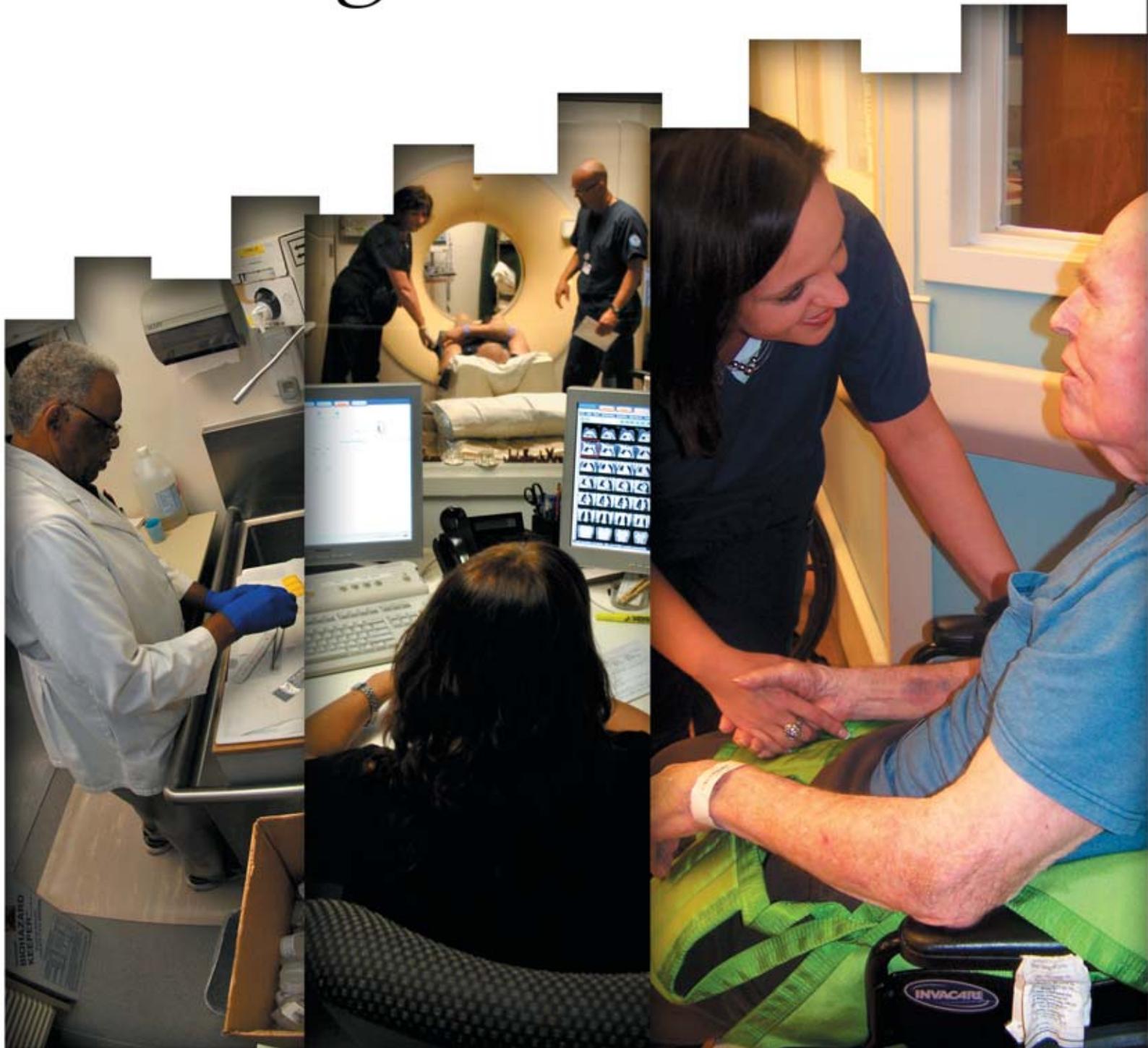


Honoring America's Veterans



We Are...

Ambassadors.....	1
Community Living.....	2
Employer of Choice.....	3
Women’s Health.....	4
Volunteers.....	5
Green Initiatives.....	6
OEF/OIF/OND.....	7
Patient Aligned Care Teams...8	
Veteran Centered Care.....	9
Ending Homelessness.....	10
For Veterans.....	11

Director's Message



Mr. Andrew Welch

This year has been remarkable. We've continued to reach for higher goals and innovative ways to care for Veterans.

Our Patient Aligned Care Teams (PACT) have changed the way Veterans receive their health care. Veterans have a better decision-making process at their convenience thanks to combining several disciplines into one team.

Over the last year, we've continued to expand our services as well as our physical space. We can now monitor a Veteran's medical situation without that Veteran having to travel to our facility through Telehealth. That program, and so many others, is made possible because of our educated and qualified staff that take pride in serving those that have served.

Our goal is to be Veteran-centered, while providing innovative health care. In 2012 we will continue to be an employer of choice and community partner as we give back to those that have given us so much.

I want to thank all of you who strive each and every day to honor America's Veterans.

Andrew Welch, MHA, FACHE
Amarillo Health Care System Director

2011

We Are...

Ambassadors



The purpose of the Amarillo VA Ambassador Program is to enhance employees' careers with training and offer opportunities for employees to participate in organizational stewardship programs. The VA Ambassadors is a group of employees that attend community events promoting the VA and its services.

The program has these primary goals:

1. Provide learning opportunities for high potential employees to develop new skills and enable the member to participate in organizational stewardship activities.
2. Increase the number of employees that have the training and knowledge to represent the AVAHCS at community events.
3. Prepare participants to be knowledgeable about VA eligibility and health care benefits.
4. Prepare participants to contribute on future medical center activities.
5. Encourage our local Veterans to use our outstanding health care services.

In FY11 the Ambassadors participated in 14 community events and reached about 380 area Veterans providing them with information regarding their health care benefits.



Lubbock Outpatient Community Based Clinic members ride in the 4th of July Parade.

Community Living

VA Community Living Centers, formerly known as nursing homes, provide short-stay and long-stay nursing home care to Veterans who are medically and mentally stable. The mission of VA Community Living Centers (CLC) is to restore the Veteran to maximum function and independence, prevent declines in health, and provide comfort at the end of life.

VA CLCs are committed to providing Veteran-Centered Care. Each Veteran's plan for care is designed around the Veteran's needs, preferences, and life-long habits. VA CLCs serve Veterans from all generations and pay special attention to ensure age, culture, and generation specific

needs and interests are incorporated into the plan of care. Care is provided so that the Veteran is respected, treated with dignity, and invited to be a participant in his or her own care. The foundation of the VA CLC model of Veteran-Centered Care is the relationship and trust between the Veteran and his or her VA caregivers.

VA CLCs strive to create an environment that resembles "home" as much as possible and are at the forefront of a trend to "de-institutionalize" nursing home care in America. VA CLCs have undergone significant changes to create homes that nurture the Veteran's mind, body, and spirit while providing state of the art professional health care and services.



The Noyses celebrate their 70th Anniversary in our CLC.

We Are... An Employer of Choice



Don Nichols clears walkways after a snow storm.

As one of the major employers in the greater Amarillo area, the Amarillo VA Health Care System provides excellent career opportunities for all primary clinical fields, as well as many administrative and trades occupations.

In 2011, the VA transitioned from a paper-based application and hiring system to the new USA Staffing automated application and hiring system. This was the biggest change for the hiring process in years for the VA and it has brought the VA hiring process into the 21st century.

Employees in the Amarillo VA Health Care System enjoy many benefits in addition to the security associated with federal employment. For example, the VA offers excellent health and life insurance options, 401-K type retirement with up to 5% matching contributions, generous Vacation and Sick leave

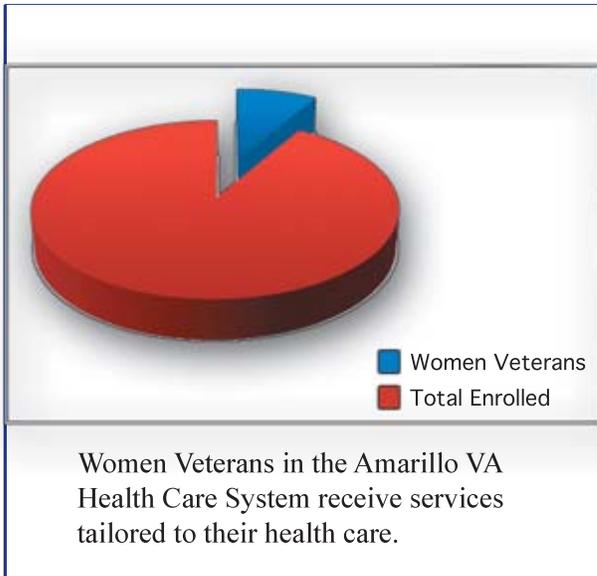
policies, tuition assistance and other various educational/leadership development programs.

Also, through redesign of the entire hiring process and transition to an HR Consultant based service, the Amarillo VA Health Care System exceeded the national performance measure of 30 days in the hiring process.

The Amarillo VA Health Care System processed 127 new employees in FY11. For current employees, there were 122 promotions demonstrating excellent career advancement opportunities.

However, the primary benefit of working at the Amarillo VA Health Care system, as expressed by employees themselves, is the opportunity to serve our country's heroes, our Veteran patients, on a daily basis.

Women's Health



No longer is it assumed that in a couple, the male is always the Veteran by any of our staff. This internal culture change has opened more opportunities to provide care for all Veterans. To that end, we keep a constant awareness of these facts:

- The largest group of women Veterans today served in the OEF/OIF/OND operations.
- Women make up 13 percent of OEF/OIF/OND Veterans.
- 54.4 percent of women OEF/OIF/OND Veterans have received VA health care; of these, 88.8 percent have used VA health care more than once.
- 49 percent of female OEF/OIF/OND Veterans who used VA care during FY 2002-2011 were 30 or younger compared to 45.3 percent of male OEF/OIF/OND

In fiscal year 2011, the total number of female Veterans receiving health care here in the Amarillo VA Health Care System rose to nearly 2,100. We expanded the Lady Liberty Women's Clinic from 848 to 1,668 square feet to meet the needs of women Veterans. The new square footage allows for a private waiting area and larger treatment rooms.

Dr. Kathleen Clark provides primary care to female Veterans. She studied obstetrics and gynecology at Texas Tech and is focused on providing women Veterans services tailored to their health care.

In addition to traditional medical care, Amarillo VA Health Care System's Women's Program has organized "Littlest Heroes" baby showers for pregnant Veterans. Two showers were held in the 2011 fiscal year with the number of pregnant Veterans in attendance more than doubling.



The staff of the Amarillo VA Women's Clinic

We Are... Volunteers

The Voluntary Service's mission is "to provide a structured volunteer program under the management of VA compensated employees, in cooperation with community resources, to serve America's Veterans and their families with dignity and compassion."

Volunteers have provided over 40,000 hours of assistance to patient and administrative programs. The impact of those Volunteer hours enhances the quality of care and comfort offered to Veterans by freeing up staff to devote more time to direct patient care. Staffing resources are easily redirected to other areas of need because of Volunteers.

Volunteers also operate the Amarillo VA Health Care System Volunteer Transportation Network which offers safe, timely transportation to medical appointments to Veteran patients. The program offers shuttle rides to patients from parking lots to buildings, helps transport patients throughout the Texas and Oklahoma panhandles, as well as New Mexico. It's all offered at no cost to eligible Veterans in need of transportation to and from appointments.



Ken Holcomb escorts Veterans from the parking lot to the entrances.

Value of Hours Donated
\$676,364.40

Green Initiatives

Here at the Amarillo VA, we've been working on several green initiatives. Sam Hagins, Amarillo's VA Energy Manager, won a Federal Energy Award by installing a thermal storage system to save energy on air conditioning the hospital. The system is designed to make ice at night to use for air conditioning during the day. The ice is stored in 18 ice tanks at 1,775 gallon each. Water is circulated through the ice tanks during the day to be chilled. The chilled water is then piped to the main hospital to cool the building.



Sam Hagins stands in front of the new thermal storage system.

Energy savings will be year-round. And during the fall, winter, and spring we will run the thermal storage plant exclusively without ever needing to run our regular chillers. We'll simply make ice two or three nights per week and then use it for cooling for the rest of the week. So there will no longer be a need to continually run a chiller during the off-season. During the summer the regular chillers will be used on extremely hot days to supplement the thermal storage system.

We've estimated about a 20 percent reduction in the cost to cool the main hospital. Furthermore, making ice at night helps reduce electrical load on the local utility provider, since the vast majority of our chiller power will be consumed at night when power demands are much lower. Cutting demand for electricity during peak daylight hours reduces the need to build new power plants. It also allows utilities to rely on their most efficient power plants which will lower their carbon dioxide and greenhouse gas emissions resulting in less global warming.

We Are... OEF/OIF/OND



Sailors walk through a cloud of smoke during a training exercise at Fort Dix. U.S. Navy photo by MC2 Lenny M. Francioni

All Veterans who served in combat since 2003 can get health care for issues possibly related to their service free for five years from their departure date. But, to receive these benefits, the Veteran must register with VA's health care system. That seems to be a problem. Returning Sailors, Soldiers, Marines, and Airman aren't signing up when they leave the service.

Enter David Crabtree. Crabtree is the Patient Representative for Operations Enduring and Iraqi Freedom Veterans at the Amarillo VA Health Care System. He doesn't wait for Veterans to show up at his office, he goes into the community to find them.

"I get them eventually," Crabtree says plainly. Every week, Crabtree is out in the community at local events, reserve centers, and large employers.

In 2011 alone, Crabtree participated in 55 outreach events.

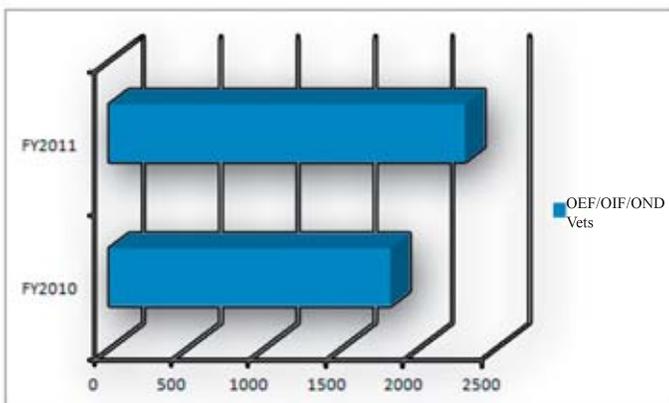
"I was at Pantex and found guys that were 20 to 30 percent disabled and hadn't registered with the VA." They're now registered.

Crabtree has helped enroll 484 new patients over the last year.

So how does Crabtree do it?

"I hunt them down. Networking is how I [get] you. I've made friends with judges, cops...Facebook."

That networking has contributed to over 2,000 OEF/OIF Veterans registered with the Amarillo VA.



Patient Aligned Care



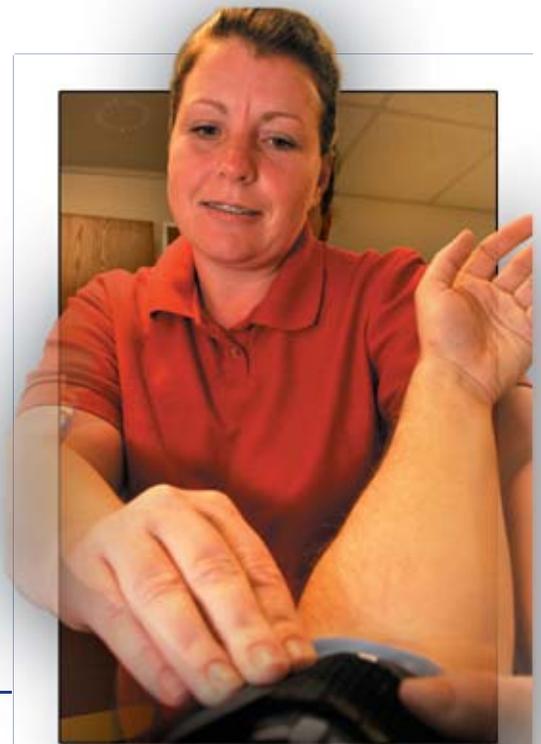
Team America

In December of 2010, the Amarillo VA Health Care System launched a new model of care called Patient Aligned Care Teams (PACT). In it, each Veteran works together with a team health care professionals to plan for whole-person care and lifelong health and wellness. PACT Veterans should expect:

- Improved continuity of care
- Secured Messaging
- Better access to care

To deliver these expectations, the Amarillo VA Health Care System has rolled out 25 teams to make sure all Veterans get this new care. This means aligning resources to make sure each Veteran received a four person team of a clerk, an LVN, an RN, and a doctor. This model of care builds the most important thing in health care: relationships. In fiscal year 2011, the Amarillo VA Health Care System was named one of the best practices when it came to implementing the PACT model.

The model of PACT is proactive, meaning prevention has created new positions to provide care. It's the Burger King of health care: have it your way. Whether that's follow-up phone care or ease of access, the goal of PACT is to do what we can to get Veterans treatment.



Marinda Newkirk works hard to put the Veteran at the center of their care.

We Are...

Veteran Centered



Nurse Aid Jennifer Pantel sets up a K-Cup coffee maker afforded by mini-grants.

Whether a truck driver, mom-to-be, rural or small town citizen.....

Our purpose is to honor them all through high quality, Veteran centered care. Amarillo VA Health Care System began a journey in 2011 to exceed the expectations of every Veteran patient.

In addition to intensive training, the AVAHCS implemented quality standards to guide employees in every interaction with Veterans and their loved ones. With safety as the top priority, focus is placed on kindness in each interaction, moving beyond standard customer service to exceed expectations.

A second year of mini grants has resulted in many amenities and services for patients and families improving their experience. Accommodations for children and grandchildren in waiting areas smoothes the visitation experience. Beautiful art and furnishings are transforming the traditional hospital environment to a warmer more welcoming experience. Mini-grants throughout the organization have been successful in heightening staff awareness of the perspective of the patient and family.

Baskets for families of the hospice patient offer comforts and allow loved ones to remain at the bedside longer. Special anniversary meals for Community Living Center residents and their spouses allow for a very noninstitutional and romantic meal that might not otherwise be possible. Design has been completed on significant construction projects that will further advance the healing, homelike environment. Construction will begin in 2012 on the 15 –bed 3 North unit, with all private rooms and baths, re-designed workflow to allow staff to be near patients more than ever in the past.

Ending Homelessness

Nearly 107,000 Veterans have found themselves without a home, while 1.5 million are in danger. The danger stems from not having enough support from family and friends and extends to not being able to earn a livable income to afford housing.

The VA continues to emphasize an end to homelessness among Veterans through many programs including housing support services, employment/job training, and partnerships with other agencies such as Housing and Urban Development-Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH). Amarillo VA has several Veterans enrolled in various programs and continues to see successes.

In fiscal year 2011, we increased our total number of HUD-VASH vouchers to 60. This program is designed to address the needs of the most vulnerable homeless Veterans. To be eligible for this program, Veterans must be VA health care eligible, homeless and in need of case management services in order to obtain and sustain permanent independent community housing.

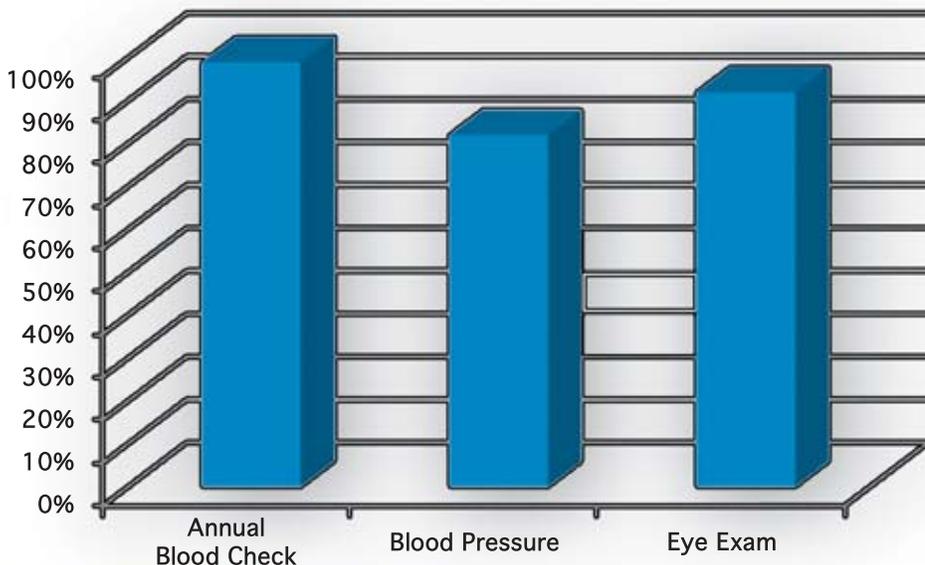
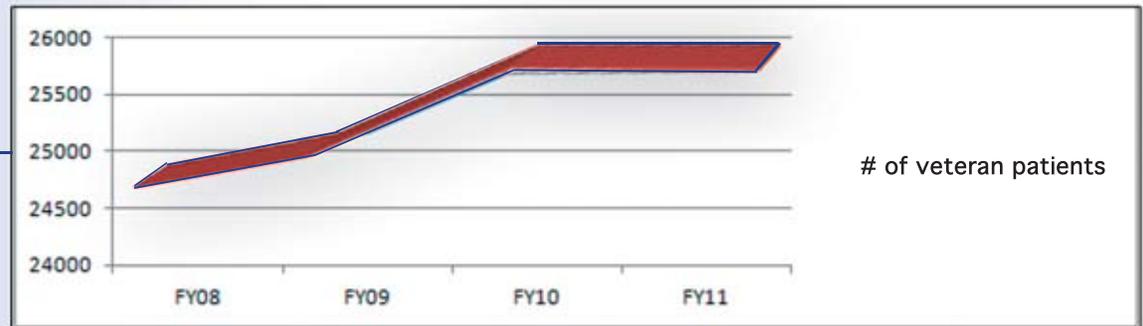
At the Amarillo VA, we've organized several events to reach out to homeless Veterans. Over the last year, we've held stand downs in both Amarillo and Lubbock to distribute clothing, hygiene products, and non-perishable food items. We've also hosted a summit on homelessness attended by multiple community organizations.



We Are... For Veterans

Each year we strive to provide more vital services to returning Veterans.

More Vital



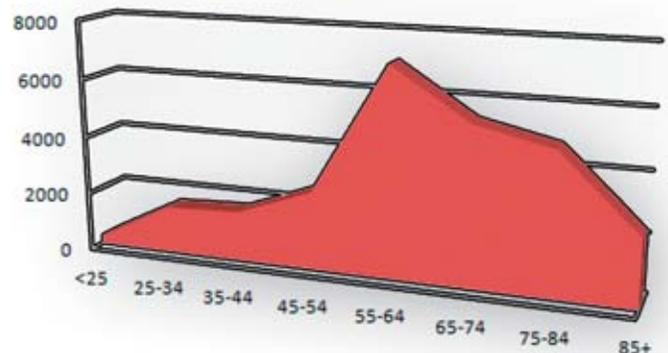
Diabetes

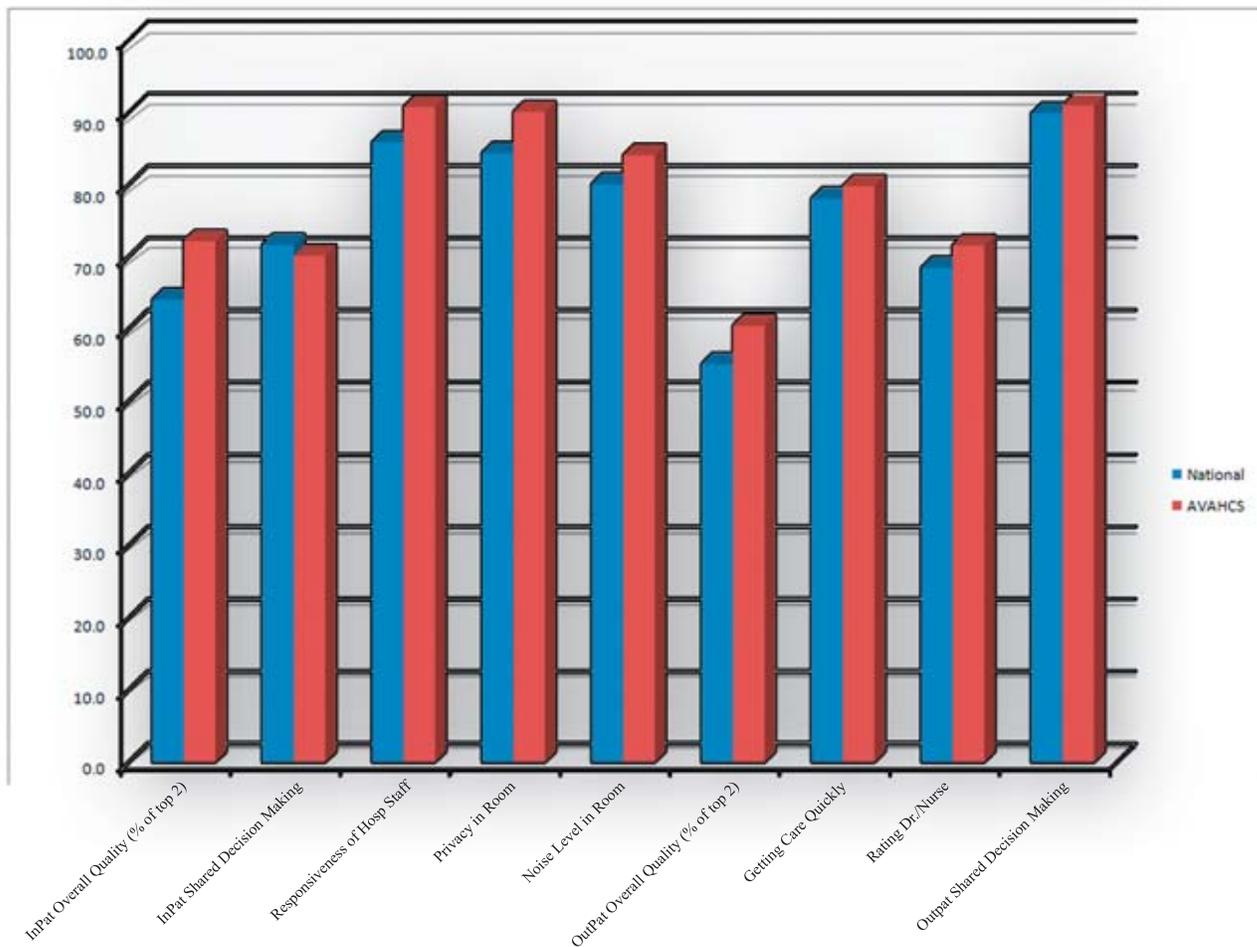
We help Veterans manage their diabetes to prevent the serious problems it can cause.

Those Who Gave Their Best

The Amarillo VA Health Care System provides services to Veterans of all ages. We honor all those who served by helping prevent disease and manage their health care.

Age Group by Year FY11

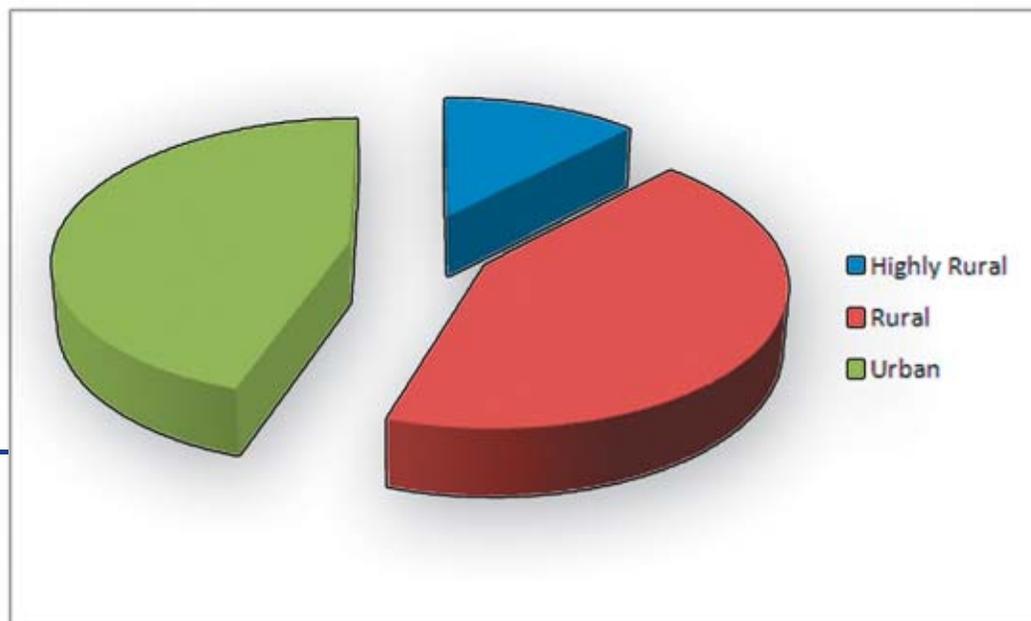




Patient Feedback

We recognize and accommodate needs, and the health care outcome has been very successful. Our care model is focused on the person first not the disease. It is partnership based, and works to optimize health rather than treat an ailing body part.

The Amarillo VA Health Care System has increased access to care for rural Veterans. The Veterans Transportation Service (VTS) will offer Veterans efficient transportation assistance to the Amarillo VA Medical Center as well as the Community-Based Outpatient Clinics.



Rural Vets

Amarillo VA Health Care System

6010 Amarillo Blvd West

Amarillo, TX 79106

806-355-9703 | 800-687-8262

Clovis Outpatient Clinic

921 East Llano Estacado, Clovis, NM 88101

(575) 763-4335

Childress Community Based Outpatient Clinic

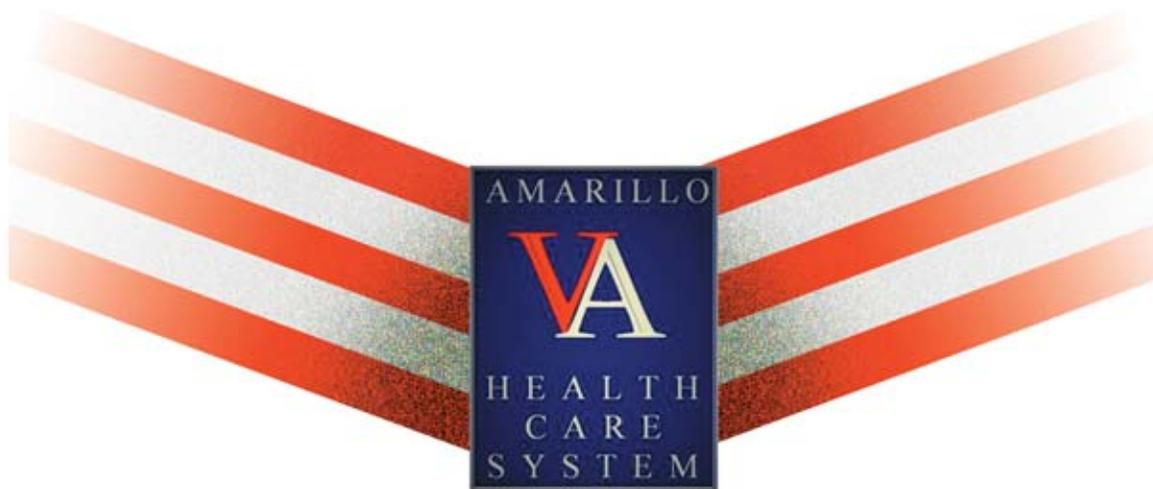
1001 Highway 83 North, Childress, TX 79201

(940) 937-8528

Lubbock Community Based Outpatient Clinic

6104 Avenue Q South Drive, Lubbock, TX 79412

(806) 472-3445



www.amarillo.va.gov
www.facebook.com/VA_Amarillo