

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

# News Release

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## **VA ribbon-cutting ceremony brings health care closer to home for rural Veterans**

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) celebrated its latest telehealth innovation Oct. 16 at the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 6786 in Eureka, Montana, with the grand opening of the first VA Accessing Telehealth through Local Area Stations ([ATLAS](#)) site which will benefit up to 300 Veterans living in that community.

This state-of-the-art remote telehealth exam room is the first of many that will be opened in partnership with Veteran Service Organizations, bringing VA health care closer to rural Veterans in their communities and reducing the need for them to travel long distances for select health care appointments.

"Our goal is to make sure every Veteran has access to health care," said VA Secretary Robert Wilkie. "ATLAS addresses another health care hurdle for Veterans living in rural areas or with limited Internet access and it's a great example of how public and private organizations can work together to solve the challenges of health care."

ATLAS exam rooms, provided by the VFW and designed in its partnership with Philips, provide telehealth equipment in a secure and private space, allowing Veterans to conduct virtual appointments with VA providers. [Philips](#) is a health technology company focused on improving people's health and enabling better outcomes by leveraging advanced technology and deep clinical and consumer insight

In addition to Eureka, Montana, the 10-site pilot program will have initial locations inside American Legions and VFW Posts in Springfield, Virginia, Los Banos, California and Linesville, Pennsylvania.

"Improving access to care for our nation's Veterans is something that will take collaboration across the public and private sector. As we expand the VA's success in telehealth and move these solutions closer to home, together with forward thinking service organizations, we can give our nation's Veterans greater access to the care they deserve," said Vitor Rocha, chief market leader, Philips North America.

There are more than 9 million Veterans enrolled in the VA health care system with three million living in rural or remote areas and 27% of that population not having internet access at home.

Visit [VA's Connected Care](#) website to learn more about ATLAS or VA's [Anywhere to Anywhere](#) telehealth initiative.

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