



# VETERAN HEALTH NEWS

VA SAN DIEGO HEALTHCARE SYSTEM

April 2019

## Mission Valley Replacement Clinic Planned



VA health services provided at the Mission Valley Clinic will be migrating nearby in 2021 to a new facility in Serra Mesa. This will allow the new services with double the amount of space from the existing Mission Valley Clinic. It will also increase the current primary care, mental health, specialty care and laboratory services the current clinic provides now. The new clinic will also provide an eye clinic, blindness rehabilitation, audiology, podiatry, physical therapy, occupational therapy, prosthetics, radiology and pharmacy services. For complete information, please see this [link](#).

## Same Day Health Care Appointments

Veterans, do you have a health care need and feel you need to be seen today? Here's how to access Same Day Health Care Appointments:

1. Just call the Patient Care Call Center: (858) 552-7475
2. Ask for a "Same Day" appointment
3. The Call Center staff will try to find you an opening with a same day provider at your regular location or if there are no openings, they'll offer you an appointment at the closest location available.

## Get the Benefits and Services You Deserve



Whether you're just getting out of the service or you've been a civilian for years, the VA Welcome Kit can help guide you to the benefits and services you've earned.

**CLICK HERE TO DOWNLOAD THE [VA WELCOME KIT](#)**

## Alternative Mental Health Offered in Oceanside

The VA Oceanside Clinic, through its mental health service, now offers "How to Reduce Pain and Suffering Through Yoga, Nutrition and Meditation" classes for Veterans who want a whole-body approach to dealing with anxiety and pain management.

The class is a pain protocol class that consists of four components: yoga poses, gadgets, nutrition, and meditation/sound therapy.

Veterans are taught a restorative yoga poses to implement in class and at home. The poses are specifically geared to help the body align correctly while opening pathways for better oxygenation to the muscles/joints. Veterans are also taught the role of inflammation and pain, pain cycle and how they can naturally decrease the inflammation in their bodies through food selections. Information provided gives Veterans options and ideas of how to best support their healing journey.

Another component of the class is show and tell. Inexpensive props and gadgets are demonstrated to Veterans so that they can use these gadgets at home to help decrease muscle tension and assist with pain reduction. Some of these gadgets include thera-cane, tens units, cupping, foam rollers, neck pump, etc. The last part of class involves meditation techniques using breath work and sound healing bowls. Sound healing is an effective and proven modality that uses vibrational sound to balance energy.

All components add up to a holistic class offering that's more than just a physical yoga class. The program offers a holistic view of the person while guiding them toward healthy choices to enhance their overall wellbeing. For more information or to attend this program, contact your primary care provider for referral.

## Task Force for Suicide



President Donald J. Trump signed an executive order titled “National Initiative to Empower Veterans and End Veterans Suicide,” which focuses on improving the quality of life for America’s Veterans and ending the tragedy of Veteran suicide. The executive order mandates the establishment of the Veteran Wellness, Empowerment and Suicide Prevention Task Force. Within one year of the order’s date and working with a variety of representatives from across both the public and private sectors, the task force shall:

- Develop a comprehensive national public health roadmap outlining the specific strategies needed to lower effectively the rate of Veteran suicide, with a focus on community engagement
- Design and propose to Congress a program for making grants to local communities, which will increase their ability to collaborate with each other, integrate service delivery and coordinate resources to Veterans
- Develop a national research strategy to improve the coordination, monitoring, benchmarking and execution of research in the field of Veteran suicide prevention.

Veterans who are in crisis or having thoughts of suicide, and those who know a Veteran in crisis, can call the Veterans Crisis Line for confidential support 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year. Call 800-273-8255 and press 1, send a text message to 838255 or chat online at [VeteransCrisisLine.net/Chat](https://www.veteranscrisisline.net/Chat).

## VA Survey of Veteran Enrollees’ Health and Use of Health Care



The Veteran Health Administration is conducting the 2019 national VA Survey of Veteran Enrollees' Health and Use of Health Care (Survey of Enrollees). The purpose of the survey is to provide essential information on Veteran utilization of health services. This information supports annual VHA projections of enrollment, utilization, and expenditures, as well as a variety of high level VHA budget and policy related analyses. In total, the survey will collect information on a random sample of 42,000 Veterans enrolled in the VA system. Veterans will be given the opportunity to complete the survey by web or, if they prefer, a paper survey will be mailed to them to complete and return in a provided postage paid envelope. Full initiation of the survey will begin on April 5 and continue through July 15th.

Enrolled Veterans selected for the survey will receive a letter that provides information about the survey and about ASD, the Service Connected Disabled Veteran Owned Small Business that is conducting the survey on behalf of VA. Participation is voluntary. Support in this survey will help ensure that we provide the best care possible for our enrollees, where it is needed, and when it is needed.

Previous survey reports are available on the VHA's Office of the ADUSH for Policy and Planning internet Web site at: <http://www.va.gov/HEALTHPOLICYPLANNING/analysis.asp>

## Private Pod for Nursing Mothers



The VA San Diego Healthcare System now has a Mamava Lactation Suite available for use for our new Veteran mothers and family members of Veterans. People can access the suite by downloading the Mamava mobile app to unlock the suite for pumping or breastfeeding. The suite is located near the front entrance of the medical center, across from the Police Check-in window. The suite was purchased with assistance from Voluntary Service and our local Veteran Service Organizations, through the dedication of our Women Veteran Program Manager, Jennifer Roberts. VA San Diego is proud to offer a private place to support new Moms!

## Patient Experience Week



The employees and volunteers of the VA San Diego Healthcare System (VASDHS) want to thank our Veterans for choosing us to care for your healthcare needs. In February 2019, VASDHS executive leaders were among over 600 VHA Leaders and Patient Experience Champions gathered in Virginia for a "Patient Experience Summit" to share tools, exchange best practices, and strategize how to provide our Veterans "World Class Customer Service." To highlight some of the ways San Diego is delivering high quality care, we will celebrate National Patient Experience Week April 22-16, 2019. This will be a week for us to recognize employees for their dedication to patient experience excellence; educate employees and volunteers on local patient experience campaigns and initiatives.; increase awareness of patient experience and applicable surveys with Vets, families and their caregivers; and launch new patient experience campaigns and initiatives.

## Get Instant Updates Through GovDelivery



Get all the latest in VA San Diego feature stories, newsletters and information by registering with our GovDelivery service. To participate, go to our internet homepage and enter your email in the box "Connect with VA San Diego Healthcare System."

## Research Opportunities

Help us advance the science of health care by volunteering for a human subject research project at VA San Diego Healthcare System. More information can be found [here](#).

## Appointment Access

**Appt. wait times:** (completed appts as of 2/28/19)

Primary Care:	1.19 days
Specialty Care:	4.27 days
Mental Health:	3.36 days

**Choice referrals:**

In fiscal year 2018, VASDHS referred **42,830** Veterans to the community for care at a total cost of **\$103,490,589**.  
The top five categories of care referred to the community in FY 18 were: mental health, physical therapy, dental, acupuncture, and chiropractic care.

## Calendar

**National Volunteer Week:** Apr. 7 - 13  
**Volunteer Awards and Recognition (MPR):** Apr. 8 10 – 11 a.m.  
**Good Friday/Passover Begins:** April 19  
**Easter:** April 21  
**Passover Ends:** April 27

Comments and suggestions about our newsletter? Send them to  
[Christopher.menzie@va.gov](mailto:Christopher.menzie@va.gov)

## Please Take Our Patient Satisfaction Surveys

We need feedback on your health care experience to continue improving the high-quality care and customer service we provide. We send our patient satisfaction surveys via mail and email on a regular basis and if you receive one, please take a moment to complete it. We are listening and want to improve – if you have a good or bad experience, we want to hear from you. We want you to Choose VA!

## About VA San Diego Healthcare System



The VA San Diego Healthcare System (VASDHS) provides a wide range of inpatient and outpatient services at the medical center in La Jolla; and 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 296 authorized hospital beds including skilled nursing beds and operates several regional referral programs including cardiovascular surgery and spinal cord injury care.

We are affiliated with the University of California, San Diego School of Medicine and provide training for 1,399 medical interns, residents and fellows as well as 676 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 \$42.2 million, >200 principal investigators and 611 projects.

**Number of Veterans who received care from VASDHS in FY 2018:** ..... 84,712  
**\*Number of Veterans in San Diego County:** .....240,926  
**\*Number of Veterans in Imperial Valley:** .....6,148  
**Total Veterans living in SD & Imperial Valley Counties:** ...247,074

*\*from VetPop, 9/30/2018*

## Important Phone Numbers:

VASDHS Main Line: ..... (858) 552-8585  
VASDHS Patient Call Center  
(Appointments/Questions): ..... (858) 552-7475  
Health Benefits & Enrollment: ..... (858) 552-7523  
Billing (Copays, etc.): ..... (866) 802-6381  
Billing (Community Care): ..... (858) 657-1313  
Billing (Choice Program): ..... (855) 722-2838  
Suicide Prevention: ..... (800) 273-8255, press 1

### VA Secretary Wilkie's Priorities:

- Customer Service
- Implementing the MISSION Act
- Electronic Health Record
- Transforming our Business Systems