TN for the last 3 years. My experience from the beginning til now has been awesome. Not only have I been cared for by professionals, I was treated with the upmost respect. Each time I walk onto the property I get a sense of pride once again from the landscaping to the caring and personal attention from each person that I've come in**

contact with. Thank you!” Way to go staff at Alvin C. York Veterans' Administration Medical Center, TN ensuring a positive experience for this Veteran!

August 25, 2020

Veterans have told us that some of their bright spots when arriving to a VA facility is friendly greeters and that they want a welcoming environment. Even during the stresses associated with COVID-19, the **Mat-Su VA Clinic, AK** did just that! **“Facility was neat, clean and even when staff were wearing masks you could see the welcoming smile in their eyes and not fear. Thank you, you are all very much appreciated.”** 56-year-old female Veteran.

When we are able to understand and respond to the needs of our patients, they notice and appreciate it. It is the little things that make a big difference in the lives of our Veterans. **“I was impressed with how the Audiology Department is handling drive-in appointments during the corona virus outbreak.”** (74 year old Male from the Hillsboro **VA Clinic, OR**) Some as simple as taking drive in appointments reduces the stress and anxiety level of our Veterans and that is important when we are building trusted lifelong relationships.

In Own The Moment, we learn that we should Connect and Care with our Veterans as we Guide their Journey to health. A Veteran from the **Bloomington VA Clinic in Illinois** said **“I love meeting with Dr. Peak weekly. She has been great at getting to the heart of my issues and support and encouraging on my journey. I have had positive experiences with all staff, helping with getting scheduled and addressing issues. The Covid changes have made some challenges but all in all I am very satisfied with my care.”**

August 20, 2020

OTM includes reaffirmation of our ICARE Ethos. The VA employee commitment to those values lets us know we are getting it right “With the virus concerns, I felt very safe and protected upon entering the VA and waiting for my appointment in the waiting room with social distances and a clean environment. I will deferentially pass the word to my fellow Veterans that the VA is safe and should make their appointments without fear of the corona virus as long as they follow safety protocol provided by the Mayor of LA. Male, Sepulveda VA Medical Center, CA (691A4), **West Los Angeles VA Medical Center, CA (691)**

Employees at the VA Clinic in Honesdale, PA and Wilkes-Barre VA Medical Center, PA feel passionate about serving Veterans, are committed and accountable to the organization and each other, and are empowered by leadership to put discretionary effort into their work. Employees understand and embody the philosophy of patient experience. **“I needed to get diabetic shoes and socks but due to Covid 19 I didn’t want to make the 100 mile round trip to the Hospital so I called my local VA LOCAL CLINIC and within the same week I had my new shoes and a week later my socks (sent from two different locations) I couldn’t believe the fast response from both the and VA Hospital Wilks-Barre, PA. THANK YOU!”** 70 year old male.

Lifelong trusted relationships are built on all the little things that we do for our Veterans. When our shared purpose is to ensure that the entire experience is one that our patients remember because it was so good, it is noticed and appreciated!

Our Shared Purpose is really serving the broader outcome the Veteran seeks rather than just the task we think needs to be accomplished. Changing our mindset from one that's transaction based, like what these employees did to help this Veteran, to one that's relationship based. That's what makes the difference, and this is how to Own the Moment! ***“Thank you for addressing the issues with my left knee and conducting the MRI on 7/28/2020. I knew something wrong even though the torn meniscus did not show up on an Xray. I am extremely thankful for the genuine care and comfort that the Veterans Administration provides to me. The Veterans Administration has become an example to the private sector in Healthcare professionalism.”*** (58 Male from the **Ralph H. Johnson Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center, SC**) It is all about actively listening, making sure the Veteran feels heard and working to understand what they need - even if they are not entirely sure themselves. “Doing the right thing” - serving the broader outcome the Veteran seeks rather than just the task to be completed.

The patients we serve, as well as their family member and caregivers notice when we provide care in a manner that honors them. A Veteran from the **Dallas VA Medical Center in Texas** said ***“The Sherman CBOC staff are friendly, respectful, and professional. I was glad to see a nurse at the entryway taking veteran temperatures and asking COVID-19 related questions of veterans entering the facility. Also happy to see mask requirements clearly posted and enforced.”***

A Veteran who receives care from the **Washington VA Medical Center, DC** gave a shout to a VA professional for her commitment caring those who born the battle by saying ***“Dr. Lauren Racoosin is a wonderful Audiologist. Not only did she reach out to me personally during the COVID Pandemic regarding my new hearing aids, she made sure that as soon as in-person appointments were once again available, I was able to get my hearing aids adjusted. I thank her for her kindness and professionalism.”***

August 11, 2020

When we think about what right looks like, it is this – “the sum of all interactions” that create this level of trust this Veteran voices in this note:

“The service and treatment I've received at Ft. Miley has been exceptional, particularly given the difficult circumstances under which the Medical Center is operating these COVID-19 days...” (74 year old Male from the San Francisco VA Medical Center, CA) When we build those trusted, lifelong relationships with Veterans, their families and supporters, they continue to want to be part of the organization that provides them with the care they need. When they trust their care team, as this gentleman does, they continue to choose VA!

Through the principles of OTM, we are consistently reminded that the value of the emotional connection that simply talking to our Veterans provides is immeasurable: ***“Thank you to Dr. Echeverria for always taking the time to talk to me about my health. I appreciate the***

support. I would also like to thank the staff at the dental office.” (Veteran feedback gathered at the Bruce W. Carter Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center, FL)

Our Veterans notice when we embody the principles of Own The Moment by “Guiding the Journey” while helping them achieve optimum health. A 74-year-old Veteran from the Jack C. Montgomery VA Medical Center in Oklahoma said **“My provider was very prepared for our appointment and showed interest in my situation offering suggestions and helpful info to take with me.”**

How we provide care and caring to our Veterans during less than ideal circumstances builds trust as confidence that VA will honor its commitment to provide care that improves their health and wellbeing. A 62 Veteran from the San Diego VA Medical Center in California said **“Being unable to swallow solid food without extreme difficulty required prompt professional diagnosis and I was very concerned about visiting the hospital with the threat of Covid-19. I found the safety procedures for Covid-19 and the medical service at the highest level of professionalism.”**

August 3, 2020

This Veteran’s acknowledgement of the hard work performed by people with whom he has built those trusted lifelong relationship with is an amazing tribute to the amazing work that is done every day by the employees of the VA! **“Recently I had an appointment with Dr Landon at the Phoenix VA hospital. I was encouraged that he was willing to meet with me during this pandemic. He is a very good doctor, and truly cares about his patients.”** (50 year old Male from Carl T. Hayden Veterans' Administration Medical Center, AZ) Veterans Patient Experience is the sum of all interactions, shaped by the organization’s culture, that influence Veterans’ and their families’ perceptions along their healthcare journey.

Veterans Patient Experience is the sum of all interactions, shaped by the organization’s culture, that influence Veterans’ and their families’ perceptions along their healthcare journey. We are doing this as this Veteran says so eloquently -**“AWESOME!!!! I love the folks at the Pharmacy and the VA in general. With the Pandemic I relay on the mail for the many many Meds I take and need. I have always felt that my questions and medicine needs were meet with incredible CUSTOMER SERVICE and Professionalism buy the OUTSTANDING Care Givers at the Pharmacy. I'm at 90% + service connected and couldn't ask for better help. Thanks a million!”** (73-year-old Male from Ioannis A. Lougaris Veterans' Administration Medical Center, NV) Trust is something we must work to gain over time, and we build that trust by Owning each and every Moment we have with our Veterans. When they trust us as this gentleman does, they choose VA!

Way to go Flint VA Clinic, MI for Owning The Moment! Being a VA employee requires that we **Welcome** the Veteran, **Explain** who we are and our role, **Connect** by having a pleasant conversation, **Actively** listen to the Veteran’s needs, **Respond** and explain what we plan to do and **Express** gratitude = **WECARE**. **“I'm so happy to be able to go to the Flint VA clinic for care. I just feel cared for in a very personal way. From the front desk, to the lab, to the nurse, to the doctor, it all has a nice flow and a real professional and personable feel. There is a very high level of protection, too. Not only with the precautions for Covid 19,**

but also my medical information. No info is ever repeated in public.” [67-year-old female Veteran, Flint VA Clinic, MI]

Being timely with test results and showing we care are examples of how we make a Veteran’s journey Easy and Effective by Owning the Moment. **“I’m thankful for the care shown to me while at the Washington VA. Especially the speed in which my COVID-19 test results were returned (62- year-old male Veteran).”** Kudos to the Washington VAMC for getting it right for our Veterans, especially during these trying times. Keep up the great work!

Ease... Effective... Emotion... Our Veterans want to know that they are receiving quality care in a safe environment that considers their needs and makes them feel valued. A 61-year-old Veteran from the Omaha VA Medical Center said **“The Omaha VA Medical Center was great. With all the Covid stuff going on, it was strange that the place was not crowded like it usually is. I felt safe and comfortable.”**

At the VA, when all 3 dimensions and principles of OTM are fully engaged, Veterans may be moved to express their appreciation through the dimension of Emotion: **“I have been under care for Covid 19 using the telehealth network since 08 Jun 20. My nurse, Rhonda, has sent me to the E R twice for reevaluation. Every part of my experience with the VA has been exceptional. I asked a telehealth nurse about a refill of a certain med on a weekend and received it in the mail Tues. or Wed. the following week. I was super surprised and really grateful.”** (59-year-old Male, Fayetteville VA Medical Center, AR (564)/Fayetteville VA Medical Center, AR)

July 28, 2020

Guiding the Journey, one of the three principles of Owning the Moment, means our Veterans clearly understand what is currently happening and what to expect next in their healthcare journey. **Doctors and staff are constantly looking to make sure I am healthy and safe..with covid the doctors calling to do a phone consult to explain my last tests and where we are going..and what is next..and to advise what the next meds I will be getting..they order first round and set up the future prescriptions to allow me to order when running low..best ever.** (71-year-old Male Veteran from the Edward Hines Jr Hospital, IL). Great work! Way to Own the Moment at the Hines VA Hospital.

Connecting and caring for our Veterans extends to the family members and caregivers as well. The family member of an 86 year old Veteran expressed great appreciation with an employee from the **Cheyenne VA Medical Center “Traci, primary care nurse for Dr Kaiser, was so kind to call me when my father arrived for his appointment this past week and I wasn’t with him as normal. It’s wonderful to have staff concerned about their patients, She got him to his appointment and called me to make sure I was coming, which I was, he was dropped off early from his assisted living place. Due to CoVid we have to meet him there.”**

Ensuring our Veterans receive care that is effective and meets their needs is important. However, making our Veterans feel valued as a customer satisfies their emotional needs. A Veteran from the John L. McClellan Memorial Veterans' Hospital in Arizona said **“Everyone at**

our local clinic is very courteous and friendly. The last VA checkup was over the phone due to Covid 19. I was assigned a new doctor which was Dr. Burnett due to Dr. Cogburn's retirement. Dr Burnett was very friendly and I felt comfortable speaking with him. Services in Mtn. Home, AR exceeds my expectations. Great Service by Good Folks."

July 24, 2020

When receiving care in VA, our Veterans have come to expect exceptional customer service and a world-class Veteran experience, and our employees answer the call to #OwnTheMoment. A 56-year-old Female Veteran from the San Juan VA Medical Center in Puerto Rico said ***"The nurse who helped me on July 10th (Iris) gave exceptional service. She was extremely friendly and competent! During this very scary pandemic I get peace of mind knowing I have excellent healthcare I can turn to if I get sick."***

When VA employees provide a consistent, exceptional experience that strengthens trust and confidence with Veterans, their families and caregivers, they notice and appreciate us. A 72-year-old Veteran from the Providence VA Medical Center said ***"My experience is with the audiology group. The staff has always been extremely professional, even more so within the confines of the current pandemic. My Audiologist is wonderful. She cares. She is not there to sell me a hearing aid. I have had that experience before so, i know the difference. It is a great benefit to those of us who are hearing impaired."***

When we build those trusted, lifelong relationships with Veterans, their families and supporters, they continue to want to be part of the organization that provides them with the care they need. ***"Before my Dental appointments It was a requirement that I receive a COVID-19 Screening and then be quarantine up to the day of my appointments. The results took only two days. I was negative. I was impressed with all of the precautions in place for all of our safety. I felt totally protected and comfortable."*** (73-year-old Male from Santa Rosa VA Clinic, San Francisco VA Medical Center, CA)

It is all about actively listening, making sure the Veteran feels heard and working to understand what they need. ***"Dr. Michel and RN Roxanne along with the Alpha Team are doing an OUTSTANDING, as well as a VERY PROFESSIONAL OUTPATIENT SERVICE at the Sunrise, Florida VA Clinic. Of course, they were providing this type of care ♡ way before the COVID-19 Pandemic."*** This quote exemplifies how VA staff continue to Own Their Moment in each and every encounter! Way to go William "Bill" Kling Department of Veterans Affairs Outpatient Clinic, FL! 59-year-old male Veteran.

One of the moments that matter for our Veteran population is ease of getting prescriptions filled. During COVID-19, the Cincinnati VA Medical Center, OH took steps to ensure this continued to happen. ***"I really appreciated the added benefit of talking to the pharmacist through the zoom style chat while there. Really made for the most personal experience I have ever had at any pharmacy. And that's even with Covid-19 practices in place that's made a lot of other healthcare aspects more difficult. Thank you!"*** 32-year-old male Veteran.

One of Own The Moment Guiding Principles is Understand and Respond to Needs. During these times it is great to see how VA Employees are stepping up and making a difference. ***“Dr Cox did my last visit by internet. He truly is an asset to the VA. I live about 50 miles from Las Vegas now due to Covid concerns, we had a very productive session. He went over all meds and future appointments. Please thank him as best you can.”*** 68 Male Northeast Las Vegas VA Clinic, NV (593GG) North Las Vegas VA Medical Center, NV

July 14, 2020

Veterans Patient Experience is the sum of all interactions, shaped by the organization’s culture, that influence Veterans’ and their families’ perceptions along their healthcare journey. ***Due to Covid It's been a long time since I've visited the St Cloud VA for Lab & X-ray imaging. Despite the current Covid19 scene, Every VA staff person was very courteous and professional, including several VA nurses & admin people who called to arrange follow-up apptmts As well as the check point staff..overall Very Positive Experience.. Thanks to All...*** (72 Male from the St. Cloud VA Medical Center, MN)

Own the Moment principle of Connecting and Caring provides Veterans with the confidence that VA is a partner in their healthcare journey, resulting in a trusting lifelong relationship. A Veteran from the **Pittsburgh VA Medical Center, Beaver County clinic** said ***“Dr. Sweigart always very attentive to my care really a good man I appreciated they were able to see me in person during these trying times with covid 19 he is always positive and your office is increased with his service.”***

A tenant of VA’s core values, ICARE, is Excellence. Consistently providing Veterans with quality care in an environment that honors their service epitomizes service excellence. A 73-year-old Veteran from the **Tibor Rubin VA Medical Center** said ***“Dental Dept treated me very promptly, respectfully, and professionally taking care to protect me from COVID before, during and after treatment. Even did wellness check the next day. I'm impressed!”***

As attested by a female Veteran recently seen at the **Peoria CBOC, staff at Danville VAMC** ensure great patient experience by commendably putting into practice one of the Own the Moment philosophy’s guiding principles, Connect and Care: ***“Outstanding job ladies! I thank the ladies @ the Decatur VA-especially my nurse, Stephanie! Even with all this Crazy COVID Crap, they still took the time to care & a little time to visit and catch up-not herded through like cattle or a nuisance or anything. God bless y'all and keep up the great work!”***

VA staff aren’t looking for praise; they are proud to serve America. But when Veteran’s see VA staff “Owning The Moment” they sometimes express their thanks this way: ***“My nurse Angie that took care of me while I was admitted to the 4th floor RM 4A-4123 is a ROCKSTAR!! I don’t remember her last name. She is extremely knowledgeable, professional and genuinely cares for her patients. Having her take care of me for 3 1/2 days made my stay all the better since visitors are not allowed due to Covid-19. Matter fact all of the staff is awesome. I just can’t name them all.”*** 7/2/2020 20:41 47, Male, Bessemer VA Clinic, AL (521GG) Birmingham VA Medical Center, AL (521)6/26/2020

“Connect and Care, one of the OTM guiding principles, guides VA Staff to always treat Veterans and those they care about with empathy and respect everyday as highlighted by this Veterans comments: **“Dr. Robert Busch has been working with me through the pandemic. He helps me understand how to deal with my illness, and explains so I can understand. Good doctor.”** 7/3/2020 Hampton VA Medical Center, VA

July 5, 2020

OTM reminds us that “The VA Way” can often be just meeting the simple and courteous and respectful expectations of our Veterans, especially during the pandemic. **“This was my first visit since the start of the Covid19 pandemic and the first time I met my new provider, Doctor Gupta. She was very professional and showed genuine concern regarding my health. My appointment was not hurried and comprehensive. I have renewed confidence in the medical services I receive at the VA Medical center. Thank you”** 6/29/2020 19:07, 69, Male, Alvin C. York Veterans' Administration Medical Center, TN (626A4) **Nashville VA Medical Center, TN**

Our Veterans tell us that while waiting to receive care, they notice the “environment” of care. A 67-year-old Veteran from the **Hunter Holmes McGuire Hospital** said **“McGuire was spotless as usual. The cheerful Greeter at the door was very clear in the requirements due to the virus. Chairs in the Red Clinic waiting room were well spaced to avoid contamination. An excellent visit to my PCP.”**

Part of Own The Moment’s VA Way is our ICARE Values. “R” is for Respect. I will treat all those I serve and with whom I work with dignity and respect. I will show respect to earn it. **“The medical team that performed my procedure was considerate, professional, and respectful. I felt like I was in good hands. I was very thankful for them putting their lives on the line during this COVID-19 pandemic. Thank you so much!”** 41yo male Veteran from **John Cochran Veterans Hospital, MO.**

Taking time to listen, showing genuine care for their concerns and then expertly guiding their journey is how we strengthen Veterans’ trust in the VA in every interaction. **Dr. Williamson was extremely caring and sensitive to my medical concern. She explained everything thoroughly. Also, Dr. Williamson practiced appropriate Covid-19 safety guidelines necessary during this pandemic.** Thank you, Dr. Williamson, for showing how much the VA values Veterans’ safety while also providing an exceptional, caring patient experience. Way to Own the Moment. (53-year-old female Veteran seen at the Community Based Outpatient Clinic in Beaumont, Texas).

June 29, 2020

The industry standard for Customer Experience includes: Ease and Effectiveness and Emotion. ***“Given this Covid 19 environment, I was extremely pleased with the service. I had to have an in-person visit because I had something in my eye. They scheduled me for the first available appointment, and it was greatly appreciated”*** This is a perfect example of a great customer experience, focused on the Ease dimension in Own the Moment. 64 Male, Wm. **Jennings Bryan Dorn Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center, SC**

Delivering high-quality customer experience is a top priority at VA. Ensuring each interaction is not only done with ease and effectiveness, but also the added element of emotion is how staff own their moment! ***“I appreciate the compassion and understanding that my physician’s, nurse’s and staff have shown me during these difficult times. Considering I have tested positive with Covid 19 and all my other health issues the still treated me with kindness and did not make me feel like I was not a human or just someone with a deadly disease.”*** 42 year old female Veteran, **Biloxi VA Medical Center, MS.**

Every interaction that we have is an opportunity to Own the Moment. Taking time to Connect and Care will have a lasting impression on our Veterans. ***“My last pharmacy request was during the peak of the Covid 19 onset. I was never made to feel that my "routine" meds were unimportant during the national crisis and at a time when the VA health system was probably extremely busy. I truly respect the VA health program it's efficient, non-discriminatory and friendly to the needs of its clients. I think the private sector could learn from VA!”*** This is another great example of why Veterans choose VA. (75 year old male Veteran seen at **West Haven VA Medical Center, CT.**)

When the team works together and really Owns all of the Moments and are able to Understand and respond to the needs, concerns and fears of our Veterans, we are able to ensure that the care they get and the experience they have is one that they want to share with others. ***“With all the adjustments the VA personnel had to make to deal with the COVID pandemic, I want to "thank" all the members on the outside of the hospital that are providing guidance, taking temps and directing veterans to where they have to go to keep the "ship upright". I was extremely pleased with CLINIC 4 personnel during my visit and discussion with my PC Doctor. Keep up the outstanding support”*** When they trust us as this gentleman does, they choose VA! (70-year-old Male from **Michael E. DeBakey Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center, TX**)

Let’s take time to really hear what Veterans are saying and what is being said so we can be Good to each other and do Good for each other! ***“I would like to thank Dr. Williams' and assistant for great care during my visit and especially during COVID. They took all the necessary precautions. Also, to the receptionist who is always courteous.”*** Changing our mindset from one that’s transaction based, like just scheduling the appointment, to one that’s relationship based, which is our Shared

Purpose. (53-year-old Female from **Audie L. Murphy Memorial Veterans' Hospital, TX**)

VA medical center staff consistently provide care and caring to our Veterans that not only improves their health and wellbeing but also motivates them to #chooseVA! A 73-year-old Veteran from the **Omaha VA Medical Center** shared **“Had an appointment to get shingles booster shot. Was rainy and Covid 19 social distancing was in effect when I got to clinic. Nurse came out in rain and gave me shot while I stayed in vehicle. I felt she went above and beyond her duty. Health workers are our heroes today. THANK YOU!!!!!!!!!!”**

June 19, 2020

Building lifelong relationships with our Veterans compels us to be there when the needed. Regardless of the situation, we answer the call. This 75 year old Veteran who receives care at the Goose Creek VA Clinic said **“The Charleston S.C.VA Pharmacy is second to none....during this 19 VIRUS period I have not missed 1 (one) medication... they have arrived correct and on time.. Might I add I do not get just 1, I get a dozen or more... and they have even checked with me by phone about my diabetic meds.... I feel blessed to have such a great group of people helping me stay alive DR, nurses, God bless you all !!!!!”**

Our patients trust us to provide high quality care in an environment that is safe as well. An 82-year-old Veteran from the **Bath VA Medical Center, NY** said **“My primary care physician, Dr. Baker and the nurses I saw for my appointment were all very professional and courteous. The VA system, due to the Virus safeguards, was very good and protective.”**

When we connect and care with our Veterans, they feel valued as a customer and trust the VA to provide quality health care. A 78-year-old Veteran from North Las Vegas VA Medical Center said **“The northwest clinic is the best in Las Vegas. Doctor kletsy and his pact 6 team are nothing short of awesome! Cynthia and Hillery are the best! They are both very efficient and always helpful. I don't want to forget Nadine (MSA) who has been there to help keep me updated during the pandemics. I stay well thanks to the VA. 78 and still ticking.”**

It has been said that the way we treat Veterans today will help them choose VA tomorrow. **Newington VA Clinic, CT** **“For me, the VA Healthcare System is far superior to the private medical coverage provided during all my decades of employment. My Primary Care Physician, Cardiology and HUD/VASH Social Worker have all reached out to make sure I was doing okay during this period of COVID-19 Pandemic. I am more than satisfied with y VA experience.”** 69 Male.

OTM reminds us that the difference between basic customer service and a truly inspiring customer experience is the element of “Emotion” as evidenced by the follow quote: **“The doctor called me directly when my original appt was cancelled due to**

pandemic. He made sure I was ok and asked if I needed anything. He then called me again to inform me of the current procedure at the hospital so I would know exactly what to do when I arrive on July 8th. The VA healthcare is the best I have ever had in my lifetime. I am so well taken care of and appreciate the VA. Thank you! 53 Female, Raymond G. Murphy Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center, NM

One of OTM's guiding principles is "Connect & Care"! It's important that Veterans see that care in practice and feel like a valued customer. ***"It is clear that a lot of thought and care went into ensuring patients and staff are safe during the pandemic. I was very impressed with the processes that were put in place. Dr. Goldberg was professional, kind, caring, efficient and fun to talk with. The pharmacy procedure was well-thought-out, efficient and quick. Kudos to you all."*** 42 Male, Parma VA Clinic, OH, Louis Stokes Cleveland Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center, OH

June 12 , 2020

Veteran Patient Experience is owning every moment and every interaction with every Veteran every day and the **Robley Rex Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center, KY** made this Veteran feel welcomed throughout his healthcare journey! ***"This was my first appointment since Covid-19 precautions. It was handled well with minimal contact, but still respectful and expedient. The techs in the lab are typically the bright spot of my day. Very efficient, but also kind and friendly. Really I could say that about just about everyone I have come in contact with at the Newburg Clinic."*** 56yo Newburg VA Clinic, KY.

Connecting and caring is how VA employees #OWNTHEMOMENT with our Veterans. Explaining our role is a behavior that shows WECARE for those who served. ***"The technician who did the MRI was very professional. He did an excellent job of explaining things. He made sure I was as comfortable as possible and everything was sanitized because of covid."*** 06/08/2020 63 Male Forth Worth Clinic

We usually think of "Ease", a key tenant of Own The Moment, when we are conducting business in person. This Veteran describes the importance of "Ease" even when we are conducting the customer experience by mail ***"During the covid 19, where face to face apt are temporarily suspended, it was easy to order and get my meds through the mail. Also, getting in contact with the pharmacy was not a problem."*** 6/8/2020 15:43 (49 Male New Orleans VA Medical Center, LA) (629)

As Secretary Wilkie said in his statement "Our priority at VA is customer service, that is my prime directive. The team that took care of this Veteran made a real difference in his life. ***"Mr Dan Gutkowski, Manager, VA Manila Pharmacy and his team for the prompt responses when I requested for a refill of my diabetes, heart,***

hypertension, and maintenance meds. I was caught in a COVID quarantine lockdown while vacationing in the Philippines. I was near of running out of my meds, and with the prompt responses from the VA Manila Pharmacy team, my personal meds had been resupplied. (62 year old Male from the Palo Alto VA Medical Center)

It's about "doing the right thing" - serving the broader purpose to ensure that the Veteran's needs are not just meet, they are exceeded.

When employees Own the Moment and are able to Guide the Journey, we are able to ensure that the care they get and have an experience that leaves them wanting to return to the VA and to share with others the great care they received.

"The pharmacy is very proactive and very easy to deal with. I just received a call from the pharmacy because I take Xarelto and requesting that I do my annual labs. The technician was extremely friendly, professional and gave me options for getting my labs because of Covid-19. I really appreciate this kind of follow up and service. Thank you for looking out for this OLD veteran!" (66-year-old Male from the North Las Vegas VA Medical Center)

How we treat Veterans today is the reason they will Choose VA in the future. ***"The staff and representatives conducted everything in the most respectful manner and with the most dedicated care. I appreciate the VA teams."*** Great job to the Tucson VA Medical Center. 33-year-old male seen at the Tucson VA Medical Center

June 1, 2020

Our commitment to providing an exceptional experience, making the journey as Easy and Effective as possible despite the uncertainty during COVID, is how we Own the Moment with our Veterans, their family members, and caregivers. ***"I just want to say thank you. It is so convenient. Just looking at what going on with this Pandemic, yet the pharmacists are out there helping us. Again THANK YOU!"*** When we display the ICARE values and show our Veterans how much WE CARE, we give them every reason to Choose VA. Well done. (VSignals quote from 73-year-old male Veteran, Washington VA Medical Center, DC)

One of the principles of Own The Moment (OTM) is "Guide the Journey". Our Veterans and their families expect us to be familiar and willing to assist through all facets of the journey. Sometimes, this means going outside our normal lanes, which is even more true during uncertain times like we are experiencing now with COVID. ***"I felt in this time of the world pandemic that the VA was set up to take necessary precautions and minimal testing prior to letting any person entering the facility. My apt was for 8:30 for lab and the nurse was very proficient and knowledgeable in taking my blood for my annual doctors update."*** (VSignals quote from 77-year-old male Veteran, Tucson VA Medical Center, AZ).

Going into harm's way is usually associated with 1st responders and not VA staff! But this Veteran recognizes what courage looks like during the pandemic when she states, ***“Even during the COVID situation, the Pitt VA staff have gone above and beyond to get me seen. I really appreciate the care and concerns.”*** *Owning The Moment* sometimes takes extraordinary courage—the kind that is appreciated by a grateful nation caring for some of its most treasured citizens. (VSignals quote from 43-year-old female Veteran, **Pittsburgh VA Medical Center-University Drive, PA**)

In order to build trusted relationship with our Veterans, they have to know that we care for them and that they are more than just a number or “patient” to us, they have to believe that we see them for who they are as unique and special individuals. ***“As I have mentioned many times before, the VA treats me as though I were their only patient. The "private" medical providers could learn from the VA as to how to treat an individual. The security considering the Covid-19 was exceptional throughout and I felt comfortable that staff was very concerned about the virus. Thank You!”*** Trust is something we must work to gain over time, and we build that trust by Owning each and every Moment we have with our Veterans. When they trust us as this gentleman does, they choose VA! (VSignals quote from 83-year-old male Veteran, **Minneapolis VA Medical Center. MN**)

It is all about actively listening, making sure the Veteran feels heard and working to understand what they need - even if they are not entirely sure themselves. ***“Dr. Bennet does an excellent job of articulating what I need(ed) to do to help my shoulder. He has been very flexible and competent during the COVID 19 situation and handled every issue professionally.”*** It's about “doing the right thing” - serving the broader outcome the Veteran seeks rather than just the task to be completed. (VSignals quote from 48-year-old male Veteran, **Durham VA Medical Center, NC**)

May 26, 2020

When we think of what Own the Moment is and what it looks like in action, I would say that Jesse really shined. His actions exemplify all of the guiding principles and made this Veteran's experience one that he will remember and tell others about. ***“I'd like to mention Jesse of Guest Services for his cheerful helpfulness when I had an appointment at the VA after the valet service had been shut down due to COVID-19. There were no volunteers available. Nonetheless Jesse provided the help I needed to get from Physical Therapy to where my car was parked. Again, he was cheerful and upbeat. And, for me, a positive VA experience.”*** Great job Jesse, thank you for taking the time to care enough to connect and guide this Veterans journey! (VSignals quote from a 73-year-old male Veteran from the **Carl T. Hayden Veterans' Administration Medical Center**)

Connecting and caring is one of the guiding principles to Own The Moment with our Veterans. The lifelong relationships we establish during normal times compels use to go above and beyond to ensure their needs are met during a crisis or other emergency. A 62-year-old Veteran from the **Biloxi VA Medical Center in Mississippi** said, ***“The***

facility that I use in Pensacola is closed due to the Pandemic but my Cardiologist Dr. Bowling called me at my home to check on me and asked if I was in need of anything. All my Doctors, Dr. Gonzalez, Dr. Menzies and their staff are all first rate in my book. I have been treated very well and literally owe my life to their diligence and professionalism. They have taken very good care of me.”

Why is Veterans Patient Experience important? Because Veterans have a choice of where they receive their care. We want Veterans to choose VA. The staff at the **Charles George Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center, NC** owned their moment and made a great impression on a first-time Veteran visit! ***“I felt very comfortable during my recent and first-time visit. Entering the hospital, considering Covid19 pandemic, all appeared to be under control and professionally handled. Everyone was cordial. Stacy Hellums, LPN was very nice.”*** (VSignals quote from a 57-year-old Male Veteran)

When our Veterans come to the VA and have a great experience, they don't always have the opportunity to say thank you. But, when they do, as this Veteran stated, ***“I was treated very well and they took care of my medical needs with care; very professional and was very impressed at what I saw and experienced at the Minneapolis VA with personnel making me feel safe as well as others during the Covid 19 pandemic.”*** It makes us feel extraordinary to know that we are owning the moment visibly in each encounter when and wherever we can. (VSignals quote from a 71-year-old Male Veteran, **Minneapolis VA Medical Center, MN**)

Using every interaction to show WECARE during these uncertain times is how we are strengthening trust with our Veterans and their families and caregivers. Our commitment to safety and well-being as well as treating everyone, including each other, with courtesy and respect doesn't go unnoticed by our nation's heroes. ***“Always feel great after visiting the Salt Lake City VA. Respect and professionalism always. I am so impressed by the cautions taken during this dang pandemic. I feel safe and cared for.”*** Every opportunity we get to show our commitment to providing an exceptional experience is a chance to earn the Veteran's next visit. Well done and way to Own the Moment! (VSignals quote from a 93-year-old male who visited the George E. Wahlen Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center in **Salt Lake City, UT**)

May 18, 2020

Connecting and Caring works both ways, when we think of all the ways that we can Own the Moment, sometimes it's the things we don't see or think of that make the difference in the lives of our Veterans. ***“This veteran thanks the good people at the VA, that are working through the troubled time of the COVID-19 virus. They are true warriors, in this hard fought battle and I wish them all God speed.”*** This Veteran's acknowledgement of the hard work performed by people with whom he has

built those trusted lifelong relationship with is an amazing tribute to the amazing work that is done every day by the employees of the VA! (VSignals quote from a 79-year-old male Veteran from the **New Orleans VA Medical Center**)

Sometimes we get so caught up and engaged in our lives and our jobs that we forget how important the little things are. As this Veteran shares, it is the ability of our great people to Understand and Respond to his needs that make the difference in his life. ***“What a huge help and service that is being provided to veterans and the "Mail Order VA Pharmacy Service". It is especially helpful by not having to go to the VA Pharmacy in person especially with the Covid 19 health concerns. Thank you VA Pharmacy for helping! It really means a lot to all of us Vets.”*** Remember to Own the Moments in our lives, because we never know when something we do will change the life of another! Be Good and Do Good! (VSignals quote from a 70-year-old male from the **Orlando VA Medical Center**)

When faced with changes in the traditional delivery model of healthcare, employees have an opportunity showcase the ICARE values. One of our Veterans said, ***“DR Bennett was kind enough to do my appointment over the phone. It was really a blessing considering COVID-19. I have always found my appointments with her of value and feel like she really cares.”*** As we interact with Veterans, their families, and caregivers, we show them ‘The VA Way’ to provide care that improves their health and wellbeing. (quote from 65-year-old female Veteran seen at the **Oklahoma City VA Medical Center, OK**)

Every day, our amazing staff and volunteers exemplify VA’s mission to honor Americas Veterans of providing excellent care. One Veteran said, ***“Am extremely pleased with the services I have always received from the VA Hospital and staff in Leavenworth, KS. Although I have excellent health insurance permitting me to go almost anywhere, VA is my first choice. The staff is always friendly, helpful and knowledgeable. Now with Covid-19 I am appreciating VA even more.”*** The connections with our Veterans as we care for them, their families, and caregivers, will ensure they continue to choose VA tomorrow. (quote from 84-year-old male Veteran seen at the **Colmery-O'Neil Veterans' Administration Medical Center, KS**)

At the VA, we know the change from face to face care to virtual care can be worrisome and difficult for our Veterans and their Caregivers. We also know that the positive actions and caring behaviors we do at each and every touchpoint along our Veterans journey shows dedication to patient experience. This 50-year-old Male Veteran from **North Las Vegas VA Medical Center, NV** said it best ***“As always, it was a convenient and informative experience. From the appointment setup to the video conference with Dr. Patel. Dr. Patel is always attentive to my health concerns in a comforting compassionate way. Thank you to all the wonderful staff members and volunteers at the SW LV VA clinic for all you do. Stay safe. Especially during these tough and challenging COVID times.”***

The dimensions of the Veterans Customer Experience are Effectiveness (I got the services I needed), Ease (It was easy to get the services I needed), and Emotion (I felt like a valued customer). A 73-year-old Male Veteran from the **Minneapolis VA Medical Center, MN** showed how VA made it easy for him to get his prescription filled. ***“I have found it very simple and easy to receive prescription drugs through the VA. I especially like reordering by mail as soon as I receive them in the mail. It is certainly far easier to do it this way especially in the Covid 19 era. Thank you very much.”***

May 13, 2020

Many Veterans have choices on where they go for healthcare, so every interaction with them is an opportunity to Own The Moment. I feel blessed to have the opportunity to go to the VA for my healthcare. With everything that is going on in the world with the corona virus, I feel the VA is doing the best they can to balance the Veterans needs and the safety of the staff. I have a teleconference medical appt at the end of May and will see how that works. Thank you. The way we treat Veterans today is the reason they will choose VA tomorrow. (quote from a 55-year-old male Veteran seen at the **North Las Vegas VA Medical Center, NV**)

Providing exceptional patient experience is part of our Own The Moment Guiding Principles, which are Connect and Care, Understand and Respond to Needs, and Guide The Journey. “The VA has reacted admirably to the COVID 19 situation. I have found it very easy to communicate with my providers and receive the services and medications I need. Thank You!” These are our foundational touchpoints for all of our decisions. (quote from a 31-year-old female Veteran, Westside (**Chicago, IL**))

As VA employees, we are always “on stage”, regardless of what roles we play. How we deliver customer experience is key to success, Veteran trust and an overall exceptional experience. At the **James A Haley Veterans’ Hospital**, a 53 year old Male Veteran let us know that we owned the moment by stating “rescheduled due to the virus; Saturday at Haley vs SoHi; quiet; wide open; thoughtful pre-screening; courteous and friendly staff Cannot adequately express how satisfied I was with my treatment; walked away reporting to my family how professionally they handled every aspect of my care thank you, VA! thank you, Haley!”

One of the best ways we, as VA employees, can own every moment and every encounter is to understand and respond to our Veterans and their caregivers needs. This caregiver expressed that by saying “Thank you for carefully taking care of my father’s needs during this pandemic. His questions were each addressed. His doctor double checked his past blood work and called me back at my home with a needed change. Thank again, he is doing well. (quote from a 90-year-old male Veteran seen at the **George E. Wahlen Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center, UT**)

Just being there for our Veterans when they feel as though the rest of the world is in turmoil and chaos, can make the difference. It is this trust that our Veterans have in their caregivers that lead to the shared experience as this Veteran shared. “During this COVID 19, Pandemic, the VA Hospital Staff and Nurses and Doctors, displayed a remarkable performance, and should be congratulated. They were there for me and I am sure for other Veterans also. Thanks for your support”. Part of Owning The Moment is the shared purpose, and when our Veterans trust us that is when those lifelong relationships can thrive! (quote from a 67-year-old male Veteran seen at the **Manhattan VA Medical Center, NY**)

Even when the interactions are virtual, our employees know how to Connect and Care! It is displayed in statements like this one from a Veteran in Wilmington. She made him feel safe and he trusts her! “Last visit was a phone call due to the virus. Which I completely understand. Just want to say Dr. Taylor has always made me important and that she cares. Hard to explain other than to say it is just a comfort relax feeling. She is very professional and most of all I trust her!” It is these little things that that Veteran will take away from his interaction with his provider! The fact that he felt important and cared for is the Emotional connection that will last! (quote from a 53-year-old male Veteran seen at the **Wilmington VA Clinic, NC**)

It is statements like what this Veteran left for his car team that demonstrate the level of trust and the depth of the relationship he has with them: “Thank all of you guys & girls at my VA hospital for being there during this time Covid -19!!! & earthquakes 🤯 Yes THANK EVERYONE no matter what kind of work they do!!! They are there helping VETERANS like me. And they have family that they are worried about!!!! They are still there at VA hospital working!!!!!!!!!! Helping me!!! God bless all of you 😊”. It is clear from his words that his team has taken the time to Own every Moment they have with him in fulfilling their commitment to the Shared Purpose of ensuring that those lifelong and trusted relationships are real and deeply engrained in what they do everyday! (quote from a 58-year-old male Veteran seen at the **George E. Wahlen, VA Medical Center, UT**)

No matter your role, when we connect and care for Veterans, their families, and caregivers, they notice: “Even with the Covid 19 crisis going on, everyone is helpful and friendly! I’m a proud veteran and absolutely love everything the VA offers me! Thank you for YOUR service!!” A simple, yet profound statement of gratitude, shaped by the Veteran’s various positive interactions with VA. (quote from a 57-year-old male Veteran seen at the **Biloxi VA Medical Center, MS**)

Coming to the VA can be stressful for some Veterans, but when staff use empathy and human connection, they feel valued as a customer. One Veteran said, “I did not have an appointment. I was a walk in and I was afraid that I would be met with negative energy due to Covid-19, however I was not. They saw me as if I had an appointment and mentally I felt so much better when I left. The good news is that I still will be able to keep my scheduled appointment and I can look at my issue of concern further. I was so grateful. Thanks to the entire team.” The way we Own every

Encounter with our Veterans will ensure they continue to choose VA! (quote from a 59-year old male Veteran seen at the **Kernersville VA Clinic, NC**)

During the pandemic, VA staff have been showing that they know how to Connect and Care and make lasting impressions on our Veterans. One Veteran put it this way, “Despite Covid-19 requirements, staff remained professional, friendly, helpful, and reassuring. Steps taken at entrance--taking temperatures, no need to use the kiosks, good directions to my final destination.” Own the Moment is not something we do; it is who we are (quote from a 70-year-old male Veteran, seen at the **Lebanon VA Medical Center, PA**)

At the nucleus of Own the Moment is the Veteran’s and Employee’s Experience. One employee at Tomball VA clinic highlights the importance of the employee experience especially during this pandemic: “The VA is the best organization I have ever been a part of the level of genuine care is above and beyond, even in this time of pandemic chaos, you are there for all of us. I am proud of my time in the Navy and Proud of the job the VA is doing to support its members.” This is a Veteran Employee exemplifying an “Attitude of Gratitude” for having a great place to work and speaks directly to how the Department of Veterans Affairs, as an institution, “Owns The Moment.” (quote from 65-year-old male Veteran at the **Male Tomball VA Clinic, TX**)

Our Shared Purpose is to build trusted, lifelong relationships with Veterans, their families, caregivers, and supporters. We do this by emplacing the OTM Principles and WECARE behaviors. A great example of this occurred at a recent encounter at the Tampa VA. “On 3/21/2020, I went to Tampa VA Emergency. Words cannot describe how well I was treated, considered, and respected. I was questioned and the DR said no Corona! Was I satisfied with his diagnosis ? Yes, thank you ! Well Done Tampa VA !” What we do and what we say drives how our Veterans feel. Tampa VA you made our Veteran feel respected and that goes a long way in earning trust. Way to Own the Moment! (quote from 74-year-old male Veteran seen at the **James A. Haley Veterans' Hospital, Tampa, FL**).

When Veterans reflect on the care they receive and how they are treated at the VA, it is the little things that they remember and tell others about. When we own the moment and make our Veterans feel important, they feel like WECARE, and they remember! “Everyone I came in contact with during my appointment at the Hutchinson VA Clinic was extremely caring, kind and curious! I am very grateful for them! They went above and beyond making sure I was healthy and did all they could to prevent spreading Corona 19.” This Veteran’s statement is a perfect example of this: it reflects how people treated him and the relationship that he has with his team. They care and it showed to him during his visit. (quote from 65-year-old Male served at **Robert J. Dole Department of Veterans Affairs Medical and Regional Office Center, KS**)

The Patient Experience framework includes a culture of kindness, collaboration, innovation, transparency and accountability that is obvious and contagious to Veterans, their families, and staff. Veterans feel welcomed and cared for throughout their healthcare journey. “I was greeted with a great smile and answer all my

questions. At the door as I came in were very professional because of what is going on with the virus, there were three people there and ask all the right questions, thanks to all. Stay safe.” Staff embody the culture of kindness and “Own the Moment” by their actions and behaviors every time in every interaction. (quote from 75-year-old Male Veteran at the **Sacramento VA Medical Center**).

May 4, 2020

As Secretary Wilkie says, “Our priority at VA is customer service, that is my prime directive. I’m privileged to champion VA’s commitment to excellent customer service for all Veterans, Servicemembers, their families, caregivers, and survivors in the delivery of care, benefits, and memorial services.” We strive to do this with every Veteran, during every encounter, as this Veteran so movingly recounts in his most recent VA experience: “I enjoy using the VA mail order pharmacy. The service has been EXCELLENT for my needs. If I have a question all I need to do is call and they answer my questions. Thank you to all who work in the VA mail order pharmacy. Stay safe during this covid pandemic.” By employing human design principles and modeling best practices from America’s leading service companies, we are creating an environment to Own The Moment that supports and empowers frontline and clinical employees with the knowledge and skills to deliver an exceptional customer experience. (quote from 70-year-old male seen at **Durham VA Medical Center, NC**)

When asked what our shared purpose is the answer is: it’s the sum of all interactions that define our Veterans experience. It takes all of us working together as a team to fulfill this purpose, which helps us ensure we are building trusted and lifelong relationships with our Veterans, like this one: “I am extremely grateful to those at the VA that help me with their exceptional services. I really think of you guys during these difficult Covid-19 times - Stay safe!” When our Veterans say things like this, it is clear that we are succeeding in fulfilling our shared purpose and that those relationships are real and have matured into trusted friendships. (quote from 69-year-old male served by the Pharmacy at **Audie L. Murphy Memorial Veterans' Hospital, TX**).

When we think about moments that matter to Veterans, in the care they receive from the VA, one of the most important aspects of those moments is how well we make them feel heard and cared for by all staff members, during every interaction. As shared by this Veteran about her experience during a recent visit to primary care, every member of the VA team ensured they owned the moment with her: “Everyone was courteous and treated me as a vet with honor and respect and especially during this COVID-19 situation going on. I still was seen and treated with respect and honor. God bless the VA nurses, doctors, and staff along with security who were kind as well.” It is these moments that matter. Guiding our Veterans’ journey through the entire

process in a way that reassures them we truly understand and care for them builds trusted and lifelong relationships. It is these trusted relationships that ensure our Veterans will continue to choose the VA! (quote from 54-year-old female seen at Primary Care in the **Fayetteville VA Medical Center, NC**)

We strive to make sure that every veteran in every encounter feels acknowledged, warmly welcomed, and cared for in a way that makes them feel as though they are an individual, not just a number. By practicing empathy and meeting them where they are, we strive to ensure every Veteran walks away from their encounter with the VA as satisfied as this gentleman was with his service at the pharmacy.

“During these trying times dealing with COVID 19 the staff was very professional but still offered a kind human compassion. My questions were listened to and I was given answers. I am very happy to have these fine folks being available to help me. Thank you.” When we conclude each interaction with the question “Is there anything more I can do for you?” we give the Veteran the opportunity to end the encounter in a way that ensures they are satisfied and happy with the care they have received. (quote from 62-year-old male served by the Pharmacy at the **San Diego VA Medical Center, CA**)

VA is prepared for COVID-19 and started emergency preparedness exercises weeks before the first case was confirmed. We are here for every Veteran that needs us during this health crisis, as this Veteran recently experienced during his most recent visit: "Everyone was concerned about the covid 19 and taking a lot of precautions. Got me right in and out." The safety of Veterans and our employees remains a critical imperative. (quote from 75-year-old male Veteran seen at **VISN 8, Malcom Randall Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center**)

April 20, 2020

With recent increased reliance on telehealth, VA remains agile and responsive to the healthcare needs of its Veterans: “The VA center in Tucson AZ consistently provides the best medical service available anywhere. Their new tele-health (doctor appointment via phone) was very beneficial and convenient, especially during the COVID-19 quarantine period. And the pharmacy filling the prescriptions by mail has been great in all respects. You people rock!!” Way to go VA. This is how we continue to own the moment under these abnormal circumstances. (70-year old Veteran, **Tucson VA Medical Center**)

Although the COVID-19 pandemic has changed just about every aspect of daily living, the VA continues to provide excellent care and service for its Veterans: "With this Coronavirus happening, the doctors have been extremely helpful in ensuring I get all prescriptions and refills filled in a timely manner." You can count on your VA, Veterans. We are always here for you. (quote from 48-year-old female Veteran seen at the **Orlando VA Medical Center**)

Part of owning the moment is living and understanding our guiding principles, and one of those is understanding and responding to the needs of our veterans. Doing so in a way that they appreciate is one of the things that make the care we provide our Veterans so unique. "VA pharmacy has been doing a superb job. It's very convenient to get my prescriptions in the mail, no waiting in line especially at this COVID 19 crisis situation. KEEP UP THE GOOD WORK AND A JOB WELL DONE! Many thanks and appreciation." How we connect, care, and guide their journey by understanding and responding to their needs is uniquely VA care. (67-year-old male Veteran seen at **San Diego VA Medical Center**)

Our current healthcare situation has created opportunities for the VA to reevaluate how it provides services to Veterans. New challenges are requiring providers to work virtually and conduct business exclusively by phone. We continue to connect with our Veterans with ease, effectiveness and emotion to guide their journey and deliver the care and services they need. "I got a call today from a VA nurse , asking if I had enough medicine (prescriptions). Also if I needed food . That made me feel important, that I was ok in this COVID-19 Crisis. Also [***] PA is my Doctor . We recently had a phone appointment to take care of a recent health concern. She took really good care of me . Had my meds the next day! Wonderful! [sic]." Our VA professionals are adapting to circumstances without missing a beat on demonstrating ICARE values and WECARE behaviors. (quote from a 59-year-old male Veteran seen on 04/01/2020 at **VISN 10, Chalmers P. Wylie Veterans Outpatient Clinic**)

For many of our Veterans these are especially stressful times. They want to know that their VA is still there for them, even while facilities are temporarily closed and routine operations are paused. The VA is a trusted provider and partner in their healthcare, regardless of the crisis. "[I'm] extremely grateful for all the staff that was involved during my visit. FHCC is taking the Covid-19 Pandemic seriously and I thank each and everyone of you! I came in with chest pain and extreme fatigue and I didnt think much of it but the staff surely did! I ultimately tested positive for Covid-19 and doing well thanks to yall! All of you are truly a blessing to us all! Stay Safe!! [sic] Through thick and thin, Veterans can count on the VA for excellent care and services. (quote from 34-year-old male Veteran seen on 04/06/2020 at **VISN 12, Captain James A. Lovell Federal Health Care Center**)

The VA has expanded use of VA Video Connect (VVC) so that Veterans can continue to receive care through minimal contact with staff. This has resulted in more being seen, while saving time and reducing the potential for harmful exposures. "Your use of telemedicine has been seamless and very convenient for me. I hope after the COVID pandemic, the VA will continue to explore wider adoption of telemedicine for some appointments, as it's super convenient, saves time/money, and would improve my overall experience with VA medicine." Our goal is to build lifelong relationships with our Veterans. The VA will continue to find innovative ways to provide access to exceptional care long after the current pandemic. (quote from a 34-year-old male Veteran seen on 02/24/2020 at **VISN 1, Jamaica Plain VA Medical Center**).

Even during this pandemic, the VA remains committed to providing consistent, exceptional healthcare experiences designed for our Veterans' individual needs. I am always amazed at

how nice and helpful everyone is at the V.A. They will accommodate my schedule making sure the times for appointments work for me. They also answer any questions that I may have and are very knowledgeable. When I needed exercises to do at home during the corona virus crisis, they knew exactly what to give to me that really helps. I am glad that I have them! Making our Veterans feel welcome and valued doesn't stop in these uncertain times. Understanding and responding to their needs are how we continue to strengthen Veterans' trust in the VA. (Quote from a 57-year-old female Veteran seen on 03/31/2020 at VISN 12, **Captain James A. Lovell Federal Health Care Center**)

VA has contingency plans in place to address the needs of the Veterans receiving care at VA. "Recently I had a prescription to pick up at the facility. Due to the corona virus pick up was arranged without me getting out of my vehicle. The whole affair was very well organized, and all personnel involved were very pleasant and professional under extremely trying conditions. I salute them." By working with the Veteran to get with they need in a manner they find convenient, VA creates a positive experience in health care delivery (quote from a 72-year-old male Veteran seen on 04/04/2020 at **VISN 5, Louis A. Johnson Veterans' Administration Medical Center**)

VA is here for every Veteran that needs us during this health care crisis. By delivering consistently exceptional care, VA functions as a trusted health partner with the Veterans they serve." I have never had a bad experience at any of the VA facilities I have used, Bonham VA is a great facility and everyone has been more then professional and I'm extremely pleased with the help I received and the concern during this covid19 pandemic. I would also like reflect on my care at the VA in Dallas, I have been blessed with the best care at all the VA facilities I have visited. [sic] " By maintaining trusted relationships with providers, VA can make sure Veterans feel heard and cared for. (quote from a 72-year-old male Veteran seen on 02/11/2020 at **VISN 17, Sam Rayburn Memorial Veterans Center**)

The key ingredient to Veterans customer experience is emotion, making sure our Veterans are treated and feel like valued customers. How we deliver care is essential to a great experience through an emotional connection as shown by the voice of our Veterans – "Today I had Physical Therapy with Hillari Olson. Due to Coronavirus we cannot meet in person so she calls on the phone. As a dedicated, outstanding Physical Therapist, she has uploaded dozens of YouTube videos on yoga and exercise for Parkinsons disease that she made herself. Her videos are very helpful to keep me moving! Also had Speech Therapy with Ann St. Jacque who has been incredibly helpful" (49-year-old male Veteran, **Minneapolis VA Medical Center**).

Veterans Patient Experience is the sum of all interactions, shaped by the organization's culture, that influence Veterans' and their families' perceptions along their healthcare journey. We are doing this as this Veteran says so eloquently. "The Bedford and Haverhill VA locations are my only two experiences with the VA. But all involved with these locations have been excellent to deal with. They have always responded quickly, professionally, and personally regarding any interaction I have had with them. Even now, during the Corona Virus ordeal, they have responded quickly and efficiently with all my needs and requests.

Great team!"Our PX vision is to ensure that Veterans and their families are at the center of everything we do, and our system ensures that every Veteran has consistent, exceptional experience no matter where they go for care. (68-year-old male Veteran seen at **Edith Nourse Rogers Memorial Veterans' Hospital**)

A very important portion of owning the moment is being the person that our Veterans think of when they think and talk about what their VA experience is. Being able to live the WECARE behaviors we can ensure that every single one of our encounters with our Veterans and each other send the message loud and clear that we and the care we give our patients are the very best in the world. The technician performing the imaging during this appointment was fantastic! She greeted me with a warm welcome and informed me of the procedures that would keep both of us safe during the COVID-19 pandemic. She should be commended for her professional manner and her personal dedication to her patients. Plus, I loved the design on her face mask (dinosaur grin). This interaction should how even the little things make a difference and help us connect with our Veterans! (61-year-old male Veteran seen at the **Jamaica Plain VA Medical Center**)

Being able to relieve and ease the stress of our Veterans, by just taking the time to see and treat them as an individual, instead of a number in the long list of "cases" we have to see today can and will ensure that our patients feel valued and help us in building those trusted and lifelong relationships we strive to have with our Veterans. "VA Panama City Beach Clinic Dr. Armisted Staff are the Best and always helpful, courteous and kind especially that U.S. Navy Hospital Corpsman LPN who works there too. VA Baton Rouge Dr. McIntire Staff are always the Best.. I returned home due to COVID-19. I knew that I had a Cold, the Flu, Allergies or COVID-19. I contacted Nurse Mary Springer and staff and was tested. Excellent Staff, No Better." This team in the Baton Rouge clinic Owned the Moment with this Veteran and his input into VSignals shows that their actions, behaviors and how he felt during and after his visit made a difference in his life. Great job team keep up the great work!!! (61-year-old male Veteran seen at the **Baton Rouge VA Clinic**)

April 15, 2020

By taking every chance we get to live the "Shared Purpose" and build trusted, lifelong relationships with our Veterans, their families, caregivers and supporters, we make the lives of our Veterans better and make their experience one that makes them feel like they are important. ***"I so appreciated that they got me in early due to uncertainty of Corona Virus and they were not sure if they would be able to see me in April. I had a spot on my head that I wanted to make sure that it was not skin cancer. Dr. Andrews ALWAYS takes time to listen. She even remembers things that I told her at the last visit. She is one of the most caring, attentive physicians that I have ever had."*** This is how we ensure Veterans can say they trust that we are fulfilling the country's commitment to take care of them. (quote from 68-year-old female Veteran seen at **Phoenix VA Medical Center**)

During these difficult times, our efforts to show **WECARE** won't go unnoticed.... *"Blessed to have the health care providers of the San Francisco Hospital & Santa Rosa VA clinic. Always a good experience and I'm confident I am receiving optimal care. Thank you to all the hard-working providers who are giving double duty during the current COVID-19 global threat. Sincerely, A grateful Vet."* Great work, everyone. Our Veterans appreciate your commitment to **Own the Moment**. (quote from 75-year-old male Veteran seen at the **San Francisco VA Medical Center**)

Even in the midst of a crisis we are still committed to our first priority of providing exceptional customer experience: *"I was at the Riverhead VA clinic during the Corona Virus crisis. The Receptionist was very nice and even during these trying times she showed me the respect and concern for my problem. Thank her very much! I wish I had gotten her name, to thank her properly."* What an exceptional display of the WECARE Behaviors. (quote from 71-year-old male Veteran seen in **Riverhead VA Clinic, VISN 2**)

Providence VA Medical Center is one of our many facilities that are providing our Veterans with alternative care options. *"The COVID-19 crisis has everyone in the health care sector scrambling to prevent the spread of this virus while providing quality care. In my case, my one on one meeting with my Dr was changed to a telephone appointment. The follow up appointment was made that same day for 5 months from now. Considering the massive rescheduling effort that is underway due to the shut down, I think this is awesome"*. Transitioning to these care alternatives continue to demonstrate VA's agility in maintaining all three "E's" of the dimensions of Veteran Customer Experience: Effectiveness, Ease, and Emotion. (quote 73-year-old male Veteran seen at **Providence VA Medical Center, VISN 1**)

There is nothing like a crisis to bring out the best in all of us. Both Veterans and VA employees are seeing the value in our shared purpose.... *"In my recent visit to the Sacramento VAMC, it was apparent that they took not only my visit and subsequent appointment seriously, but they were ensuring ALL personnel that came there were screened for possible COVID-19 exposure. They ALL were extremely courteous to those they screened. They displayed patience and care with my visit and left me with a satisfied feeling as I left. Thank you!!"* Way to Own the Moment Sacramento and thank you to all the hard-working staff in VA. (quote from 55-year-old male, **Sacramento VA Medical Center**)

The trusted lifelong relationships that VA employees have built with our Veterans are front, center, and visible.... *"I want to thank the Pharmacists who work hard on our behalf at the VA Pharmacy. Us Veterans depend greatly on their service. Every prescription [whether] filled at the VA Pharmacy or mail[ed] to the VA pharmacy are greatly appreciated by us. Their continued sacrifice is also very appreciated especially during this Corona Virus. Everyone at the VA are true Heroes because they are working in harm's way."* Way to Own

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April 8, 2020

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