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## VA Expands New Innovators Network Program

WASHINGTON –The Department of Veterans Affairs Center for Innovation (VACI) is expanding its Innovators Network Program. Fourteen new VA Medical Center innovation sites and one National Cemetery innovation site will join the eight selected last year, for a total of 22 recognized innovation sites across the country. The sites were selected from a highly competitive pool of 44 sites from across the country. The selection was based on a review of 12 parameters, including: proposed Veteran-centered approach; plans to empower and engage employees and collaboration with local infrastructure enablers.

The [VA Center for Innovation](#) identifies, tests and evaluates new approaches to efficiently and effectively meet the current and future needs of Veterans through innovations rooted in data, design-thinking and agile development. Each of the Network sites is focused on [building a culture of innovation](#) to support employees working with input from Veterans to design and develop new innovations to better serve Veterans and their families.

“VA continues to increase its ability to rapidly respond to Veterans’ needs and deliver the best possible experience for Veterans. We have invested in creating a culture of innovation which we can constantly find, test and create better ways to deliver services to our Veterans,” said [VA Secretary Robert McDonald](#).

The Network began as a pilot in early 2015 and seeks to build and empower a community of VA employees who are actively engaged in innovation. The Network has been a tremendous success in [developing VA’s culture of innovation](#), empowering employees to improve the experience and care of our Veterans, and successfully funding transformational innovations that significantly reduce costs and improve the care and services available to Veterans. The Network program and Innovation Specialists – dedicated staff at each innovation site – have trained over 1,300 VA employees on innovation-related competencies to help them first recognize, and then solve problems that are negatively impacting or preventing Veterans from receiving the care and services.

To support initiatives, the VA Innovators Network creates a pathway to accelerate the development of new, reimagined experiences for Veterans and their families. The accelerator has invested in 38 projects across the VA. Two of its biggest, Technology-Based Eye Care Screening from the Atlanta VA and the Care in the Community Tool from the Portland VA project to save over \$20 million over the next five years and improve Veterans access to services and care.

The following sites have been selected as Innovators Network Sites for 2017:

- Albany Stratton VA Medical Center, Albany, N.Y.
- Louis Stokes Cleveland VA Medical Center, Cleveland, Ohio
- Grand Junction VA Healthcare System, Grand Junction, Colo.
- Hines VA Medical Center, Chicago, Ill.
- Hunter Holmes McGuire VA Medical Center, Richmond, Va.
- Lebanon VA Medical Center, Lebanon Pa.
- Lexington VA Medical Center, Lexington, Ky.
- VA Loma Linda Healthcare System, Loma Linda, Calif.
- New Mexico VA Healthcare System
- Puget Sound VA Healthcare System, Seattle Wash.
- VA San Diego Healthcare System, San Diego, Calif.
- South Texas Healthcare System, San Antonio, Texas
- Tuscaloosa VA Medical Center, Tuscaloosa, Ala.
- White River Junction VA Medical Center, White River Junction, Vt.
- Fort Snelling National Cemetery, Minneapolis, Minn.

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