Northeast Ohio VA Healthcare System

2016 Annual Report
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Welcome to the Northeast Ohio VA Healthcare System where we are committed to providing high-quality, timely, Veteran-centered care to our Nation’s Heroes. Every day, we have the privilege to honor and serve Veterans from the greatest generation of WWII to the most recent generation of Veterans who served in Iraq, Afghanistan and countries around the world.

With 18 locations of care in Northeast Ohio we provide access to primary and mental health care within 30 minutes or 30 miles to more than 112,000 Veterans across 24 counties.

As a teaching healthcare system, we support the future needs of Veterans and the general public by providing the core training environment for more than 3,000 students in clinical and administrative fields in affiliation with more than 200 academic institutions.

Along with providing care for Veterans and training future providers, we support a broad-based research program. Our research programs receive more than $11 million annually and are featured in more than 200 publications each year. We are also home to two VA research centers; Functional Electrical Stimulation (FES) and Advanced Platform Technology (APT).

We pride ourselves on the quality care we provide our Veterans and appreciate the continued support of our more than 5,240 employees, our local, state and federal representatives, our service organizations and many other local and national partners.

It is an honor and a privilege to serve the Veterans of Northeast Ohio!

Respectfully,

Susan M. Fuehrer
Medical Center Director
In 1940, the VA established its first facility in Northeast Ohio known as the Broadview Heights VA Hospital, a 324-bed tuberculosis hospital. A few years later, in 1946, the VA took over a temporary Army hospital in Parma Heights known as the Crile Hospital. The Crile Veteran’s Administration Hospital became a 1,000-bed facility with general medical and surgical capabilities for all Veterans. Crile was affiliated with University Hospitals of Cleveland and the Medical School of Western Reserve University.

In 1961, the VA continued to expand its services in Northeast Ohio with the opening of its Brecksville Hospital. The Brecksville and Broadview Heights facilities were merged and eventually the VA closed Broadview Heights due to declining occupancy in 1965. The Brecksville facility was a neuropsychiatric hospital and gained national recognition for its programs to successfully rehabilitate Veterans through alcohol, drug and gambling abuse treatment programs.

The VA opened what is now the Louis Stokes Cleveland VA Medical Center in 1964 as a medical and surgical hospital with an outpatient clinic and sold the Crile VA Hospital to Cuyahoga County. Specialized services available at the Louis Stokes Cleveland VA Medical Center included an artificial-kidney center added in 1965, and an intensive-care unit in 1969. In 1971, the Cleveland VA Medical Center merged with the Brecksville facility to improve patient care, make better use of expensive, specialized equipment and to lower costs. Shortly after the merger, the VA added a $2.3 million wing in 1974 to increase the number of beds and house a research facility at the medical center.

Consolidation occurred once more in 2011 when all long-term, medical, surgical and specialty care services moved to the Louis Stokes Cleveland VA Medical Center and the VA closed the Brecksville facility. The Louis Stokes Cleveland VA Medical Center now serves as the hub for the Northeast Ohio VA Healthcare System, coordinating access and care for Veterans at 17 other locations throughout Northeast Ohio.
Leadership

Susan M. Fuehrer
Director

Susan M. Fuehrer became the Director effective September 26, 2010. She began her career as a management intern with the Brockton / West Roxbury VA Medical Center in Massachusetts. Fuehrer came to Northeast Ohio in May 1986, and has held numerous staff and line positions throughout the healthcare system and the VA during her career. She is actively involved in the Northeast Ohio Community, serving on several community, medical and regional boards.

Andrew D. Pacyna
Deputy Director

Andrew D. Pacyna became Deputy Director effective November 1, 2015. He previously served as Associate Director upon returning to Northeast Ohio in 2014. Pacyna started his career with the VA as a Graduate Health Administration Training Program (GHATP) Resident at the Syracuse VA Medical Center. After completing his training and first position at the Syracuse VA, Pacyna went on to hold positions with the VA Maryland Health Care System and the Clement J. Zablockie VA Medical Center in Milwaukee.

Beth A. Lumia
Associate Director

Beth A. Lumia became Associate Director effective July 10, 2016. She came to Northeast Ohio from the Bath VA Medical Center in New York where she served as Medical VA Care and Diagnostics and Therapeutics Care Line Manager since 2009. Ms. Lumia also served as the VA Care in the Community Program Manager since 2015. She started her career with the VA in 2003 as a social worker and served as the Acting Associate Director for the Erie VA Medical Center from July 2013 to September 2013.

Murray D. Altose, M.D.
Chief of Staff

Dr. Murray Altose is the longest serving Chief of Staff in the VA healthcare system, assuming the role in August 1988. Additionally, he is a Professor of Medicine at Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine and serves as the Associate Dean of the School of Medicine. Prior to becoming Chief of Staff, Dr. Altose served as the Chief of Pulmonary Medicine for Cleveland’s MetroHealth Medical Center. He is American Board of Internal Medicine certified in internal medicine and pulmonary disease.

Innette Sarduy, DNO, MPH, RN, NEA-BC
Associate Director Patient Care Services / Nurse Executive

Dr. Innette Sarduy became Associate Director of Patient Care Services in December 2012. Previously, she served for 12 years at the James A. Haley VA Medical Center in Tampa as the Chief Nurse for Acute Care. Dr. Sarduy holds an adjunct faculty appointment with Case Western Reserve University Francis Payne Bolton (FPB) School of Nursing and is the Chair of the FPB Chief Nursing Officer Advisory Council. She is also on the advisory council for Ursuline and Notre Dame Colleges’ Schools of Nursing.
About the Northeast Ohio VA Healthcare System

For more than 75 years, the VA has taken care of Northeast Ohio Veterans, growing and adapting to meet the changing needs of America’s heroes. Focusing on treating the whole Veteran through health promotion and disease prevention, the VA provides comprehensive, seamless health care and social services for Veterans across Northeast Ohio.

With 18 locations of care, including 13 outpatient clinics, two community resource and referral centers, a psychosocial resource rehabilitation center, a chronic dialysis center and an ambulatory surgery center, the Northeast Ohio VA Healthcare system’s quality services are easily accessible to Veterans in 24 counties. The Northeast Ohio VA Healthcare System also contributes to the future of medicine through education, training and research programs.

“Excellent treatment! My husband went in with cancer, and while there had a slight heart attack – two stints later and now home. The VA staff that took care of him are still taking every measure to ensure he gets all the treatment he needs. We thank each and every one of you!!!”

- L.J. Patton Kirby

Mission:
The mission of the Northeast Ohio VA Healthcare System is to provide high quality, technologically current healthcare services in a compassionate, humanitarian and ethical manner within a multi-centered environment which promotes strong research and educational programs, in affiliation with our partners.

Vision:
The Northeast Ohio VA Healthcare System will be a Department of Veterans Affairs innovative leader in providing healthcare and other services to our Veteran patients and other constituents.
**Key Facts**

**A Day at the Northeast Ohio Healthcare System**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outpatient Appointments</th>
<th>Specialty Care Appointments</th>
<th>Home Care Visits</th>
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**Average Daily Census (ADC)**

- Total ADC 484
- Inpatient ADC 210
- Community Living Center ADC 123
- Residential Care ADC 151

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**Annual (FY16) Key Hospital Facts**

- Unique Veterans Served: 112,348
- Outpatient Appointments: 2,022,636
- Admissions: 11,826
- OIF/OEF Veterans Served: 8,818
- Women Veterans Served: 8,857
- Medical Center Employees: 5,240
“They (The Cleveland VAMC) take really good care of us vets... by far the best care I’ve had in my lifetime...very thorough and concerned for our wellbeing.”

- K. Quaas Henry

Area of Service

The Northeast Ohio VA Healthcare System provides care to more than 112,000 Veterans in the following 24 counties:

- Ashland
- Belmont
- Carroll
- Columbiana
- Crawford
- Cuyahoga
- Erie
- Geauga
- Guernsey
- Harrison
- Holmes
- Huron
- Lake
- Lorain
- Mahoning
- Medina
- Noble
- Portage
- Richland
- Stark
- Summit
- Trumbull
- Tuscarawas
- Wayne
Northeast Ohio VA Healthcare System

Akron Community Resource and Referral Center
111 E. Voris St.
Akron, OH 44311
330-761-7054

Akron VA Outpatient Clinic
55 West Waterloo Rd.
Akron, OH 44319
330-724-7715

Ambulatory Surgery Center
8901 Superior Ave.
Cleveland, OH 44106
216-421-3133

Canton VA Outpatient Clinic
733 Market Ave.
Canton, OH 44702
330-489-4600

Cleveland Community Resource and Referral Center
7000 Euclid Ave., Suite 202
Cleveland, Ohio 44103
216-391-0264 Ext. 7772

East Liverpool VA Outpatient Clinic
15655 St. Rt. 170, Suite A
Calcatta, OH 43920
330-386-4303

Lorain VA Outpatient Clinic
5255 N. Abbe Rd.
Sheffield Village, OH 44035
440-934-9158

Louis Stokes Cleveland VA Medical Center
10701 East Blvd.
Cleveland, OH 44106
216-791-3800

Mansfield VA Outpatient Clinic
1025 South Trimble Rd.
Mansfield, OH 44906
419-529-4602

Midtown Dialysis Center
7000 Euclid Ave.
Cleveland, OH 44103
216-391-0274

New Philadelphia VA Outpatient Clinic
1260 Monroe Ave., Suite 1A
New Philadelphia, OH 44663
330-602-5339

Painesville VA Outpatient Clinic
7 West Jackson St.
Painesville, OH 44077
440-357-6740

Parma VA Outpatient Clinic
8787 Brookpark Rd.
Parma, OH 44129
216-739-7000

Ravenna VA Outpatient Clinic
6751 N Chestnut St.
Ravenna, OH 44266
330-296-3641

Sandusky VA Outpatient Clinic
3416 Columbus Ave.
Sandusky, OH 44870
419-625-7350

Warren VA Outpatient Clinic
1460 Tod Ave. (NW)
Warren, OH 44485
330-392-0311

Youngstown VA Outpatient Clinic
2031 Belmont Ave.
Youngstown, OH 44505
330-740-9200
Services
Acute, Medical, Surgical and Clinical Support Services

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<th>Medicine</th>
<th>Surgery</th>
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<td>• Endocrinology</td>
<td>• Ophthalmology</td>
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<td>• Plastics</td>
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<td>• Hematology/Oncology</td>
<td>• Urology</td>
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<td>• Infectious Diseases</td>
<td>• Vascular Surgery</td>
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<td>• Mental Health</td>
<td>• Podiatry</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Nephrology</td>
<td>• Spinal Surgery</td>
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<td>• Pain Medicine</td>
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<td>• Physical Medicine &amp; Rehabilitation</td>
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<td>• Primary Care</td>
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<td>• Pulmonary/Critical Care/Sleep</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Rheumatology</td>
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Advanced Clinical Programs

**Clinical**
- Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS)
- Anticoagulation
- Cardiac Surgery
- Domiciliary Care for Homeless Veterans
- Geriatrics Evaluation and Management
- Health Care for Homeless Veterans
- Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV)
- Pain Management
- Serious Mental Illness
- Spinal Cord Injury
- Substance Abuse Care

**Research**
- Advance Platform Technology
- Functional Electrical Stimulation

**Education**
- Patient-Centered Specialty Care Education
- Primary Care Education

“I have had nothing but great experiences with all the doctors, nurses and staff at both the Wade Park and Parma VA locations. Love you guys.”

- Michael Sedor

**National and Regional Referral Services**
- Blind Rehabilitation
- Cardiac Surgery
- Cochlear Implants
- Comprehensive Cancer Center
- Comprehensive Rehabilitation Center
- Fecal Microbiota Transplants (FMT)
- Gambling Disorders
- Long Term Spinal Cord Injury
- Polytrauma Care
- Post-Traumatic Stress Disorders
- Spinal Cord Injury
- Substance Abuse
- Ventricular Assist Device
Telehealth and Virtual Care

Connected Health
VA is aligning virtual care technologies to create a seamless, unified experience for Veterans across all VA patient-facing technologies.

VA’s virtual care technologies include:

- Clinical Video Telehealth
- Home Telehealth
- Store and Forward Telehealth
- Telemental Health
- Mobile Health
- My HealtheVet
- Secure Messaging
- SCAN-ECHO
- Mobile Apps
- VA Point of Service Kiosks
The Northeast Ohio VA Healthcare System prides itself on providing quality care and
works to prove it. Outcomes are tracked internally and externally to continuously
evaluate the care provided and to better serve our Veterans.

All 14 Northeast Ohio VA Healthcare System primary care clinics received a
Better Health Partnership Gold Star rating for outstanding achievement in
crucial patient care measures for 2016.

VA Strategic Analytics for Improvement and Learning (SAIL) 5-Star Facility for
fifth consecutive year measuring quality
and efficiency.

The Northeast Ohio VA Healthcare System focuses on disease prevention and health
promotion to keep Veterans healthy and uses the Electronic Medical Record to
keep Veterans’ health information secure and connected.
Research

Creating State-of-the-Art Medical Techniques and Treatments

The Northeast Ohio VA Healthcare System has several large, well-funded research and development programs, with funding totalling $11 million in FY 16. The Medical Center is an active participant in VA Cooperative Studies programs, which are large multi-site studies on health issues vital to Veterans. With strong programs in both basic and clinical science, scientists focus on, among other things, seeking ways to understand and combat antibiotic resistant bacteria, cardiovascular disease, sleep disorders, vision loss, restoring function to Veterans with nerve damage, and much more. Currently, more than 100 active research projects are being conducted in areas such as:

- Infectious Disease
- Autoimmune Disorders & Rheumatology
- Cardiology
- Hypertension
- Diabetes
- Pulmonary Diseases
- Surgery
- Hematology / Oncology
- Kidney Disease (Nephrology)
- Neurology / Ophthalmology
- Urology
- Spinal Cord Injury
- Stroke Rehabilitation
- Schizophrenia and other Psychiatric Disorders

Grace Gongaware/Case Coulter Translational Research Partnership

Cleveland VA Hematologist Dr. Evi Stavrou and her team are increasing convenience for patients and clinicians by allowing for coagulation tests to be done in clinician’s offices, rather than requiring a patient to travel to labs. The team recently released findings related to the ClotChip device, a prototype for a portable, disposable sensor that will help doctors quickly determine important clotting factors and platelet activity for patients using a small drop of blood. The technology allows clinicians to test blood up to 95% quicker than traditional coagulation tests. The technology was developed by engineers with the APT Research Center and Case Western Reserve’s School of Engineering. Dr. Stavrou helped to define the clinical application.
The MyoPro by the company Myomo is an upper limb electric orthosis designed to support a weak or deformed arm while using the patient’s own muscle signals. Sensors built into the custom device detect the EMG signal in the affected arm which then drives small motors to allow the individual to extend/flex their elbow and open and close their thumb and fingers.

Cleveland VA researchers are improving the lives of Veterans and civilians every day by repairing, replacing and restoring functionality. National Geographic, CNN and The Discovery Channel featured the prosthetic hand with sensory capabilities that conveys a sense of touch from 20 spots, allowing Veterans to feel.

APT’s Team made history winning gold in the world’s first “Cyborg Olympics.” The international Cybathlon competition combines disabled individuals with the latest in assistive technology. The APT team featured its surgically implanted neural stimulators, programmed to allow the participant to pedal a recumbent bike to victory.

The MyoPro by the company Myomo is an upper limb electric orthosis designed to support a weak or deformed arm while using the patient’s own muscle signals. Sensors built into the custom device detect the EMG signal in the affected arm which then drives small motors to allow the individual to extend/flex their elbow and open and close their thumb and fingers.
Who We Are

A trans-disciplinary alliance of active, passionate and committed professionals, in science and medicine, specializing in the fields of biomedical and neural research, engineering, medicine and rehabilitation. We embrace an open-door, collaborative, compassionate, and inquisitive engagement.

Redefining FES

The FES Center focuses on the application of electrical currents to either generate or suppress activity in the nervous system. This technique is known as functional electrical stimulation (FES). FES can produce and control the movement of otherwise paralyzed limbs for standing and hand grasp, activate visceral bodily functions such as bladder control or respiration, create perceptions such as skin sensibility, arrest undesired activity such as pain or spasm, and facilitate natural recovery and accelerate motor relearning.

The Center was founded to introduce FES into clinical practice. Our challenge is to translate fundamental knowledge of electrical stimulation of the nervous system into useful systems that enhance the independence and quality of life for those individuals affected by neural disorders. We advance toward this goal by integrating and facilitating the efforts of scientists, engineers, and clinicians across the institutional partners.

In an exciting environment of leading scientists, engineers, clinicians, students, and fellows working together, we explore new techniques of medical rehabilitation and enable FES knowledge to develop into useful products. We are pleased to provide systems that assist veteran and civilian populations in improving their lives after the devastating consequences of central nervous system disorders.

Congratulations

Ronald Riechers, MD
Crain’s Cleveland Business
Health Care Heroes Award

Ronald Riechers, MD is an honored physician whose performance is considered exemplary by both patients and peers. A veteran himself, Riechers has focused his medical career on helping returning soldiers suffering from traumatic brain injury.

At the Louis Stokes VA Medical Center, Riechers has created a comprehensive rehabilitation program for veterans with brain and other service-related trauma.

“Dr. Riechers is a model leader with demonstrated excellence in research, training and clinical care and deep commitment to the care and well-being of veterans,” wrote Dr. Murray Altose, chief of staff at the LSCVAMC, in a letter supporting Riechers’ nomination.

Anne Bryden, OTR/L
ASCIP Therapy Leadership Council’s
Distinguished Clinician Award

The Therapy Leadership Council (TLC) is one of four of ASCIP’s professional sections, comprised of therapists and other professionals from every region that represent the continuum of SCI rehabilitation from research to clinical settings and from VA to private and academic sectors. The purpose and mission of TLC is to provide a platform for clinical dialog, mentorship, and distribution of information to impact therapy practice and clients.

The Craig H. Neilsen Foundation has committed $125,000 to ASIA, over a five year period, to fund one award each year for a clinician working in SCI care delivery who expresses an interest in adding a research element to his/her career. Anne received the award for her project entitled “The Development of a Novel Upper Extremity Assessment Protocol for Acute Tetraplegia.”
Structure

Founded in 2005, the Advanced Platform Technology Center (APTC) is one of 16 VA Rehabilitation Research and Development research centers across the U.S. and located at the Louis Stokes Cleveland VA Medical Center. In Collaboration with Case Western Reserve University (CWRU), APT provides support to clinicians and scientists (i.e., investigators) pursuing innovative medical devices and therapies to enhance Veteran health.

Mission

We develop and test advanced technologies that serve the clinical needs of Veterans with sensory, motor and cognitive deficits or limb loss, in order to provide new tools for rehabilitation, treatment and scientific inquiry that lead to enhanced health, independence and societal participation.

APTC investigators continue to make important discoveries and generate intellectual property leading to industry conversations and licensing opportunities. They also serve on the Editorial Boards of 6 journals and 133 panel review boards.

Key Impacts 2015 – 2016

Three Core APTC Investigators won major contracts from the DARPA’s HAPTIX program to explore ways to deliver naturalistic sensations to amputees and enable better control over their prosthetic limbs through direct connections to the users’ nervous systems.

1. Dr. Dustin Tyler: Restoring Amputees’ Sense of Touch to restore sensation to upper limb amputees.
2. Dr. Paul Marasco: Evaluate Prosthetic Limb Technology to develop a suite of outcome metrics for advanced prosthetic limbs.
3. Dr. Ron Triolo: Natural Sensation for Lower Limb Amputees to determine the feasibility of re-establishing natural perceptions of how lower limb prostheses interact with the environment.

Dr. Paul Marasco received the Presidential Early Career Award for Scientists and Engineers (PECASE) from President Barack Obama for his work that is reminiscent of Star Wars. The PECASE Award is the highest honor bestowed by the U.S. government on outstanding scientists. Dr. Marasco’s lab uses neural-machine-interfaces to provide touch and movement sensation to prosthetic limbs. Individuals with amputation can simply think about moving their hands – and the prosthetic hands move.

Dr. Joe Potkay et al. published the article, “In vitro evaluation and in vivo demonstration of a biomimetic, hemocompatible, microfluidic artificial lung” in the March 2015 issue of Lab on a Chip, that presented the first microfluidic artificial lung with improved hemocompatibility and demonstrated its operation in a rat.

Dr. Margot Damaser partners with major manufacturing firm to produce prototypes of her UroMonitor that can sense continuous internal organ pressure wirelessly and catheter-free. The primary application is chronic ambulatory bladder pressure monitoring to improve diagnosis and/or provide feedback to neuromodulation systems to better treat urinary incontinence in the spinal cord injured.

Dr. Kath Bogie’s Additive Manufacturing for Biotechnology facility was designated a Core Facility by the School of Medicine at CWRU. The Core consists of an EnvisionTEC 3D-Bioplotter that enables fabrication of biocompatible constructs from a wide array of materials, from soft hydrogels over polymer melts to hard ceramics and metals.
Accreditations and Recognition

**Joint Commission**
- Hospital Accreditation Services
- Long-Term Care
- Home Care
- Behavioral Health
- Methadone Treatment Program
- Disease Specific Certification for Inpatient Diabetes
- Advanced Inpatient Diabetes Care

**American Association of Diabetes Educators (AADE)**
- Diabetes Self-Management Education Programs

**American Diabetes Association**
- National Standards for Diabetes Self-Management Education

**American College of Surgeons (ACoS)**
- Commission on Cancer (CoC)

**The American College of Radiology (ACR)**
- National Standards for Diabetes Self-Management Education
  - Radiation Oncology Department

**Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF)**
- Employment Services and Psychosocial Rehabilitation
- Inpatient and Outpatient Amputee System of Care
- Pain Management Center Intensive Outpatient Program
- Spinal Cord Injury Patient and Outpatient Program
- Inpatient Medical Rehabilitation
- Blind Rehabilitation

**CARF International** – Comprehensive Homeless Center Programs
Human Rights Campaign (HRC)
- Health Equality Index (HEI) Accreditation

American Psychological Association
- Postdoctoral Residency Program in Clinical Psychology, Clinical Health Psychology and Rehabilitation Psychology

ALS Association Northern Ohio Chapter
- Certified ALS Treatment Center of Excellence

American Board of Physical Therapy Residency and Fellowship Education (ABPTRFE)
- Geriatric Residency Program

Association for Assessment and Accreditation of Laboratory Animal Care International (AAALAC)
- Research Laboratory

Anticoagulation Forum Center of Excellence Certification
- Anticoagulation Clinic

Coalition on Ministry in Specialized Settings (COMISS)
- Pastoral Care

College of American Pathologists
- Laboratory Program
Points of Pride

DAV 2016 Outstanding Veterans Health Administration Employee of the Year – Dr. Murray Altose, Chief of Staff

European Society of Clinical Microbiology and Infectious Diseases – 2016 International Excellence Award – Dr. Robert Bonomo, Chief of Medicine Service

Ohio Hospital Association’s 2016 Health Care Worker of the Year – Richard Pulice, Physician Assistant.

Patient Safety Office – National Center for Patient Safety Gold Cornerstone Award, recognizing leaders in patient safety.

2015 American Pain Society Clinical Center of Excellence – Pain Management Center and SCAN ECHO

Get With The Guidelines® - Heart Failure Gold Plus Quality Achievement Award and Target Heart Failure Honor Roll, recognizing commitment and success in implementing a higher standard of care by ensuring that heart failure patients receive treatment according to nationally accepted standards and recommendations.

North Coast 99 - Northeast Ohio Top 99 place to work!

American Association of Critical-Care Nurses’ Beacon Award for Excellence - The Cleveland VA Medical Center’s Medical and Surgical Intensive Care Unit.

Ohioans with Disabilities “Committed to Opportunity” employer, recognized for a proven commitment to integrating individuals with disabilities into the workforce.
Better Health Partnership

Gold Star Practices – Recognizing outstanding achievement in key health measures.
Akron / Canton / East Liverpool
Lorain / Wade Park / Mansfield
McCafferty / New Philadelphia
Painesville / Parma / Ravenna
Sandusky / Warren / Youngstown
VA Outpatient Clinics

AFGE Local President, Darlene Estell was the recipient of the VA Leadership Alumni Association Board 2015 Exemplary Service Award.

President Early Career Award for Scientists and Engineers - Dr. Paul Marasco, Principle Investigator and Cleveland VA Researcher received the 2016 award for his research using neural-machine-interfaces to provide touch and movement sensation to prosthetic limbs so that individuals with amputation feel like the devices are a part of their body.

Dr. Ali Mchaourab, Chief of Pain Management was recently awarded the 2016 Learning! 100 Award for his work with the SCAN ECHO project.

Crain’s Health Care Heroes Awardees for exceptional service.
- Dr. Ronald Riechers - Medical Director of the TBI and Poly Trauma Program and Director of Neurology
- Andrew Bisbee – Patient Navigator and former Army Medic
- Janet Briggs – Infectious Disease Nurse and HIV Care Coordinator

Red Cross Hero Award – Dr. Thomas Dundon, Chief of Dental Service

First VA medical center designated as a Ventricular Assist Device Destination Implantation Site.

Better Health Partnership

Presidential Early Career Award for Scientists and Engineers - Dr. Paul Marasco, Principle Investigator and Cleveland VA Researcher received the 2016 award for his research using neural-machine-interfaces to provide touch and movement sensation to prosthetic limbs so that individuals with amputation feel like the devices are a part of their body.
“The staff was very professional and courteous.”
- M. Herring

“The staff in all aspects that took care of me was great as always.”
- R. Brown

“We are so thankful for the years of treatment we have received. Most recently we spent three days on the 4th floor with an amazing staff of nurses and doctors who were able to make a diagnosis that a private hospital was unable to make after six days. We LOVE the VA.”
- M. Parker

“The staff was very professional and courteous.”
- M. Herring

“Cleveland VA is the best!”
- G. Maznik

“Huge shout out to the Cleveland VA system. From the moment my Dad registered, they didn’t see a white man or a black man, all they saw was a very sick old man that had served his country FOR THEM. I am proud to be a Vet. I am proud to remember what it means to be amongst others who also remember what that means. It means honor. The government can cut our funding but they cannot cut that camaraderie. I salute you, ER staff of Wade Park!”
- T. Read
“Today I accompanied my father for an outpatient surgery. Both he and I were extremely pleased with the service we received. Everyone we came in contact with from the security guard that helped us find our way, to the nurses, and the doctors. We had such a wonderful experience!! I think my dad is trying to find more things wrong with him so he can get back in there! Thank you again for such a great experience!!”

- Nicole Lewis

“From the time I entered until the time I left the care was excellent. The nursing staff was always there and courteous.”

- R. Gilbert

“I came today to visit my uncle and not only was I impressed at how beautiful the hospital was; but, it truly touched my heart to see how absolutely wonderful the nurses and staff are to the patients. How they treat them with the respect they deserve - how they treat them like the true American heroes they are. They are kind, caring and gentle. Thank you guys for being so wonderful to our heroes!”

- Brittainy Nutter

“I want to commend the Cleveland VA, I could not have asked for better care from the surgeons to the cleaning crew. They all displayed such care and commitment to my healing. They were all very informative and displayed such a high level of expertise that made me feel very confident in my situation. I want to thank them all and especially all the nurses and nursing assistants on 5A for making my treatment as enjoyable and stress-free as they could.”

- D. Isabella

“They did a wonderful job on my dad, the staff are friendly and informative and sincere, God Bless America!!!”

- D. Walker
Honoring our Nation’s Heroes

The VA’s mission goes beyond just taking care of Veterans’ healthcare needs. It takes pride in improving their quality of life, educating them on their benefits, connecting them with the Northeast Ohio community, and honoring them for their service.

Outreach & Customer Care

The VA participates in more than 200 outreach events each year throughout Northeast Ohio, designed to connect Veterans with their healthcare benefits. Additionally, outreach coordinators and patient advocates work together to address Veterans’ concerns and answer questions about the VA. Staff are also able to direct Veterans to other VA services available through the Veterans Benefits Administration and the National Cemetery Administration, and work closely with the Veteran Service Commissions throughout Ohio to ensure Veterans’ needs are addressed. In addition to outreach in the community, leadership holds quarterly Veteran listening sessions to bring benefits assistance from all three VA administrations closer to Veterans. Patient Advocates can be reached by contacting your nearest VA facility and asking to speak to the Patient Advocate. If you would like to help the VA promote health care benefit information or have a question about eligibility, please contact the outreach coordinators at ClevelandVet@va.gov.

Veterans and their families enjoy a day away to celebrate the holiday season.

Volunteers at the Parma VA Clinic host an annual holiday party for Veterans.

Veterans from the Louis Stokes Cleveland VA Medical Center enjoy a baseball game compliments of the Cleveland Indians and their Friends of Francona Program.
Visitors & Community Outings

Whether at the medical center for a short procedure or receiving long term care, Veterans deserve to experience the supportive Northeast Ohio community. Staff work with local community organizations, businesses, and sports teams to bring the community to Veterans and take Veterans out into the community. In the past year, patients have been able to truly experience Northeast Ohio; they've been on fishing trips, gone out for dinner at local restaurants, travelled the Cuyahoga Valley Scenic Railroad, attended major league sporting events, received VIP visitors, and celebrated the holidays. It is important to help Veterans make these connections with the community. If you are interested in getting involved or setting up a visit, please contact Public Affairs at vhaclePublicAffairs@va.gov.

The VA commemorated the 50th Anniversary of the Vietnam War this year with events throughout the country. The Northeast Ohio VA Healthcare System held events across Northeast Ohio to recognize and thank our Vietnam Veterans.

More than 2,000 people signed up for the 2016 Fox8 Fox Trot benefiting the Cleveland VA Medical Center.
Volunteers & Donations

The goodwill of benefactors and Volunteers enhances the quality of life for Veterans at the Cleveland VA Medical Center and its 13 community outpatient clinics. They fill a void for Veterans and make the Veteran’s visit or extended stay more enjoyable. Volunteers and donations help provide essential services and programs that otherwise would not be available for Veterans such as; transportation services, social service assistance, rehabilitation equipment, recreation programs, activities, homeless Veteran’s services, holiday gifts, phone cards and many others. To Volunteer or donate, please contact the VA Voluntary Service Office at 216-791-3800 ext. 5081.

Honoring our Nation’s Heroes (continued)

Staff from the McCafferty VA Clinic out in the community educating Veterans on their health benefits.

The Painesville Veteran Appreciation event celebrates the service of hundreds of Northeast Ohio Veterans each year.

Cleveland Indians Pitcher Corey Kluber talks with patients and staff during a visit to the VA.

Each year volunteers of all ages help to celebrate the U.S. Marine Corps Birthday with a cake cutting ceremony.
Veterans from across Ohio and the country come to the Cleveland VA Medical Center to benefit from the VA’s national and regional medical programs and services. Many Veterans cannot bring their spouse, children or parents while receiving treatment, but soon, these family members will have a place to call home as they support their hero on the road to recovery.

The Greater Cleveland Fisher House Foundation, an affiliate of The Fisher House Foundation, was founded in 2013 to work with the Northeast Ohio community toward the goal of raising $3 Million to build a Fisher House facility for families of Veterans receiving care at the Cleveland VA Medical Center.

Fisher Houses have individual suites with private bedrooms and baths and families share a common kitchen, laundry facility, dining room and living room space. There is never a lodging fee for families who stay in the Fisher House while their loved one is receiving care at a VA or military medical center.

The Greater Cleveland Fisher House Foundation met its fundraising goal in the summer of 2016. Due to the outstanding efforts of the local foundation and the identified local need, The Fisher House Foundation has generously agreed to double their commitment, and build two homes with 16 suites in each. These Fisher Houses will be built a short walk away from the Louis Stokes Cleveland VA Medical Center. The Greater Cleveland Fisher House Foundation and the Cleveland VA Medical Center hope to break ground on construction in Spring of 2017.

National Cemetery Administration

The VA offers memorial benefits for Veterans and their spouses whether buried in a VA National Cemetery or private cemetery. The closest VA National Cemetery to Northeast Ohio is Ohio Western Reserve National Cemetery located at 10175 Rawiga Rd., Seville, OH 44273. Contact them at 330-335-3069 for more information.

Veterans Benefits Administration

VBA provides a variety of benefits and services to Servicemembers, Veterans, and their families. Northeast Ohio has a regional office in Cleveland located at 1240 East Ninth St., Cleveland, OH 44199. VBA can also be reached at 1-844-698-2311.
Northeast Ohio VA Healthcare System

Akron Community Resource and Referral Center
Akron VA Outpatient Clinic
Ambulatory Surgery Center
Canton VA Outpatient Clinic
Cleveland Community Resource and Referral Center
East Liverpool VA Outpatient Clinic
Lorain VA Outpatient Clinic
Louis Stokes Cleveland VA Medical Center
Mansfield VA Outpatient Clinic
McCafferty VA Outpatient Clinic
Midtown Dialysis Center
New Philadelphia VA Outpatient Clinic
Painesville VA Outpatient Clinic
Parma VA Outpatient Clinic
Ravenna VA Outpatient Clinic
Sandusky VA Outpatient Clinic
Warren VA Outpatient Clinic
Youngstown VA Outpatient Clinic

cleveland.va.gov
1-877-838-8262