



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Veterans Health Administration
VA Illiana Health Care System

PRESS RELEASE

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New VA Illiana initiative aims to reduce wait times, improve access to care

DANVILLE, Ill. – Thanks to a new VA Illiana initiative launched Feb. 20, 2024, some Veterans living with diabetes will now be able to manage their care within VA without the need for a community referral.

The initiative, called the Community Care Scheduling Collaborative, is rooted in VA's goal of connecting Veterans with the soonest, best care. The Community Care Scheduling Collaborative leverages the existing clinical skillset of VA's clinical pharmacist practitioners, allowing them to care for Veterans who had been previously referred to specialists in the community. For Veterans, this means faster care by the VA clinicians who know them best.

"VA Illiana's team of pharmacists can provide seamless diabetes management care for Veterans," said Ashely Lorenzen, VA Illiana's acting chief of pharmacy service. "Our pharmacists can order medications, monitor your labs, and tailor your care without the extra steps related to obtaining records and prescriptions from an outside provider. This new initiative will connect Veterans with care faster, providing the most efficient path for them to reach their health and wellness goals."

Lorenzen added that Veterans will have the choice to see a clinical pharmacist in-person, over the phone, or virtually. Either way, she said, they will benefit from VA's Veteran-tailored care. While eligible Veterans may still elect to receive Community Care, those who choose VA care will enjoy the benefits of deeply integrated care.

As part of the change, VA Illiana is also using technology to automate the initial Community Care scheduling call to Veterans. This move will improve efficiency and provide a consistent Veteran experience.

The impact of this project promises to extend far beyond local locations of care, since VA Illiana was selected as the VISN 12 representative for this national collaborative. This means the data and best practices learned through this change will inform similar access to care initiatives across VA Illiana's VISN and [17 other VISNs](#) participating in the national collaborative.

About VA Illiana Health Care System

VA Illiana Health Care System provides services at 6 locations serving a 30-county area of central Illinois and west-central Indiana. Locations include the Danville VA Medical Center and 5 community-based outpatient clinics in Bloomington, Decatur, Mattoon, Peoria, and Springfield, Illinois. The VA Illiana Healthcare System is one of the leading health care systems serving Veterans in the VA Great Lakes Network. We're an innovative care center within the Veterans Integrated Service Network 12 (VISN 12). VISN 12 includes medical centers and clinics in Wisconsin, Illinois, northwestern Indiana, and the Upper Peninsula of Michigan.

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