

VA



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Veterans Health Administration
VA Healthcare-VISN 4

VISION

for Excellence

Newsletter for Veterans and Stakeholders in VISN 4

Issue 33

Summer VetFest Events held in VISN 4

During the month of July, VA hosted a nationwide Summer VetFest. Local VA facilities hosted events to inform Veterans, their families, caregivers and survivors about the PACT Act and encourage them to apply for the health care and benefits they have earned. There were events in all 50 states, and events in VISN 4 were held in Philadelphia, Pa. and Wilmington, Delaware.

The events were casual summer gatherings that featured food, music, and family-friendly activities. Veterans were able to meet with VA health care and benefits staff ready to help them apply for PACT Act-related benefits, enroll in VA health care, get screened for toxic exposures, and much more.



Inside this issue:

Update on VA Health Care Priorities

In September 2022, the Under Secretary for Health, Dr. Shereef Elnahal, announced VA's health care priorities, identifying key areas to focus our resources, time and attention going forward for the next couple years.

Dear Veterans, fellow employees, volunteers and friends of VISN 4:

It's my pleasure to share some of our accomplishments in the first half of 2023.

Our staff continued to implement the Sergeant First Class Heath Robinson Honoring our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics (PACT) Act. This law, passed in August 2022, expands access to VA health care to Veterans with toxic exposures. As of July 24, 183,103 Veterans in VISN 4 received toxic exposure screenings, with approximately 40% reporting a concern of exposure. This represents more than 47% of total enrolled Veterans being screened.

I am proud to say VISN 4 is hiring staff at an unprecedented rate over the past few months. During FY23, VISN 4 has had a growth rate of 3.5%, far exceeding the national goal of 3%. We have added 591 new employees to our network for a total of 17,261 full-time employee equivalents across the network. Our current vacancy rate at the network level is 1% lower than FY22 during the same quarter.

We continued to expand VA Health Connect and modernize our clinical contact center. We achieved the million-call milestone by early March 2023 in the VISN 4 Clinical Contact Center with more than 1 million calls through all four core services: RN triage, pharmacy, administration & scheduling, and tele emergency care/urgent care.

As you will read in the issue, we continued to implement holistic and integrated models of care through our whole health transformation initiative, and we continued our journey to become a high reliability organization. We also expanded access to care through virtual modalities and enhanced our commitment to suicide prevention.

It is our honor and privilege to serve you.

Sincerely,

Timothy W. Liezert
Network Director



VA Healthcare-VISN 4 Leadership Team

Timothy W. Liezert
Network Director

Charles R. Thilges
Deputy Network Director

Timothy Burke, M.D.
Chief Medical Officer

Denise Boehm, MSN, RN, NEA-BC
Chief Nursing Officer

Kelly O'Connell
Quality Management Officer

Joseph Haverstick
Chief Financial Officer

Amber Mesoras
Chief Human Resources Officer

David E. Cowgill
Communications Manager

Kristy Kralik
Executive Assistant



On June 27, 2023, VA and the University of Pennsylvania Health System signed agreements that will allow them to begin working on plans to replace VA's out-of-date facilities in Philadelphia and Coatesville and to expand care for Veterans in the region.



I CARE represents the core values that define the basic elements of how we go about our work—“who we are”—and form the underlying principles we use every day in our service to Veterans.

VISN 4 established a new, quarterly I CARE award to recognize employees who not only demonstrate our I CARE values, but who go the extra mile to live by our I CARE ideals. There are many wonderful examples of employees demonstrating these values in their day-to-day work.

Integrity • Commitment • Advocacy • Respect • Excellence

FY22 3rd Quarter Awardee

Erin McKain, certified registered nurse anesthetist

VA Pittsburgh Healthcare System

Erin McKain exemplified the principles of I CARE while providing services to a Veteran earlier this year. Erin, a nurse anesthetist, was involved in the care of a Veteran who lost some personal belongings. Although not directly related to her daily job duties, Erin actively listened to the Veteran’s concerns, and she orchestrated a heroic recovery of his belongings.

She explored the possibility that the items were lost on a Port Authority bus. She was able to identify the number and origin of the bus, and she contacted the mass transit company. Erin was able to connect directly with the bus operator who was able to locate and secure the items. Moreover, Erin arranged for the items to be brought to VA Pittsburgh and returned to the Veteran before he departed the premises.

Her grace and humility embodies the I CARE principle of integrity. Erin extended a not so common ownership to do the right thing, even when it wasn’t the most convenient. Her efforts epitomize commitment, as merely calling customer service today has monumental challenges let alone the logistics of recovery. Furthermore, she was a respectful advocate who pursues nothing short of excellence daily.

When we think of the effort and temporal investment to achieving a successful outcome and Veteran satisfaction, we are reminded of numerous and unrecognized actions that occur on a continuum that perhaps go unrecognized. However, this is exceptional. It is remarkable that an anesthesia professional invested time into recovery of this Veteran’s belongings. This dedication is an inspiration for us all.





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Integrity • Commitment • Advocacy • Respect • Excellence

FY22 4th Quarter Awardee

Raymond Rumbaugh, REACH Vet coordinator

Butler VA Health Care System

Mr. Rumbaugh has been with the Butler VA since April 2019. He has been the REACH VET (RV) Coordinator, part of the Suicide Prevention Team, and one of the CBH RNs for the past 2 years. Since being the RV Coordinator, Butler VA has exceeded the national requirements each month and has reached 100% in all 5 categories multiple times. In April 2022 he was selected to be the Acting Suicide Prevention Coordinator in addition to his REACH VET Coordinator responsibilities. Throughout all these changes, he continues to remain personable, friendly, and easily approachable every day. Mr. Rumbaugh goes above and beyond to make sure not only Veterans receive the best care but also his fellow coworkers receive the support they need.

Mr. Rumbaugh is a leading example of what I CARE stands for. He has collaborated with several different departments to develop more awareness of suicide screening and prevention. He assisted Home Telehealth with the development of directions on management of suicidal Veterans. He has worked with HUD/VASH on completion of screens, educating on resources within the VA and community, and contacting the SPC program. He assisted with implementing new policies such as going from a 3-step screening process to a 2-step screen by using the Columbia Suicide Risk Screen rather than the PHQ+2. He educates new employees on the Suicide Prevention Program, participates in outreach in the community for Veteran suicide prevention awareness, and collaborates with other suicide prevention teams within the VISN.

An example of how Mr. Rumbaugh promotes the I CARE values involved a Veteran who called their PACT team to report that he had left a suicide note in his mailbox. Mr.

Rumbaugh collaborated with the Veteran’s providers and police, encouraging them to be mindful of the Veteran’s crisis and perception. He encouraged the team to continue to work with the Veteran with the goal that he and others remain safe. He made multiple calls to the Veteran to assess safety, validate his feelings, provide empathy, and discuss his actions and encourage him to seek help and receive treatment. Mr. Rumbaugh was a key component in keeping this Veteran safe and getting him the care he was in desperate need to receive.



Mr. Rumbaugh is a true representation of what the VA Core Values stand for. Each I CARE value—Integrity, Commitment, Advocacy, Respect, and Excellence—are clearly demonstrated in his day-to-day interactions with Veterans, family members and co-workers. His hard work ethic, humbleness, goodhearted nature, and willingness to assist at any given moment makes him a true inspiration. The Butler VA is very fortunate to have someone who is so dedicated to his coworkers and Veterans.

FY23 1st Quarter Awardees

Eric Walker, Ronald Christopher, Claude Taylor and Ronald Betts, peer specialists

Butler VA Health Care System

All four of Butler VA's peer specialists represent all 5 of the ICARE values in their work with colleagues, community members and Veterans on a daily basis. They work across multiple settings at the facility, including behavioral health outpatient, Domiciliary, MHICM RANGE, Veterans Justice Outreach, and HUD-VASH. They are also actively involved in implementation of various peer support evidence based practices, including recovery groups, WRAP, and contingency management.

Individually and as a group, the peer specialists at VA Butler Healthcare act with integrity and maintain the trust and confidence of all Veterans with whom they engage. You often see the peer specialists stopping in the halls to assist a Veteran who needs assistance with using the kiosks, directions, or just a friendly smile. The peer support team works collaboratively to assist one another as well as all Veterans they encounter.

They advocate for Veterans and strive to meet their needs. This usually involves assistance with contacting Veteran Service Organizations, working alongside legally involved Veterans as part of Veterans Justice Outreach, assisting with food, furniture or housing, finding community based resources, targeting self-reported loneliness, or improving wellness and physical activity.

As a group, the peer support team consistently receives recognition from Veterans and staff. More than one of them have been recognized previously as VISN Peer Specialist of the Year and/or employee of the month. It is not unusual for one or more of the peer specialists to receive compliments through community stakeholders, their colleagues, and/or by Veterans themselves speaking to the patient advocate.

All four peer specialists act with high moral principles, adhere to highest professional standards, and maintain the trust of all with whom they engage. They take accountability for correcting any mistakes, and strive to improve their professional skills and growth through honest self-reflection, being receptive to feedback and additional training. The peer specialists allow us to meet the needs of our Veterans and foster hope and belief in recovery amongst not only our Veterans but our staff as well. They strive to improve recovery based services and are consistently willing to lend a hand to one another and their colleagues.



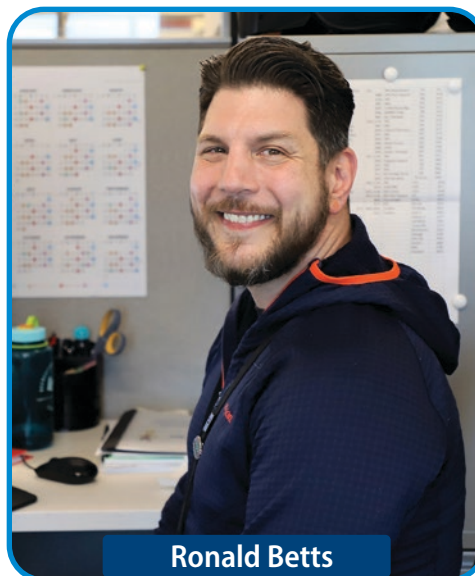
Eric Walker



Claude Taylor



Ronald Christopher



Ronald Betts

AROUND the NETWORK



Introducing the new Monroeville Multi-Specialty VA Outpatient Clinic - Opening Summer 2023!

VA Pittsburgh's new state-of-the-art outpatient clinic is located near the Macy's in Monroevill Mall. It will improve Veterans' access to primary and specialty outpatient services and reduce drive times for many Pittsburgh-area Veterans enrolled in VA care. The building is approximately 64,000 square feet with 500 ground-level parking spaces available.

The clinic will be operated by VA Pittsburgh Healthcare System employees and will serve Veterans enrolled in VA Pittsburgh regardless of where they live. The clinic will also provide same-day primary care appointments and have eligibility and enrollment staff on-site to help Veterans new to VA.

There will not be any emergency or urgent care provided at the clinic.

Other amenities include a calming and relaxing atmosphere, easy access from the parking lot, free guest Wi-Fi, and close to shopping and eating establishments.

A clinic ten years in the making!

Shortly after we closed our Highland Drive campus in 2013, Veterans complained of their frustration with the University Drive campus' parking garage and Oakland traffic. This continuing frustration prompted the idea to build a VA outpatient clinic in Allegheny County. The funding for a new clinic was included in the VA Choice and Quality Employment Act of 2017.

We selected Monroeville because extensive research found a large number of Veterans reside on the eastern side of Allegheny County, making an outpatient clinic in this area more accessible and ideal for many of our patients.

Freeing up space at University Drive will allow us to provide enough parking in the garage to accommodate Veterans who need surgery and other specialty care. It will also allow us to expand the Emergency Department to decrease wait times and to build psychiatric safe rooms in our ED for Veterans in crisis.



Eye Clinic



Pathology/Lab

Services available:

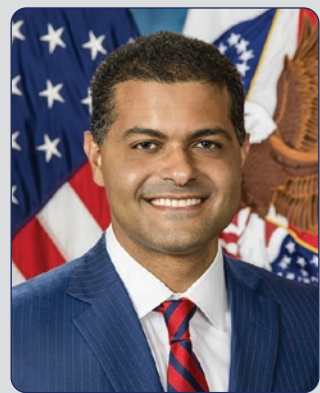
- Primary Care
- Primary Care Mental Health Integration
- Rotating Specialty Care:
 - Chiropractic
 - Acupuncture
 - Pain Management
 - Palliative Care
 - Gastroenterology
 - Massage Therapy
 - Endocrinology
 - Infectious Disease
 - Rheumatology
 - Pulmonology
 - Hematology/Oncology
- Podiatry
- Pulmonary Function Testing/ Home Oxygen
- Echocardiogram
- Telehealth
- Eye Clinic
- Radiology (including X-Ray, MRI, Ultrasound)
- Physical Therapy
- Occupational Therapy
- Social Work
- Pathology/Lab Services
- Dietary



Monroeville VA Clinic
421 Mall Circle Drive
Monroeville, PA 15146
866-482-7488

Our mission...

To fulfill President Lincoln's promise to care for those who have served in our nation's military and for their families, caregivers and survivors.



Dr. Shereef Elnahal

*Under Secretary for Health
Veterans Health Administration*

VA Health Care Priorities

VISN 4 mid-year update

In September 2022, the Under Secretary for Health, Dr. Shereef Elnahal, announced VA's health care priorities, identifying key areas to focus our resources, time and attention going forward for the next couple years.

to address the concerns of diverse Veterans in diverse locations. We continue to prioritize critical efforts like Telehealth and Electronic Health Record Modernization because they hold the promise of both improving care for Veterans and serving as a model for transformative health care innovation.

What makes VA so special is our employees, who are selflessly committed to our mission of helping Veterans

and their families. More than 9 million Veterans are eligible for health care in the largest health care system in the country, and VA is truly remarkable in its ability

and their families. Our staff, a third of whom are Veterans themselves, represent the best of the best, and their professionalism is nothing short of exceptional. Walk through any VHA facility and you will find the most dedicated, hardest-working professionals in health care.

VA's Health Care Priorities are foundational to every decision we make in supporting VHA's long-range goals. They are informed by comprehensive public and private reports, as well as Veteran Service Organizations (VSOs), Congress, unions and other partners. The Priorities will help VA, as an organization, turbocharge our employees' efforts as we move toward pandemic recovery by removing barriers and building upon the great work we have already been doing to care for Veterans.

HIRE FASTER AND MORE COMPETITIVELY

One of our top priorities is to improve the VA hiring process. Providing the top-notch health care our Veterans deserve is only possible with a team of the best and brightest in their respective fields. To hire the best, we must speed up the hiring process. We cannot lose quality candidates to competitors because it took us too long to make an offer. And to retain the best, we must take care of our employees with competitive wages and benefits so they can focus on taking care of our Veterans.

VISN 4 is hiring staff at an unprecedented rate. During FY23, VISN4 has a growth rate of **3.5%**, exceeding the national goal of 3%. We've added **591** new employees to our network for a total of **17,261** full-time employee equivalents across the region.

By implementing the New Hire Center/Scheduling Application, we have reduced the average days to complete pre-employment physicals for new hires from 14 days

in December 2022 to **8 days** in July 2023. This assists management to help keep track of pre-employment requirements and to ensure we are bringing new employees on board in a timely matter.

Our current vacancy rate at the network level is **1% lower** than FY22 during the same quarter. We have implemented initiatives such as "Stay in VA," competitive pay packages through the PACT Act, and taking action after the All Employee Survey. At the end of FY22, our loss rate was 10%, and in FY23 our loss rate is currently at **4.7%**.

We are continuing to hire aggressively, and we will not rest until every VA employee has the resources they need to deliver world-class care and benefits to Veterans, their families, caregivers, and survivors.





The Right Care, Right Now



Scheduling & Administration



Clinical Triage



Virtual Clinic Visits



Pharmacy Services

1-833-TELE-URGENT
(1-833-835-3874)

CONNECT VETERANS TO THE SOONEST AND BEST CARE

To deliver the soonest and best care possible to Veterans, VHA is incorporating technology into all aspects of the health care experience, from setting appointments to meeting with a provider. Technology allows Veterans to benefit from more convenient, patient-centered care. This includes access to electronic health records from home or through a mobile device via MyHealthVet, as well as telehealth solutions that ensure Veterans get the right care in the right place at the right time, from a location of their choice.

The Connected Care program in VISN 4 is a crucial part of VA's goal to connect Veterans to the soonest and best care. Thus far this fiscal year, we have completed more than

327,000 telehealth visits, allowing Veterans to be seen in their homes, reduce travel, and avoid inclement weather. Our Veterans have also sent **468,000** secure messages to their providers and care teams, often negating the need to make an appointment. Our clinicians prioritize these messages as they respond over 99% of the time within three business days.

We offer tele-eye, dermatology, and sleep services in nearly all of our community clinics to ensure Veterans don't have to travel out of their communities to receive these crucial services.

Quick tip!



Scan this QR code with your smart phone to add the VISN 4 Clinical Contact Center phone number to your contacts!



Our Remote Patient Monitoring—Home Telehealth Care Coordinators have helped **5,736** patients avoid emergency department and hospital admissions when they have acute and chronic diagnoses. So far this fiscal year they have reduced bed days of care by **52%** and reduced hospital admissions by **32%**.

We also help Veterans manage their own care, and this year more than **3,500** patients have used the Annie self-help application. The Annie application helps Veterans manage their own care through text-based protocols for a large selection of clinical conditions.

Clinical Contact Center

In early March, our VISN 4 Clinical Contact Center surpassed 1 million calls across all four of the core services including nurse triage, pharmacy, administration and scheduling, and tele emergency care/urgent care.

In the period from October 2022 to May 2023, the clinical contact center has served **1,562,926** Veteran callers:

- more than **142,000** Veteran callers with medical or mental health symptoms were served by our RN triage call center
- nearly **1,118,000** Veteran callers who needed to make, change, or cancel an appointment or had questions for VA were handled by our administrative call center
- nearly **220,000** Veteran calls were supported for medication related questions or needs by our pharmacy call center
- over **8,600** Veteran appointments were provided on-demand by our tele emergency care/urgent care



Our Clinical Resource Hub supports gap coverage for primary care and mental health services. They also provide a variety of specialty care and eye care services to meet Veteran needs in underserved areas. From October through May, the clinical resource hub completed more than **50,000** Veteran visits, nearly double the care provided in this timeframe last fiscal year.

Additional services include cancer screening programs (colorectal cancer screening, lung cancer screening, etc.), heart failure care, physical therapy and pain services, eye screening and low vision rehabilitation to name a few.



VA Health Chat

Have a non-urgent health care question? Chat with a VA care team member in as little as 60 seconds through your mobile device or desktop computer.

VA Health Chat can quickly connect you with a VISN 4 Clinical Contact Center nurse. Chat is available 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. ET Monday through Friday except holidays.

Now available to Veterans receiving care throughout VISN 4.

Learn more:

mobile.va.gov/app/va-health-chat



SERVE VETERANS WITH MILITARY ENVIRONMENTAL EXPOSURES

On August 10, 2022, the President signed into law the The Sergeant First Class Heath Robinson Honoring our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics (PACT) Act. This once-in-a-generation law ensures Veterans qualify for benefits and health care to treat illnesses resulting from exposure to toxins or other hazards during their service. It is now our responsibility to implement the PACT Act and deliver its promises to Veterans. VA has expanded health care and benefits for millions of Veterans and their survivors – including many Vietnam era, Gulf War era, and Post-9/11 Veterans.

PACT Act Update

As of July 15, Veterans and their survivors have filed **744,701** claims for toxic exposure-related benefits since the PACT Act was signed into law Aug. 10, 2022.

VA has awarded more than \$1 billion in earned benefits to Veterans and survivors who filed PACT Act-related claims.

As of July 17, more than **4 million** Veterans across VA received toxic exposure screenings, with approximately **42%** reporting a concern of exposure.

As of July 24, **183,103** Veterans in VISN 4 received toxic exposure screenings, with approximately **40%** reporting a concern of exposure.



VA's public-facing PACT Act dashboard is available at <https://www.accesstocare.va.gov/healthcare/pactact> and has the latest data and information on how VA is implementing the PACT Act. Updates are published every other Friday.

PACT Act Deadlines

If you apply for PACT Act-related benefits on or before August 9, 2023, your benefits may be backdated to August 10, 2022 – so get your claims come in as soon as possible. And if you're not ready to submit a full claim by then, don't worry – you can also submit an intent to file before August 10, 2023 and still receive the same effective date.

Also, there are only a few weeks remaining in the PACT Act one-year special health care enrollment period for Post-9/11 combat Veterans. VA encourages all Post 9-11 combat Veterans to apply now before this eligibility window closes on September 30.

Learn more about the PACT Act and apply for benefits by visiting www.va.gov/PACT or calling 1-800-MY-VA-411.

Did you know?

Time is running out to enroll in the PACT Act one-year special enrollment period for Post-9/11 combat Veterans that began October 1, 2022.

To learn more, visit www.va.gov/PACT.



SUPPORT VETERANS' WHOLE HEALTH, THEIR CAREGIVERS AND SURVIVORS

VA empowers Veterans to take charge of their health and live life to the fullest, and our whole health system of care is positively impacting Veterans' health and well-being. When we treat the entire person, and not just a particular symptom or disease, we not only care for a Veteran's most immediate health concerns but also consider their unique needs and preferences.

All of our facilities in VISN 4 now offer virtual whole health and complementary & integrative health treatment in some capacity. We also have a tele whole health hub, which expands virtual access to whole health offerings like coaching and Tai Chi. So far this fiscal year, we have increased the number of Veterans who use whole health services by **23.3%**, far exceeding the goal of 14%.

All VISN 4 facilities have a whole health program manager and a steering committee. We also have an active VISN-wide whole health steering committee. The steering committee allows for diverse perspectives in developing the strategy for whole health implementation in VISN 4, visibility of initiatives across the Network, and sharing of best practices.

By the end of FY23, each facility in VISN 4 will be offering the Caregiver Health and Wellbeing Coaching through the Caregiver Support Program. This is a resource that empowers the caregiver by focusing on *their* health and wellbeing. It uses whole health strategies to assist caregivers in managing the health risks associated with caregiving while also improving overall wellness.

All sites also offer Intro to Whole Health sessions and Taking Charge of My Life and Health sessions either on site or via the tele whole health hub. We also offer virtual classes from Millennium Health and Fitness that expand access to wellness classes beyond what is available on site.



DISCOVER
WHAT MATTERS
TO YOU.

Live Whole Health.

VA



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

va.gov/wholehealth

ACCELERATE VA'S JOURNEY TO A HIGH RELIABILITY ORGANIZATION

Our journey to High Reliability represents a long-term commitment to both Veterans and our workforce. High Reliability Organizations (HROs) experience fewer than anticipated accidents or events of harm, despite operating in highly complex, high-risk environments. In a HRO, safety is the desired result of employee engagement in HRO practices and actions in delivering safe, high-quality care to Veterans.

Our commitment to High Reliability is integrated within the fabric of our operations and culture. In VISN 4 we have implemented all four foundational HRO practices:

- 1. Safety Huddles**—work units gather briefly to communicate and discuss plans for the day ahead, as well as potential risks or concerns.
- 2. Leader Rounding**—facility health care leaders set aside dedicated time to talk with staff in their work settings providing an opportunity for open and closed loop communication with staff.
- 3. Patient Safety Forums**—large group meeting where executive leaders, patient safety staff members and front line personnel have an equal voice and an opportunity to review errors and safety concerns.
- 4. Visual Management Boards**—provides a snapshot of performance information and data for the facility and work settings to develop real-time action plans which ensure safety and quality care.

Celebrating HRO successes is a critical component of our journey to high reliability that connects teams, raises morale, and reinforces our shared commitment to zero harm.

Congratulations to our VISN 4 HeRO Award winners for FY23:



- Q1: James E. Van Zandt VAMC (Altoona) Laboratory Team—Laboratory technologists combined efforts to ensure the accuracy of laboratory testing.
- Q2: Wilkes-Barre VAMC CAC Team—The clinical applications coordinators developed a plan to ensure accuracy of Veteran vaccination records.
- Q3: Lebanon VAMC SPS Team—When a water pipe broke in their department, the surgical sterile processing team jumped into action to reduce the impact on surgical cases.



PREVENT VETERAN SUICIDE

Every Veteran suicide is a tragedy. Our top clinical priority is preventing Veteran suicide and that will require a full public health approach, combining community and clinical-based interventions. We are calling on all partners, stakeholders and communities to help us reach Veterans and reduce Veteran suicide. We will never give up the fight to combat Veteran suicide, but we cannot win this fight alone.

Veteran Crisis Line

On July 16, 2022, the Veterans Crisis Line (VCL) transitioned to a new 3-digit number. Veterans can now use this new option by dialing 988 then pressing 1 to contact the Veterans Crisis Line. In the first 6 months of FY23, VISN 4 had a **99.18%** success rate for successful closure—within 3 days of the initial call—to the Veteran Crisis Line. In VISN 4, there have been **3,165** total requests from the VCL for Veteran follow-up, and **609** resulted in dispatch of emergency service to the Veteran.

Community Engagement and Partnership Coordinator (CEPC) program

CEPCs serve as subject matter experts in public health approaches, coalition development and facilitation, and other community-based models for Veteran suicide prevention. They collaboratively work with communities to develop, facilitate, and strengthen community-based

interventions for suicide prevention at community, state, and regional levels.

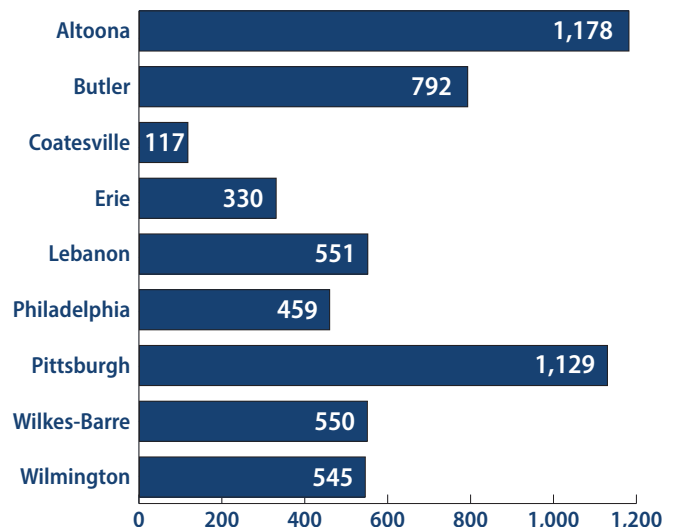
During the first 6 months of FY23, VISN 4 has filled all current CEPC positions (a total of 12 positions, across the 9 VISN facilities). In the first 2 quarters of FY23, these CEPCs established **34** new suicide prevention community coalitions within VISN 4. Total community coalitions established since the launch of the program is **90**.

In May 2023, VISN 4 exceeded the Comprehensive Suicide Risk Evaluation (CSRE1) national adherence rate (VISN: 85%. National 82%). Percentage of Veterans with timely completion of the comprehensive suicide risk evaluation following a positive suicide screen.

In May 2023, VISN 4 exceeded the Columbia Suicide Severity Rating Scale (CSSRS1) national adherence rate (VISN: 59%. National 58%). Percentage of Veterans with timely completion of the suicide screening, when it was due.

Oversight of gunlock distribution

The distribution of cable gunlocks continues across VISN 4 in FY23. As one method of suicide prevention, processes exist at all facilities to provide gunlocks to any Veterans requesting them. A total of **5,654** gunlocks have been distributed in the first 2 quarters of FY23:



Under the new 2022 PACT Act



all enrolled Veterans will
be able to receive
a toxic exposure screening
at VA

TOXIC EXPOSURE DURING MILITARY SERVICE?

Learn more at [VA.gov](https://www.va.gov)
1-800-MyVA411 (800-698-2411)

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Vision for Excellence - Issue 33

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We'd Like to Hear from You

Vision for Excellence is published for the employees, volunteers, patients and friends of VA Healthcare-VISN 4. For more information about this publication, contact David Cowgill at david.cowgill@va.gov.