



FULFILLING OUR PROMISES
TO THE MEN AND WOMEN WHO SERVED



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The Tallahassee Chapter #5
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VA Clinic Dedication & Ribbon Cutting Ceremony

The Tallahassee Veterans Affairs Health Care Center located at 2181 East Orange Avenue, Tallahassee, FL 32311, hosted a Dedication & Ribbon Cutting ceremony at 2:00PM on Thursday, February 23, 2017. Thanks to all that attended.



Chapter #5 Says Good Bye to Ray Wright, Chapter Treasurer and Service Officer

Ray is moving to the Southeast Coast of Florida to be near family. We wish him the Best of Luck and will greatly miss him.

Veterans Opioid Prescription Initiative Successful

A new effort was able to decrease the number of US military veterans receiving risky opioid prescriptions over the 2-year study period. The use of high-dose opioid prescriptions decreased 16%, and very-high-dose prescriptions decreased 24%. Additionally, the investigators found that patients receiving prescriptions for opioids/sedatives, a potentially lethal combination, decreased 21%. In the study, the researchers observed the effects of the Opioid Safety Initiative (OSI) created by the Veterans Health Administration (VHA), which was implemented in all of the Veterans Affairs (VA) hospitals. The investigators found that after the OSI was implemented, 331 fewer patients per month received opioid prescriptions with daily doses of 100 MEQ or above, and 164 fewer with daily doses of 200 MEQ or above, according to the study. Accidental overdoses resulting from a drug interaction are also on the rise. Due to the OSI, 781 fewer patients per month received prescriptions for opioids and the sedative benzodiazepine. Although a majority of hospitals saw a significant decrease, a small number of facilities had an increase in opioid prescribing, according to the study.

VA Educational and training Benefits

If you are a Veteran or Servicemember who served after September 10, 2001, the Post-9/11 GI Bill® may be able to provide financial assistance with your tuition, housing, books and more. The Post-9/11 GI Bill® covers support for: Undergraduate, graduate degrees and non-college degrees; National testing reimbursement; On-the-job training; and vocational and technical training. Visit VA.gov for more.

Native Americans

Native Americans serve in the military among the highest rate, per capita, compared to other groups & our nations honor the place of tribal warriors in our communities & our culture on a daily basis. But for Veterans living within or near tribal

communities, it can sometimes be difficult to receive representation for benefit claims. Often, these Veterans cannot reach existing Veterans Service organizations (VSOs) or may not be using them due to cultural barriers. One way VA has tried to help with this is through a rule change in the Code of Federal Regulations (38 CFR 14.628). This change will allow eligible tribal organizations to become accredited by VA. It is believed that accredited tribal organizations can provide Veterans with better, more culturally competent services. But receiving VA accreditation is not an easy process. The VA must ensure all accredited VSOs can provide long-term, quality representation; therefore, tribal organizations must meet the same stringent requirements as national/state organizations. VA invites all interested tribal organizations to consider beginning the VSO process.

Florida Awards Grant to University of Miami

The University of Miami has received a \$13 million grant from the Florida Department of Health to fund Zika-related research, including rapid testing and assessments of infants with mothers who have the virus, the university announced.

Thirty Minutes Three Times/ Week

Reduce stress and anxiety - Exercise increases the presence of all sorts of good chemicals in the brain: norepinephrine, for example, which helps the brain respond to stress. These chemicals trigger positive feelings even as they reduce perceptions of pain. Many studies have shown that even moderate walking (three or four days a week for 30 minutes at a time) can deliver very positive benefits.

Increased brain health - When you exercise, you increase the production of brain-derived neurotrophic factor (BDNF) — a protein in the brain that's important for long-term memory. Low levels of BDNF in the brain have been linked to Alzheimer's, obesity and depression. Moreover, BDNF is also important for helping brain cells & neurons grow & form important connections with other neurons, Neuroplasticity is a term you'll be hearing much more about as scientists tackle a significant concern for veterans — traumatic brain injury.

Improved sleep patterns - The Centers for Disease Control recently reported that insufficient sleep has become an important public health issue. In fact, more than a third of Americans fail to get sufficient sleep on a regular basis. Why is this important? An insufficient quantity of sleep, chronically, is linked to 7 of the 15 leading causes of death in the U.S.!

Walgreens Make Flu Shots available to Veterans

The Department of Veterans Affairs has once again teamed up with Walgreens Pharmacies nationwide to allow all

veterans who are currently enrolled in the VA healthcare system to be able walk into any of the over 8000 Walgreens nationally to receive a vaccination at no cost. Vaccinations will be available through March 31, 2017. The Center for Disease Control and Prevention does not recommend the high dose (HD) vaccine for people over 65 - so this no-cost vaccination is Trivalent at the standard dosage. If you wish to receive an HD vaccination please visit your nearest VA Medical Center or Community Based Outpatient Clinic for that vaccination. Veterans wishing to receive the no cost vaccination at Walgreens simply need to present a Veterans Identification Card & photo ID, at any participating Walgreens.

You Can Pay Your VA Bill Online

Veterans can pay the balance of their VA bills from the comfort of their own home: no more writing checks or driving to the local VA to make a payment. Pay.gov is a secure, free, fast and the easiest way to pay your VA health care and prescription copayments online. More than 100,000 Veterans already are using this service. Making an online payment is easy: Go to www.pay.gov; Under Common Payments, click the VA Medical Care Copayment link; fill out the form; enter the account number exactly as it appears on your VA billing statement; click continue; enter credit card - debit card - checking account or savings account information to process payment. Click Submit Payment. Veterans can establish recurring payments through Pay.gov for a set amount to come out on the same date each month. Recurring payments from a checking account can be modified or cancelled at any time. Credit card payments must be cancelled by midnight of the same business day the payment was processed. Recurring payments do not establish or take the place of a Repayment Plan. You can make a payment or set up recurring payments on your own, or with assistance by calling 1-888-827-4817.

Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall of Faces

My name is Johnny Byard and I am a member of Vietnam Veterans Chapter 1036 at The Villages, Florida and I am working on a project to help create a Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall of Faces. This is a nationwide effort & are we looking for photos of Florida Vietnam Veterans who are listed on "The Wall". Florida has 1,955 names on the Vietnam Veterans' Memorial Wall & originally we needed 777 photos to complete Florida's section of the Wall of Faces. Currently we need approximately 389 photos to complete our project. An Obituary photo or a high school yearbook photo or any other photo you might be willing to copy & share will enable us to post it on the Florida Wall & honor their memory. The preferred format is Jpeg. If you know of other individuals, from your area, who were lost in Vietnam we would also like to have pictures of them also and we will post them to the wall. I am sending along a link to the Wall to show where the photos will be posted. <http://www.vvmf.org/Wall-of-Faces/search/results>

Are you in the market for a new device?

Should you get a desktop PC, laptop PC, Mac device, Windows unit, tablet computer, Chromebook, or 2-in-1 laptop-tablet combo? Much here depends on you - specifically how you'll be using the device, what your past experience is, & how much you're willing to spend. A survey last year by a market-consulting firm asked consumers which devices they prefer using for specific activities. Here are the results: For reading

the news, conducting online research, doing online shopping, checking bank balances, watching short videos, & making video calls, most prefer a laptop. For checking social networking sites, playing games, recording videos, taking photos, & doing voice calls over the internet, most prefer a smartphone. For watching live TV & streaming movies & TV shows, most prefer a TV. Conspicuously out of favor are desktop PCs & tablets. Of these five types of devices, desktops are favored only by males for playing games & by men/women age 55 or older for checking bank balances. In this survey, no one favors tablets for particular activities.

Hand sanitizer poisoning increases among children

Data from the National Poison Data System showed that exposures to hand sanitizer among youths aged 12 & younger totaled 70,669 between 2011 & 2014, 91% of which were among children aged 5 & younger, according to a CDC study in the agency's Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report. The findings showed more serious adverse effects such as seizures & coma occurred among those who ingested alcohol-based sanitizer, & researchers said intentional ingestion was more likely among youths ages 6 to 12.

Medicare and VA Healthcare Coverage

When considering healthcare options as you age, remember Medicare coverage can begin at age 65 for everyone; you can claim it late but that is usually not in your best interest. If you are covered by a TRICARE, when you turn 65 your plan will change into TRICARE for Life (TFL). This plan pays secondary to Medicare. There are no enrollment fees to pay with TFL, but you MUST pay Medicare Part B premiums. These premiums will be taken automatically out of your Social Security, or billed directly to you. If you are covered by VA Healthcare & are Medicare eligible, Medicare pays for Medicare-covered services & VA pays for VA-authorized services. Medicare & VA cannot pay for the same service. If you need non-service connected care, VA may bill you for it.

What an update status to your claim?

What an update on your claim or check your last payment, then call the **VA Call Center at 1-800-827-1000**. The Call Center usually answers most questions within a few minutes.

Survivors and Dependents Assistance

The VA offers benefits & programs to the survivors & children of veterans who are totally disabled. There are two main programs offering education assistance: The Marine Gunnery Sergeant John David Fry Scholarship is available for children/spouses of Servicemembers who died in the line of duty after 09 10, 2001. The Survivors' & Dependents' Educational Assistance (DEA) Program offers education/training opportunities to eligible dependents of Veterans who are permanently & totally disabled due to a service-related condition or of Veterans who died while on active duty or as a result of a service-related condition.

What is needed for a successful claim?

There are three separate/distinct elements of a claim for service connected that must be present in order for a claim to be successful. The elements are: **a) an in-service event; b) a current diagnosis of the disability; and c) a nexus (or link) between the in-service event and the diagnosis.**