VA SAN DIEGO HEALTHCARE SYSTEM

COMBAT VETERAN CARE

Case manager, Michael Kilmer, MSW, counsels Iraqi combat veteran, Todd Engle. Returning combat veterans now have a convenient resource for accessing VA health benefits in San Diego. VASDHS offers a full-time case manager for assisting combat veterans from Iraq and Afghanistan.

ANNUAL REPORT 2004

SUCCESSFUL YEAR

Left to right:
Jacqueline G. Parthemore, MD
Chief of Staff/Medical Director
Gary J. Rossio, CHE
Director
Janet M. Jones, RN, MS
ACOS/Nursing & PCS

DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

This year we continued to meet our mission of providing high quality health care to America's veterans and being recognized for quality care, innovation, value and exceptional customer service. In June, we successfully completed an unannounced survey by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO). Our new outreach and case management program for returning combat veterans has been very effective at providing a smooth transition to VA health care and benefits. We received top patient satisfaction scores for inpatient and outpatient care compared to both VA medical centers and private sector health care. Our recently launched Internet-based services program now offers veterans the options of looking up their appointments, requesting prescription refills and searching for health information. For the second year, San Diego, as part of the Desert Pacific Healthcare Network, received the Kizer Quality Achievement Recognition Grant recognizing the highest award given for quality within the Veterans Health Administration (VHA). We look forward to expanding our clinics in Chula Vista and Vista in the coming year and will continue to strive to find new efficiencies to assure that we provide timely, quality care to all veterans.

Gary J. Rossio, CHE
Director, VA San Diego Healthcare System
VA Desert Pacific Healthcare Network

PET THERAPY PROGRAM

Chester visits patient Chuck Bonner along with recreational therapist, Lani Ricks and Pet Therapy Coordinator for the Helen Woodward Animal Center, Robin Cohen. Animal-assisted therapy (AAT), commonly known as "pet therapy," has become a favorite program at the VA. Chester visits the VA every other week. He brings a smile to the faces of many veterans and loves all the attention he receives.

2004 HIGHLIGHTS

JCAHO & PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT

In June, we successfully completed an unannounced survey by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO) and were accredited for three years. We held our seventh Annual Performance Improvement Fair on May 20, 2004 with 27 entries and approximately 150 participants. In addition, 239 employees participated in 62 Goal Sharing Teams, which complete projects toward the national VA strategic goals. Forty-three teams achieved the highest recognition, the Gold Award Level and employees received more than $185,000 in recognition awards.

PATIENT SATISFACTION SCORES

VASDHS ranks tops among VHA's leaders in patient satisfaction. In all 10 inpatient *Dimensions of Care* categories, VASDHS scored better than the Network 22 average and at or better than the national average in nine of the 10 categories. In 13 of the 14 Outpatient *Dimensions of Care* categories, VASDHS had better scores than the VHA national average and Network average scores. Patients rated VASDHS 11 points above the VA standard for Overall Quality of Inpatient Care and eight points above for Overall Quality of Outpatient Care.

EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION

VASDHS employee responses on the national All VA Employee Satisfaction Survey, conducted in 2004, rated the San Diego VA in the top range for satisfaction and with high ratings for San Diego leadership.

RETURNING COMBAT VETERAN OUTREACH

VASDHS launched a new outreach and case management program to assure that all returning Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom (OIF/OEF) combat veterans receive the medical care and assistance they need in a friendly and timely manner. The program is designed to streamline access for combat veterans from enrollment to all medical, VA and community services.

INTERNET-BASED PATIENT SERVICES

The VA San Diego launched *My HealtheVet*, the on-line patient services program in May 2004. Since the launch, 690 San Diego patients have signed up to use the online services. Patients can now view appointments for next 30 days, refill prescriptions on-line, view their prescription status, and read a drug information handout about their prescription. In addition, patients can look up health information, access special programs for veterans and keep a personal health information record.

CLINICAL IMPROVEMENTS

Video Capsule Endoscopy (VCE): In 2004, the San Diego VA obtained a Video Capsule Endoscopy (VCE) system. This system is a state-of-the-art tool used to diagnose problems in the small intestine, particularly bleeding that could not be seen by any other means. The technology allows the patient to swallow a disposable pill-sized camera that transmits wireless images as it passes through a patient's intestines to a recorder that the patient wears.

Clinic for Complicated Hepatitis C Virus (HCV) -Infected Patients: In addition to the screening and treatment clinics run jointly by the GI Section and Primary Care, San Diego has established a clinic for HCV-infected

NURSING EXCELLENCE

Special Procedure Unit nurse, Kathy Hansen-Schmid, RN, prepares a patient for an outpatient procedure. Approximately 460 RNs, a majority with advanced education, coordinate general and specialized nursing care for inpatients and outpatients at the medical center and VA community clinics. Nursing support staff also play an important role.

patients who have complications such as cirrhosis or other co-morbidities that require more difficult treatment approaches.

ALTERNATIVE REVENUE COLLECTIONS

VASDHS collected a record $16.7 M [Medical Care Cost Fund (MCCF): $15.2 M + external sharing revenue of $1.5 M]. San Diego increased collections by 60% this year and surpassed the goal by 127%, exceeding the goal by the highest percentage within our Network.

AWARDS & RECOGNITION

Gary J. Rossio, CHE, director of the VA San Diego Healthcare System, was selected by President Bush for the prestigious Distinguished Executive Presidential Rank Award for 2003. Rossio received the award at a White House ceremony on June 8, 2004.

VASDHS Cardiothoracic Surgeon, Michael Madani, M.D. received the California Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) 2004 Outstanding VA Healthcare Employee of the Year award.

Vilma C. Divinagracia, MSN, CNS, as chair of the VASDHS Nursing Education Council Cultural Task Force, was one of ten national winners of the 2004 Office of Nursing Services (ONS) Innovation Award.

CONSTRUCTION

The San Diego Facilities Management team:

- Led the design and award of two minor construction projects: the remodel of the Prosthetics Service and the Hemodialysis Unit
- Oversaw the construction of a second Cardiac Catheterization Lab, an important expansion to meet the needs of our cardiology patients
- Completed a project to install a new cogeneration power plant that will reduce energy costs for the facility by using natural gas to create electricity on-site
- Expanded on-site parking and valet parking services

STAND DOWN

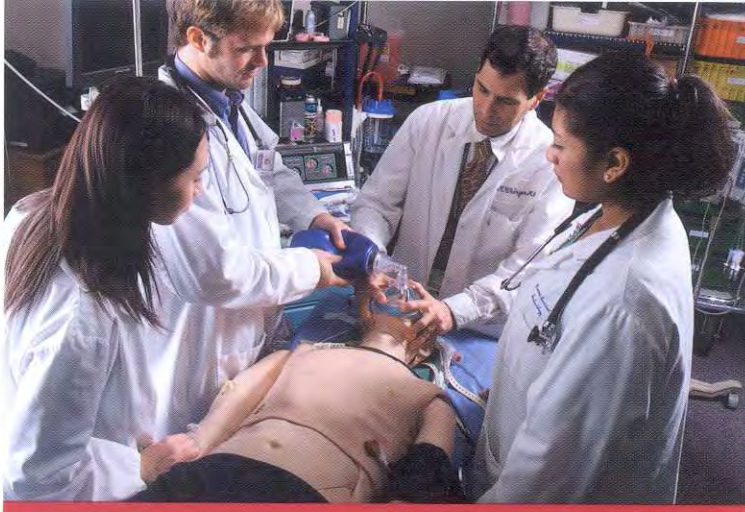
VASDHS managed the medical tent for Stand Down for homeless veterans for the 17th year serving 659 homeless veterans and 147 of their family members. Over 380 volunteers from the VA San Diego Healthcare System, Department of Defense (DoD) and the private sector donated over 2,500 hours of their time. They worked in various aspects of the medical tent assisting with registration, pharmacy, medical care, dental and eye exams, podiatry, and TB testing.

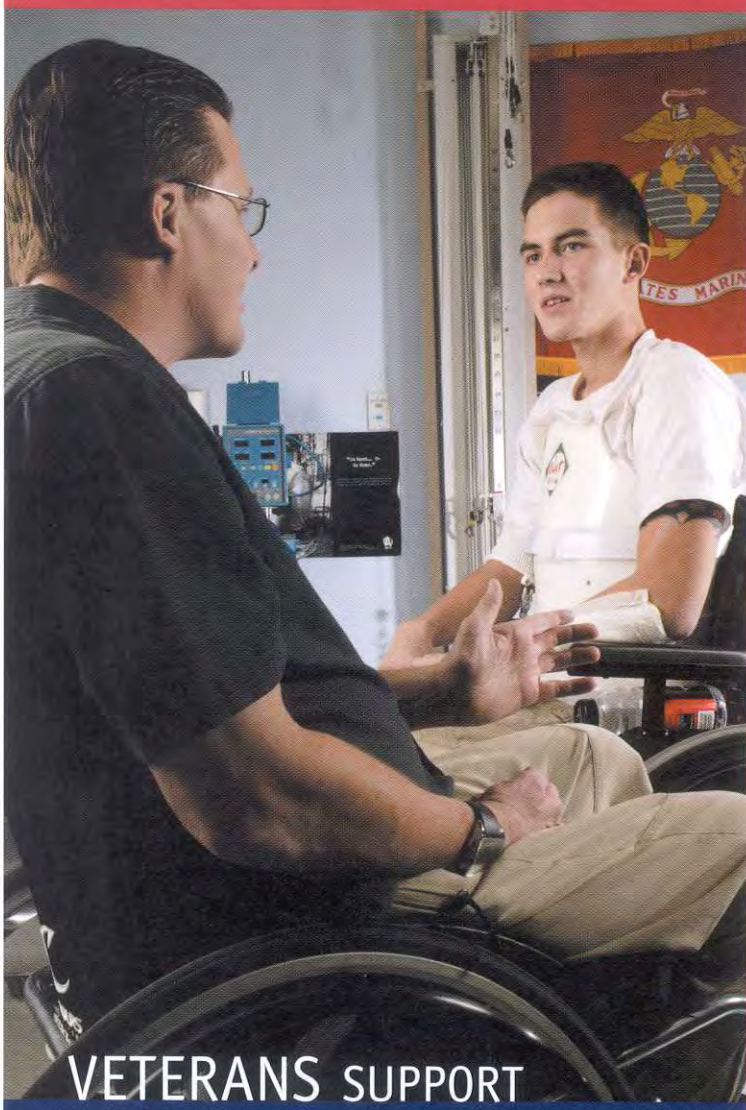
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SERVICES

ITS continued to improve and expand IT support for all of the hospital systems including the electronic medical record (Computerized Patient Record System or CPRS), Barcode Medication Administration, and the Picture Archive Communication System for radiology and imaging files. Installation of new servers and operating system enhancements allowed a 60% improvement in response time for CPRS.

RESEARCH ACCREDITATION

The VA San Diego Healthcare System Research Service completed their first National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) site visit in September 2004 to review the Human Subjects Research Protections Program. They received accreditation with an outstanding score of 97.



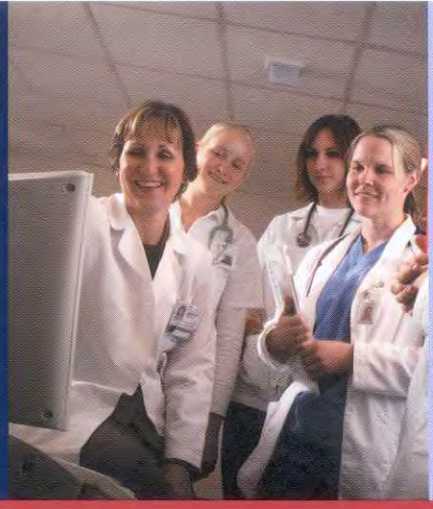


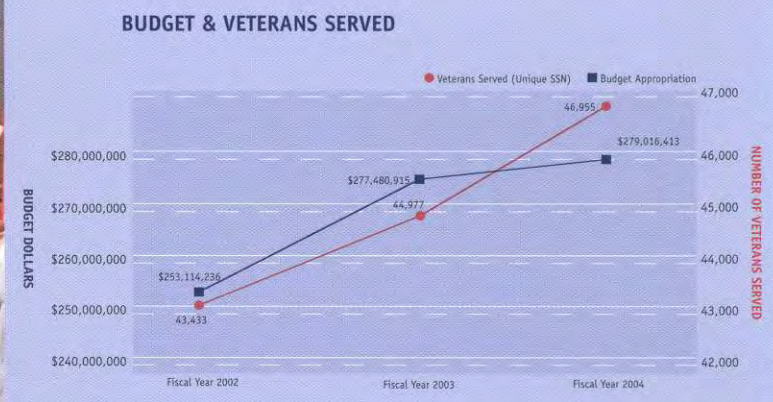
VETERANS SUPPORT

President of the Cal-Diego Paralyzed Veterans of America (PVA), Al Kovach visits Iraqi combat Marine, Redzuan "Wan" Razak. Veteran service organizations play an important role in assisting veterans at the medical center and in the community.

QUALITY CARE

We value Trust, Respect, Excellence, Commitment and Compassion in an environment of continuous improvement.





PROFILE

The VA San Diego Healthcare System (VASDHS) provides a wide range of inpatient and outpatient health services at the medical center in La Jolla, and at five community clinics located in Chula Vista, Escondido, Imperial Valley, Mission Valley, and Vista. We provide medical, surgical, mental health, geriatric, spinal cord injury, and advanced rehabilitation services. VASDHS has 238 hospital beds, including skilled nursing beds, and operates several regional referral programs including cardiovascular surgery and spinal cord injury.

We are affiliated with the University of California, San Diego School of Medicine and provide training for 400 medical interns, residents and fellows, as well as 64 other teaching affiliations for nursing, pharmacy, dental and dietetics. VASDHS has one of the largest research programs in the VA nationally with a budget of $50.6 million (FY 2004), 211 principal investigators, and 904 projects.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

VASDHS is committed to being an active member of the San Diego veterans, medical, and business communities, and we actively participate in the following organizations: Greater San Diego Chamber of Commerce, United Veterans Council, San Diego County Regional Health-care Advisory Council, Healthcare Association of San Diego and Imperial Counties, and the San Diego Medical Society.

Each year we support community groups and agencies including Stand Down for Homeless Veterans and Vietnam Veterans of San Diego (VVSD) for their homeless veteran winter shelter.

Our Community Advisory Board, composed of key community stakeholders, meets monthly and is actively involved in providing information and advice on how we can best serve veterans.

FINANCIAL REPORT & STATISTICS

FY 2004 (10/1/03 – 9/30/04) BUDGET

Total Medical Care Appropriations $279,016,413

Operating Expenses $279,016,413
- Salary, Wages & Benefits . .$162,089,721
- Supplies $41,512,745
- Services $44,762,031
- Other Expenses $30,651,916

WORKLOAD STATISTICS

Medical Center
- **Beds Total 238**
  - Acute 172
  - Extended Care 40
  - Spinal Cord Injury 26
- **Admissions Total 6,653**
  - Acute 6,069
  - Extended Care 340
  - Spinal Cord 244
- **Patient Days Total 62,688**
  - Acute 53,021
  - Extended Care 9,667
- **Average Length of Stay**
  - Acute . . . . . 8 Days
  - Extended Care . . . . . 27 Days
- **Surgeries Total 4,351**
  - Inpatient 1,607
  - Ambulatory 2,744

Outpatient Visits 476,938
Patients 46,955
Number of Veterans in San Diego and Imperial Valley 274,135

STAFFING STATISTICS

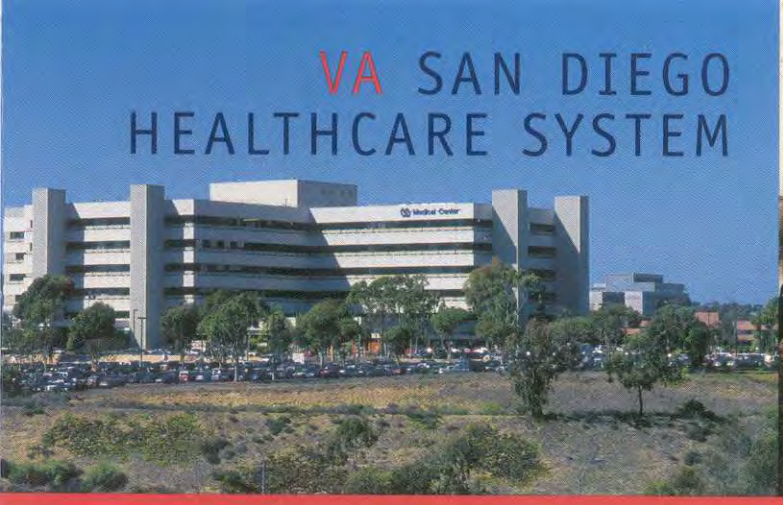
Employees (FTE) 2,001
- FT Physicians (FTE) 144
- RNs (FTE) 466
- Other (FTE) 1,391

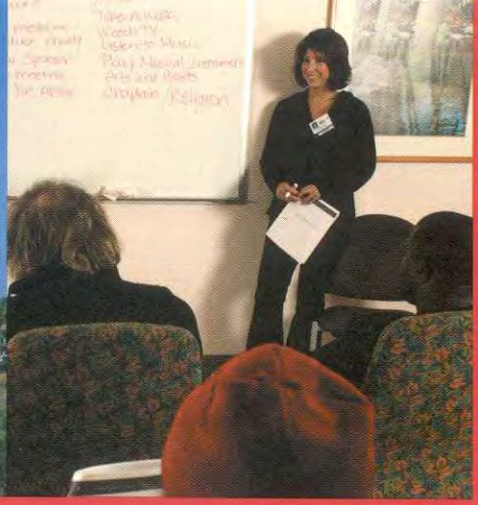
Residents & Medical Students (FTE) . 400
(FTE = Full Time Equivalent)
Volunteers 1,054
Volunteer Hours 100,672

RESEARCH STATISTICS

Total Research Funding . . . $50,564,806
Principal Investigators 211
Research Projects 904

VA SAN DIEGO HEALTHCARE SYSTEM





MEDICAL CENTER

VA San Diego Healthcare System
3350 La Jolla Village Drive
San Diego, CA 92161
(858) 552-8585
1 (800) 331-VETS

FREQUENTLY CALLED PHONE NUMBERS

TeleCare System (Nurse Advice)
1 (877) 252-4866

Enrollment & Eligibility Questions
(858) 552-7523

Appointment Scheduling (Medical Center)
(858) 552-7570

WEB ADDRESSES

For more information, visit us at:
www.san-diego.med.va.gov
www.va.gov

VET CENTERS

San Diego Vet Center
2900 6th Avenue
San Diego, CA 92103
(619) 294-2040

Vista Vet Center
1830 West Drive, Suite 103
Vista, CA 92083
(760) 643-2070

OUTPATIENT CLINICS

VA Mission Valley Clinic
8810 Rio San Diego Drive
San Diego, CA 92108
(619) 400-5000

VA Chula Vista Clinic
835 Third Avenue
Chula Vista, CA 91910
(619) 409-1600

VA Vista Clinic
1840 West Drive
Vista, CA 92083
(760) 643-2000

VA Escondido Clinic
815 East Pennsylvania Avenue
Escondido, CA 92025
(760) 466-7020

VA Imperial Valley Clinic
528 G Street
Brawley, CA 92227
(760) 344-9085

Wellness & Vocational Enrichment Clinic
W.A.V.E. Program
4525 Mission Gorge Place
San Diego, CA 92120
(619) 228-8000

ACCREDITATION & CERTIFICATION

Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO) 2004-2007

Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF); Spinal Cord Injury, Medical Rehabilitation, Wellness and Vocational Rehabilitation Enhancement and Homeless programs

College of American Pathologists

Comprehensive Cancer Center (American College of Surgeons Commission on Cancer)

American Association for Accreditation of Laboratory Animal Care (AAALAC)

Nuclear Regulatory Commission

American Association of Blood Banks

Blood Bank is FDA Registered

Clinical Laboratory Improvement Act (CLIA)

National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) Research Accreditation

SERVICES

Alcohol/Drug Treatment Center
Ambulatory Care
Audiology & Speech Pathology
Cardiac Care
Critical Care
CT Scanner
Dental Services
Diabetes Care Clinic
Extended Care Center
Geriatrics
Gulf War Health Screening
Health Care for Homeless Veterans
Hemodialysis Center
HIV/AIDS Treatment (Special Infectious Disease Program)
Home-Based Primary Care
Magnetic Resonance Imaging
Mammography
Medicine
Neurology
Nuclear Medicine
Nutrition Counseling
Oncology
PET Scanning
Pharmacy
Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder Clinic
POW Program
Primary Care
Prosthetic Treatment Center
Psychiatry
Psychology
Rehabilitation Medicine
Research
Sexual Trauma Counseling
Spinal Cord Injury Unit
Surgery
Ultrasound
Visual Impairment Services
Women's Clinic

Department of Veterans Affairs

MEMBER OF THE VA DESERT PACIFIC HEALTHCARE NETWORK VETERANS INTEGRATED SERVICE NETWORK 22

VA DESERT PACIFIC HEALTHCARE NETWORK

01/2005