



THE PULSE



Flu Vaccine Clinics

Walk-In Clinic:

-Open at VA Medical Center in Altoona every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from September 20, 2021 through October 29, 2021--from 7:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. in the second-floor auditorium.

The clinic is open to Veterans, employees, and those enrolled in the Caregiver Support Program.

Vaccines will also be offered at regularly scheduled appointments.

Drive-Thru Clinics:

-Will occur one Saturday at each Outpatient Clinic and are open to Veterans and those enrolled in the Caregiver Support Program.

Schedule for Drive-Thru Clinics:

Saturday 9/25:

-Huntingdon (8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.)
-Johnstown (8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.)
-DuBois (9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.)

Saturday 10/2:

-Indiana (9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.)

Saturday 10/9

-State College (8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.)
-Altoona (9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.)

COVID-19:

All Veterans entering the Altoona Medical Center or Outpatient Clinics have the option to bring their own mask. If you do not have a mask, one will be provided by staff.

We ask everyone to continue to mask, and follow social distancing protocols.

James E. Van Zandt VAMC Awarded Best in Experience Award

By: Evan Hinkley

The James E. Van Zandt VA Medical Center was awarded the Department of Veterans Affairs 2021 Best in Patient Experience Award. The award recognized the facility's dedication to exceptional Veteran experience.

The facility scored the highest in the nation for patient experience, trust, best place to work, with a top overall combined experience score.

"We're proud to receive this award," said Sigrid Andrew, VA Medical Center Director. "It's just a testament that our team knows how to take care of Veterans, and has done an exemplary job of doing that."

All 152 VA Medical Centers are ranked by complexity levels, with one facility from each of the three complexity levels being selected. Ms. Andrew attributed this award to providing strong support to employees, focusing on Veterans needs rather than metrics, and growing resources where Veterans requested.

The VA Medical Center, along with its five community-based outpatient clinics serve 14 counties and more than 26,000 Veterans. During the last three years, the facility has grown more than 50 services, added 300 personnel and expanded its infrastructure foot print by adding 60,000 sq foot of additional clinical and administrative space.

Facility Update- New Specialty Clinic Addition Opens

By: Evan Hinkley

In June 2021, a new specialty clinic addition opened on the third floor of the James E. Van Zandt VA Medical Center. The new 12,500 square foot space houses Cardiology, Optometry, and Respiratory specialty care—with each service gaining additional space.

"We're really excited for this space," said Medical Center Director, Sigrid Andrew. "It's new and fresh and it allows us to expand from our really tight quarters, because we have increased our specialties so much."

Planning for the approximately \$8 million addition started five years ago and Director Andrew said the project is largely a result of Veteran and staff feedback.

"We asked Veterans and staff what they need, and they gave us a list of specialties. To that end, we have continued to expand with what our Veteran population is asking us for," she said.

The addition was designed for collaboration between services — especially Cardiology and Respiratory.

"When a Veteran comes in for their cardiac appointment, they very often need to see respiratory service as well—now they simply go across the hall. So it's a very convenient thing for our Veterans and improves their overall experience," Director Andrew said.

The addition also features a non-skid floor, spacious rooms for patients and equipment, and a skybridge connecting the addition to the existing third floor of the hospital.

On the roof of the addition are 170 solar panels that, during prime sunlight hours, can provide nearly enough energy to power the entire addition. This allows the space to be close to self-sufficient.

