

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

News Release

Office of Public Affairs
Media RelationsWashington, DC 20420
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www.va.govFOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Sep. 18, 2020

VA recognizes HeRO award winners for safety initiatives, COVID-19 efforts

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announced today it honored Veterans Health Administration (VHA) National HeRO Award recipients for their contributions to VHA's journey to becoming a high reliability organization (HRO).

VHA's enterprise-wide journey to high reliability aims to continuously improve its processes by maximizing safety and minimizing harm to achieve the goal of ensuring every patient receives excellent care every time.

The awardees were recognized for their safety and process improvement initiatives as well as their COVID-19 response efforts to provide the best possible care to Veterans. Their accomplishments include COVID-19 communication and education, innovative and efficient COVID-19 screening and triage processes including the development of a screening app, and using 3D printing technology for personal protective equipment.

"Even during these unpredictable times and the COVID-19 response, these recipients responded swiftly and efficiently to ensure that VHA delivers the best care available to our Veterans," said VA Secretary Robert Wilkie. "From developing new entry procedures to manufacturing personal protective equipment to staying in touch with Veterans, VA staff are handling the pandemic quickly and creatively."

Each of the 11 teams and individuals were nominated by top leadership in one of five categories: Clinical individual from a Veterans Integrated Service Network (VISN) or facility, non-clinical individual from a VISN or facility, clinical team from a VISN or facility, non-clinical team from a VISN or facility and individual or team from VHA central office.

The National HeRO Award is the highest level of HRO recognition available within VHA and is reserved to honor employees who advance VHA's journey to high reliability through demonstration of VHA's HRO principles in action. The HRO steering committee votes quarterly to select one winner in each category for a National HeRO Award.

Learn more about VA's journey to high reliability at [VA National Center for Patient Safety](https://www.va.gov/patient-safety).

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