

# JAMES E. VAN ZANDT

# ANNUAL REPORT

## FY 2021



A SHOT IN THE ARM  
FOR OUR NATION'S HEROES

VA



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs  
Veterans Health Administration  
James E. Van Zandt VA Medical Center

# DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Dear Stakeholders,

This year, the Altoona VAMC facility, along with our five community-based outpatient clinics (CBOC) in DuBois, Huntingdon, Indiana, Johnstown and State College remained steadfast in fulfilling President Abraham Lincoln's charge to care for those "who shall have borne the battle".

I have always said our facility is a special place to work. In my more than 30 years of VA experience, the commitment, compassion, and determination I have seen here in Altoona is unparalleled. Our focus is on the Veteran. Our exceptional services and staff are why our Veterans Choose VA.

We continue to be leaders in the community in providing services and healthcare to our Veterans. That was demonstrated when we received the Department of Veterans Affairs 2021 Best in Patient Experience Award. Our facility scored the highest in the nation for patient experience, trust, and ranked among one of the best places to work. This is thanks to our amazing staff, who work daily to take care of our nation's heroes.



**SIGRID ANDREW**  
**DIRECTOR**

***"The VA is a special place because heroes walk our halls."***

As we continue our battle against the COVID-19 Virus, I am proud of our facility's effort to vaccinate our Veterans. Throughout the year, we have administered more than 28,000 vaccines and boosters to Veterans, spouses, caregivers, and employees. We have also continued to expand our Telehealth Services; we now see hundreds of Veterans in their own homes. This makes it easier to bring our wrap around services to our most compromised patients. We have seen a large increase to our facility resources because of our staff's hard work in understanding our data, coding, reimbursement, and productivity. These increases have led to us expanding our services, increasing our quality of care, and adding new specialists to our team.



I knew that our Veterans and staff were extraordinary people, but what has become increasingly apparent over the past year is the depth of their promise. The trials of the past year continue to support my opinion; the VA is a very special place because heroes walk our halls.

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# BUDGET & EMPLOYEES

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**\$258,381,000**

**TOTAL OPERATING BUDGET**

**1,040 TOTAL EMPLOYEES**

**228 VETERAN EMPLOYEES**

**278 NURSES**

**38 PHYSICIANS**





# UNIQUE PATIENTS



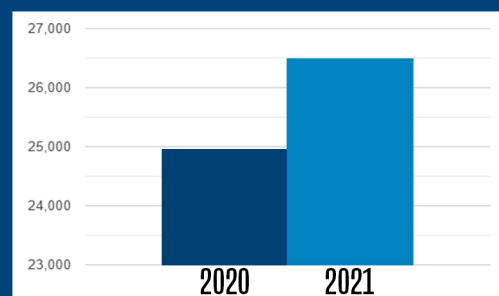
26,500  
TOTAL UNIQUE PATIENTS



9%

INCREASE IN  
UNIQUE PATIENTS

UNIQUE PATIENTS



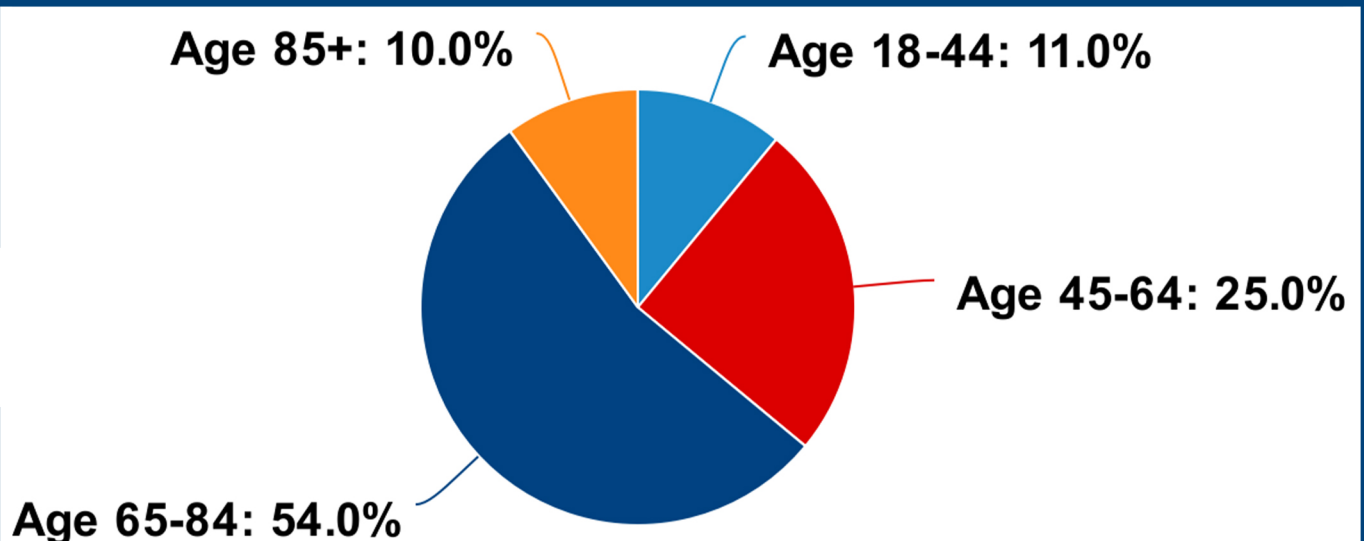
FISCAL YEAR

# ENROLLMENT

**24,700 MALE VETERANS**

**1,800 FEMALE VETERANS**

## AGE DISTRIBUTION



# OUTPATIENT



330,694  
OUTPATIENT VISITS

51  
OPERATING  
BEDS

1,376  
SURGICAL  
PROCEDURES

566  
ADMISSIONS

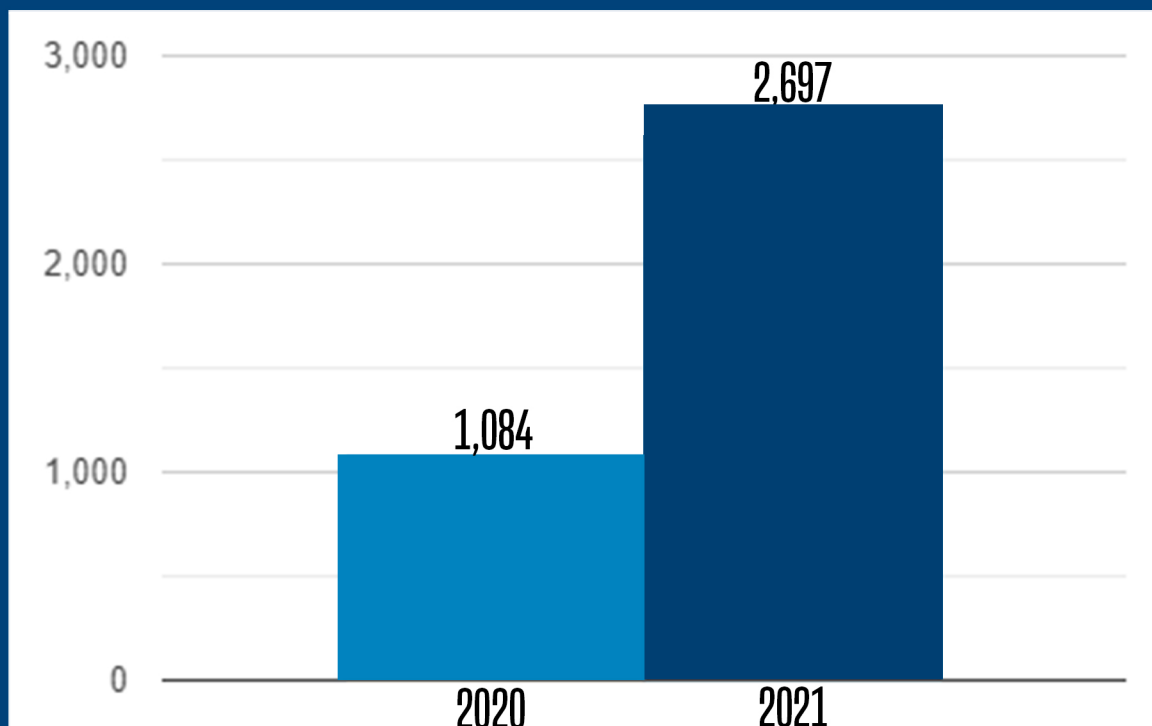
# TELEHEALTH DATA



149%

INCREASE IN  
VA VIDEO CONNECT USAGE

VA VIDEO CONNECT VISITS

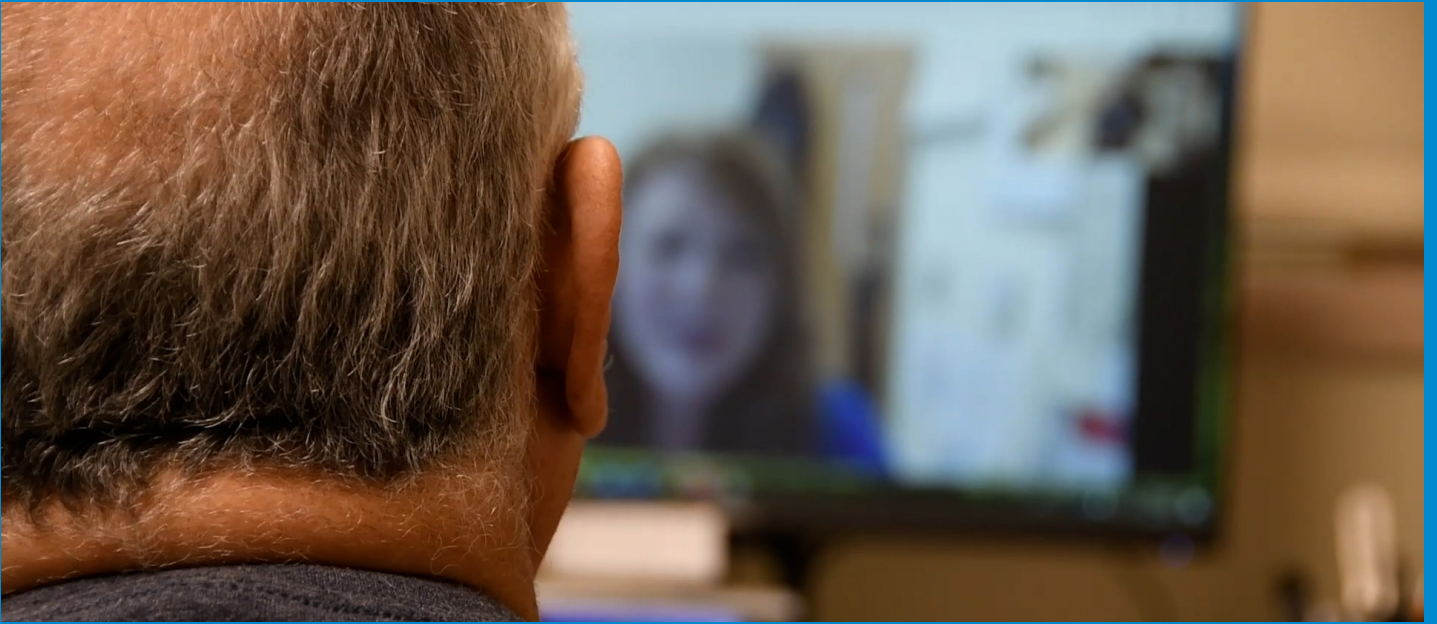


FISCAL YEAR



# TELEHEALTH DATA

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37,490

ENCOUNTERS VIA TELEHEALTH

32,731

TELEMENTAL HEALTH  
CARE ENCOUNTERS

3,657

UNIQUE VETERANS USED  
SECURE MESSAGING

86

UNIQUE VETERANS  
SERVED VIA E-CONSULT

# VOULUNTARY SERVICES

150  
VOLUNTEERS

102,000 VOLUNTEER HOURS



# WHOLE HEALTH



AS OUR WHOLE HEALTH PROGRAM CONTINUES TO GROW,  
WE FOCUS ON WHAT MATTERS TO EACH VETERAN.

ACUPUNCTURE

GUIDED IMAGERY

MINDFULNESS

PROGRAMS THROUGH COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS



# FACILITY NEWS

## 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."



***"This award is just a testament that our team knows how to take care of Veterans."***

***-Sigrid Andrew, Director***



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 NEWS

## SPECIAL EMPHASIS PROGRAM LAUNCHED; SUPPORTS INCLUSIVENESS

By: Evan Hinkley

In the Summer of 2021, The James E. Van Zandt VA Medical Center continued its commitment to serving all Veterans by engaging in Special Emphasis Programs (SEP's).

SEP's are designed to promote inclusion and stop discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, or disability.

The two primary goals of SEP's are to: (1) raise awareness of the importance of diversity and inclusiveness for Veterans and staff, and (2) identify and eliminate discriminatory practices to ensure equal treatment and a welcoming environment for VA employees and Veterans.

***"We serve all  
who served our  
nation."***

***-Craig Wingate,  
SEP Coordinator***



Numerous empirical studies have shown positive correlation between diversity and organizational performance. Research shows that diverse teams are more creative, are better at problem solving, and result in better decision making—compared to less diverse groups.

Two flagpoles were installed outside the Medical Center to allow SEP flags to fly during different days and months throughout the year. The first flag raised was the LGBTQ+ Pride Flag for Pride Month in June.

Flags raised as part of the SEP include: The Women's Suffrage Flag for Women's Equality Day (August), A Hispanic Heritage Flag (Sept. 15-Oct. 15), a Disability Employment Awareness Flag (October), and Black History Month Flag (February).

"The flags show that our VA is supportive of all Veterans in the community," said Craig Wingate, Special Emphasis Program Coordinator. "If one additional Veteran comes to our facility for healthcare as a result of this program, that's a success. We serve all who served our nation."



# FACILITY NEWS

## NEW SPECIALTY CLINIC ADDITION OPENS; ENHANCES PATIENT EXPERIENCE

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 the 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).

The waiting room area of the addition features a skylight, one of many design elements used to give natural lighting to 75% of the new space. Natural lighting is proven to improve overall mood and well-being.

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.

# FACILITY NEWS

## NUTRITION AND FOOD SERVICES MODERNIZATION



By: Amanda Hite

The mission of Nutrition and Food Services is to provide excellent comprehensive and innovative nutrition and food service programs for our Veterans and stakeholders that are evidence based and support the full continuum of healthcare through interdisciplinary collaboration both within and outside the Veterans Health Administration. Nutrition and food services is two services under one direction.

Clinical Nutrition is comprised of registered dietitians led by the Clinical Nutrition Manager. Nutrition services include face-to-face and VVC appointments for individuals and groups for medical nutrition therapy located at the Altoona VAMC and all Community Based Outpatient Clinics (CBOC).

Group nutrition classes include a nationally recognized Diabetes Self-Management Education class, MOVE! Weight Management class, and a Healthy Teaching Kitchen class. Nutrition and Food Services also has an affiliation with The Pennsylvania State University as a clinical and food service management site for undergraduate and graduate level nutrition students.

Food Service Operations is comprised of food service workers, cooks, and health technicians. This group is led by the Food Service Systems Manager who is a registered dietitian and a Food Production Supervisor - who is an Executive Chef.

To meet our mission, Nutrition and Food Services is modernizing its services to include a select menu supported by health technicians at the Veterans' bedside and made to order cooking on the CLC units for 3 meals a day, 7 days a week.

The additional modernized services is aimed to improve Veteran and staff satisfaction, reduce waste with more input from our customers, and align services with the community.

The modernization effort will enable Nutrition and Food Services to deliver premier level nutrition and food service programs using Veteran centered, results driven, and forward looking principles.



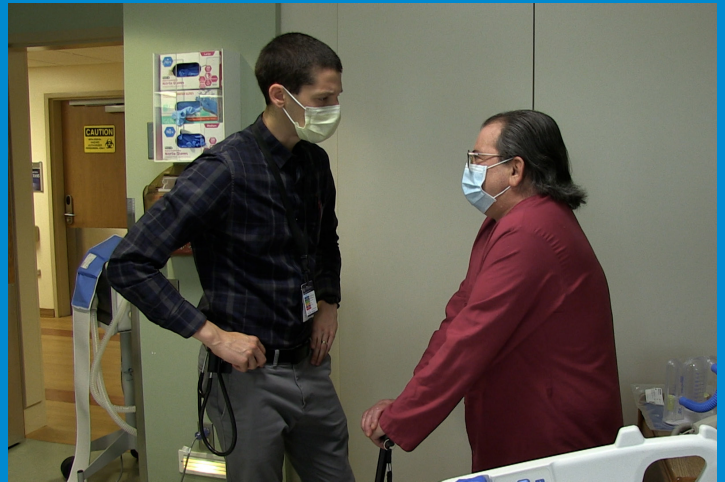


# SERVICES OFFERED

## Altoona VAMC:

- Allergy
- Audiology
- Cardiology
- Caregiver Support
- Chaplain
- Chemotherapy-Infusion
- Chiropractic
- Colonoscopy
- Dental/Oral Surgery
- Dermatology
- Geriatrics and Extended Care
- Gynecology
- Home Based Primary Care
- Homeless Veteran Care
- Intimate Partner Violence
- Laboratory and Pathology
- LGBT Veteran Care
- Low Vision and Blind Rehabilitation
- Mental Health Care
- Military Sexual Trauma
- Minority Veteran Care
- My HealtheVet Coordinator
- Neurology
- Nutrition, Food, and Dietary
- Occupational Therapy
- Ophthalmology - Cataract Surgery
- Optometry
- Orthopedics
- Otolaryngology
- Palliative and Hospice Care
- Pharmacy
- PMR Wheelchair Clinic
- PMR Amputee Clinic
- PMR PT Compression Stockings
- PMR Physical Therapy Triage Clinic
- Podiatry
- Post 911 Military to VA
- Primary Care
- Prosthetics
- Pulmonary Medicine
- Radiology
- Respiratory Therapy
- Returning Service Member Care
- Smoking and Tobacco Cessation
- Social Work

- Specialty Care
- Speech Therapy
- Suicide Prevention
- Surgery
- Telehealth
- Travel Reimbursement
- Transition Care and Management
- Urology
- Veterans Justice Outreach
- Women Veteran Care



## DuBois CBOC:

- Audiology and Speech CVT
- Caregiver Support
- Home Based Primary Care
- Homeless Veteran Care
- Laboratory and Pathology
- Low Vision and Blind Rehabilitation
- Mental Health Care
- Military Sexual Trauma
- Occupational Therapy
- Optometry
- Physical Therapy
- Podiatry
- Primary Care
- Radiology
- Smoking and Tobacco Cessation
- Social Work
- Suicide Prevention
- Telehealth
- Transition Care and Management
- Travel Reimbursement
- Wound Care

# SERVICES OFFERED

## State College CBOC:

- Audiology and Speech CVT
- Caregiver Support
- Home Based Primary Care
- Homeless Veteran Care
- Laboratory and Pathology
- Low Vision and Blind Rehabilitation
- Mental Health Care
- Military Sexual Trauma
- Occupational Therapy
- Optometry
- Physical Therapy CVT
- Podiatry
- Primary Care
- Psychiatry
- Radiology
- Smoking and Tobacco Cessation
- Social Work
- Suicide Prevention
- Telehealth
- Transition Care and Management
- Travel Reimbursement
- Wound Care

## Huntingdon CBOC:

- Caregiver Support
- Homeless Veteran Care
- Laboratory and Pathology
- Low Vision and Blind Rehabilitation
- Mental Health Care
- Military Sexual Trauma
- Neurology Consultation
- Optometry
- Physical Therapy
- Podiatry
- Primary Care
- Radiology
- Smoking and Tobacco Cessation
- Social Work
- Speech CVT
- Suicide Prevention
- Telehealth
- Travel Reimbursement
- Transition Care and Management
- VA Video Connect
- Wound Care

## Johnstown CBOC:

- Audiology and Speech CVT
- Caregiver Support
- Home Base Primary Care
- Homeless Veteran Care
- Laboratory and Pathology
- Low Vision and Blind Rehabilitation
- Mental Health Care
- Military Sexual Trauma
- Occupational Therapy
- Optometry
- Pain Clinic
- Physical Therapy CVT
- Podiatry
- Primary Care
- Radiology
- Smoking and Tobacco Cessation
- Social Work
- Suicide Prevention
- Telehealth
- Transition Care and Management
- Wound Care
- Travel Reimbursement

## Indiana CBOC:

- Audiology and Speech CVT
- Caregiver Support
- Laboratory and Pathology
- Low Vision and Blind Rehabilitation
- Mental Health Care
- Military Sexual Trauma
- Optometry
- Physical Therapy CVT
- Podiatry
- Primary Care
- Radiology
- Suicide Prevention
- Telehealth
- Travel Reimbursement



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**VA**



**U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs**

**Veterans Health Administration**

***James E. Van Zandt VA Medical Center***