

VA Nebraska-Western Iowa Health Care System Receives Second-Straight National SimLEARN Advanced Simulation Lab Certification

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OMAHA, Neb. – VA Nebraska-Western Iowa Health Care System (VA NWIHCS) has received its second straight National SimLEARN Advanced Simulation Lab certification. This prestigious recognition confirms the healthcare system's unwavering commitment to upholding top-tier healthcare education and training standards.

"I wish to express my sincere gratitude to our executive leadership Team, the dedicated NWI staff, and all our community partners for the remarkable support they've extended, making this triumphant re-certification possible," said Kami Willett MSN RN-BC, VA NWIHCS simulation coordinator/clinical educator, in announcing the certification.

The Veterans Administration Professional Education Resource Center (VAPER) simulation lab serves a broad spectrum of internal customers and programs. These include – but are not limited to – nursing, medicine, surgery service lines, emergency management, and transition programs such as the post-baccalaureate registered nurse residency and transition to practice residency programs.

The training facility plays a pivotal role in educating participating community nursing, medical, pharmacy, and physical therapy school students. It also provides invaluable exposure to high school students from across Nebraska and western Iowa who are eyeing potential healthcare careers.

Willett said the NWI team coordinates efforts to ensure top-notch healthcare solutions internally and in the broader community. The operative strategy involves deploying sharing agreements and other contractual arrangements with leading health authorities including Omaha Children's Hospital, Omaha Emergency Medical Services and Fire Department, Offutt Air Force Base, Nebraska Medicine, and Creighton University.

VAPER first opened its doors at the Omaha VA Medical Center in 2014. VA Nebraska-Western Iowa Health Care System added two additional simulation labs at the Grand Island VA Medical Center and the Lincoln Community-Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC) the same year.

Recognized as an Intermediate Simulation Center from 2015 to 2017, the Omaha VAMC's VAPER center received an Advanced Certification Center status during that cycle. The cycle of events, culminating during the early stages of the global pandemic, has been instrumental in steering VA NWIHCS back to a sense of normalcy, said Willett, highlighted by the renewed Advanced Certification designation for the Simulation Program at NWI for the 2020-24 period.

According to Willett, the certification helps underline VA NWIHCS' continuing commitment to championing high-quality, simulated training environments. A testament to its quality of care, this certification showcases its commitment to facilitating exceptional healthcare throughout Nebraska and Iowa, she added.