

**Vision Rehabilitation Clinic  
Lt. Col. Luke Weathers, Jr. VA  
Medical Center  
Annual Report FY 2022**

**October 2021 through September 2022**

Completed May 16, 2023

## **Mission:**

To honor America's Veterans in all that we do by providing timely, quality eye care and vision rehabilitation; providing outstanding customer service; providing excellent optometric education through clinical experience.

## **Vision:**

To be a patient-centered health care organization that provides excellent vision rehabilitative care for Veterans; an organization that provides excellent education for optometric residents and students; an organization where people choose to work; an active community partner.

## **Program Goals:**

- 1) It is the goal of the Vision Rehabilitation Clinic (VRC) to provide education and training to Veterans with impaired vision and their families.
- 2) It is the goal of the clinic to assist Veterans in achieving their rehabilitation goals through individualized care and training. As part of the Vision Rehabilitation Team, the clinic strives to provide services in a way that is respectful and empathetic to the individual needs of the Veterans and caregivers we serve.
- 3) It is the goal of the Vision Rehabilitation Team to promote the highest level of independence possible for each Veteran served. This is by being at the **HEART** of good health: **H**igh Quality, **E**asily **A**ccessible, **R**eliable and **T**rustworthy.

## **Core Values:**

The core values of the VRC are the same as that of the Lt. Col. Luke Weathers, Jr. VA Medical Center: **I CARE**

- **Integrity:** Act with high moral principle. Adhere to the highest professional standards. Maintain the trust and confidence of all with whom I engage.
- **Commitment:** Work diligently to serve Veterans and other beneficiaries. Be driven by an earnest belief in VA's mission. Fulfill my individual responsibilities and organizational responsibilities.
- **Advocacy:** Be truly Veteran-centric by identifying, fully considering, and appropriately advancing the interests of Veterans and other beneficiaries.
- **Respect:** Treat all those I serve and with whom I work with dignity and respect. Show respect to earn it.

- **Excellence:** Strive for the highest quality and continuous improvement. Be thoughtful and decisive in leadership, accountable for my actions, willing to admit mistakes, and rigorous in correcting them.

### **Clinic Update:**

2022 was a transitional year in which the VRC maintained clinic schedule optimization and a commitment to care through the change of the Chief of Optometry, Director of Intermediate Low Vision Clinic and Program Support Assistant.

The VRC welcomed Dr. Halie Cottrill as the new Low Vision Optometrist and Director of Low Vision Clinic in August 2022.

### **Stakeholder Feedback:**

The VRC received a total of 160 consults from all sources. For the purposes of this report, consults to the VRC from the Optometry section at the Community Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC) in Jackson, TN will be included with all Optometry consults. There are three primary sources of consults to the VRC including Optometry, Ophthalmology, and the VIST Coordinator. The VIST sent the highest number of consults to the VRC and comprised 40% of all consults. Optometry referred 32% and Ophthalmology sent 24%. The remainder were consulted from various other sources including Primary Care and In-Patient services.

One of the aims of the Vision Rehabilitation Clinic is to maintain a good relationship with all stakeholders. To do so, satisfaction surveys of referral sources and persons served are conducted throughout the year. Those results are then incorporated into clinic planning.

### **Satisfaction Survey Results:**

A stakeholder satisfaction survey was sent to primary referral sources for fiscal year 2022, and 13 of 22 stakeholders responded. The rating scale ranged from strongly agree to strongly disagree. The results of this survey are below:

Question #1: I was satisfied with the amount of communication I had with the staff or the VRC: 84.62% strongly agreed and 15.38% agreed.

Comment received: "Keith Tackett does an excellent job of effective communication."

Question #2: VRC services were initiated promptly and delivered efficiently to the Veteran: 76.92% strongly agreed, 23.08% agreed

Comment received: "some delay with prosthetics authorizations"

Question #3: VRC staff provided services that were respectful of the Veteran's cultural and personal beliefs and practices: 91.67% strongly agreed, 8.33% agreed.

Question #4: I found that the VRC staff were able to adequately meet the technological needs of the Veteran: 76.92% strongly agreed, 23.08% agreed

Question #5: I am satisfied overall with the services that the Veterans have received from the VRC: 92.31% strongly agreed, 7.69% agreed.

#### uSPEQ Satisfaction Survey:

Input from patients was also gathered through a uSPEQ Satisfaction Survey (Universal Stakeholder Participation and Experience Questionnaire). The results of all surveys for FY2022 were compiled and reviewed. One hundred percent of those surveyed were overall satisfied with the services they received.

Areas that are reported as being strengths or assets for our clinic were Service Responsiveness, Informed Choice, Respect, and Overall Value. Items in these areas included:

- Got what I needed when I needed it
- Staff paid attention to what I said
- Respected as a Person
- Services enabled me to do things better

The area that was reported as needing possible improvement was Participation. Items in this area included:

- Able to do needed things without barriers
- Able to participate in leisure activities
- Able to do the things I want to do now

## Modified Visual Function Questionnaire (VFQ)

The VFQ is a brief survey developed by the National Eye Institute to determine the difficulty of everyday tasks in people with a vision impairment. This survey is given at the time of entry into the Vision Rehabilitation Clinic and at a 6 week follow up phone call. The information is used to ascertain if there was an improvement in everyday tasks after the Veteran received low vision services. The results were broken down into two sections: 1) the percentage of Veterans pre and post assessment who felt tasks were impossible to perform or they needed a lot of assistance; 2) the percentage of Veterans pre and post assessment who felt the tasks were not difficult or were slightly/moderately difficult.

The most difficult tasks were reading, using the telephone, and watching television. The least difficult were telling time and using the microwave. The largest gain was seen in reading with 14% of Veterans reporting pre training that either they could not read or needed a lot of assistance, and only 6% reporting difficulty after training.

## **Demographic Information about Veterans Served in FY 2022:**

The Vision Rehabilitation Clinic serves the catchment area of the Lt. Col. Luke Weathers, Jr. VA Medical Center including parts of West and Middle Tennessee, Eastern Arkansas, and Northern Mississippi. Services are provided on an outpatient basis at the Nonconnah Optometry Clinic. Telehealth services are also provided via VA Video Connect in conjunction with in-person BROS visits. The total amount of patient encounters was 199 for this fiscal year.

Demographics for the Veterans served include 6% women and 94% men. A total of 47.5% were Black or African American, 45% were Caucasian, 7.5% not specified. Approximately twenty-five percent of the total patients were 64 or younger, 58% were 65-84, and 17% were 85 or older.

## **Outreach and Device Training FY 2022**

October 13 CLVT attended OrCam 2 hour F2F Training

November 15 LVOD met with Dr. Ilyse Kornblau and Dr. Holley O'Malley of Ophthalmology during the Nonconnah Optometry Clinic tour. Referrals and vision rehab services were discussed.

November 17 LVOD provided clinic information to new provider Dr. Lindsey Adams at Hamilton Eye Institute.

January 10 gave new optometry student orientation to the VRC

February 9 CLVT met with Paul Day – Tennessee Low Vision for training and demo on the LyriQ OCR device

February 24 CLVT, VIST, BROS met with Anat Nulman, Business Development Director for the RealSAM Pocket voice-operated smartphone for a demonstration

March 24 CLVT met with Customer Outreach Specialist Barbara Mora from Eschenbach. New products were demonstrated and features from products were reviewed.

May 17 gave new optometry student orientation to the VRC

May 18 CLVT, BROS and VIST received demonstration of the IrisVision Inspire Digital magnifying headset presented by Tim O’Kane sales rep.

May 25 CLVT received training with the IrisVision Inspire Digital magnifying headset presented by Tim O’Kane sales rep.

June 1 CLVT received training with the IrisVision Inspire Digital magnifying headset presented by Tim O’Kane sales rep.

August 29 gave new optometry student orientation to the VRC

September 25 CLVT met with Paul Day – Tennessee Low Vision for training and demo on the Amigo 8.

## **Staffing**

The Vision Rehabilitation Clinic is fully staffed. The clinic consists of one half-time Low Vision Optometrist, one full-time Low Vision Therapist and one half-time Program Support Assistant.

## **Goals & Performance for FY 2022**

### **Increase Veteran Access**

1. Goal: Continue outreach to the community through the addition of information to the clinic website

Outcome: The clinic website was absorbed by the facility and is now listed as a specialty. The previous information regarding the clinic is still present, but no additional quarterly information can be added.

2. Goal: Provide outreach to the community, Veterans and Medical Center Staff through a White Cane Day 2022 Event. This will be a joint program planned and carried out by the vision rehab team, VIST support group and Blinded Veterans Association.

Outcome: This goal was not achieved due to staff turnover and delayed planning.

### Increase Veteran Awareness

1. Goal: Provide more training for technological assistive devices. This goal was listed as a priority.

Outcome: This goal was not achieved due to staff turnover. It will remain a top priority for the 2023 Fiscal Year.

2. Goal: Provide different types of safety training for the visually impaired.

Outreach: Informed Veterans through newsletter and VIST Support group of Strive4You's OneTouch Self Defense Training through Tri-State Adaptive Sports Association. This program was specifically developed for self-defense for the visually impaired.

### **Goals for FY2023**

#### Increase Veteran Access

1. Goal: Provide education of clinic and services to other disciplines and providers in the VA, including new Ophthalmology residents—joint effort by Vision Rehab Team. This was designated as a priority.
2. Provide outreach to the community, Veterans and Medical Center staff through White Cane Day 2023 (October 2023). This will be a joint program planned and carried out by the vision rehab team, VIST support group and Blinded Veterans Association.

3. Initiate planning for Mid-South Blind Rehabilitation Conference to be held Spring 2024. This will be a joint program planned and carried out by the vision rehab team, VIST support group and Blinded Veterans Association.

Increase Veteran Awareness

1. Provide more training for technological assistive devices—joint effort by Vision Rehab Team. This was designated as a priority.



---

Dr. Halie Cottrill, Director, Vision Rehabilitation Clinic

5/16/2023

Date

---

Dr. Katherine Sanford, Chief, Optometry

5/16/23

Date