

Veteran Updates

News and updates on Veterans issues from the San Francisco VA Medical Center • July 2013

SFVAMC & Veterans Embrace New PACT-Model of Care

The San Francisco VA Medical Center (SFVAMC) and all of our community based outpatient clinics have implemented Patient Aligned Care Teams (PACT), in support of VA's Universal Health Care Services Plan to redesign health care delivery. PACT—the pioneering future of VA health care—provides accessible, coordinated, comprehensive, patient-centered care. It's team-based and managed by primary care providers along with their teams of clinical and non-clinical staff.



their health care, increases patient satisfaction and decreases hospital costs due to fewer hospital visits and readmissions.

Since 2011 we've taught highly-motivated primary care residents, internal medicine residents, nurse practitioner students, and associated health trainees to build core knowledge of PACT and skills that they apply to their individual patient panel, a shared team patient panel, and to the clinics in which they work.

Every patient who receives primary care at SFVAMC or at one of our VA clinics is assigned a PACT. That team is a patient's point of contact for all primary health care needs.

Who makes up a PACT? The team includes a primary care provider, registered nurse, licensed vocational nurse and a clerical associate. Extended team members include, but are not limited to, a clinical pharmacist, social worker, dietitian and mental health provider.

This approach allows patients to experience a more active role in

We have increased telephone care so patients can meet with their provider over the phone when appropriate. We have successfully implemented online secure email messaging for faster communication between patients and provider teams. SFVAMC also offers selected patients with chronic conditions (such as diabetes and hypertension) the opportunity to participate in group care.

PACT members work together to improve patients' health. To learn more about your PACT, contact your primary care clinic.

Affordable Care Act and Your VA Health Care

The provisions of the Affordable Care Act upheld by the U.S. Supreme Court will not affect the current role the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has in the lives of America's Veterans.

We will continue to provide Veterans with high quality, comprehensive health care and benefits they have earned through their service. VA health care does not change as a result of the Affordable Care Act.

Veterans who get health care through the VA system do not have to purchase any other coverage in order to satisfy the ACA's requirement for insurance.



Veterans Health Library: An Online Library for Vets

The new Veterans Health Library (VHL), provides Veterans, family members, and caregivers 24/7 access to comprehensive, Veteran-focused health information.

VHL is a one-stop source for health information to help Veterans stay well and well-informed. All health information has been approved by VA experts, and includes topics specific to Veterans. Topics include: , posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD); combat-related Traumatic Brain Injury; Agent Orange; Cold Injury, and many others.

There are over 1,500 health sheets, more than 150 videos, Go-to-Guides, and Flipbooks—many in both English and Spanish—all available to Veterans, their family members, and the public, no matter where the Veteran receives care.

You can access the library at www.veteranshealthlibrary.org, or on the MyHealthVet website at myhealth.va.gov.

Annual Financial Assessment No Longer Needed

VA's Under Secretary for Health has recently granted approval for VA to stop requiring Veterans to submit an annual financial disclosure statement.

VA plans to partner with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) and Social Security Administration (SSA) to establish the Veteran's eligibility for continued enrollment and co-pay responsibility based on reported and verified earnings information.

VA is in the process of implementing the new system, though until it becomes fully operational, VA Medical Centers will continue the annual means and co-pay test renewal process.

How does this affect you as an enrolled Veteran? If the new, verified way of determining eligibility affects your beneficiary travel eligibility and co-pay responsibility in any way, you will be notified by a letter from the Health Eligibility Center in Atlanta.

VA Partners with TechShop: Free Membership to Veterans

VA is collaborating with TechShop to provide 2,000 free, one-year memberships at six TechShop locations across the U.S. to Veterans of all eras. Veterans will have full membership privileges to use the wide array of equipment, such as milling, forming, cutting, welding, woodworking, electronics, and more.

Each free membership also includes \$350 in free group classes. Veterans can use TechShop's cutting edge training and equipment to become more competitive in the job market or pursue entrepreneurial goals. This effort supports VA's interest in finding new ways of providing Veterans with resources that help them serve an important role in America's economy.

TechShop is a membership-based, do-it-yourself workshop and fabrication studio that supports a growing community of makers and innovators.



TechShop Locations in the Bay Area:

San Francisco:

926 Howard Street
San Francisco, CA 94103
Phone: (415) 263-9161

Menlo Park:

120 Independence Drive
Menlo Park, CA 94025
Toll Free: (800) 640-1975

San Jose:

300 South 2nd Street
San Jose, CA 95113
Phone: (408) 916-4144

