



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

News Release

VA Long Beach
Healthcare System

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

VA Long Beach Expands Surgical Services to Include Neurosurgery

LONG BEACH, Calif. – VA Long Beach Healthcare System will soon begin performing neurosurgery – elective, urgent and emergent – in-house, in lieu of referring Veterans to another VA facility and/or community partner.

Veterans diagnosed with spinal disease, multiple sclerosis, Huntington’s disease, epilepsy, brain tumors, lymphomas, and aneurysms are some of the many who need and/or can benefit from neurosurgery.

In 2019, VA Long Beach Healthcare System neurosurgeons identified 275 Veterans in need of neurosurgery but referred them to community partners as they could not offer the intervention.

VA Long Beach Healthcare System is investing \$1.5 million in specialized top-notch equipment and additional physicians, residents, nurse practitioners, nurses and radiologists in support of the additional services.

VA Long Beach Healthcare System expects to expedite and improve the quality of care offered to Veterans with neurosurgical conditions by avoiding transfer delays, consolidating care and meeting individual patient needs.

Neurosurgery will be deployed progressively in a stepwise approach. The first phase will include vagal nerve stimulator implantation and/or battery change, as well as outpatient peripheral neurosurgery, such as spinal cord stimulator implantation, baclofen pump implantation, carpal tunnel release and ulnar nerve decompression. The second phase will include simple spine surgery and cerebrospinal fluid diversion. The third phase will include complex spine surgery, including thoracic and lumbar fusions. Eventually, phase 4 will include craniotomy and brain tumor operative therapies.

“We look forward to adding this specialty to our already broad array of highly complex and high-quality care,” said Dr. Brian Smith, Chief of Surgical Services at VA Long Beach Healthcare System.

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