



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Veterans Health Administration
Montana VA Health Care System

Veterans Invited to Recreational Therapy Open House

Open House at Fort Harrison VA Medical Center on Nov. 30

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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HELENA, Mont.— Montana VA Health Care System invites all Helena-area Veterans to stop by the Fort Harrison VA Clinic (in the Rec Hall) for the Recreational Therapy Open House on Thursday, Nov. 30, from 8:30 a.m. until 4:00 p.m.

The Recreational Therapy Open House is an opportunity for Veterans to meet with staff and learn more about adaptive sports training, outdoor recreation (such as hiking, kayaking, etc.), indoor recreation, social programs, creative arts (painting, creative writing, etc.), the [VA's adaptive sports and art programs](#), and other available resources (such as community organizations, the local library, senior centers, and city, state and national parks).

“Every Veteran can increase their physical strengths and social engagement—regardless of age, mobility, and ability,” said Michael Bassett, Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist. “For example, if you are not able to walk as far as you’d like, a recumbent bike may help you experience miles of movement. Or a hiking group can help make regular movement an enjoyable, social hobby. Recreational Therapy allows endless ways to adapt to help each person’s individual goals.”

Recreation Therapy provides Veterans unique opportunities for health and healing through adaptive sports, recreational options, and therapeutic art programs. Programming can be individual or occur as a group. Recreational Therapy has been linked to reduced stress, anxiety, and improved adaptability, increased motor functioning and reasoning abilities, higher confidence, and the development of better strategies to master critical life skills.

“The unique impact of Recreational Therapy is that it gets at the heart of what motivates each patient,” said Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist, Matt Lucas. “When we understand what motivates them, whether this is having more endurance to keep up with your children or grandchildren, or an interest in lifelong learning, we can then find new movements and solutions to help every Veteran enjoy closing that gap between today and the future they want to have. Injuries, changes in ability, and disabling conditions can impact us heavily, and with Recreational Therapy, every Veteran can improve physical, cognitive, social, emotional, and spiritual functioning.”

For more information on Montana VA Health Care System’s Recreational Therapy programs, Veterans can call 406-447-7070.

Montana VA serves over 47,000 enrolled Veterans across Montana—an area roughly 147,000 square miles in size. Veterans are cared for by a staff of 1,400 at 18 sites of care across the state. One third of Montana VA employees are Veterans.

Veterans can connect to their VA healthcare records, information, and message their VA care teams 24 hours a day through the [MyHealthVet patient portal](#). Montana VA information, updates, and events are available on the [Montana VA website](#) and [Facebook page](#).