VA San Diego
HEALTHCARE SYSTEM

ANNUAL REPORT 2015

IMPROVING THE LIVES OF VETERANS

VA | U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

CULTURAL TRANSFORMATION

As part of the VASDHS cultural transformation program entitled **CULTURE OF EXCELLENCE**, we held supervisor training programs to integrate the principles into the supervisor skills set. The training was well received by supervisors and the 2015 All Employee Survey ratings for Supervisory Behaviors were very high in all categories.

IMPROVING ACCESS TO CARE

- VASDHS implemented initiatives to **IMPROVE CLINIC WAIT TIMES IN PRIMARY CARE** and to **FOSTER PERSONALIZED RELATIONSHIPS** between the providers and each Veteran.
- VASDHS enhanced access to care through the use of the **VETERANS CHOICE PROGRAM**. In FY 15 we made over 35,000 referrals to community care and the Veterans Choice Program. VA has partnered closely with TriWest Healthcare Alliance to facilitate appointments.

THE ONE VA COMMUNITY ADVOCACY BOARD (CAB)

One VA CAB was recognized as a "best-practice," which led to the establishment of **MY VA COMMUNITIES** throughout the entire VA system. The One VA CAB started at the VA San Diego Healthcare System in 1995 and has created a dynamic community-VA partnership over the years.

HOMELESS VETERAN INITIATIVES

In collaboration with the **25 CITIES INITIATIVE** and **OTHER COMMUNITY PARTNERS**, VASDHS continued to enhance programs and services for homeless Veterans. In 2015, there were 1,381 homeless Veterans – 15% of all San Diego homeless (this was a slight decline from 2014). San Diego had 1,485 HUD/VASH housing vouchers in 2015. In addition, the homeless primary care team reached out to almost 300 Veterans in the community to make sure they were getting the health care they need.

2015 AWARDS &

WOMEN VETERANS

We hosted the **CELEBRATING WOMEN VETERANS EVENT** at the VA Oceanside Clinic on July 10, 2015. This national initiative was the VA's only women Veterans event held on the West Coast. We had speakers from the VA Center for Women Veterans, the California Deputy Secretary for Women Veterans as well as elected officials and 17 exhibitors. Three women received the Women Veterans Resiliency Awards. Approximately 110 Veterans attended the event and five media outlets ran stories.

EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION

VA San Diego employee satisfaction is positive overall. The **SAN DIEGO ALL EMPLOYEE SURVEY** scores were better than the Veterans Health Administration nationally, as were the San Diego 2014 scores.

COMPENSATION & PENSION PHYSICAL EXAMS FOR VA PENSION CLAIMS

VA San Diego **COMPLETED 30,440 PHYSICAL EXAMS** for the Compensation & Pension program within an average of 26 days from the initial request, which is four days less than the national standard. This contributed to reducing the backlog of VA benefits claims.

SUMMER SPORTS CLINIC

VASDHS hosted the **8TH NATIONAL VETERANS SUMMER SPORTS CLINIC**, September 13–18, 2015. More than 130 Veterans participated.

CLINICAL CARE

- **HEPATITIS C TREATMENT** VASDHS physician Samuel B. Ho led the VISN 22 Health Innovations Team in developing a uniform protocol for using the highly effective all oral treatment medication for chronic hepatitis C. For the first time, this enables a large number of patients to be cured of the disease, avoiding consequences that can include liver failure and death. In fiscal year 2015, VA San Diego completed treatment with over 161 patients using the new direct-acting antiviral treatments at a cost of $8.3 million and currently has about 120 patients on active treatment. The overall sustained virologic response rate (considered a "cure") was 88%.
- The San Diego **VA TELEHEALTH PROGRAM** continued to expand services for Veterans in 2015. The program launched a new virtual primary care program where Veterans can have an appointment with their provider via video from their home. The **PTSD TELEMEDICINE REGIONAL PROGRAM** continued to grow, providing expanded mental health care access. In addition, the Telehealth program provided more than 7,000 video encounters, in-home monitoring for 800 patients and more than 2,000 remote evaluations of photos for tele-retinal and dermatology. This medical care modality is considered the wave of the future, and Veterans are benefiting today.

REDUCTION OF NARCOTICS USE BY VETERANS IN SAN DIEGO

VA San Diego launched the 2015 **OPIOID SAFETY INITIATIVE** to improve oversight and management of opioid prescribing. Components of the program included a clinical reminder in the medical record for urine drug screenings, education for staff and patients and monitoring of medical records. There was a notable decrease in prescriptions for opioids and a significant increase in monitoring and drug testing. Veterans are referred to alternate programs for pain management including:

- physical therapy
- hydrotherapy
- pain management group
- rapid relaxation response
- acupuncture
- guided imagery
- recreation therapy
- yoga and tai chi

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

VA/DEFENSE DEPARTMENT SHARING PROJECTS

The VA San Diego Healthcare System and Naval Medical Center San Diego are working on two joint projects:

- Developing a $1.2 million **DEFENSE DEPARTMENT/ VA REHABILITATION CARE CENTER** in the VA Oceanside Clinic. The center will provide prosthetics care for both Defense Department and VA patients with staff from both organizations. It is planned to open in Spring 2016.
- In conjunction with the Navy Hospital Camp Pendleton, Defense Department/VA are developing **TWO PHYSICAL THERAPY CLINICS** in Rancho Bernardo and Chula Vista for $8.4 million. The Rancho Bernardo facility is opening in the second quarter of fiscal year 2016, and the Chula Vista facility will open in spring 2016. This initiative adds much-needed physical therapy care to VA and non-active duty TRICARE Prime patients in the San Diego region. Staff will include 12 physical therapists, 21 physical therapy assistants and four medical service assistants from the VA and Defense Department.

AWARDS

- **PUBLIC AFFAIRS AWARDS** VA San Diego Public Affairs staff received two first place Veterans Health Administration Communications Awards. The two communications campaigns were Culture of Excellence Communications and Research Opportunities Communications.
- **GREEN AWARDS** VA San Diego received the 2015 Practice Greenhealth Environmental Emerald Partner for Change Award for our commitment to improving our environmental performance.
- VA San Diego was selected by the City of San Diego's Environmental Services Department as one of the **RECYCLERS OF THE YEAR** in the 2015 Waste Reduction and Recycling Awards Program.
- Twelve VASDHS nurses received the **DAISY AWARD** and another nurse received the **DAISY LEADERSHIP AWARD** in 2015. DAISY is an international non-profit organization that recognizes nurses for their outstanding contributions in providing excellent and compassionate care.
- VA San Diego Healthcare System received the **2015 LEADER IN LGBT HEALTHCARE EQUALITY** recognition award.
- VA San Diego Healthcare System received a National Center for Patient Safety **2015 GOLD AWARD CORNERSTONE RECOGNITION AWARD**.

VA San Diego
HEALTHCARE SYSTEM

DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Every day the employees at the VA San Diego Healthcare System demonstrate their gratitude to Veterans who have offered their service and sacrifice to preserve our freedoms. We pride ourselves on being the community health care system for Veterans in San Diego and Imperial Counties. We believe Veterans' health care is best provided when services are delivered in true partnership with the community. With this spirit of partnership, it is not surprising that San Diego has become the model for community collaboration for the Department of Veterans Affairs. We strive to plan new initiatives and evaluate their success with our key stakeholders. Together, with the support of the Veteran community, we are passionate in providing the highest quality care and earning the trust and support of Veterans in San Diego and Imperial Counties.

Jeffrey T. Gering, FACHE
Director/Chief Executive Officer
VA San Diego Healthcare System
VA Desert Pacific Healthcare Network

EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP (L–R)

Robert M. Smith, MD • Chief of Staff/Medical Director
Cynthia E. Abair, MHA • Associate Director
Jeffrey T. Gering, FACHE • Director/Chief Executive Officer
Sandra Solem, PhD, RN • Associate Director, Patient Care Services/Nurse Executive
Wade Ebersole, MHA • Assistant Director

I CARE
DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

VA Core Values and Characteristics:
I CARE

Integrity
Commitment
Advocacy
Respect
Excellence

PARTNERING WITH THE VETERAN COMMUNITY

Improving the Lives of Veterans in San Diego & Imperial Counties

"Veterans Village has been honored to be a strong partner with the VA in serving Veterans in San Diego since our founding in 1981."

– **Phil Landis**
Chief Executive Officer, Veterans Village of San Diego

VVSD
Veterans Village of San Diego

Phil Landis • Chief Executive Officer, Veterans Village of San Diego
Mona Oge • LCSW, VASDHS Grant & Per Diem Liaison to Veterans Village

VVSD assists homeless Veterans who have substance abuse and/or mental health issues, including men and women who have recently returned from Iraq and Afghanistan. At the heart of VVSD's programs are five pillars of success: Prevention, Intervention, Rehabilitation, Aftercare and Employment services. This includes Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF), where we provide eligible Veteran families with outreach, case management, and assistance in obtaining VA and other benefits.

With five locations throughout San Diego County, VVSD is the only program of its kind in the United States – providing services to more than 2,000 Veterans a year. At VVSD we believe intensive treatment leads to self-sustaining independence, the maximizing of human potential and a meaningful, fulfilling life. Our Veterans are worthy of nothing less. vvsd.net

"The VA San Diego Healthcare System is an example of what a true community partner is. Through their spirit of collaboration and innovation, the staff and leaders of the VA San Diego Healthcare System are constantly seeking opportunities to go outside the norm to build better systems for their patients with ease and efficiency. They do this by seeking input, feedback and valuable partnerships with public and private service providers in their community to put the best resources at the fingertips of those who need them most."

– **Bill York**
Executive Vice President
2-1-1 San Diego

2-1-1 SAN DIEGO

The mission of 2-1-1 San Diego is to "help people by connecting them efficiently to the service delivery system, and by providing vital trend information for community planning," with the approach of providing comprehensive and collaborative services.

2-1-1 San Diego has been commended as the model for information and referral agencies across the country. 2-1-1 San Diego provides high quality professional services, builds strong partnerships and utilizes state of the art technologies that create efficiencies to best serve people across California. 211sandiego.org

Bill York • Executive Vice President, 2-1-1 San Diego
Leila Rubio • VASDHS Web Content Coordinator

(L–R) **Kym Grey** • LCSW, VASDHS Program Manager, Transition and Care Management Team

Sean Mahoney • Executive Director, zero8hundred

Becky Sanford • Lead Navigator, zero8hundred

zero8hundred

"The San Diego VA has been a strong partner with zero8hundred. They've shown their commitment to this San Diego community initiative through their active participation in zero8hundred's leadership committee, and the VA has worked closely with us to ensure transitioning service members are getting the support they need. It has been an absolute pleasure to work with the VA during the planning and implementation of this program."

– **Sean Mahoney**
Executive Director
zero8hundred

The mission of zero8hundred is to proactively link transitioning military families to a broad range of resources and opportunities in the community, helping them successfully transition to civilian life. zero8hundred helps manage the challenges of transition through interaction with experienced peer navigators, and addressing vital employment, education, health, and wellness issues. zero8hundred works closely with military bases in San Diego to offer this support to service members from nine months prior to 12 months after separation. zero8hundred also has a web portal for those who would like to self-navigate to resources. zero8hundred.org

(L–R) **Caroline Clark** • Program Manager, SSVF, Interfaith Community Services

Kate McCausland • LCSW, VASDHS Grant & Per Diem Liaison to Interfaith

HELPING PEOPLE HELP THEMSELVES

interfaith community services

"The close collaboration efforts between the VA and Interfaith has allowed us to help hundreds of Veterans and their families that would otherwise be homeless today."

– **Caroline Clark**
Program Manager, SSVF
Interfaith Community Services

Interfaith Community Services empowers Veterans and their families in need to stabilize and improve their lives through comprehensive programs in partnership with VA San Diego Healthcare System and people of compassion. These VA grant-funded programs include Grant & Per Diem transitional housing, Supportive Services for Veterans and their Families, Rapid Rehousing, Mental Health Services and Employment Development. The collaboration between the VA and Interfaith allows our agency to help Veterans achieve self-sufficiency. interfaithservices.org

FINANCIAL REPORT & STATISTICS

BUDGET FY 2015 (10/1/14 – 9/30/15)

Operating Expenses	**$668,080,975**
Salaries, Wages & Benefits	$362,275,228
Supplies	$97,451,197
Services	$110,487,568
Other Expenses	$97,866,982

STAFFING STATISTICS

(FTE = Full Time Equivalent)

Employees (FTE)	**2,961**
Physicians (FTE)	257
RNs (FTE)	595
Other (FTE)	2,109

EDUCATION STATISTICS

Total	**2,410**
Medical Residents & Students	1,519
Other Clinical Trainees	891

VOLUNTEER STATISTICS

Volunteers	**1,439**
Volunteer Hours	**92,654**
Donations (cash and non-cash)	**$1,409,790**

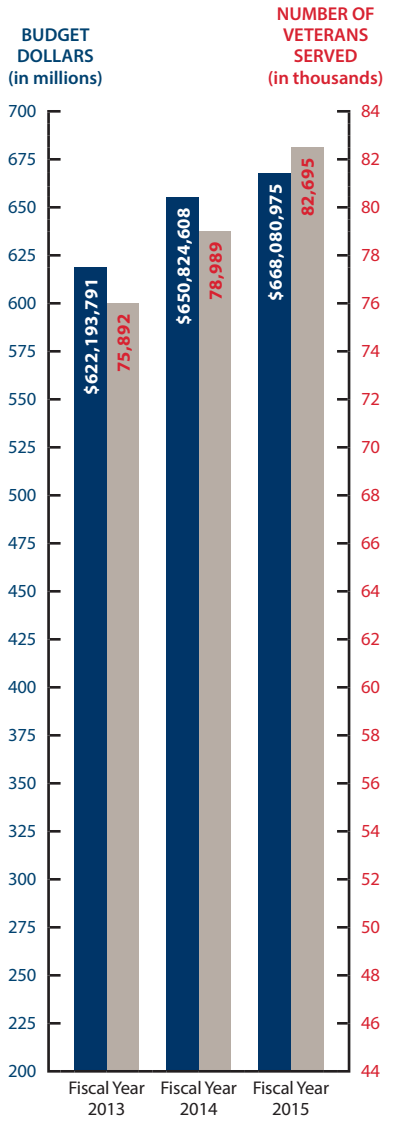
RESEARCH STATISTICS

Total Research Funding	**$43,200,000**
Principal Investigators	**210**
Research Projects	**679**

WORKLOAD STATISTICS

Medical Center Beds Total (authorized)	**304**
Acute	142
Community Living Center	43
Spinal Cord Injury	50
Domiciliary	69
Admissions Total	**7,106**
Acute	6,380
Community Living Center	282
Domiciliary	444
Patient Days Total	**69,753**
Acute	43,619
Community Living Center	5,901
Domiciliary	20,233
Average Length of Stay	
Acute	7 Days
Community Living Center	18 Days
Domiciliary	39 Days
Surgeries Total	**5,301**
Inpatient	1,868
Outpatient	3,433
Outpatient Visits Total	**929,345**
Chula Vista Clinic	33,298
Escondido Clinic	21,674
Imperial Valley Clinic	5,366
La Jolla Medical Center	617,527
Mission Valley Clinic	156,613
Oceanside Clinic	94,867
Patients	**82,695**
Number of Veterans in San Diego and Imperial Counties Total (estimated)	**235,104**
San Diego	227,463
Imperial Valley	7,641

BUDGET & VETERANS SERVED



ALTERNATIVE REVENUE

VASDHS collected $28 million, composed of $25.7 million Medical Care Cost Fund (MCCF), plus external sharing revenue of $2.3 million. These funds stay at our local facility to enhance services for San Diego Veterans.

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, at six community clinics located in Chula Vista, Escondido, Imperial Valley, Mission Valley, Oceanside, Sorrento Valley and at the Rio Clinic. We provide medical, surgical, mental health, geriatric, spinal cord injury and advanced rehabilitation services. VASDHS has 304 authorized 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 1,519 medical interns, residents and fellows as well as 910 other health profession trainees, in areas such as nursing, pharmacy, dental and dietetics. VASDHS has one of the largest research programs in the VA nationally with a budget of $43.2 million, 210 principal investigators and 679 projects.

ACCREDITATION & CERTIFICATION

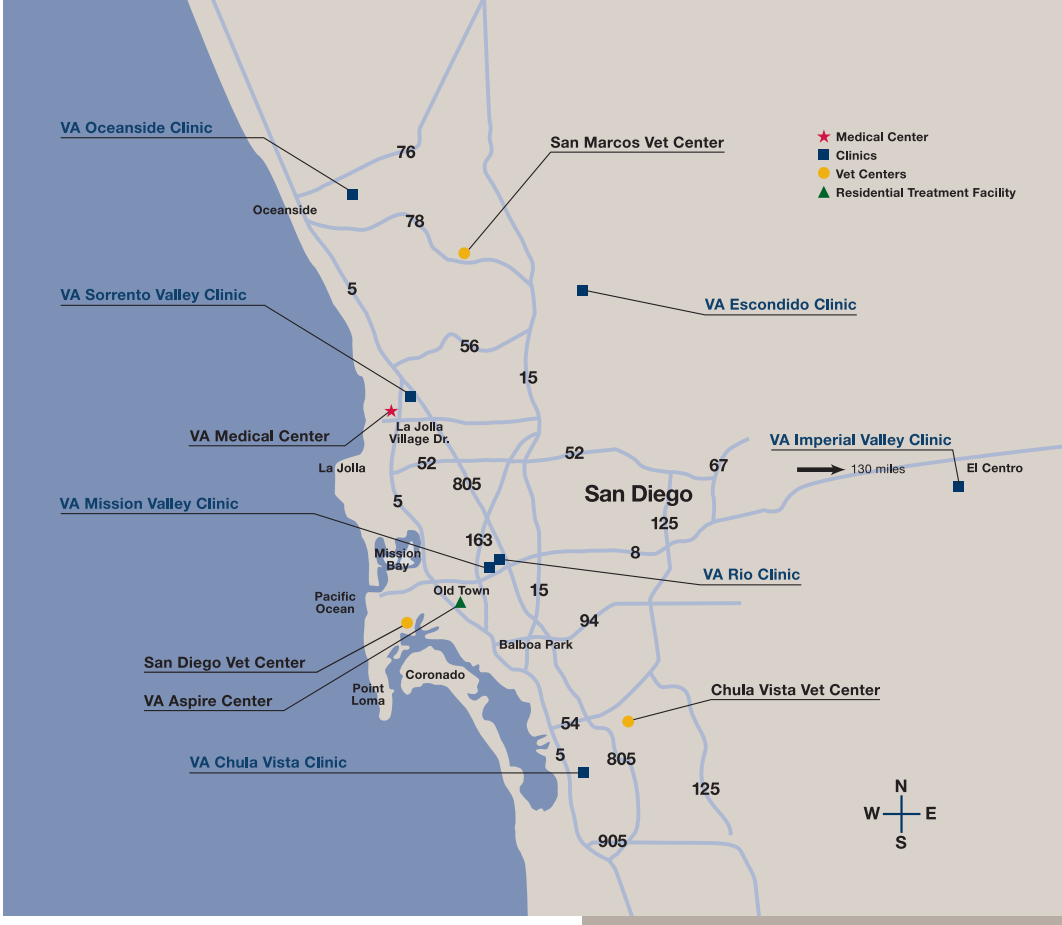
- The Joint Commission
- Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF): Aspire Center, Spinal Cord Injury, Medical Rehabilitation, Wellness and Vocational Rehabilitation Enhancement, Homeless Veterans Programs and Substance Abuse Recovery and Rehabilitation Treatment Program
- College of American Pathologists
- American College of Radiology (ACR): Mammography, CT and MRI
- American Association for Accreditation of Laboratory Animal Care (AAALAC)
- Nuclear Regulatory Commission
- American Association of Blood Banks (AABB)
- U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Registered Blood Bank
- FDA: Mammography Program
- Clinical Laboratory Improvement Act (CLIA)
- Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA)

VHA MISSION

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

VHA VISION

- VHA will continue to be the benchmark of excellence and value in health care and benefits by providing exemplary services that are both patient-centered and evidence-based.
- This care will be delivered by engaged, collaborative teams in an integrated environment that supports learning, discovery and continuous improvement.
- It will emphasize prevention and population health and contribute to the Nation's well-being through education, research and service in national emergencies.



MEDICAL CENTER

VA San Diego Healthcare System
3350 La Jolla Village Drive
San Diego, CA 92161
(858) 552-8585
(800) 331-VETS (8387)

VA San Diego
HEALTHCARE SYSTEM

VA DESERT PACIFIC HEALTHCARE NETWORK

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

CLINICS

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

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

VA Imperial Valley Clinic
1600 South Imperial Avenue
El Centro, CA 92243
(760) 352-1506

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

VA Oceanside Clinic
1300 Rancho del Oro Drive
Oceanside, CA 92056
(760) 643-2000

VA Sorrento Valley Clinic
10455 Sorrento Valley Road
San Diego, CA 92121
(858) 657-1980

VA Rio Clinic
8989 Rio San Diego
Suite 360
San Diego, CA 92108
(619) 228-8000

VA ASPIRE CENTER

2121 San Diego Avenue
San Diego, CA 92110
(858) 297-8397

VET CENTERS

San Diego Vet Center
2790 Truxtun Road, Suite 130
San Diego, CA 92106
(858) 642-1500

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

Chula Vista Vet Center
180 Otay Lakes Road, Suite 108
Bonita, CA 91902
(877) 618-6534

WEB ADDRESSES

For more information, visit us at:
www.sandiego.va.gov
www.facebook.com/VASanDiego
www.twitter.com/VASanDiego

FREQUENTLY CALLED PHONE NUMBERS

24-hour Nurse Advice Line
(877) 252-4866

ENROLLMENT & ELIGIBILITY QUESTIONS

(858) 552-7523

APPOINTMENT SCHEDULING

(858) 552-7475

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