

# Salute Your Health

**Affirming Our Commitment to America's Heroes**

## Patient-Centered Care

Have you heard the phrase, “patient-centered care?” This model of health care ensures Veterans are at the center of their health care. By planning care in collaboration with the patient and his or her provider, Erie VA can offer patient-centered care as the most effective means of treatment.

### Increased Options

Erie VA Medical Center considers all aspects of Veterans in care decisions. The patient-centered care approach gives patients more options on how, when, and where they'd like to receive care.

Veterans make decisions about their health, well-being, medical procedures, laboratory work, or any other service Erie VA offers with assistance and guidance from the primary health care provider or specialists.

### Erie VA's Commitment

What does a patient-centered approach to health care look like? Erie VA will continue to:

- Honor patient expectations ensuring care is safe, of high quality, and easy to access
- Improve personal interactions and customer service
- Respect values and preferences as a Veteran
- Strive to assure the best coordination of care
- Empower patients with information and education to help make knowledgeable choices
- Assist with nutrition and healthy living choices
- Provide pain management to assure physical comfort

- Support emotional and spiritual needs
- Encourage family and friend support when making health care decisions
- Provide a clean and comforting medical center atmosphere that is conducive to health and healing
- Introduce creative arts as a means of healing

Erie VA staff is fully engaged in the patient-centered care approach to assure that Veterans needs are met in all these areas. The Veteran will always be considered at the “HEART” of his or her care.

In this issue, you will find descriptions of a variety of Erie VA programs that allow Veterans to take control of their health care goals.



# New Telephone Lifestyle Coaching Program

*The support you need to reach your health goals*

**A**re you trying to quit smoking? Would you like to lose weight? Are you feeling stressed? Telephone Lifestyle Coaching (TLC) is a new program available for Veterans who need a little support to help reach their health goals.

This six-month program helps Veterans reach their health care goals by offering ongoing telephone calls from a personal health coach. The health coach will offer ideas, tactics, and encouragement as you work toward meeting health goals. Participants will receive workbooks to help track weight, food, drinks, and physical activity.

To date, 600 Veterans across the country have enrolled in TLC, including 23 Veterans

**A recent study showed that 49 percent of patients using a telephone coaching program achieved a 5 percent weight loss vs. just 26 percent of patients using other methods.**

from the Erie VA and the Community-Based Outpatient Clinics (CBOCs).

Telephone coaching has proven to help patients:

- Improve eating habits
- Get more exercise
- Lose weight
- Quit smoking
- Manage stress
- Decrease alcohol consumption

Participants in telephone coaching programs have high levels of satisfaction and are more likely to follow the advice of their health care team.

Talk to your VA Patient Aligned Care Team (PACT) today, and ask about signing up for TLC. Your health care team can provide an overview of TLC and answer your questions.



# Combating Homelessness in 2012

More resources available for homeless Veterans

Homelessness among  
Veterans decreased by

↓ **12%**

January 2010 - January 2011

The Homeless Care Team is a few steps closer to eliminating homelessness among Veterans after receiving 15 additional housing vouchers at the beginning of the year, bringing the total up to 75 vouchers.

“No Veteran should ever be homeless,” says Mike Wehrer, Erie VA’s Housing and Urban Development – Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing coordinator. “That’s our goal. With these additional resources, 15 Veterans and their families are able to take a step out of homelessness and move toward recovery.”

Erie VA offers health care, transitional housing, supportive housing, and case management services to homeless Veterans. The Homeless Care Team served more than 300 homeless Veterans last year and more than 600 Veterans since the program began in 2008.



*Erie VA continues to do community outreach to build awareness about programs available for homeless Veterans. In October, Erie VA held a Homeless Summit to educate dozens of community organizations and key officials about homeless services, and to collaborate on how to end homelessness in Erie and surrounding communities.*

Visit [www.erie.va.gov/homeless](http://www.erie.va.gov/homeless) for more information about homeless Veteran services or call **814-860-2481**.

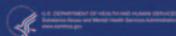
NATIONAL CALL CENTER  
for Homeless Veterans



1-877-4AID-VET  
1-877-424-3838

**It takes the courage and strength  
of a warrior to ask for help...**

**“If you or someone you know is in an emotional crisis...  
call 1-800-273-TALK “Press 1 for Veterans”**



Department of  
Veterans Affairs



### *Find Your Way!*

**D**id you know you can use the directory located in the main first floor entrance to find your way around the Medical Center? You can even print maps from the directory to help you navigate our halls. When in doubt, map it out.



*The new directory offers patients a convenient way to view and print maps of the Medical Center as soon as they enter the building.*

## New Crawford VA Clinic Location



**E**rie VA Medical Center is pleased to announce that construction is under way for a new Crawford VA Clinic. The Crawford VA Clinic has been proudly serving more than 2,800 area Veterans since 1998. The new location will allow for the further expansion of behavioral health and telehealth services for Veterans in and around Crawford County.

### **New Crawford VA Clinic**

- Expected construction start: Spring 2012
- Expected completion date: October 2012
- Current square footage: 4,480
- New square footage: 6,460
- Location: 16954 Conneaut Lake Road in Meadville

### **Other Projects in Development:**

#### **New Behavioral Health Clinic**

- Expected construction date: spring 2012
- Expected completion date: spring 2013
- Current square footage: 9,568
- New square footage: 20,000

#### **New Community Living Center**

- Expected construction start: Summer 2013
- Expected completion date: summer 2014
- Current square footage: 18,000
- New square footage: 20,400

#### **New Parking Garage**

- Expected construction start: summer 2013
- Expected completion date: summer 2014
- Parking capacity: 240 parking spaces

# Women's Veteran Support & Education

**E**rie VA Medical Center provides care to more than 1,310 women Veterans, which equates to a 10 percent increase in enrollees since 2009. As the number of women Veterans increases, Erie VA's Women Veterans program continues to roll out new programs to meet the needs of this population, including the new Women Veterans Networking group that launched in 2011.



## **New! Women Veterans Networking Group**

**When:** 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of the month from 5:30–7 p.m.

**Where:** 1st floor patient education room

Women Veterans of all ages come together to find solace and understanding in a place where women who have served in the military can share their experiences in a supportive setting. No registration or appointment is necessary.

## **Salute to Women Veterans Luncheon**

**When:** April 28 at 11:30 a.m.

**Where:** Capers Reception Hall  
2743 East 38th Street in Erie

This event is held to honor and celebrate the service of women Veterans who receive care from the Erie VA Medical Center and the community VA clinics.

For more information about the Women Veterans program, call Nadean Sitter, Women Veterans Program Manager, at **814-860-2907**.

## Minority Veterans Program

**D**uring the past year, the Minority Veterans program has become an active part of both the VA and the Erie community. The Minority Veterans Program Coordinator, Jennifer Scott, and a team of dedicated staff work to promote VA services to minority Veterans in the community by networking with local groups and organizations, such as the Lake Erie Area Diversity Engagement Roundtable, the Martin Luther King Center, and several area churches. The Minority Veterans program team also serves as advocates on behalf of minority Veterans and educates staff to the unique needs of minority Veterans.

To learn more about the Minority Veterans program, contact Jennifer Scott, Minority Veterans Program Coordinator, at **814-860-2282**.



*Minority Veterans Program Coordinator Jennifer Scott introduces guest speaker Royce Kinniebrew at the Black History Month presentation in February.*

# Send a Message to Your Health Care Team Online!

Join more than 6,000 Veterans in using My HealthVet to take control of their health. My HealthVet allows patients easy, online access to refill prescriptions, view appointments, view lab results, and send secure messages to health care teams.

1. **Create your My HealthVet account** by visiting **www.myhealth.va.gov**. Make sure your middle name is exactly how it appears on your VA ID card. Check VA Patient.
2. **Print and sign the authentication form** found online and bring the form in to your clinic or to the Release of Information Office along with a photo ID. This must be done in person for security reasons.
3. Once you have signed in, **Opt in to use secure messaging** by clicking on the red “Secure Messaging” tab at the top of the screen. Then click the orange “Open Secure Messaging” button. Read the terms and conditions and select “Opt In”. Then send a secure message to any one of your teams.

## More than 34 health care teams are currently using My HealthVet to communicate with patients. Secure Messaging Teams:

- Eri – Bauda
- Eri – King
- Eri – Maring
- Eri – Peng
- Eri – Ramanujam
- Eri – HBPC Ramanujam
- Eri – Diplacido
- Eri – Walters
- Eri – Murphy
- Eri – Dr. Russ
- Eri – Estrada
- Eri – Larson
- Eri – Roussos
- Eri – Postdeployment Clinic
- Eri – Ashtabula Kercher
- Eri – Ashtabula Malleis
- Eri – Crawford Larson
- Eri – Crawford Lutz-McCain
- Eri – Crawford Murray
- Eri – Venango Gabreski
- Eri – Venango Lutz-McCain
- Eri – Warren Bulger
- Eri – McKean Panah
- Eri – Talk to a Chaplain
- Eri – Cardiology Clinic
- Eri – Hematology/Oncology
- Eri – Pulmonary
- Eri – Homeless Care Team
- Eri – BHC Montgomery and Schwartz
- Eri – Hepatitis C Clinic
- Eri – TeleMOVE
- Eri – MOVE Support
- Eri – MHV Customer Service
- Eri – Women Veterans
- Eri – Health Promotion Disease Prevention



*Bob Feldman, VA volunteer, assisting Rob Olson, returning service member, with MyHealthVet.*



For more information, call the My HealthVet coordinator at **814-860-2097**.

# Health Promotion Disease Prevention

[www.prevention.va.gov](http://www.prevention.va.gov)

Spring 2012

View upcoming events and classes online at [www.erie.va.gov](http://www.erie.va.gov).

## 9 HEALTHY LIVING MESSAGES

Be Involved In Your Health Care

Be Physically Active

Eat Wisely

Strive for a Healthy Weight

Manage Stress

Be Safe

Be Tobacco Free

Limit Alcohol

Get Recommended  
Screening Tests and Immunizations

### New Family Support Group

Become a part of your loved ones' recovery. Learn all about mental health issues and how to support your loved ones while they work toward recovery.

**CONTACT:**

Jeff Rose at  
814-860-2038

### New Seek Out Strength Group

The risk for suicide increases in people suffering from depression, addiction or other illnesses. This SOS group focuses on identifying warning signs that may lead to a crisis and developing coping strategies to handle a crisis.

**WHEN:** First Friday of every month from 10 a.m. – noon

**WHERE:** Behavioral Health Clinic

**CONTACT:** Janet Montgomery, LSW, at 814-860-2612 or Lisa Schwartz, LCSW, at 814-860-2986

### Farmer's Markets Coming Soon!

Join us at the annual Farmer's Markets held under the second floor pavilion. Stop by for fresh fruit, veggies, and baked goods.

- Friday, June 22 from 11 a.m. – 2 p.m.
- Friday, July 27 from 11 a.m. – 2 p.m.
- Friday, August 24 from 11 a.m. – 2 p.m.
- Friday, September 14 from 11 a.m. – 2 p.m.

### MOVE! – Weight Management

Take control of your weight and join one of the many MOVE! groups offered to Veterans, including support groups, phone clinics, education classes, and more!

**CONTACT:** 814-860-2554 for more information.





Erie Veterans Affairs Medical Center  
135 East 38th Street  
Erie, PA 16504

PRSR STD  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
LONG PRAIRIE, MN  
PERMIT NO. 372

## INSIDE:

- **Your Lifestyle Coach**
- **Ending Homelessness**
- **Supporting Women Veterans**

Attention Postmaster: Time Dated Material Enclosed

*Salute Your Health* is published quarterly as a patient education service by the Erie VA Medical Center. The publication is intended to provide information to help you stay well, manage your health care, and learn more about the many services available through the VA. This publication is not intended as a substitute for professional medical advice, which should be obtained from your provider. All articles may be reproduced for educational purposes. Our mission is to maintain and improve the health and well-being of Veterans by providing state-of-the-art comprehensive health care in a professional and pleasant environment. All models used for illustrative purposes only. (SP12 6210M)

**FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT US AT:**  
**Erie VA Medical Center**  
**135 East 38th St., Erie, PA 16504**  
**814-868-8661 or 800-274-8387**  
**Check out our Web site for**  
**hours, telephone numbers, and**  
**maps at [www.erie.va.gov](http://www.erie.va.gov).**



## You're Invited to the Welcome Home Event

**M**ark your calendars for the annual Welcome Home Veterans Appreciation Day, scheduled for Saturday, July 28. Enjoy a free buffet dinner and an Erie SeaWolves game.

Tickets will be available in the Voluntary Service Office and the OEF/OIF/OND Office starting June 11th. You must redeem your tickets by July 16th. Tickets will NOT be available the day of the game.

Look for more information online at [www.erie.va.gov](http://www.erie.va.gov) or visit us on Facebook or Twitter.

