



**VA**



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Veterans Health Administration  
Bay Pines Healthcare System

# FY2022 - FY2023 Biennial Report



**VA**



**U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs**

Veterans Health Administration  
*Bay Pines Healthcare System*

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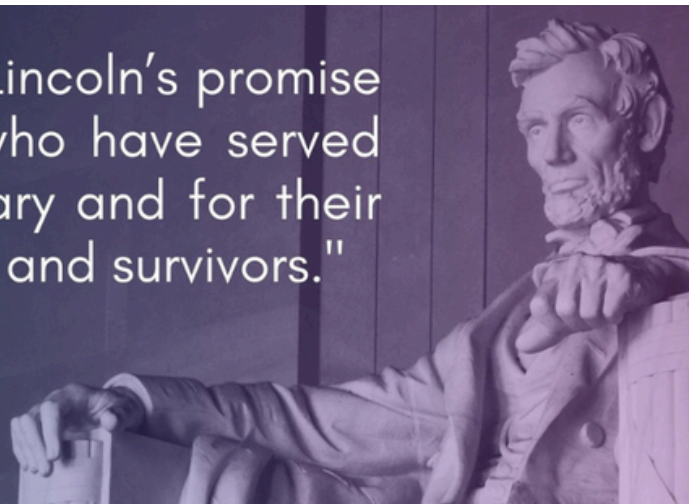
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"To fulfill President Lincoln's promise to care for those who have served in our nation's military and for their families, caregivers, and survivors."

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Bay Pines VA Healthcare System





# From the Director/CEO

**Paul M. Russo MHSA, FACHE**



It has been an honor serving America's heroes, their families, and caregivers across southwest Florida, as the executive director and chief executive officer for Bay Pines VA Healthcare System. The commitment, professionalism

and dedication of every employee allowed our organization to commemorate 90 years of service, and I am optimistic about our continued growth and success as we move forward. Together, we remained steadfast through the official end of the global pandemic. We also answered the call, twice in 11 months, to ensure the safety and welfare of employees and those in our care during Hurricanes Ian and Idalia.

My fundamental leadership belief is that none of us is as good as all of us. Thanks to our continued partnerships with veteran service organizations, congressional offices, stakeholders, volunteers, and community members, Veterans who entrust their health care to us are surrounded by a community of care by individuals, organizations, and leaders who share our passion for providing best-in-class health care. I also want to acknowledge the St. Petersburg Regional VBA Office and the Bay Pines National Cemetery. Our combined presence on the same campus has continued to prove impactful for numerous partnerships that result in increased benefits for Veterans and their loved ones.

As a Veteran-connected community, we've worked to bolster our support, and I believe our success continues to derive from communication and engagement that is bilateral, collaborative, and results-driven. I remain committed to this vision and believe we can achieve anything we put our minds to by working productively together. This organization continues to place Veterans' interests first, and we've done that by empowering our teams to plan, coordinate, and execute a cross-functional delivery of high-quality care and excellent customer service.

Our commitment to the Veteran experience has never been stronger. We have made significant strides in modernizing our facilities, elevated our support to women Veterans, and proudly championed the importance of equal opportunities through inclusion, diversity, equity, and access. As the needs and conditions of those we serve evolve, it remains our responsibility to be ready to respond, as we serve the Veterans, families, and caregivers of yesterday, today, and tomorrow.

We have faced some challenges over the past two years. These events have offered us opportunities to review, assess, and redefine our approaches to health care.



# From the Director/CEO

**Paul M. Russo MHSA, FACHE**

A primary focus has been addressing personnel shortages. We have made progress, but we know there is more work to be done. We remain committed to attracting the best professionals and retaining high performers, through a talent management strategy that fosters an environment for professional growth and success.

In August 2023, the C.W. Bill Young VA Medical Center received a 1-star rating from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), as part of their annual Overall Hospital Quality Star Ratings. This release involved historical performance, from July 2018 to March 2022, and we performed as well as the community in four of five categories. Our subpar performance in hospital readmissions dragged us down.

We are working hard to improve across multiple process areas that influence the quality of services we deliver with priority focus on our hospital readmission metrics. The CMS Star Ratings did not represent long-term care, mental health, or outpatient care services. We are a 4-star in the Medicare Patient Care Customer Survey Scores, which validates how highly Veterans rate our health care services.

Finally, the Office of Inspector General released their report on *Inaccurate Community Care Wait-Time Eligibility Calculations at C.W. Bill Young VA Medical Center in Bay Pines, Florida*. Following our review of Veterans associated with the miscalculations, all Veterans impacted were contacted, and the OIG determined there was no negative impact to Veteran care. Retraining and certification of personnel was completed in September 2022, and all corrected items were completed at the station level in January 2023.

In closing, I look forward to the future and the exciting milestones we will add to our legacy of service. It remains an honor for me to serve as the Bay Pines VA Healthcare System executive director and chief executive officer, and know you continue to choose us as your healthcare system of choice in southwest Florida.



**Paul M. Russo, MHSA, FACHE**  
**Executive Director and Chief Executive Officer**

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*Mr. Russo leads the tertiary health care delivery for Bay Pines VA Healthcare System which includes the C.W. Bill Young VA Medical Center, Lee County Healthcare Center, and seven VA clinics, serving Veterans in 10 counties, across southwest Florida. He also provides direct leadership and oversight for strategic communications, quality systems, compliance office, I\*DEA, and Equal Employment Opportunity.*

# Executive Leadership Team



**Kristine M. Brown, MPH**  
**Deputy Director**

Ms. Brown provides oversight of all business operations, Health Administration Services, government information and privacy, finance, Voluntary Services, Prosthetics and Sensory Aids Services, the Veteran Experience Office, and patient advocacy.



**Amin (Elamin) M. Elamin, MD**  
**Chief of Staff**

Dr. Elamin serves as chief medical officer and provides leadership and oversight for all clinical operations across the healthcare system; he oversees Social Work Services, women Veterans program, research, dental, behavioral health; education, and geriatrics and extended care.



**Sean N. Turner, ACHE**  
**Associate Director**

Mr. Turner leads Environmental Management Services Facility Management Services, Healthcare Technology Management and Biomedical Engineering, Nutrition and Food Service, Police Services, logistics and supply chain management, emergency management; Fisher House.



**Carrie L. Hawkins, MS, RN, CCRN-KNEA-BC**  
**Associate Director of Patient Care Services**

Ms. Hawkins leads the integration and collaboration of nursing services with other professional disciplines to achieve Veteran-centered goals; she also oversees Sterile Processing Services, and Chaplain Services.



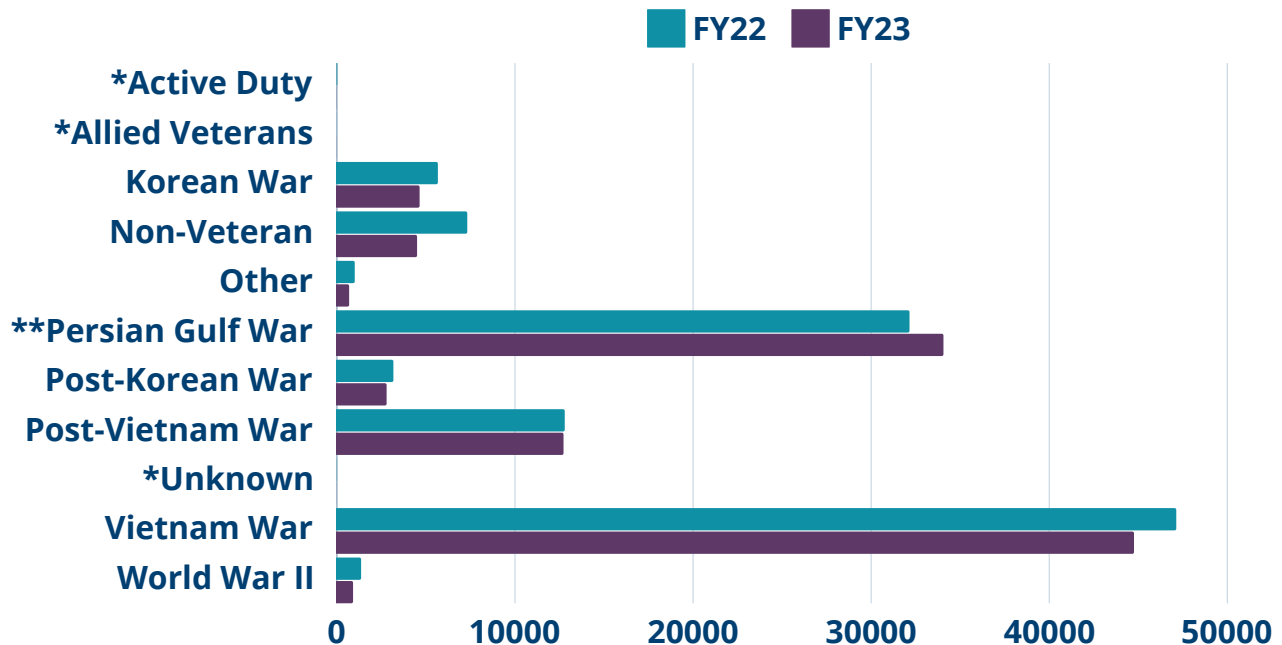
**Justina L. Wells, MPH**  
**Assistant Director**

Ms. Wells leads the day-to-day operations for Lee County Healthcare System and oversees the coordination and execution of healthcare and facility services across seven VA Clinics throughout Bay Pines VA Healthcare System's 10-county catchment area.

# About our VA Healthcare System

Bay Pines VA provided care to 110,708 Veterans (FY22) and 105,133 Veterans (FY23) at the C.W. Bill Young VA Medical Center (CWY), Lee County Healthcare Center, and seven community-based VA Clinics in southwest Florida.

## Total Veterans Served Across the Healthcare System

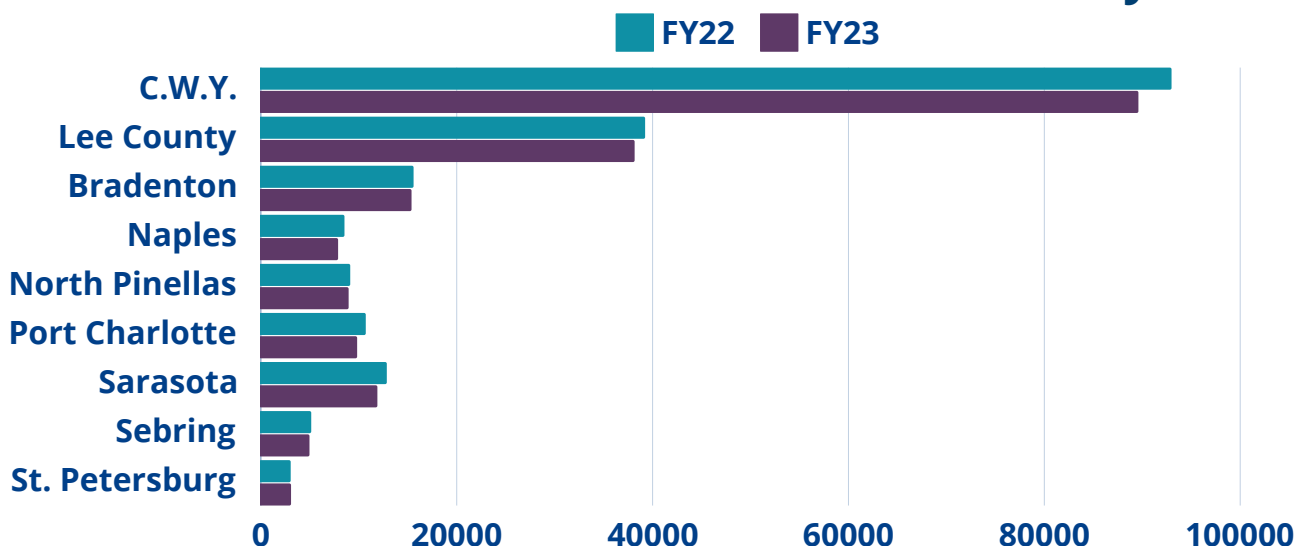


\* Veterans population ranges from 1 to 25 and is not charted on this graphic.

\*\* OIF and OEF Veterans are included in Persian Gulf War category.

**Note:** There were 3,776 deaths in FY22 and 4,527 deaths in FY23.

## Total Number of Visits Across the Healthcare System

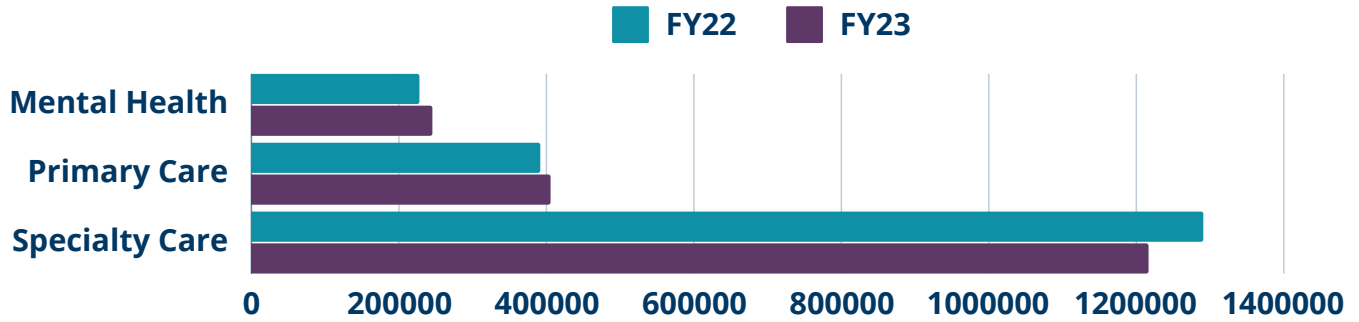


Total number of visits in FY22 were 197,244 and in 189,781 in FY23.

**Note:** Veterans may receive care from more than one facility.



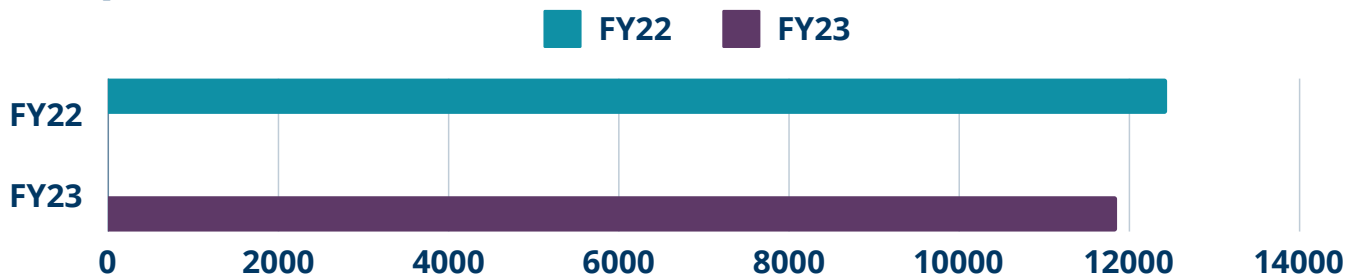
## Total Number of Outpatient Clinic Encounters



Total number of outpatient encounters in FY22 were 1,910,435 and 1,867,700 in FY23.

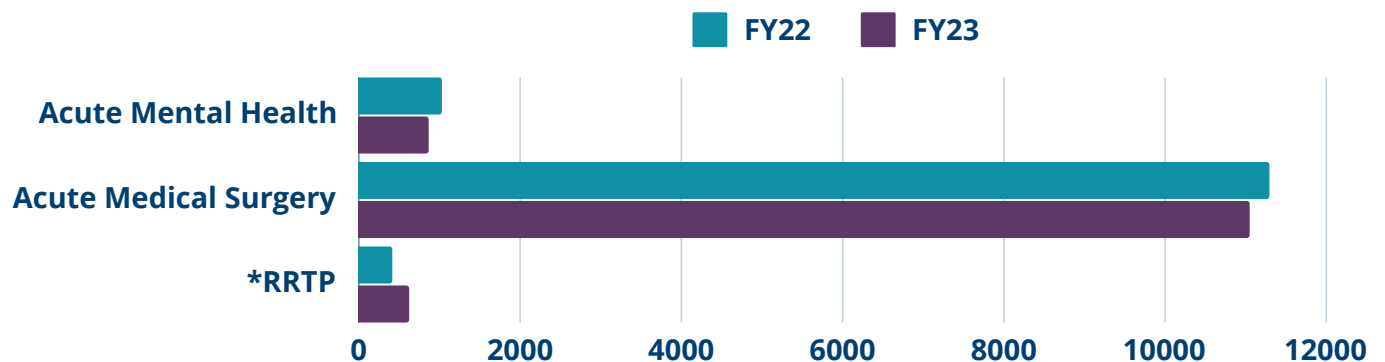
**Note:** There were 12,443 admissions in FY22 and 11,855 admissions in FY23 to the C.W. Bill Young VA Medical Center. See below for breakdown of hospital admissions by ward locations.

## Hospital Admissions



**Note:** There were 12,443 admissions in FY22 and 11,855 admissions in FY23 to the C.W. Bill Young VA Medical Center. See below for breakdown of hospital admissions by ward locations.

## Hospital Admissions by Area



**Note:** RRTP stands for Residential Rehabilitation Treatment Program.

## Facility Locations Overview

Bay Pines VA Healthcare System serves Veterans across 10 counties in southwest Florida, at nine locations. The healthcare system includes C.W. Bill Young VA Medical Center (Bay Pines, Fla.), Lee County Healthcare Center (Cape Coral, Fla.), and seven Community-Based VA Clinics.

### C.W. Bill Young VA Medical Center

10000 Bay Pines Boulevard  
Bay Pines, FL 33744  
727-398-6661

**86,545 Veterans served annually**



### Lee County Healthcare Center

2489 Diplomat Parkway East  
Cape Coral, FL 33909  
239-652-1800

**37,188 Veterans served annually**

## Bradenton

5520 State Route 64,  
Suite 101  
Bradenton, FL 34208  
941-721-0649

15,323 Veterans served annually



## Naples

800 Goodlette Road North,  
Suite 120  
Naples, FL 34102  
239-659-9188

7,908 Veterans served annually



## North Pinellas

26286 US Highway 19 North  
Clearwater, FL 33761  
727-734-5276

8,927 Veterans served annually



## Port Charlotte

14161 Tamiami Trail,  
Suite 401  
Port Charlotte, FL 3395  
941-235-2710

9,946 Veterans served annually





## Sarasota

5682 Bee Ridge Road,  
Suite 100  
Sarasota, FL 34233  
941-371-3349

11,978 Veterans served annually



## Sebring

5901 US Highway 27 South  
Sebring, FL 33870  
863-471-6227

4,861 Veterans served annually



## St. Petersburg

840 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.  
Street North  
St. Petersburg, FL 33705  
727-502-1700

3,041 Veterans served annually



# Access to Care

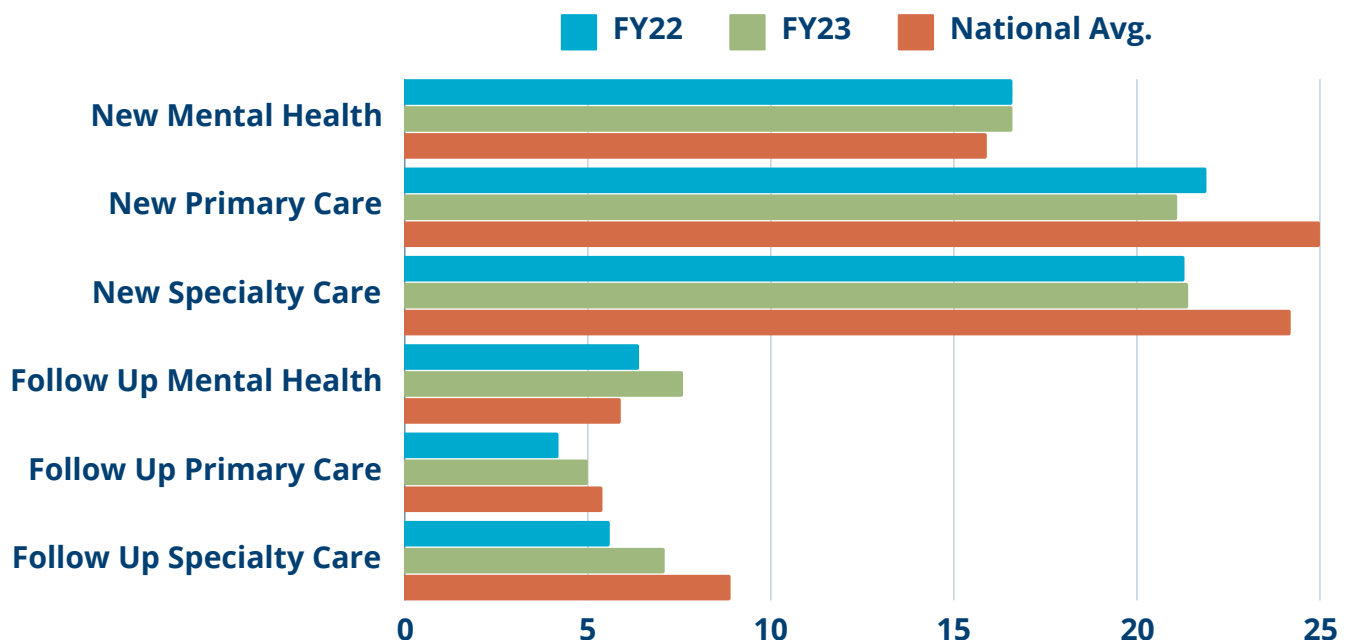
In FY22 and FY23, VA made it easier for Veterans by investing in telehealth, offering transportation to VA facilities, focusing on groups with increased access to care issues, and tracking access to care data.

In FY22 Bay Pines VA had 42,647 telehealth appointments, and in FY23, the number of telehealth appointments expanded to 113,147. Telehealth allowed Veterans to connect with their providers without the hassle of travel and ensured they were able to keep themselves safe in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic. We also offered training and equipment to Veterans who did not know how to operate the technology for telehealth, through our Veterans Education Resource Center.

We also continued to offer urgent care services via community providers, in lieu of Emergency Department care, primary care, and specialty care, when urgent issues arose, to ensure Veterans had immediate and proximate access to care 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

## Access - % of Patients Seen Within Wait Time Standard

**Wait Time Standards:** 20 days (Mental Health & Primary Care); 28 Days (Specialty Care)



\* New patient wait times are based off when the appointment was created.

\*\* Established patient wait times are based off when the appointment was preferred by the patient.

# Bay Pines VA Healthcare System Budget

This biennial report highlights our commitment to budget resource management and stewardship of federal funding. We prioritize delivering Veteran-centered care through engaged and collaborative teams within an integrated environment. Our focus on research, education, prevention, whole health, and continuous process improvement helps us exceed our customer's expectations and creates an exceptional Veteran experience for those we serve. The budget includes specific purpose funding from more than 25 different national program offices, further emphasizing our dedication to meeting the unique needs of these Veteran groups.

At the close of FY22 and FY23, Bay Pines VA Healthcare System ended in the black with no need for additional budget dollars.

## FY22 Expenditures

<b>Equipment:</b>	<b>\$ 20,167,161</b>
<b>Maintenance:</b>	<b>\$ 26,543,387</b>
<b>Community Care:</b>	<b>\$ 385,916,647</b>
<b>Salary:</b>	<b>\$ 615,233,101</b>
<b>Ancillary:</b>	<b>\$ 221,956,181</b>
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$ 1,269,816,477</b>

## FY23 Expenditures

<b>Equipment:</b>	<b>\$ 21,657,898</b>
<b>Maintenance:</b>	<b>\$ 4,202,975</b>
<b>Community Care:</b>	<b>\$ 464,312,065</b>
<b>Salary:</b>	<b>\$ 693,562,581</b>
<b>Ancillary:</b>	<b>\$ 309,734,182</b>
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$ 1,493,469,701</b>



## Bay Pines VA Healthcare System Education and Training Affiliations

Bay Pines VA Healthcare System proudly supports education and training for health care personnel that fully supports the Department of Veterans Affairs' success of training and education to more than 120,000 health professions trainees, in more than 60 disciplines, annually. The VA is the nation's largest provider of health professions training. VA's health professions trainees are critical to maintaining timely Veteran access to the best and soonest care. An estimated 70% of VA podiatrists, 75% of psychologists, 85% of optometrists, and 65% of physicians participated in VA health professions education programs prior to recruitment to staff positions.



Bay Pines VA Healthcare System continues to be a major training location for physician residents and fellows, medical students, associated health students and interns, and nursing students. Bay Pines VA has ensured the training and education of more than 2,000 trainees annually, from 137 affiliations, and 45 program specialties. The healthcare system is solely accredited for 11 programs. This includes fellowships for speech pathology, neuropsychology, and general post-doctorate psychology. Additionally, Bay Pines VA has residency programs for pharmacy, optometry, podiatry, dietetic masters interns, dental, post-baccalaureate registered nurses, physical therapy, orthopedics, and occupational therapy lymphedema. In FY22, the organization had 127 Affiliation Agreements. That number increased to 137 for FY23.

## Bay Pines VA Healthcare System Accreditations & Certifications

- The Joint Commission
- Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities
- Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education
- American Psychological Association
- American Association of Blood Banks
- American College of Radiology
- Association for Assessment and Accreditation of Laboratory Animal Care
- Association for Accreditation of Human Research Protection Programs
- Commission on Dental Accreditation
- Commission on Cancer
- Food and Drug Administration

# Healthcare System Highlights

## COVID-19 Operations and Impact

Bay Pines VA Healthcare System served in a leading role during the ongoing national response to COVID-19, through FY22 and FY23. The strength, agility, and resolve of employees proved essential to maintaining the highest level of communication, education, and health care services to Veterans, families, and caregivers, through an integrated health care system, as a single enterprise. From FY22 through FY23, Bay Pines VA Healthcare System performed 106,761 COVID-19 tests. From those results, 92,648 patients were negative and 10,232 positive.

## Bay Pines VA Debuts Hybrid Operating Room



The Hybrid OR combines rooms and teams to form a multi-disciplinary group of clinicians who are prepared to meet the complex needs of patients. This group consists of staff from Surgery, Radiology, Nursing and Anesthesia. Each member serves a crucial role in ensuring better patient outcomes during vascular surgery. Read the full story [here](#).

## SECVA Awards Recognize Bay Pines VA Leaders

Bay Pines VA Healthcare System Director and CEO Paul M. Russo and Geriatric Extended Care (GEC) Chief Nurse Sonya Arnold earned recognition during the Secretary of VA's Award for Excellence in Nursing and Advancement of Nursing Programs in 2022 and 2023. Mr. Russo was recognized as the **Advancement of Nursing Programs Medical Center Director honoree in 2022** for his servant leadership and for tirelessly advocating for his nurses and their role in Veteran care in addition to his commitment to excellence and quality. Ms. Arnold was recognized as the **Registered Nurse/Expanded Role honoree in 2023** for leading the successful implementation of multiple nursing-driven Performance Improvement/Quality Improvement projects.



## VA Secretary Recognizes Employees for Health Care Support to Veterans at Sarasota VA Clinic



“ We brag about Bay Pines because you do a lot of great work; I am excited about the things you’re doing here and what that means for Veterans.

**Hon. Denis McDonough**  
**Secretary of VA**

”

During Secretary of Veterans Affairs Denis McDonough's visit to Florida, in April 2023, he met with employees and Veterans at the Sarasota VA Clinic and recognized several leaders for their ongoing efforts to exceed expectations for Veterans. The Sarasota VA Clinic has seen an 11.8% increase in unique patients since FY20. Throughout 2023, Veterans have scored the Sarasota VA Clinic above the national average for V-Signal trust and overall facility trust scores.

## Bay Pines VA Earns Accreditation from ACS Commission on Cancer

The Commission on Cancer Program of the American College of Surgeons awarded a three-year accreditation to the cancer program at Bay Pines VA Healthcare System. Bay Pines VA has maintained its accreditation for more than 30 years and remains the the only VA in Florida, and one of 32 VAs in the country, that is COC accredited.



## Bay Pines VA Implements TeleCritical Care in ICU



On Nov. 29, 2022, Bay Pines VA became the first healthcare system in VISN 8 to implement TeleCritical Care (TeleCC), which allows seasoned VHA physicians and nurses from connected parts of the country to use virtual technologies and clinical information systems to consult with the primary care team assessing a patient. Learn more about the impact of Tele CC for Veterans [here](#).





# VETText

VETText is an automated, interactive text message system authorized for use by the U.S. Department of Veterans to remind Veterans of upcoming VA appointments. Below reflects the impact this resource has made in communicating with Bay Pines VA Healthcare System Veterans.

## Combined VETText Appointment Reminders Sent to Veterans FY22 and FY23

<b>140</b> Active Sites	<b>2.87M</b> Total Reminders	<b>52K</b> Cancellations	<b>952K</b> Confirmations	<b>32.8%</b> Confirmation Rate
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Bay Pines VA utilizes VETText for Open Slot Management (OSM) which allows for Veterans who are waiting for care to get appointments more quickly.

## Combined OSM Scheduling for FY22 and FY23

<b>57.04K</b> Messages	<b>9.64K</b> Declines	<b>2.84K</b> Rescheduled	<b>76.54K</b> Appointment Days Saved	<b>709</b> Rescheduled Hours Saved
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# VETText

- Know when prescriptions have shipped to your home
- Learn when flu vaccines are available and how to schedule an appointment.
- Receive emergency updates during a natural disaster or emergency impacting healthcare in your area



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## Vulnerable Patients a High Priority During 2023 Hurricane Season

Following the devastation caused by Hurricane Ian, Bay Pines VA Healthcare System continued to strengthen its readiness and response efforts to support Veterans as the possibility of inclement weather strengthened for the 2023 hurricane season in southwest Florida.

"When the effects of severe weather forecast for a loss of electricity, flooding, and barriers to transportation that prevent receiving treatment, it's our responsibility to let those Veterans and their loved ones know that we're here to help," said Melissa Wallach who serves as the lead for Emergency Management.

Across the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Veterans identified as part of a vulnerable population are those receiving services in the following areas: dialysis, spinal cord injury, home-based oxygen, homecare, homeless Veterans, mental health, nursing homes, oncology, telehealth, and high-risk pregnancies.



*The use of VEText continues to be a reliable way for us to communicate with Veterans, whether it be appointment reminders, pharmacy refills, or emergency situations.*

**Sean Turner,  
Bay Pines VA  
Associate Director**

"Veterans, families, and caregivers entrust us with their health care needs, and it remains our goal to reinforce their confidence and trust in us during hurricane season," said Bay Pines VA Healthcare System Associate Director Sean Turner.

Observing the exercise was VISN 8 Program Specialist and National Project Manager Jon Esteban who offered compliments to the team and cited best practices that he plans to elevate throughout VA.

"Bay Pines VA is usually at the forefront of initiatives and innovation, and it's great to see this team in action," added Esteban. "What I saw here today is this team remaining mindful of taking key points from those in charge and working together to define the wants and needs of those we serve as part of the exercise."

Veterans can sign up for local text messaging and email updates [here](#).

## Bay Pines VA, Sunshine Network, and FDVA Unite to Care for Veterans During Hurricane Idalia



During 2023, for the second time in 11 months, Bay Pines VA Healthcare System activated emergency operations to prepare for the potential impact and aftermath of a hurricane headed for the western coast of Florida.

In the days preceding Hurricane Idalia's landfall, nursing leadership from across the VA Sunshine Healthcare (VISN 8) Network worked to set the conditions for the coordination of care of patients and residents from C.W. Bill Young VA

Medical Center to other VA locations across the state. In the span of 24 hours, 146 Veterans were evacuated to the state Veterans home in Orlando, as well as VA Medical Centers in West Palm Beach, North Florida/South Georgia, Orlando, and Tampa. Significant assistance was also provided by Pinellas County Emergency Operations Center (EOC), which provided Sunstar Emergency Management Services (EMS) to support numerous ambulance transports. "I believe that none of us is as good as all of us, and this past week validates that," said Bay Pines VA Healthcare System Director Paul M. Russo. "From the coordination and partnership throughout VISN 8 to our partnership with FDVA, we remain, as we always have been, an interwoven network of professionals who will always rise to the challenge to ensure the care, safety, and well-being of our nation's heroes."

## Bay Pines VA Recognized for 75 Years of American Hospital Association Membership

“

*Since joining the AHA on March 1, 1946, Bay Pines VA has continued to provide high-quality care to patients throughout the area while also helping to train the next generation of caregivers.*

**Rebecca Jolley,  
Regional Executive of AHA**

”



## 1,324 Local Veterans No Longer Homeless Thanks to Bay Pines VA Social Work Services Team

During FY22 and FY23, Bay Pines VA ensured more than 1,300 local Veterans received permanent housing as part of the VA mission to address Veteran homelessness. Instrumental in this goal were bay Pines VA social workers, the Homeless Veterans Program, and HUD/VASH teams. Watch the impact these efforts made for one Bay Pines VA Veteran [here](#).



## Bay Pines VA Completes 80K PACT Act Toxic Exposure Screenings Since August 2022

"VA set a goal for healthcare systems across the country to screen 44 percent of enrolled Veterans by September 2023," said Dr. Keisha McFarlane, Bay Pines VA section chief of employee occupational health and compensation and pension. "We surpassed that goal in May and used that momentum to reach 73 percent by the one-year anniversary." Events conducted over 14 months include partnerships with the Tampa Bay Rays, Bay Pines National Cemetery, and American Legion Post #273.



Dr. McFarlane credits a focused approach by providers who championed toxic exposure screenings during face-to-face appointments. She also added that specialty clinics were critical in helping the organization exceed expectations.

"Specialty clinics have been helpful for Veterans who do not frequently see their primary care doctors," continued Dr. McFarlane. "Incorporating these teams into the toxic exposure screening process contributed to the overall number of Veterans we've screened over the last year."

The toxic exposure screening aims to make each Veteran's primary care team aware of any potential exposures to toxins during the Veteran's military service"

McFarlane added that results can have a long-lasting impact to each Veteran's health care journey.

"When a Veteran reports a hazardous military exposure, the information is added to their electronic medical record which makes the entire treatment team aware of the exposure," added Dr. McFarlane. "This is critical, because this information allows providers to factor in those exposures and use that information in discussions and recommendations on the best way to address medical concerns."

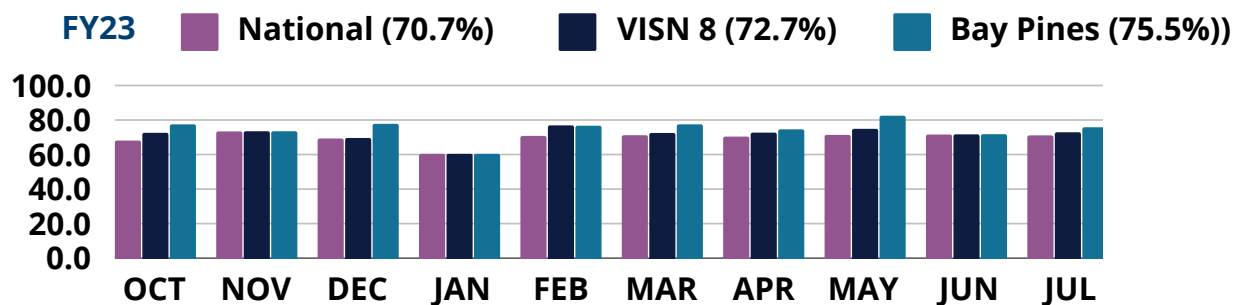
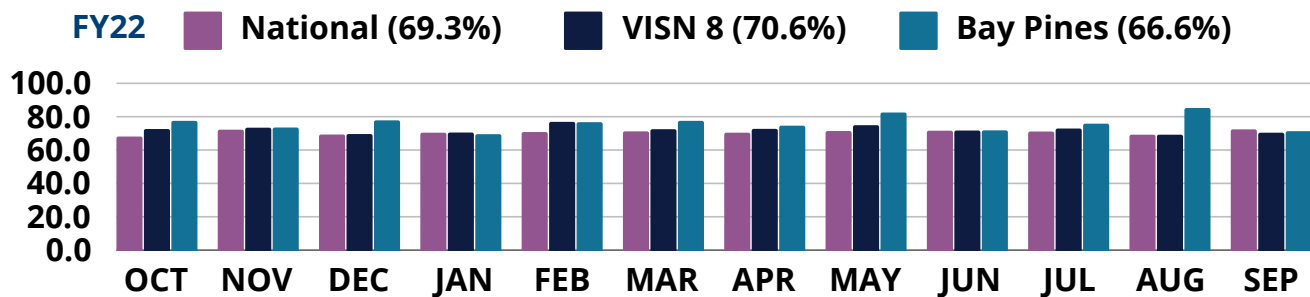




## Veteran Experience / Customer Service

### Overall Hospital Rating

The data below reflects results from the Survey of Healthcare Experience of Patients (questionnaire which provides feedback to leaders about the Veteran experience). We saw substantial improvement in FY23.



*Analysis only available through June 23, at time of publication.*

### Outpatient Trust Score

Data below reflects year-end responses to the question *I trust Bay Pines VA Healthcare System with my health care needs.*



## Bay Pines VA Reinforces Commitment to the Veterans' Experience

Veteran Experience Officer Amy Whitaker says, "The most rewarding part of my responsibilities at the Veteran Experience Office (VEO) is helping Veterans navigate the healthcare system," Whitaker said. "Our team bridges gaps in understanding, access, and resolution; being able to work with Veterans and get them what they need is a rewarding experience for Veterans and our team." Read the full story to learn more about Whitaker and the VEO Team [here](#).



## Lee County Celebrates Tenth Anniversary



Dec. 7, 2022, marked the ten-year anniversary of the Lee County Healthcare Center opening in Cape Coral, Fla. The organization's move from the Fort Myers Community-Based Outpatient Clinic in 2012, expanded health care services for Veterans in a new state-of-the-art, 220,000-square-foot facility. The increase of Veterans seen over the past decade has steadily grown, and in 2023, Lee County Healthcare Center accounted for 35% of all Veterans served across Bay Pines VA Healthcare System.



*VA embraces our responsibility to care for America's Veterans; it's an honor and a privilege. Every Veteran merits our deepest respect and the best care our nation has to offer. I ask that we use this occasion to appreciate the past and celebrate the potential we have for the future.*

**David Isaacks**  
VISN 8 Network Director



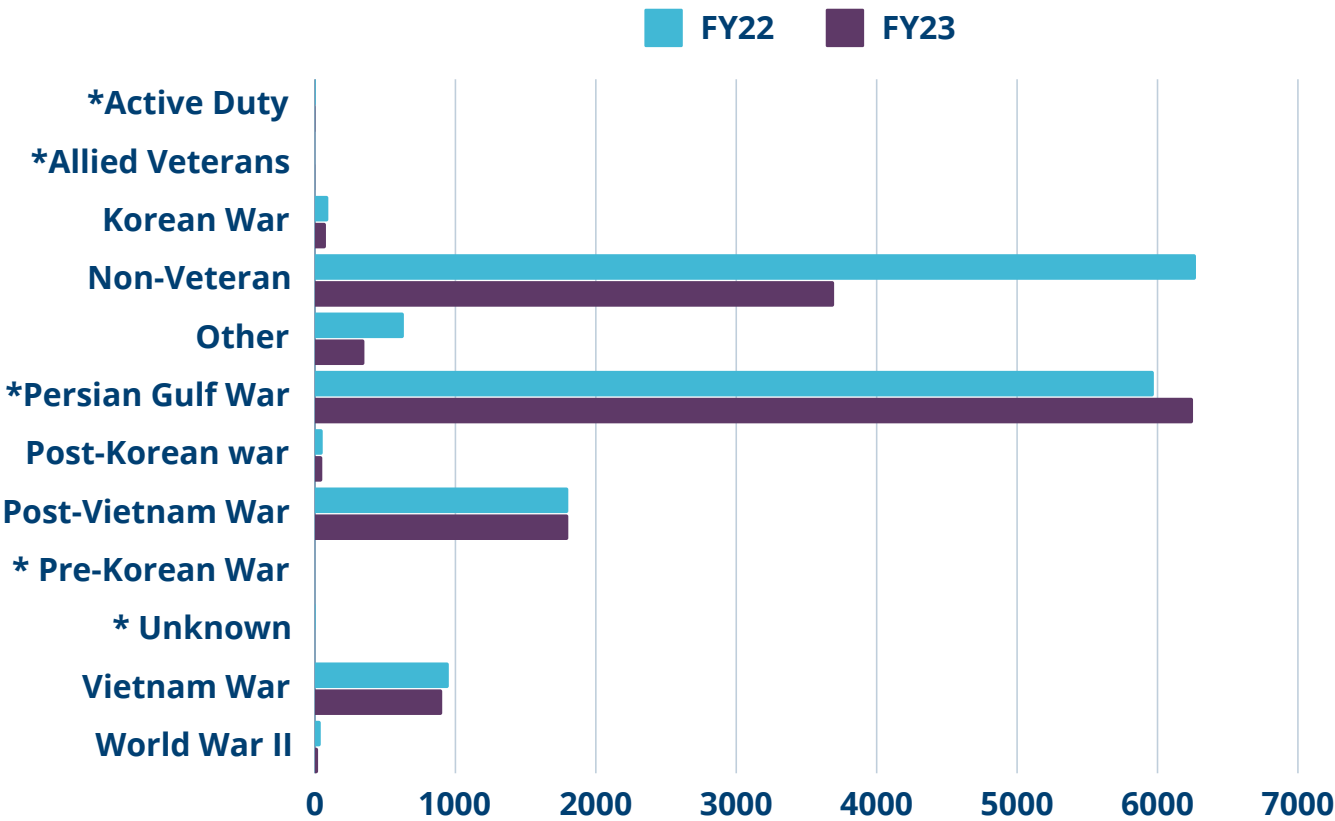
## Bay Pines VA Healthcare System and National Cemetery Celebrate 90 Years of Service



March 17, 2023, was an event 90 years in the making for Bay Pines VA Healthcare System and the Bay Pines National Cemetery. **Representative Kathy Castor** (FL-14) served as the keynote speaker. Additional speakers for the event included the VISN 8 Deputy Network Director, **Ms. Verana E. Richardson**, National Cemetery Director Mr. Douglas Maddox, and Ms. Beverly Young, wife of the late Florida Congressman C.W. "Bill" Young. As part of the event, Veterans from every major conflict since WWII were also recognized.

# Healthcare Services for Women Veterans

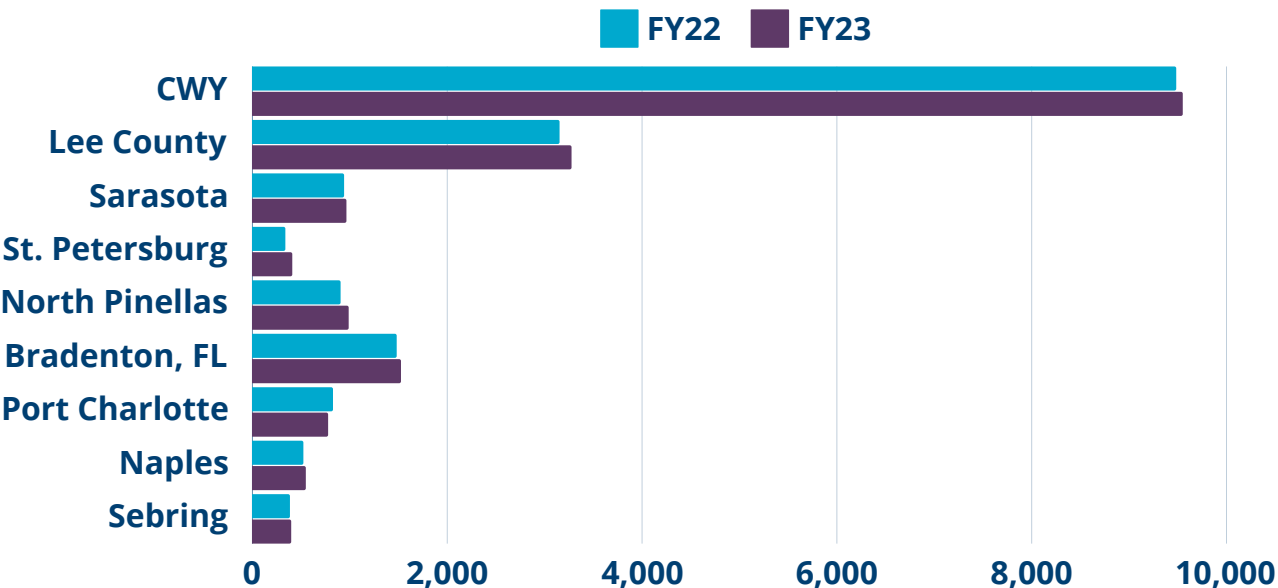
## Women Receiving Health Care by Era



\* Women population ranges from 0 to 5 and is not charted on this graphic.

\*\* OIF and OEF Veterans are included in the Persian Gulf War category.

## Women Receiving Health Care by Location



Note: Women may receive services at more than one facility.

## Women Veterans' Recognition Wall

Bay Pines VA Healthcare System unveiled the Women Veteran Wall at all locations throughout the healthcare system in recognition of the 100th year of Veterans Affairs providing health care services to women Veterans. The inaugural class of honorees highlighted Bay Pines VA nurses who are women Veterans.



## Bay Pines VA Showers Women Veteran Moms

The Bay Pines VA Healthcare System's Women Veterans Program, along with volunteers and donors from throughout the community, showered new and expectant Veteran moms with baby gifts during the organization's annual drive through baby showers at the C.W. Bill Young VA Medical Center and Lee County Healthcare Center locations. The events reinforce the organization's support to women Veteran health care while providing opportunities for local community partners, volunteers, and employees to work together.





# Bay Pines VA Community Care

Bay Pines VA Community Care (VACC) office coordinates care to Veterans through community providers when MISSION Act requirements are met. Community care is based on specific eligibility requirements, availability of VA care, and the needs and circumstances of individual Veterans.

Community care includes primary care, medical specialty, Urgent care, Emergency care as well as, but not limited to, Home Health and Hospice Care. In effort to maximize Veteran preference for care in the community providers, we partner with third party administrator Optum Serve as administrator for credentialing and



contracting providers in the community. Optum processes payment claims on average of 6.4 days, providing confidence for community providers to enter the network and provide care to our Veterans.

Consistent with census growth in southwest Florida, in FY23, Bay Pines VACC consults increased from FY22 to FY23 by 42.4%. We received more than 102,000 referrals for care in the community in FY23, making us the third highest volume for community care in VISN 8. Our highest volume of referrals based on specialty provider are dental, orthopedics, skilled home nursing care, optometry and ophthalmology.

VACC strategic planning is directly in line with the the priorities of the VA Under Secretary for Health with outcome for North Star Access Goal for Primary Care wait time to scheduling in the community meeting target metric timeliness in FY23 Q4.

VACC is keeping current with changes in technology through Veterans Health Information Exchange platforms such as Joint Legacy View (JLV), Health Share Referral Manager (HSRM), Enterprise Precision Scanning and Indexing (EPSI), and Medicom Imaging Service.

# Comprehensive Care for our Most Vulnerable Veterans

## Annual Homeless Stand Down Event for Veterans

Every April, Bay Pines VA Healthcare System and community partners sponsor the Veteran Stand Down for Homeless that provides approximately 500 Veterans across southwest Florida with access to resources and health care services.



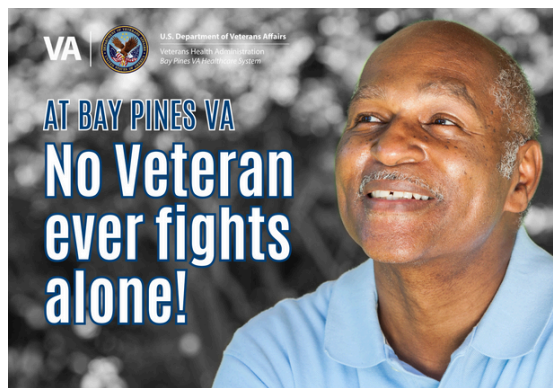
## Community Living Center

The Community Living Center (CLC) is a 112 bed, **CMS 5-star-rated facility**, that provides long-term, skilled nursing care for Veterans with a service-connected disability of 70 percent or higher. Services include: rehabilitation for deconditioning, exacerbation of chronic conditions, wound care, cancer and radiation treatments, extended antibiotic therapy, and long-term, palliative, hospice and respite care. Our Restorative Nursing Program focuses on achieving and maintaining optimal physical, mental, and psychosocial functioning that promotes independence. We do this in a personalized, Veteran-centered, home-like setting to restore dignity and self-esteem.

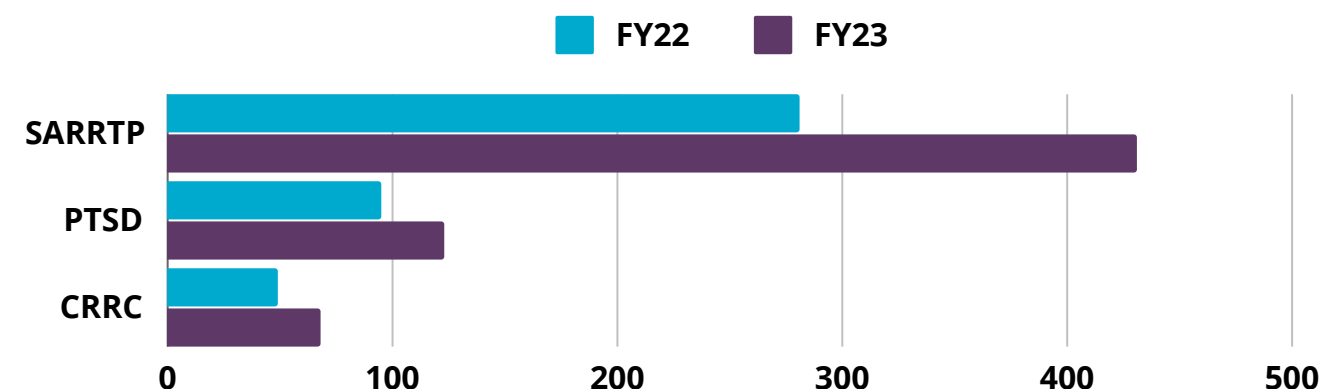


# Mental Health Support, Prevention of Veteran Suicide, and Providing Care for Military Sexual Trauma

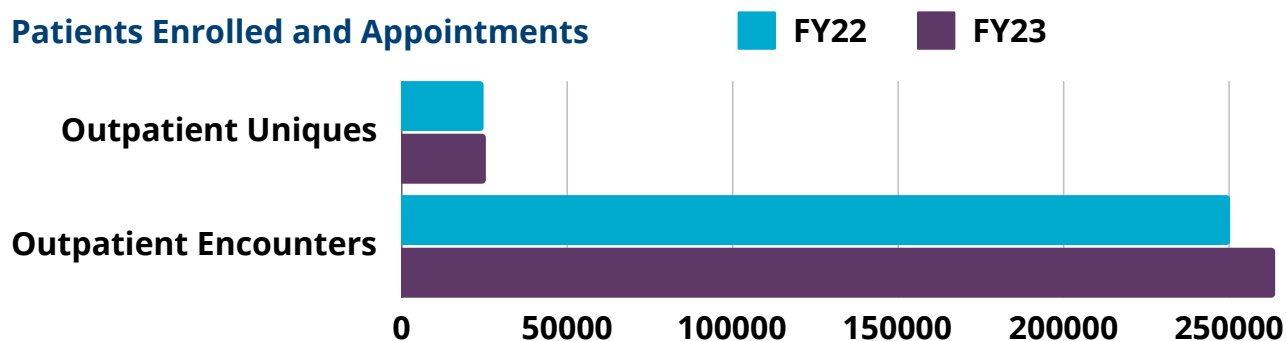
We are a recognized regional center of excellence for Veteran-focused mental health care. Over the past two years, we have supported an increase in Veterans dealing with SAR RTP (substance abuse), PTSD, & CRRC (Homeless and ready to return to work). See data below referencing the increase in services along with the increases in number of Veterans (uniques) and appointments (encounters).



## Bay Pines VA Healthcare System Mental Health Program Data



## Patients Enrolled and Appointments





# Mental Health Support, Prevention of Veteran Suicide, and Providing Care for Military Sexual Trauma

## Military Sexual Trauma



Bay Pines VA Healthcare System works to raise awareness and provide resources for survivors of **Military Sexual Trauma (MST)**. MST professionals are ready to help. Reach out to learn about the resources available to support your road to recovery.

The Bay Pines VA Healthcare system is home to the Center for Sexual Trauma Services (CSTS) and offers 16 beds in one of the top tier MST residential programs in the Country. Our program is distinguished from other VA programs by offering MST specific programming and comprehensive residential services to both men and women recovering from MST.

Ninety percent (90%) of patients receiving a full course of therapy report a statistically significant decrease in symptomology. This same percentage of patients also report an increase in their outlook on quality of life. Veterans admitted to our program will receive gold standard assessment and intensive trauma processing for Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and co-occurring disorders using specialized evidence-based psychotherapy. The typical length of stay is 6-8 weeks. Veterans can also expect to receive medication management, clinical pharmacy services, primary care, recreation therapy, music therapy, Peer Support, and consultation with a registered dietician if needed. Bay Pines and the CSTS has a commitment to a safe, inclusive treatment community and welcomes Veterans of all races, ages, religions, gender identities, and sexual orientations. Other VA's and their mental health providers recognize this level of excellence, distinction and expertise and refer Veterans from all over the U.S. The Bay Pines CSTS enjoys a national reputation for excellence and will continue to look for innovative and evidence-based ways to serve those Veterans impacted by MST.





## Research

Discovery and innovation in health care has been the foundation of VA's Research and Development (R&D) Program for nearly a century.

In FY22, the research program, including our non-profit corporation affiliate, Bay Pines Foundation, Inc., brought approximately \$1.6 million in funding to the study of Veteran health care issues.

There are 49 ongoing studies focusing on a variety of areas including Alzheimer's disease, traumatic brain injury, cancer, post-traumatic stress disorder, infectious diseases, substance use disorder, chronic pain, cardiovascular conditions, dermatological conditions, arthritis, whole health, and genomics.

The service participates in 13 multi-site VA studies sponsored by the VA Office of Research and Development Clinical Sciences Research and Development Service and has 25 active non-VA sponsored clinical trials.



Clinical research includes oncology, cardiology, infectious diseases, pulmonary and rheumatology research and is sponsored by several organizations including the National Institutes of Health, VA ORD Cooperative Studies Program, VA ORD Clinical Science Research and Development, and pharmaceutical and biotechnical companies.

Research actively participates in genomic studies to identify genetic markers that can be used to personalize patient care across multiple conditions. Bay Pines VA has been a top enrolling site into a genomic database through the Million Veteran Program for a decade, with 23,000 Veteran participants.

Additional research also includes oncology, with a focus on the VISN 8 Lung Precision Oncology Program, in partnership with Miami VA, Tampa VA and the Moffitt Cancer Center. The VISN 8 LPOP complements ongoing prostate cancer precision oncology activities.

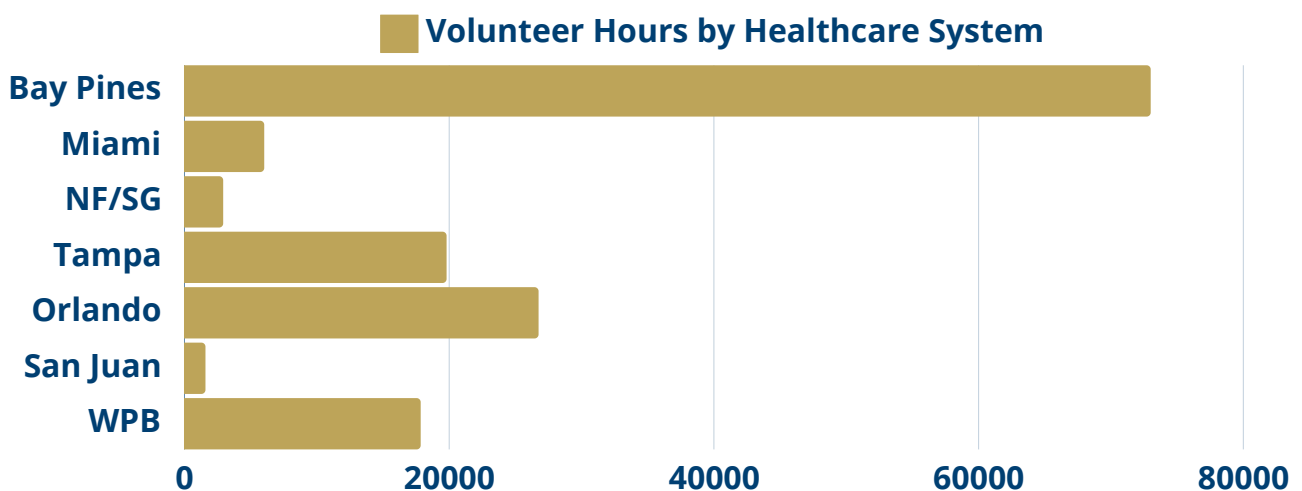
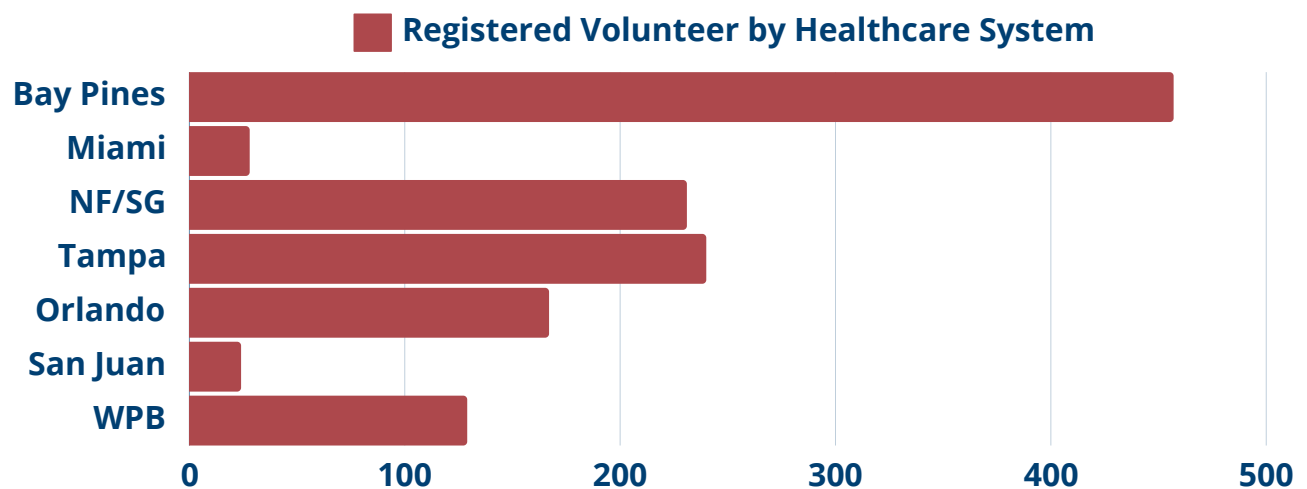
# Center for Development and Civic Engagement

The Center for Development and Civic Engagement (CDCE) manages all volunteers, oversees donations, and facilitates community partnerships and engagements



## Volunteer Services

Bay Pines VA Healthcare System continues to lead all healthcare systems throughout the VA Sunshine Healthcare Network in number of registered volunteers and volunteer hours. Volunteers support a number of positions including transportation network drivers, greeting Veterans at the main entrances of each facility, championing efforts as Red Coat Ambassadors, and through supporting the Compassionate Contact Corps by contacting socially isolated Veterans.



# Modernization and Safety

Our commitment to modernizing our facilities reflects an investment into the future of health care for every Veteran, family member, and caregiver we serve. From FY22 to FY23, we completed the following projects at Bay Pines VA Healthcare System.

**Main Hospital B100 - Ward 4A Renovation:** This project involved updating 14,250 sq. ft. of an inpatient ward to ensure compliance with privacy issues as required under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), Public Law 104-191. This project renovated the entire 4A Ward, ensuring fully handicap accessible, state-of-the-art patient rooms and employee work areas which meets, and in some case, exceeds, community standards of care.

**Main Hospital B100 - Power & Data for Telecare in ICU Rooms:** We improved access to health care by upgrading capabilities through the installation of power and data in 22 ICU rooms for a Tele-Care virtual patient care (telecare monitoring) system.

**Building 107 Radiation Oncology:** This project included expanding the scan room from 350 sq. ft. to 500 sq. ft. to address the CT Scan Room, which was 40% undersized and the Control Room, which was 60% undersized (relative to VA design guidelines). These changes enhance the patient care experience, and provide long-term flexibility in the CT scan room to accommodate updates and lifecycle replacements in the future.

**Main Hospital B100 – Hybrid OR:** This project renovated 5,000 sq. ft. of existing Cath Lab space contiguous with the existing nine OR's on the second floor of building 100 to be a hybrid OR. It includes all utility and finish upgrades that brought the space to current VA requirements. The use of imaging in an OR setting is becoming more common and is considered industry practice. Industry standard also includes a fully functional digital interventional radiology room in an OR. This project provided the space for this modernization and allows surgeons and radiologists to perform complex vascular surgery procedures, in line with current industry standards.

**Building 109 Parking Garage – Security Fencing Installation:** This project immediately addressed suicide prevention measures, which remains as one of the Secretary of VA's top priorities. The installation of the fence is meant as a deterrent and safety measure to reduce the possibilities of suicide jumpers who might attempt to use the upper and middle decks of the structure.



**90<sup>th</sup>** **BAY PINES**  
DEPARTMENT OF  
VETERANS AFFAIRS  
ANNIVERSARY Honoring a Legacy of Service



## **BAY PINES VA HEALTHCARE SYSTEM**

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