

Veteran Updates

News and updates on Veterans issues from the San Francisco VA Health Care System • July 2015

Telehealth Serves Veterans Home of California - Yountville

The San Francisco VA Parkinson's Disease Research, Education, and Clinic Center (PADRECC) recently held its first "Clinical Video Telehealth" (CVT) visit to the Veteran's Home of California in Yountville, much to the delight of some residents there.

Many Yountville residents receive their health care at the San Francisco VA Medical Center (SFVAMC)—59 miles away. Although transportation is provided for residents to and from SFVAMC, the trip itself can be especially challenging for Parkinson's patients, who often require caregiver support for travel. There are additional challenges for Parkinson's patients who are gurney- or wheelchair-bound.

Now patients living at the Veterans Home in Yountville can have their Parkinson's appointments without traveling.

"The CVT visits allow us to see our Parkinson's patients at the Yountville Veterans Home without the burden of travel," says PADRECC Program Manager, Lorraine "Lori" Anzaldo.

"The significant benefit to this Telehealth technology is that the patient does not have to give up an entire day for a one-hour appointment," says Susan Heath, MSN, RN. "Patients can stay in their familiar surroundings at the Yountville Home to have their appointment. This brings specialty care closer to the patient."

"What's key in the success of this service for our Veterans is the collaboration," says Elaine Der, NP, MHS, San Francisco VA Health Care System (SFVAHCS) Facility Telehealth Coordinator. "The collaboration amongst the SFVAHCS Telehealth, V21 Telehealth, CalVet, and PADRECC teams is a testament to the focused determination to achieve this long-desired goal to bring access and quality care to our Yountville Veterans."

"SFVAMC and Yountville are working as a team, the video quality is impressive, and the connection is excellent. It is our desire to connect to more sites," says Lori. "We want Parkinson's patients in Veterans' homes to have easier access to our VA Neurology and our movement disorders specialists."

VA providers from any location wishing to refer Veterans can call the Parkinson's Center at SFVAMC at (415) 379-5530.



From SFVAMC, PADRECC Movement Disorders Clinical Nurse Specialist Susan Heath, MSN, RN, prepares for a video Telehealth appointment at the Yountville Veterans Home.

SFVAMC's New Dialing Procedure

What Will Change?

Starting July 17, 2015, when you dial San Francisco VA Medical Center's main phone number (415) 221-4810, you'll need to dial a "2" before an extension.

Direct-dial phone numbers at the Medical Center won't be affected.

Our 6 community VA clinics (located in San Bruno, Santa Rosa, Ukiah, Eureka, Clearlake, and Downtown San Francisco) have direct dial numbers and won't be affected.

Why the Change?

This change comes as the Medical Center has upgraded our phone system and service.

Some Examples:

Old number for Information Desk: (415) 221-4810, ext. 4141.

New number for Information Desk: (415) 221-4810, ext. 2-4141.

Old number for Smoking Cessation Program: (415) 221-4810, ext. 4922.

New number for Smoking Cessation Program: (415) 221-4810, ext. 2-4922.

Veteran Kudos

"The SFVAMC is the ONLY reason I'm still here !!! It's also the ONLY entity on the planet that truly cares about ME ! God's blessings on all the staff on every shift and in every department of this facility ESPECIALLY my primary care physician." –S.T.

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"I'm very happy with the trans care I receive at the SFVAMC. Big kudos to the SFVAMC and key employees that serve us so well. You are my heroes and sheroes!" – X.S.M.

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"Congratulations! You all do a wonderful service for Veterans!" – D.M.

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"I LOVE the most marvelous, carrying, compassionate people of the SFVAMC Social Work department. There is NOT another service in the Bay Area with a more caring and professional team of people ready to hear you and to open their network of resources to find the best solutions which work best for you. know it was available. Give the Social Worker the respect they deserve because they WANT to help. They WANT to make certain that YOU are alright. They care. They really care." – S.U.

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"Anne Kelly with the Hospice Team was the best." – J.S.

Clarification: VA Dental Insurance

In our April issue of *Veteran Updates*, there was an article about "Affordable VA Dental Insurance."

We received many questions asking if this insurance could be used at VA Dental Clinics by Veterans who were otherwise not eligible for VA dental care. We apologize for any confusion.

To clarify, Veterans who are enrolled in VA health care (and who aren't eligible for VA dental care) may purchase this private dental insurance

coverage at a reduced cost through MetLife and Delta Dental.

Although the affordable rates for this insurance were arranged through VA, **this is for private dental services outside of VA only - it cannot be used for VA dental services nor at any VA.**

For more information about the dental plans and for a network of non-VA dentists in your area, visit www.va.gov/healthbenefits/vadip/.

Do You Have Benefits Questions? VA Has a New App for That

"311VET" is a new app from the VA that helps Veterans find general information about VA Benefits anytime, anywhere.

With 311VET, Veterans, families, and caregivers can ask benefits-related questions through the app or by texting questions to 311VET (311838).

311VET then uses both automation and a team of experts to quickly respond with the best answer.

311VET allows Veterans to gather information on health care benefits, pensions, life insurance, dependents and survivors benefits, and much more.

311VET also offers text alerts on topics of interest, such as news, benefits, career, health, events and tips, where anyone with a basic phone can sign up with a single text to receive periodic alerts topics of interest to them.

This app is available for both Apple and Android devices.

Resources for Veterans

National VA Phone Numbers:

VA Benefits/Claims
(800) 827-1000

Education (GI Bill)
(888) 442-4551

Health Care Benefits
(877) 222-8387

Veterans Crisis Line
(800) 273-8255 (Press #1)

Women Veterans Call Center
(855) 829-6636

SFVAHCS Phone Numbers:

Billing Office
(866) 347-2353

Mental Health/Substance Abuse
(415) 750-6674

Pharmacy (Auto Refill)
(415) 750-2233

Patient Experience Specialist
(415) 750-6650

Telephone Linked Care
(800) 733-0502

