



VA San Diego Healthcare System



annual report 2007



Our OEF/OIF Care Management Team is easing the transition from military to civilian life while maximizing veterans' health care services and benefits.



to civilian



director's message

VA San Diego Healthcare System continues to be recognized as one of the finest VA medical centers in the nation and we continue to have high customer satisfaction scores. We have taken significant steps to improve access for veterans for their medical care and will continue to focus on this in 2008.

Last year was marked by many significant accomplishments. We successfully completed a Joint Commission visit and received accreditation for three years. We increased our number of veterans served by 3.1% and have enrolled more than 7,200 Iraqi and Afghanistan veterans for health care. We have added staff to provide service for those veterans including our OEF/OIF Care Management Team, a Suicide Prevention Coordinator and mental health staff. This year we opened a Heroes Internet Café in the medical center for the convenience of our patients.

We will continue to provide the highest quality clinical care to our veterans through advanced medical practices and our commitment to continuous improvement, education and research. Our employees and volunteers have created a culture of caring that is recognized by our patients and visitors – we will continue to provide quality service with respect and compassion to veterans in 2008.



Executive leadership: (L – r) **Cynthia E. Abair**, MHA, Associate Director; **Janet M. Jones**, RN, EdD, ACOS/ Nursing & Patient Care Services; **Gary J. Rossio**, FACHE, Director; **Jean Sobczak**, MBA, Assistant Director; **Jacqueline G. Parthemore**, MD, Chief of Staff/Medical Director

Gary J. Rossio, FACHE

Director, VA San Diego Healthcare System
VA Desert Pacific Healthcare Network

annual report 2007 list

OEF/OIF VETERAN CARE

VA San Diego Healthcare System provides comprehensive care and services for Operation Enduring Freedom/Operation Iraqi Freedom (OEF/OIF) veterans, including:

- We schedule new OEF/OIF patients within 30 days of their desired appointment date, and usually within less than two weeks. All returning combat veterans are screened for post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), traumatic brain injury and risk for suicide upon their initial evaluation.
- We offer extensive outreach to OEF/OIF veterans and all veterans to make sure they know about their health care benefits. We have a full-time Transition Assistance Program (TAP) coordinator for health care who teaches classes at the military installations for separating combat veterans.
- We have a comprehensive OEF/OIF Care Management Team including nine staff – Transition Patient Advocates, VA/DoD liaisons, and Case managers and a seamless team representative in our Enrollment Office.
- This year we added 22 FTE mental health clinical staff (physicians, psychologists, social workers, and chaplains) to support returning combat veterans. We offer over 20 mental health programs including Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), Military Sexual Trauma, Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) screening and evaluation, suicide prevention, and Alcohol/Drug Treatment programs. We have met the VA mental health hiring requirements.



We are conducting many research studies on health care and mental health issues for OEF/OIF veterans that will enable us to provide the most advanced medical care for the returning combat veterans.



IMPROVED ACCESS

Improving access to care remains one of the highest priorities for VA San Diego Healthcare System. We have been working to improve this on many different fronts. Some of these include:

- We are now seeing all new OEF/OIF veterans and all current patients within 30 days in our top ten clinics, and are seeing most other new patients within 30 days of their requested date.
- Through our improved appointment scheduling system, we have markedly decreased our “no show” appointment rates and have improved clinic efficiency.
- We have significantly improved our response time for the Patient Telephone Call Center and have reduced “dropped calls” to less than 10%.
- We expanded our Operating Room hours and have significantly improved surgery appointment availability.

2006 MIDDLETON AWARD

Roland C. Blantz, MD, nephrologist at the Veterans Affairs (VA) San Diego Healthcare System received the 2006 William S. Middleton Award, the highest honor for biomedical investigators in the Department of Veterans Affairs. Dr. Blantz, a world leader in the study of kidney physiology and function is a physician in Nephrology at the VA San Diego Healthcare System (VASDHS) and is a professor of medicine and head of Nephrology-Hypertension at the University of California, San Diego. Blantz officially received the award on May 15, 2007 in a ceremony in Washington D.C

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA FIRES

During the catastrophic fires in the fall of 2007, VASHDS continued to operate the medical center, emergency surgeries, and clinics despite having more than 400 employees evacuated from their homes. In addition, VASDHS provided emergency housing, food service and child care at the medical center for employees. “This was one of VASDHS’ finest hours, I am proud to be part of this team,” said Gary Rossio, medical center director.



NURSE ACADEMY

This year VASDHS was selected from 42 applicants nationwide as one of the first four sites for the VA Nursing Academy pilot project. VASDHS will work with the San Diego State University School of Nursing with a five year grant that will fund staff, education and clinical practice to address nursing shortages both within the VA and nationwide.

ALTERNATIVE REVENUE

VASDHS collected \$15M [Medical Care Cost Fund (MCCF): \$13.6M + external sharing revenue of \$1.4M]. These funds stay at our local facility to enhance services for San Diego patients.

st of accomplishments



HEROES INTERNET CAFÉ

VASDHS opened the Heroes Internet Café at the VA Medical Center in June 2007. Veterans visiting the VA Medical Center in La Jolla now have another option while waiting for their medical appointment or prescription refill. They can surf the web or send e-mail messages to their friends from the new Heroes Internet Café. "We wanted to create a friendly, convenient and comfortable atmosphere at the medical center," said Gary Rossio, director of the VA San Diego Healthcare System. The Internet Café, located in the medical center dining area has four computers offering free Internet and e-mail access for veterans.



EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION & CAREER DEVELOPMENT

VASDHS continues to provide a variety of programs for employees including extensive education and training opportunities and a Health & Wellness program. Some of the career development programs we support include: Emerging Leaders, Leadership Development Institute, Executive Career Field, Presidential Management Fellow, National Nursing Education Initiative Program, Employee Incentive Scholarship Program, Federal Student Loan Repayment, Technical Career Field Intern Program, Education Debt Reduction Program, Student Employment Programs, Upward Mobility Program, and a Recruitment Referral Bonus Program.



CONSTRUCTION

The VASDHS Facilities Team worked on the following construction projects this year:

- Seismic Upgrade – VASDHS is undergoing a \$52.2M major structural upgrade to the main hospital building to remain operational after a significant seismic event. The project has progressed well and is three months ahead of schedule. Significant work has been completed and 6 of the 8 exterior stairs have been completed. The project is receiving local and regional recognition as a "best practice," and is scheduled to be complete in May 2008.
- Site preparation and installation of a new CT scanner in Radiology and a PET/CT scanner in nuclear medicine was installed in FY 2007 to increase the medical imaging capability at the VA San Diego to one of the most sophisticated imaging centers in San Diego.
- A new modular MRI facility was installed outside of the Emergency Department to provide state-of-the-art technology and to allow construction for the seismic project to be completed on the north side of the hospital. The new module will be relocated back to the Building 14 MRI Center upon completion of the seismic work in FY 2008.
- The inpatient psychiatric unit was remodeled providing a central nurses station to improve patient observation and staffing efficiencies.



AWARDS & RECOGNITION

Kristin Bell, MD, internal medicine physician received the Dr. William Beaumont Award in Medicine from the American Medical Association at the AMA Opening Session of the 2007 Interim Meeting of the House of Delegates on November 10, 2007. The award recognizes physicians under 50 years of age, who are U.S. citizens, and have distinguished themselves in medical science.

The San Diego United Veterans Council named Michael Kilmner, MSW, as the "Unsung Hero for 2007" for his work as a case manager for returning OEF/OIF combat veterans in San Diego.

Chaplain Dick Millsbaugh received the 2006 Excellence in Chaplain Service Award in the full-time category for his service to veterans at VASDHS.

Jill Bormann, RN, PhD was a recipient of the Top 10 Office of Nursing Services Innovations Awards for her work on Rapid Relaxation for well-being of mind, body and spirit.

VASDHS sleep researcher, Sonia Ancoli-Israel, PhD, received the National Sleep Foundation 2007 Lifetime Achievement Award.

Green Awards – VASDHS received the Director's Recycling Award for their recycling and diversion efforts on June 7, 2007 from the City of San Diego's 2007 Waste Reduction & Diversion Awards program.

VASDHS received the 2007 VA Environmental Excellence Award in the category of Waste/Pollution Prevention.

Volunteers are an important part of our health care team.



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 242 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 1,479 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 \$55 million (FY 2007), 243 principal investigators, and 1,068 projects.

ACCREDITATION & CERTIFICATION

The Joint Commission 2007-2010

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 Accreditations

FY 2007 (10/1/06 – 9/30/07) BUDGET

Total Medical Care Appropriations	\$346,136,638
Operating Expenses	\$346,136,638
Salary, Wages & Benefits	\$203,266,383
Supplies	\$45,599,920
Services	\$57,066,751
Other Expenses	\$40,203,584

STAFFING STATISTICS

(FTE = Full Time Equivalent)

Employees (FTE)	2,155
Physicians (FTE)	182
RNs (FTE)	444
Other (FTE)	1,529
Residents & Medical Students	1,479
Other Clinical Trainees	1,047

VOLUNTEER STATISTICS

Volunteers	1,038
Volunteer Hours	82,753
Donations	\$802,978

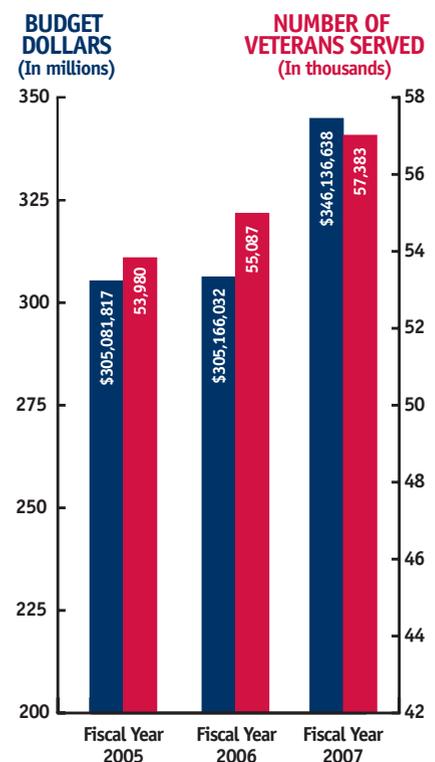
RESEARCH STATISTICS

Total Research Funding	\$54,551,897
Principal Investigators	243
Research Projects	1,068

WORKLOAD STATISTICS

Medical Center Beds Total	242
Acute	172
Extended Care	40
Spinal Cord Injury	30
Admissions Total	6,756
Acute	6,081
Extended Care	399
Spinal Cord	276
Patient Days Total	62,954
Acute	53,382
Extended Care	9,572
Average Length of Stay	9 Days
Acute	8 Days
Extended Care	23 Days
Surgeries Total	4,467
Inpatient	1,818
Outpatient	2,649
Outpatient Visits Total	549,384
Chula Vista Clinic	13,695
Escondido Clinic	12,756
Imperial Valley Clinic	2,146
La Jolla Medical Center	433,421
Mission Valley Clinic	101,068
Vista Clinic	24,683
Patients	57,383
Number of Veterans in San Diego and Imperial Valley (estimate)	267,000

BUDGET & VETERANS SERVED



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

WEB ADDRESSES

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

FREQUENTLY CALLED PHONE NUMBERS

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

Enrollment & Eligibility
Questions
(858) 552-7523

Appointment Scheduling
(Medical Center)
(858) 552-7475

VET CENTERS

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

San Marcos Vet Center
1 Civic Center Drive
Suite 150
San Marcos, CA 92069
(760) 744-6914

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

services

Alcohol/Drug Treatment
Center
Ambulatory Care
Audiology & Speech
Pathology
Cardiac Care
Combat Veteran Services
Chaplain Services
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
Optometry

Ophthalmology
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
TeleHealth
Ultrasound
Visual Impairment Services
Women's Clinic

VHA MISSION Honor America's veterans by providing exceptional health care that improves their health and well-being.

VHA VISION To be a patient centered integrated health care organization for veterans providing excellence in health care, research, and education; an organization where people choose to work; an active community partner and a back up for National emergencies.

WE VALUE Trust, respect, excellence, compassion, and commitment.

