



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Veterans Health Administration

VA Northeast Ohio Healthcare System

## VA Northeast Ohio Healthcare System Pharmacy Residency FAQ

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## VA Northeast Ohio Healthcare System Pharmacy Residency FAQ

### A. Demographics of VA Northeast Ohio Healthcare System (VANEOHS)

#### 1. Where is the Louis Stokes VA Medical Center located?

- a. Louis Stokes VA Medical Center (VAMC) includes the tertiary care hospital, emergency department, and long-term care center that is a part of VANEOHS. There are also outpatient clinics for primary care, geriatrics, and all specialty clinics at the Louis Stokes VAMC campus. Louis Stokes VAMC is located just east of downtown Cleveland in the area of University Circle, across the street from Cleveland's museums and botanical gardens. Learn more about VANEOHS by viewing our 2021 Annual Report [Video](#) and [Book](#), and the [Northeast Ohio Relocation Guide](#) (pages 56-57).

b.

#### 2. Where are VANEOHS' Outpatient VA Clinics?

- a. There are 13 outpatient VA Clinics that are part of VANEOHS located in Akron, Canton, Cleveland, East Liverpool, Lake County, Lorain, Mansfield, New Philadelphia, Parma, Ravenna, Sandusky, Warren, and Youngstown. These outpatient VA clinics offer primary care, mental health, and limited specialty services to patients closer to where they live. Depending on the residency program, residents may complete one or more of their learning experiences at a VA clinic location as specified by their program details.

#### 3. How many beds does Louis Stokes VA Medical Center have?

- a. There are a total of 597 daily inpatient beds at the Louis Stokes VA Medical Center that includes the long-term care center and rehabilitation programs.

#### 4. How many pharmacists are preceptors for the VANEOHS pharmacy residency program?

- a. There are 164 FTE pharmacists at VANEOHS, including 94 clinical pharmacy specialists with a scope of practice. The number of pharmacists serving as residency preceptors grows every year, with currently 65 pharmacists serving as residency preceptors throughout VANEOHS locations. This robust group of preceptors allows for a wide net of pharmacists to be able to help precept learning experiences, precept projects and presentations, serve as mentors, and provide feedback on presentations.

#### 5. What positions have past VANEOHS pharmacy residents acquired after completing their residency?

- a. In the past 10 years, 70% of graduated PGY1s have gone on to complete a PGY2 pharmacy residency, with 81% of these PGY2 residencies being completed at VANEOHS. 95% of PGY2 residents have acquired a clinical pharmacy position following residency and 3% have acquired a management or academic position. 68% graduated PGY1s & PGY2s currently work at a VA, with 49% of these VA positions being at VANEOHS.



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### B. Demographics and Policies of Residency

#### 1. What are the VANEOHS policies have regarding pharmacy licensing?

- a. PGY-1 pharmacy residents are required to obtain pharmacy licensure within 90 days of residency start or else they will be dismissed from the program. PGY-2 pharmacy residents are required to provide a copy of their pharmacist license & PGY-1 Pharmacy Residency Certificate prior to beginning their residency. Licensure from any state is acceptable for work in the VA.

#### 2. Does VANEOHS allow pharmacy residents to moonlight during residency?

- a. Moonlighting (internal or external) should be approved on a case-by-case basis by the residency program director (RPD). In cases where moonlighting is approved, hours may not exceed the ASHP duty hour policy and may not interfere with residency requirements including completion of ASHP-defined residency goals and objectives.

#### 3. How many pharmacy residents are there at VANEOHS?

- a. There are currently 10 resident positions at VANEOHS with the following number of positions per program:
  - 3 PGY-1 Pharmacy Practice Residents
  - 2 PGY-2 Ambulatory Care Pharmacy Residents
  - 2 PGY-2 Geriatric Pharmacy Residents
  - 1 PGY-2 Infectious Diseases Pharmacy Resident
  - 2 PGY-2 Psychiatric Pharmacy Residents

#### 4. What locations of VANEOHS will pharmacy residents complete learning experiences at?

- a. All residency programs complete most of their learning experiences at the Louis Stokes VA Medical Center. As indicated in their individual brochures, some programs include a limited number of required or elective learning experiences located at VA outpatient clinics within a closer radius of central Cleveland.
- b. The Infectious Diseases residency program additionally includes the opportunity to complete several rotations at partner institutions within Cleveland.

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### 5. Are PGY1s able to early commit to the PGY2 specialty residency programs?

- a. Early commitment to a VANEOHS PGY-2 specialty residency programs is considered on a case-by-case basis starting in November. Decision of early commitment may be made before or after Midyear per the shared interests of the PGY-2 RPD, Residency Advisory Committee (RAC), and the candidate(s). Selection of the applicants will be made based upon leadership, professional competence, communication skills, professional dependability, ability to work independently and with others, and review of PharmAcademic®.
- b. A 2023 change in ASHP policy has extended the opportunity that programs in the same health-system may opt-in to offering early commitment across institutions. Pending individual VA institutions opting into this policy update, PGY1 residents at VANEOHS may have options to early commit to PGY2 residency programs at other VA institutions across the country.

### 6. What resources are available to support the wellbeing of residents at VANEOHS?

- a. Residents are introduced to a variety of resources in July that include the Employee Assistance Program, local whole health initiatives, and the national VA Pharmacy Residency Wellness Center and Consulting Psychologist. Ongoing resources throughout the year includes monthly wellbeing tips from the VA's Pharmacy Residency Program Office Consulting Psychologist and local quarterly Whole Health activities at VANEOHS designed for healthcare professional trainees.
- b. Residents are reminded and encouraged on an ongoing basis to incorporate a minimum of one stress relief/wellness activity. This is reviewed and discussed with residents in the orientation of learning experiences, one-on-one quarterly meetings with RPDs, and on their monthly progress sheets. The chief resident is also requested to select one wellness activity per month to implement with the residency class.

### 7. How is Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion addressed in the VANEOHS residency program?

- a. The VANEOHS Pharmacy Residency program is an inclusive training program that welcomes and embraces pharmacy professionals regardless of attributes such as race, gender, identity, religion, ability or disability, economic status, and sexual orientation. The preceptors and staff work to eliminate bias in recruiting, interviewing, and selecting residency candidates.

### 8. What opportunities do residents have to be mentored at VANEOHS?

- a. All incoming pharmacy residents will be formally matched to a pharmacist mentor. Matches are based on resident-submitted rankings following participation in mentor speed-dating during pharmacy orientation. Residents are encouraged to meet with their formal mentors at least monthly throughout the residency year. Residents will have further mentoring opportunities as they work with various preceptors on projects and presentations throughout the year.



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### 9. What opportunities do residents have to provide feedback throughout the year?

- a. Residents are expected to give ongoing feedback directly to preceptors throughout and at the end of learning experiences. The chief resident also provides collective residency class feedback in a one-on-one meeting with the RAC Chair. Finally, formal feedback inquiries occur during the midpoint and end of the year residency retreats, one-on-one quarterlies with the RPDs, and an end of the year formal exit survey. The RAC regularly incorporates changes to the residency program based on the feedback provided from residents via these channels.

### 10. Which professional pharmacy conferences do residents typically attend?

- a. All residents typically attend Fall and Spring meetings for OCCP, the local Ohio chapter of the American College of Clinical Pharmacy. OCCP's Spring meeting offers the opportunity for residents to present on their research findings via either a poster or platform presentation. All residents are able to attend the ASHP Midyear Clinical Meeting if interested for their residency/job application and professional development interests. PGY-2 pharmacy residents additionally attend a relevant specialty conference such as ADA, ASCP, CPNP, ID WEEK, or MAD-ID.

### 11. Do pharmacy residency programs at VANEOLS have on-call requirements?

- a. No, VANEOLS pharmacy residents do not have any on-call requirements.



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### C. Benefits

#### 1. What is the annual pharmacy resident stipend at VANEOHS?

- a. Stipends are slightly adjusted annually, but 2023-2024 stipends for PGY1s and PGY2s were \$49,457 and \$52,882, accordingly. Additionally, pharmacy residents are paid the standard pharmacist rate for weekend staffing hours or what equates to approximately \$13,000-15,000 over the course of the residency year. This additional compensation indirectly helps to cover the registration fee/travel expenses accrued by residents for professional conferences they attend.

#### 2. How much leave are pharmacy residents granted?

- a. Residents will be granted leave for the 11 paid Federal Holidays. Residents will additionally accrue 4 hours of annual leave and 4 hours of sick leave per pay period that may be scheduled/ used at their discretion upon seeking appropriate approval. Per ASHP Residency Standards, 37 days is the maximum number of days that can be spent away from a residency program within a 52-week training period without requiring extension of the program.

#### 3. What insurance is available to pharmacy residents at VANEOHS?

- a. Pharmacy residents are eligible to participate in the Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) including Dental/Vision as well as the Federal Employees Group Life Insurance (FEGLI) programs. All employees are responsible for paying a portion of the insurance. In terms of liability insurance, you are covered by the "Public Officers Law" and will not need any practice liability insurance during your residency. While performing within your scope of practice and in conformance with VA rules and regulations, the VA will cover all liability issues. Your only risk would be if you exceed your scope of practice or violate VA policies.

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### D. Projects, Presentations, and Teaching Certificate

#### 1. What are the project requirements for the VANEOHS?

- a. All residents are required to complete a major project in accordance with ASHP accreditation standards; most programs additionally are required to complete a medication utilization evaluation (MUE). Project ideas are collected and vetted by the pharmacy residency project committee prior to residents' arrival, but residents may also elect to submit their own idea for vetting.
- b. Major projects are given the designation of being a research project requiring IRB approval or a quality improvement project to be completed via training and application of Lean Six Sigma methodology. IRB projects continue to be supported by the research committee, and residents completing a quality improvement project will undergo yellow/green belt certification and have one-on-one coaching from our facility's quality analyst who is a master black belt. MUEs are vetted and supported by the MUE Subcommittee.

#### 2. What are the presentation requirements for pharmacy residents at VANEOHS?

- a. PGY1 Pharmacy Practice residents have typically been required to complete 2 journal clubs, 2 case presentations, and 1 formal seminar.  
PGY2 residents have typically been required to complete 2 journal clubs, 1 case presentation, 1 formal seminar, and additional required presentations by program such as lectures to specialty fellows, specialty grand rounds, lectures to the advanced practice nurses, patient education groups, or Case Western Reserve University medical students' psychiatry lectures. Other informal presentation opportunities may arise related to specific learning experiences.

#### 3. What leadership opportunities do pharmacy residents have at VANEOHS?

- a. All residents will be assigned to a committee throughout the year such as Medication Management, P&T, or committees relevant to PGY-2 specialties. The resident's role will vary by the nature and needs of the committee.
- b. All residents will additionally be assigned at least 1 month to serve as the chief pharmacy resident at VANEOHS. Responsibilities as the chief resident include being a liaison between the residency class and RAC, completing a pharmacy newsletter disseminated to providers throughout VANEOHS, and various other leadership responsibilities. Additional local or national VA opportunities to engage in leadership are available for interested residents.



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4. **Does this program offer the opportunity for residents to obtain a teaching certificate?**
  - a. Yes, all residents have the opportunity to obtain a teaching certificate. Interested PGY2s recently completed the inaugural year of a precepting-focused teaching and learning certificate program at VA Northeast Ohio Healthcare System in 2022-2023. The program will be offered to all interested PGY1s and PGY2s starting with the 2023-2024 residency year. Residents interested in Academia have the opportunity to complete an immersive academic-focused track at the Northeast Ohio Medical University's College of Pharmacy that is located approximately 1 hour south of Louis Stokes VAMC.



## VA Northeast Ohio Healthcare System Pharmacy Residency FAQ

### E. Staffing

#### 1. How often will I staff?

- a. PGY-1 pharmacy residents staff every 3<sup>rd</sup> weekend and PGY-2 pharmacy residents staff approximately every 3<sup>rd</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> weekend. Residents will be compensated at a staff pharmacist hourly rate for hours worked during staffing in addition to the resident annual stipend. Weekend schedules for the year are provided at the beginning of the residency, but residents have the opportunity to switch weekend assignments with peer residents as conflicts arise.

#### 2. What responsibilities will I have when staffing?

- a. PGY-1 pharmacy residents staff in the inpatient pharmacy on weekends, with responsibilities including vancomycin and anticoagulation monitoring, processing orders in the electronic medical record, and answering phone calls.  
PGY-2 pharmacy residents staff in the outpatient pharmacy on weekends. Responsibilities include completing discharge medication reconciliation, processing and checking prescriptions, counseling patients at prescription pick-up window, and answering phone calls.

#### 3. How often are residents pulled to help with staffing at unscheduled times?

- a. Residents are not pulled to help with staffing at unscheduled times or throughout the week. Staffing is limited to pre-scheduled weekend requirements as described above.

## VA Northeast Ohio Healthcare System Pharmacy Residency FAQ

### F. Information on Cleveland

#### 1. What is there to do in Cleveland?

- a. Cleveland offers a range activities including professional and minor league sports teams, Metroparks for the outdoor enthusiasts/ hikers/ runners/ bikers, Lake Erie beaches, botanical gardens and art museum, Playhouse Square (2<sup>nd</sup> largest U.S. performing arts center), world-renowned orchestra, shopping, great food, concerts, and more!
- b. Other attractions within and near the city include the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame, Cuyahoga Valley National Park, A Christmas Story House, Pro Football Hall of Fame, Cedar Point amusement park, and Lake Erie islands.
- c. More information on things to do and places to stay or eat in Cleveland can be found here: <https://www.thisiscleveland.com/>

#### 2. Where do pharmacy residents typically live in the Cleveland area?

- a. Depending on the residents' preferences they may choose to live in a nearby neighborhood such as Cleveland Heights, Little Italy, or Shaker Heights. Other residents have elected to live downtown or commute from suburbs.

#### 3. How do I get around in Cleveland?

- a. Cleveland offers public transportation via bus line or the rail line. The Red line specifically connect passengers to the airport and can be a quick and cheaper alternative for residents to travel when visiting/heading out to out of state conferences.

#### 4. What events can I look forward to when living in Cleveland?

- a. Concerts, festivals, and Holiday markets can be found in Cleveland throughout the year. For more information, see Cleveland's event schedule: <https://ohiofestivals.net/ohio-festivals/cleveland-festivals/>