



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 22, 2022

VA recognizes James H. Quillen VA Medical Center National HeRO awardees for commitment to patient safety

(MOUNTAIN HOME, Tenn.) — The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) honored five James H. Quillen VA Medical Center (JHQVAMC) employees during its quarterly National HeRO Award ceremony March 18, 2022, for their contributions to Veteran Health Administration’s (VHA) ‘Journey to High Reliability.’

JHQVAMC employees Kara Burton, a speech language pathologist, Gary Cutshall, a nursing assistant, Donna Emmert, a dietician, Brandy Goble, food service systems manager, and Holly Taylor, assistant chief of Nutrition and Food Services, were recognized for their safety efforts and process improvement initiatives to reduce aspiration risk for patients who suffer from dysphagia and have difficulty managing to safely swallow liquids.

VHA’s enterprise-wide Journey to High Reliability aims to continuously improve its processes by maximizing patient safety and reducing harm to restore trust and ensure every Veteran receives the high-quality care they deserve.

“I am immensely proud of the work our staff accomplished to enhance our provisioning of quality care to Veterans,” JHQVAMC Director Dean B. Borsos stated. “Receiving a HeRO Award means our staff members have embraced High Reliability Principles and practices by continuously improving our processes to ensure VHA delivers the best care possible. Veterans have a champion on their side when it comes to these stellar employees.”

The JHQVAMC team was one of 10 teams or individuals nominated by VHA leadership in one of five categories: Clinical Individual from a Veterans Integrated Service Network (VISN) or Facility, Non-Clinical Individual from a VISN or Facility, Clinical Team from a VISN or Facility, Non-Clinical Team from a VISN or Facility, and Individual or Team from VHA Central Office.

The National HeRO Award is the highest level of High Reliability Organization (HRO) recognition available within VHA and is reserved to honor employees who advance VHA’s Journey to High Reliability through demonstration of VHA’s HRO Principles in action.

Learn more about VA's Journey to High Reliability at [VA National Center for Patient Safety](#).

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(MOUNTAIN HOME, Tenn.) — Employees at James H. Quillen VA Medical Center (JHQVAMC) receive a National HeRO Award during a ceremony hosted by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) March 18, 2022. The quarterly National HeRO Award ceremony recognizes employees for their contributions to Veteran Health Administration's (VHA) 'Journey to High Reliability.' JHQVAMC employees Kara Burton, a speech language pathologist, Gary Cutshall, a nursing assistant, Donna Emmert, a dietician, Brandy C. Goble, food service systems manager, and Holly Taylor, assistant chief of Nutrition and Food Services, were recognized for their safety efforts and process improvement initiatives to reduce aspiration risk for patients who suffer from dysphagia and have difficulty managing to safely swallow liquids. Pictured left to right are: Dr. Colleen M. Noe, JHQVAMC associate director, Cutshall, Emmert, Goble, and Dr. Angela E. May, JHQVAMC chief of staff (acting). Burton and Taylor were unavailable for the ceremony.