

VA**U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs**Veterans Health Administration
VA Northeast Ohio Healthcare System

Press Release

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VA Northeast Ohio Healthcare System launches mobile medical unit to support Cleveland area homeless Veterans

CLEVELAND – VA Northeast Ohio Health Care System (VANEOHS) recently unveiled a new mobile medical unit (MMU) to increase care for Veterans experiencing homelessness or those who are at risk of experiencing homelessness by meeting them where they are.

The MMU serves as an exam room that moves from one location to another to provide primary care, women’s health, audiology, laboratory and other services for Veterans who may not have access to a local VA medical center or a community-based outpatient clinic.

“The VA mobile medical unit is an initiative that is supported by our Homeless Patient Aligned Care Team,” said Leslie Yoak, homeless programs nurse manager. “The team is focused on addressing the distinct challenges that homeless Veterans face both accessing and engaging in health care.”

Managed by VANEOHS’ Homeless Patient Aligned Care Team (HPACT) and in collaboration with other local VANEOHS homeless programs, the MMU will continue to work to address the various barriers preventing Veterans from accessing proper healthcare, often including a lack of transportation to get to VA medical facilities.

MMUs can provide Veterans with services such as health assessments and education, preventative care, mental health services, and referrals to VA homeless programs and other resources.

Yoak said the HPACT has already made significant strides in assisting the area’s homeless Veterans.

“Over the last month, we have been able to provide medical care, and other supportive services to Veterans at the shelters, and transitional housing locations for Veterans experiencing homelessness,” Yoak said. “This has allowed us to provide support to our Veterans that have barriers with their care, and work to assist with the needs of our

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homeless population.”

In May 2022, VA’s Homeless Programs Office released a competitive funding opportunity for VA healthcare systems to apply to receive an MMU. In total, VA awarded 25 MMUs valued at \$6.2 million nationwide.

NOTE: The MMU will be onsite during the 2024 Homeless Standdown from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, April 20, at the Cleveland Public Auditorium, 500 Lakeside Ave. East, Cleveland.

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Contact Damien Horvath, VA Public Affairs Officer, at 216-339-5240, or Damien.Horvath@va.gov with questions or to arrange follow up interviews with local VA leadership.

ABOUT VA NORTHEAST OHIO HEALTHCARE SYSTEM: Focusing on treating the whole Veteran through health promotion and disease prevention, VA Northeast Ohio Healthcare System provides comprehensive, seamless health care and social services for more than 134,000 Veterans across Northeast Ohio. With 17 locations of care, including 12 outpatient clinics, two community resource and referral centers, a psychosocial rehabilitation and recovery center, a chronic dialysis center, and an outpatient surgery center, VA Northeast Ohio Healthcare System’s quality services are easily accessible to Veterans in 21 counties. VA Northeast Ohio Healthcare System also contributes to the future of medicine through education, training, and research programs.

For more information about programs and services offered by VA Northeast Ohio Healthcare System, visit www.cleveland.va.gov or follow us on Facebook @ClevelandVAMC.