



Monthly Report from the Director



Scott R. Isaacks, FACHE
Medical Center Director

UPCOMING EVENTS

**Million Veteran Program
10,000 Participants Celebration**
Nov. 2, 11:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
VAMC Employee Picnic Area

Veterans Day Parade
Nov. 4, 2:00 p.m.
Downtown Charleston (Starts
at corner of Concord St. and
Market St.)

Veterans Day (Observed)
Nov. 12 – VA Facilities Closed

Thanksgiving Day
Nov. 22 – VA Facilities Closed

CHECK IT OUT!

2017 Annual
Report Video

High Reliability Organization

In 2013, as part of the South Carolina Safe Care Commitment, Ralph H. Johnson VA Medical Center, in partnership with the South Carolina Hospital Association (SCHA) and The Joint Commission, set out on a journey to become a High Reliability Organization (HRO). HROs are entities – such as health care facilities – that are involved in complex and high-risk environments and deliver exceptionally safe and consistently high-quality services and results over time. Our VA's goal for this initiative was to create and sustain a successful health care system where every Veteran patient receives high quality care in a safe environment every time with zero cases of preventable patient harm.

We realize that our employees on the front lines of health care are the experts when it comes to the day-to-day operations of this health care system. They see, better than anyone, where there is a potential for patient harm and that's why, over the past several years, we've made a concerted effort to engage our staff and empower them through numerous initiatives to report areas where they see room for improvement as we endeavor to provide the safest care to our Lowcountry heroes. We've also sought guidance from you, our Veterans, through focus groups, various surveying tactics and face-to-face interactions, to get a clear idea of what is working well and what needs some adjustment. I'm so proud that hundreds of our staff members became and remain actively involved in identifying innovative solutions through our Engage in Excellence process improvement teams and we're excited to build on this energy soon through our Operation Lasting Impression teams, which will help expand our focus toward ensuring we consistently provide you with excellent customer service in every interaction. Listening to your advice, and that of our employees at every level, and involving you in improvement decisions is the reason why we've risen to one of the highest-rated

VAs in the country. Our leadership team is committed to keeping these lines of communication open and hearing your ideas as we continue to sharpen our processes in the future.

As a High Reliability Organization, Ralph H. Johnson VAMC has:

- 1. Preoccupation with Failure:** Every employee at every level is aware of and thinking about how things might go wrong. Staff are constantly attentive and encouraged to evaluate processes, report near misses and develop and share best practices in regard to safety.
- 2. Sensitivity to Operations:** All staff pay close attention to what's happening on the front line and maintain awareness as to what is or isn't working. Employees have a clear understanding of the big picture and have access to leadership to share ideas for improvement.
- 3. Reluctance to Simplify:** Employees rarely accept simple explanations for problems and instead dig deeper to get to the core of the issue. Diversity of experience, perspective and opinion is encouraged.
- 4. Commitment to Resilience:** Our staff are relentless in their pursuit of ever-improved patient safety. When problems arise, every member of our team of almost 3,000 staff members responds quickly and finds new solutions – always keeping the health and well-being of our Veterans at the center of everything we do.
- 5. Deference to Expertise:** As those closest to our Veterans, our front-line employees are empowered as experts on patient safety concerns. Staff at all levels and across service-lines are engaged and encouraged to learn from one another.



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VA | Ralph H. Johnson
VA Medical Center



Monthly Report from the Director

Charleston VAMC was the first VA in the nation to formally pursue becoming an HRO and our efforts have earned us 14 SCHA Zero Harm awards over the past few years. Our facility is now being considered as one of a small number of VA pilot sites as VA as an agency also sets out to become a High Reliability Organization. Late this month, a workgroup from VA Central Office will visit our facility to see how Charleston VA has folded HRO tactics into our daily operations and discuss the road ahead. As we proceed on our journey, we'll continue talking about our challenges and working together to improve our processes and operations every day. Our goal is to be the safest place for you – our Veterans – to receive care and the safest place for our employees to work. Thank you for your partnership as we become the best VA we can be.

Contracts awarded for new Myrtle Beach VA Outpatient Clinic & Charleston Clinical Annex

I am very excited to announce that late last month, Ralph H. Johnson VA Medical Center was awarded two major leases that will expand access to care for Veterans in the Charleston and Myrtle Beach areas. These new leases will provide a Clinical Care Annex for outpatient services in the greater Charleston area and a new consolidated facility for outpatient care in Myrtle Beach. The planning for the new consolidated Myrtle Beach VA Outpatient Clinic, to be built at Howard Avenue and Airport Drive, and the Charleston Clinical Care Annex, that will be located at Rivers Avenue and Hanahan Road, is already moving forward at a rapid pace. The 75,000-square-foot Charleston

Clinical Care Annex will include primary care, dental services, mental health, radiology and select specialty care. The new 84,000-square-foot Myrtle Beach VA Outpatient Clinic will consolidate Myrtle Beach's current outpatient clinic and the Myrtle Beach Annex at Market Commons, offering primary care, mental health, tele-mental health, tele-health, dermatology, podiatry, physical therapy, occupational therapy, prosthetics, optometry, audiology, compensation and pension, blood collection, radiology and an optical shop. Early concept drawings provided by the contractor's development team include several features such as healing gardens, Veterans memorials, impressive building designs and ample parking. While there may be some minor modifications to the designs as we continue planning, these renderings are a good concept of what the new facilities will look like. We are working diligently to provide a welcoming environment that honors our Veteran patients, meets the needs of staff, and provides the latest technology and amenities at these locations. I look forward to sharing more information with you as these projects progress. Groundbreaking for both locations is expected in spring 2019.

Sincerely,

Scott R. Isaacks
Director & CEO

Myrtle Beach VA Outpatient Clinic



DEDICATION PLAZA



LONG BAY PLAZA



VETERANS GARDEN PLAZA



Charleston Clinical Annex



DEDICATION PLAZA



VETERANS HEALING GARDEN



CORNER POINT PLAZA



VETERANS MEMORIAL / "WALL OF HEROES"



BUS STOP

