

VA**U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs**

Louis Stokes Cleveland VA Medical Center

Louis Stokes Cleveland Veterans Affairs Medical Center

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All Northeast Ohio VA Primary Care Clinics Receive Accolades for High Achievement

CLEVELAND – All 14 Northeast Ohio VA Healthcare System primary care clinics received a Better Health Partnership Gold Star for outstanding achievement in key measures for 2015, as reported during the partnership’s 2016 report to the community Wednesday. A Gold Star rating recognizes high achievement and outstanding improvement on crucial measures of care for patients living with diabetes, high blood pressure, and heart failure.

This is the first year the VA submitted its community outpatient clinic outcomes for inclusion in the partnership’s reporting. For the previous three years of VA participation with the partnership, the VA has submitted results for the Louis Stokes Cleveland VA Medical Center’s Primary Care Clinic, receiving Gold Stars each year.

While VA’s report their outcomes internally, they rarely report data publicly for comparison with private sector practices, according to Dr. Brook Watts, Chief of Informatics and Analytics and Chief Quality Officer for the Northeast Ohio VA Healthcare System. “The Better Health Partnership provides us with an opportunity to benchmark our outcomes with those of the community, showing that we rank just as well, if not better, than many of our peers,” said Watts.

VA’s results, based on diabetes and high blood pressure treatment, showed each of the primary care clinics having quality scores in the top ten percent of all participating practices. Thomas E. Love, PhD., Data Director for Better Health Partnership, presented these findings to VA clinicians earlier this month and discussed the science behind the results, noting that the VA’s electronic health record makes it easier to track report and improve care. He said the partnership uses nationally endorsed, locally vetted measures for primary care for adults with chronic illnesses. They attempt to determine who is doing well and how others can improve to reach the same outcomes.

Love stressed the partnership’s goal to create a safe space for health competitors to collaborate and ultimately make Northeast Ohio a “healthier place to live.”

In congratulating the clinicians on the gold star accomplishment, Dr. Murray Altose, Northeast Ohio VA Healthcare System Chief of Staff, thanked the Better Health Partnership for “making a measurable impact on the health of all patients.” He said “the quality of care in the greater Cleveland area is better than most other areas in the country and appreciates the opportunity to compare the VA’s system.” He looks forward to the opportunity to see how the VA can make its care even better.

The Better Health Partnership is a 501(c)(3) multi-stakeholder Regional Health Care Improvement Collaborative established in 2007 with support of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation as part of its national Aligning Forces for Quality initiative.

Members include health care providers and systems, insurance plans, employer groups and community organizations that are committed to transforming health care to achieve better care, better health and lower costs.

The Northeast Ohio VA Healthcare System provides timely, high quality healthcare to more than 8,100 Veterans daily through its inpatient and outpatient health care [services](#) at 18 locations of care across Northeast Ohio.

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