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NEWS RELEASE

Changes at the Erie VA Medical Center

(Erie, PA) – Due to the declining census for critical care services, the intensive care unit at the Erie VA Medical Center (VAMC) will close on September 17, 2012. The Erie VAMC has relied on local community hospitals to provide a higher level of care for some time and will continue to collaborate closely with these hospitals to assure that our patients with critical illnesses receive seamless care when the need arises.

Erie VA's 22-bed inpatient acute care unit will remain open, including monitored telemetry beds.

As a result of the intensive care unit closing, the emergency room will become an urgent care center that will be open from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. every day of the year which meets the needs of a vast majority of patients seeking unanticipated care. Also, inpatient surgeries will be performed in the community or at another VA. There will be minimal impact as more than 95 percent of surgical procedures performed at the Erie VAMC are delivered in an outpatient setting.

The Erie VAMC continues to expand behavioral health services, telehealth services, home-based primary care, patient-aligned care teams within primary care, and health promotion and disease prevention. Many of these preventive and ambulatory care services are allowing Veterans, especially rural Veterans, to receive primary and specialty care closer to home and for many Veterans within their home.

The Erie VAMC is committed to those who served this great Nation and to that end, will always place Veterans needs at the forefront of facility decisions. The medical center remains a strong, high quality health care provider for local Veterans.

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