



Northport

Veterans Health Care

Patient Services & Information





Welcome to the Northport VA Medical Center. We have provided this booklet for you and your family so you may become familiar with the services we offer. Inside, you will find important information about preventive health care, outpatient services, inpatient care, etc.

Whether you served us in war or in peacetime, on battlefields around the world, or in cities and towns closer to home, we work hard to provide you with the highest quality health care. Your satisfaction is a key measure of our success. At VA Health Care, we strive to provide you with outstanding services.

Our Mission

Honor America's Veterans by providing exceptional health care that improves their health and well-being.

Our Vision

Veterans Health Administration (VHA) will continue to be the benchmark of excellence and value in healthcare and benefits by providing exemplary services that are both patient-centered and evidence based.

This care will be delivered by engaged, collaborative teams in an integrated environment that supports learning, discovery and continuous improvement.

It will emphasize prevention and population health and contribute to the Nation's wellbeing through education, research and service in national emergencies.

I thank you for choosing Northport VAMC as your health care provider.

Philip Moschitta
Director

Table of Contents

About Northport VAMC	1	Health Care Information	
Care Services		Dual Care	12
PACT/Primary Care	2	Emergency Care	12
Mental Health	2	Nurse Care Line	12
Geriatrics	2	Health Care Programs	
Specialty and Inpatient Care	2	Move	13
Specialized Care Programs		Blood Donor Program	13
Caregiver Support	3	Preventive Health Care	13
Home Based Primary Care	3	For Your Safety	
Homeless Services	3	Cell Phones, Photography & Recordings	14
Residential PTSD	3	Fire/Disaster Drills	14
Suicide Prevention	4	Police	14
Telehealth	4	Prohibited Items	14
Mobile Outreach	4	Smoking	14
Women's Wellness Center	4	Safe Environment	14
Northport Facility and Clinics		Outpatient Information	
Mobile Outreach	4	Outpatient Visits	15
Community Based Outpatient Clinics	5	Care Decisions	
Vet Centers	5	Inpatient Visits	16
Facility Map/Parking	6	Advance Directives/Health Care Proxy	16
VA Shuttle	6	Advanced Illness/Palliative Care	16
Patient Services		Discharge Against Medical Advice	17
Agent Cashier	7	Consent for Treatment	17
Canteen Service	7	Do Not Resuscitate (DNR)	17
Patient Advocate	7	Ethics Advisory Committee	17
Business Office	8	Organ Donation	17
Central Intake	8	Continuing Care	
Customer Service/Billing	8	Community Home Health Services	18
Co-Payments	8	Home Delivered Meals	18
Beneficiary Travel	8	Hospital Based Primary Care (HBPC)	18
Health Insurance	8	Support Groups	18
Compliance & Business Integrity	8	Psychosocial Rehab Recovery Center (PRRC)	18
DAV Transportation	9	Adult Day Care Programs	18
HOPTel	9	Mental Health Care	18
Lost and found	9	Residential Care	18
Interpreter Services	9	Long Term Care	
Minority Veterans Program	9	Community Living Center	19
MyHealthVet	10	Geriatric Evaluation & Management (GEM)	19
Release of Information	10	Short Stay Unit (SSU)	19
Patient Education Resource Center	10	Palliative Care Unit	19
Prescriptions/Pharmacy/Refills	10	Respite Program	19
Pharmacy Call Center	10	Important Phone Numbers	Inside Back Cover
Visual Impairment Services	11		
Veterans Benefits Counselors	11		
Volunteers	11		
Additional Patient Services	11		

About

Northport VAMC

Northport VA Medical Center is a teaching center that offers a wide range of care services using state-of-the-art technology and provides comprehensive outpatient and inpatient health care with specialties in medicine, surgery, psychiatry, physical medicine and rehabilitation, neurology, oncology, dentistry, geriatrics, extended care, and more.

Northport VAMC will ensure quality care to all patients, regardless of race, origin, religion, gender, or social or personal characteristics. All patients and family members will receive all of their entitlements and will be treated with dignity and respect in all of our healthcare settings. Patient and family members are encouraged to comfortably provide any information relevant to their care, including information about sexual orientation and gender identity. Contact a member of your health care team if you need assistance.



Northport VAMC is affiliated with the State University (SUNY) at Stony Brook Medical School.



Our facility maintains fully integrated residency programs in general medicine and specialties in cardiology, endocrinology, hematology/oncology, pulmonary, nephrology, infectious disease, rheumatology, surgery and specialties of urology, orthopedic surgery, ophthalmology, podiatry, anesthesiology, dermatology, pathology and rehabilitation medicine.

Care Services

Mental Health Care Services

VA offers a variety of mental health care programs and services to help veterans work toward healthy and productive lives. Services include inpatient and/or outpatient:

- Individual psychotherapy
- Group therapy
- Couple's and family therapy
- Psychological and neuro-psychological testing
- Crisis intervention
- Case management
- Supportive therapy
- Weight management
- Stress management
- Medication management
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Alternative treatment for chronic pain
- Substance abuse programs
- Smoking cessation
- Suicide Crisis Program

PACT/Primary Care

Your health care team will arrange for outpatient care based on your specific needs. All patients are encouraged to enroll in primary care to benefit from a wide array of outpatient health services. Your care is coordinated in primary care, including referrals to specialists. Services include:

- Management of acute & chronic medical conditions
- Urgent Care
- Special medical exams (Agent Orange Registry, OEF/OIF/OND, former POW, Gulf War Veterans, Compensation & Pension)
- Geriatric evaluation and management
- Health promotion and disease prevention
- Outpatient services are available at community based outpatient clinics

Geriatrics and Extended Care Services

- Four Community Living Centers
- Palliative Care
- Respite Care
- Community Residential Care
- Homemaker / Home Health Aide
- Home Based Primary Care

Comprehensive Specialty and Inpatient Care

- Medicine
 - Allergy
 - Cardiology
 - Dermatology
 - Endocrinology
 - Gastroenterology
 - Hematology/Oncology
 - Infectious Disease
 - Nephrology
 - Pulmonary/Respiratory
 - Rheumatology
- Surgery
 - Ear, Nose & Throat/Head & Neck
 - Plastics
 - General Surgery
 - Thoracic
 - Ophthalmology
 - Urology
 - Orthopedics
- Acute Psychiatry
- Intensive Care



Specialized Care Programs

Caregiver Support Program

If you are caring for a veteran at home, we offer support, training, and referrals to VA and community services (home health aides, skilled nursing homecare, respite, adult day health care, home based primary care, contracted nursing facilities, support groups, eligibility and benefits).



Home Based Primary Care (HBPC)

HBPC is a special program that provides health care in the home. The program is for severely disabled patients with a chronic illness or who are terminally ill. Health care providers visit patients in their own home to deliver care. HBPC may also use technology to assist in providing at-home care. This secure, easy-to-use technology lets patients send daily progress reports to their VA care provider. Providers are able to work closely with the patient through interactive systems such as videophones, tele-monitoring devices, in-home messaging devices, telephone, etc. Ask a member of your health care team if you would benefit from HBPC.

Homeless Services Program

The Homeless Services Program at Northport VAMC is designed to help homeless veterans live as self-sufficiently and independently as possible. The program provides assistance to veterans who are homeless or at risk for homelessness. Help is available in finding emergency, transitional and permanent housing, applying for VA and non-VA benefits, obtaining employment, and accessing VA medical, mental health, and substance abuse treatment. Services include assessment of needs, client-centered treatment planning, case management, and referral to a wide variety of VA and community-based programs. Staff work with homeless veterans to develop and practice vocational skills, daily living skills, medication management, and interpersonal skills needed to maintain independent and successful living.

Residential PTSD Program

Offers comprehensive treatment aimed at resolution of war related problems, resumption of personal development, restoration of ability to deal with close relationships, social participation, employment and other aspects of productive living. This program also has a robust aftercare and outpatient component.

Northport VA Medical Center's Mobile Health Unit Outreach Program

Northport VA Medical Center's mobile health unit team offers a variety of programs such as hypertension screenings, diabetes education, and customized programs including an overview of VA's TeleHealth and My Health eVet programs. If you would like further information regarding this program or wish to include the mobile unit in your veteran-focused event for screenings, education, or other services please contact Community Relations at 631-261-4400 ext. 7239, Mon-Friday 8am-4:30pm.

Suicide Prevention Program

Educates providers and other VA staff, Veterans, volunteers, and the community about measures to prevent veteran suicide.



Nancy P. Olsen, LCSW
Suicide Prevention Coordinator
631-261-4400 ext. 2791

Help is only a phone call away

VA has a 24-hour National Crisis Line where you can get immediate understanding, compassion, and help from trained mental health professionals. Reach out and call 1-800-273-TALK (8255) for help.

Telehealth and TeleMental Health

Telehealth is the use of technologies to connect with veterans in their homes. Patients receive health education to manage chronic conditions including congestive heart failure, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, diabetes mellitus, hypertension, psychotherapy/counseling for psychosocial & mental health issues, PTSD, depression, etc.

There is also Clinic Video Telehealth, whereby VA uses interactive videoconferencing and attached peripheral medical technology (for example, a blood pressure cuff, stethoscope) to deliver care between hospitals and clinics.

Women's Wellness

Located in Building 200, Fourth Floor- Unit 44, the Women's Wellness Program provides comprehensive women's health and gynecology services. The program focuses on health promotion, disease prevention and management, reproductive health and behavioral health. The center is open Mon-Fri 7:30am-4:30pm, and offers evening clinic once per week. Please call 631-754-7978 to make an appointment.

Women's Wellness POINTS OF CONTACT

Women Veterans Program Manager
631-261-4400 ext.5793

Military Sexual Trauma Coordinator
631-216-4400 ext. 7012

Mammography Coordinator
631-261-4400 ext. 2307

OIF/OEF/OND Program Manager
631-261-4400 ext. 2173
631-774-1707

Northport Clinics

- Access Care Center
- Acupuncture
- Allergy
- Ambulatory Surgery
- Audiology/Speech Pathology
- Cardiology
- Cardiopulmonary Rehabilitation
- Coumadin
- Dental Services
- Dermatology
- Diabetes Education
- Dialysis
- Ear Irrigation
- Ear, Nose & Throat
- Endocrinology
- Gastroenterology
- General Surgery
- Geriatric
- Gynecology
- Head/Neck
- Health Screening
- Hematology/Oncology
- Infectious Disease
- Kinesiotherapy
- Mental Health
- MOVE weight loss program
- Nephrology
- Neurology
- Nuclear Medicine
- Nutrition
- Occupational Therapy
- OIF/OEF/OND
- Ophthalmology
- Optometry
- Orthopedic
- Primary Care/PACT
- Pain Relief
- Phototherapy
- Physical Therapy
- Pulmonary
- Plastic Surgery
- Podiatry
- Proctology
- Prosthetics
- Radiology
- Rheumatology
- Smoking Cessation
- Thoracic
- Urology
- Vascular
- Women's Wellness

Northport in the Community

Community Based Outpatient Clinics



Riverhead
300 Center Drive,
Griffing Building
Riverhead, NY 11901

Patchogue
4 Phyllis Drive
Patchogue, NY 11772

Bay Shore
132 East Main Street
Bay Shore, NY 11706

East Meadow
2201 Hempstead Turnpike
Building "Q"
East Meadow, NY 11554

Valley Stream
99 South Central Avenue
Valley Stream NY 11580

For more information call
631-754-7978 for Primary Care
631-266-6077 for Mental Health

Vet Centers

The goal of the Vet Center program is to welcome home and honor war veterans by providing quality readjustment counseling in a caring manner. Vet Centers provide a broad range of counseling, outreach, and referral services to eligible veterans in order to help them make a satisfying post-war readjustment to civilian life. Vet Centers are located at the following locations in Nassau/Suffolk:

Babylon Vet Center
116 West Main St.
Babylon, NY 11702

Phone: 631-661-3930 Or 631-661-3930

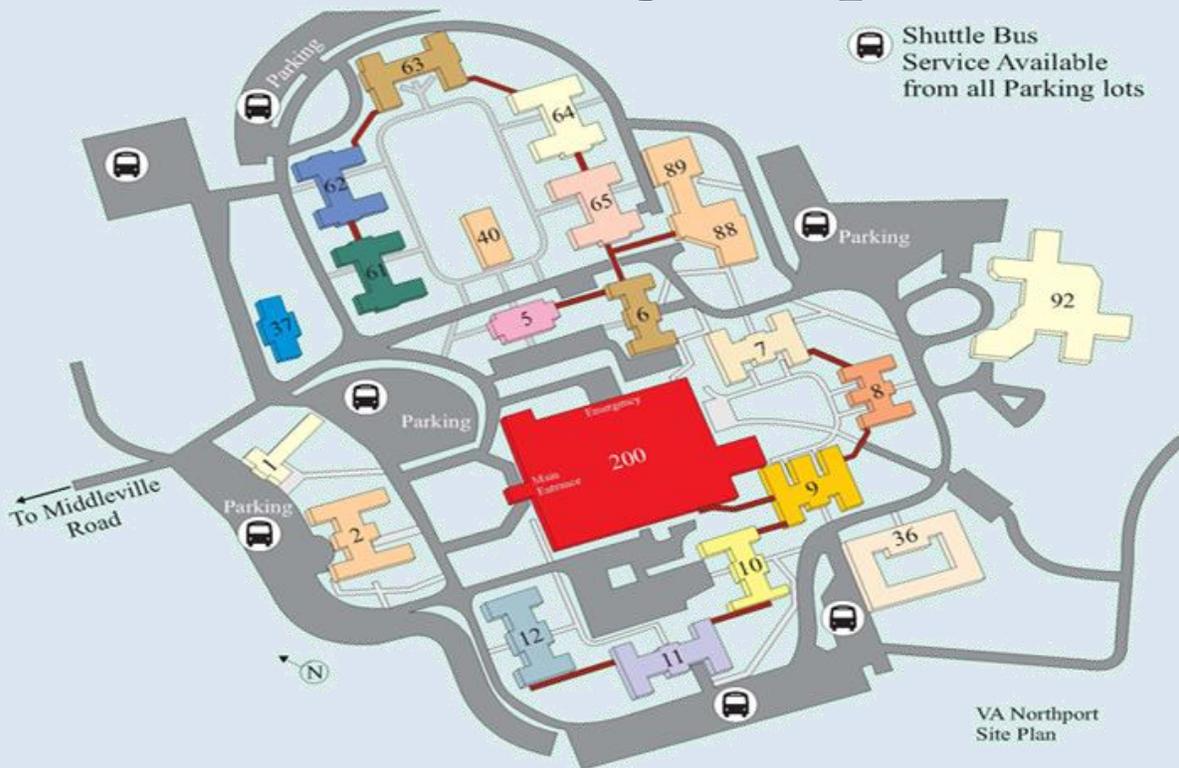
Nassau Vet Center
970 South Broadway
Hicksville, NY 11801

Phone: 516-348-0088 Or 877-927-8387

To speak confidentially with a Vet Center Counselor at any time around the clock call:

877-WAR-VETS (927-8387)

VAMC Northport Facility Map



Parking

Free parking is available to all patients, visitors and staff of the Northport VA Medical Center. All patients, visitors, employees and vendors must show appropriate identification at the Police checkpoint in order to enter the VAMC grounds. Those driving on Medical Center grounds must observe the posted speed limits and parking signs. Parking space is limited and patient cars cannot be left during hospitalization. Since overnight parking cannot be accommodated, patients must arrange to have a relative or friend remove their vehicles. Visitors must park in designated areas and during visiting hours only. Please do not park in spaces reserved for handicapped persons without a permit. Persons who operate or park cars in violation of these regulations are subject to U.S. Court Violation notice and a fine. Handicapped parking is available throughout the facility grounds. Free parking is available at our outpatient clinics.

VA Shuttle

A wheelchair-lift equipped Veteran Shuttle, staffed by volunteer veterans will transport anyone to and from Medical Center parking lots and buildings. This van circles the campus Monday – Friday from 8:30 AM to 3:15 PM, and can be signaled in transit or reached by pager 226. A staff member can assist you to call the shuttle.

Patient Services



Agent Cashier

The Agent Cashier is available to veterans wishing to make co-payments.

PatriotCafé Hours

Monday - Friday
7:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
closed on weekends and
holidays

PatriotBrew Hours

Monday - Friday
7:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
closed on weekends and
holidays

PatriotStore Hours

Monday - Friday
7:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Sat & Sun 8:00 a.m.-1:00p.m.

PatriotCafé

Visitors are welcome to eat in the medical center PatriotCafé, which is located on the lower level of Building 200. We offer hot and cold entrees, beverages and desserts. Vending machines are also available for your convenience 24 hours a day. Vending areas are located in Building 200 on the lower level, on the 1st floor by the ER entrance, and on the 3rd floor.

Inpatients may visit the PatriotCafe only after receiving permission from the nurse. Any food purchased at the cafeteria or from vending machines should be in line with your prescribed diet and with the knowledge of your doctor. Eating

PatriotBrew

Our PatriotBrew is located in the Primary/Specialty Care Pavilion Lobby. Visitors may select from a variety of coffees, juices and pastries.

PatriotStore

We offer a full-service retail store with such products as electronics, cosmetics, toiletries and clothing. Items may be purchased tax-free. The retail store is open to patients, staff and caregivers, and is located in the lower level of the Primary/Specialty Care Pavilion

Patient Advocate

The Medical Center recognizes the basic rights of patients and families. In support of these rights, the facility maintains a patient advocacy program. The Patient Advocates are available at extensions 5326 or 7009, Monday through Friday from 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM. During evenings, nights and weekends, all concerns should be directed to the supervisor of the immediate area. In the event that further assistance is needed and the concern cannot wait until the next business day, please contact the Administrative Officer of the Day (AOD) through the Admissions area, Building 200, ext. 2655.

Business Office

The Business Office provides one-stop assistance to veterans who need to update insurance or personal contact information, complete a financial assessment, ask billing questions, or need help with enrollment and eligibility questions.



Central Intake

To update your address, insurance or financial information:

In person: Building 200, First floor Admissions area

Phone: (631) 261-4400 ext. 2661

CPAC Customer Service Options

If you have a question about a bill you received for medical care/services the following options are available:

In-Person: Building 200, Rm B1-7 1st Floor (next to the co-pay teller)

Monday to Friday, from 8:00 AM – 4:30 PM

By Phone: Call the Health Resource Center (HRC) toll free at 1-888-440-9587

Beneficiary Travel

Certain eligible veterans can receive reimbursement for travel to the VAMC and community clinics. Beneficiary travel requests(that do not require receipt submission) may be submitted on any kiosk. For more information, visit the travel office in the lower level of Bld. 200

Co-Payments and Health Insurance

Public Law 99-272 requires VA to charge certain categories of Veterans for treatment and care of their non-service connected conditions. This includes co-payments for prescriptions, outpatient, inpatient and community living center care. If the veteran is covered by medical insurance, by law, VA must seek reimbursement from third party payers (insurance companies) for his/her non-service connected care. Co-payments are assessed to certain veterans based on income and eligibility. Payment received from private insurance is applied to VA co-payment charges. For more information visit Central Intake.

Compliance and Business Integrity Program

Compliance is an ongoing effort to adhere to federal, state & healthcare system regulations. It is designed to detect, prevent and correct violations of law or medical center policy and minimize organizational risk. Compliance is about doing the right thing. The Compliance Program oversees business processes such as intake and billing for copayments or third party insurance. If you become aware of an issue or conduct that you believe is reportable under the Compliance and Business Integrity Program, or if you have a question regarding any past, present, or future conduct, several resources are available to you: Contact the Compliance Officer at (631) 261-4400, ext. 5911 or ext. 5912, or contact the VHA National CBI Helpline at 1-866-842-4357. You may remain anonymous when reporting a compliance issue.

Patient Services

Disabled American Veterans (DAV) Transportation

DAV Transportation at Northport is a volunteer service provided by veterans for veterans. The DAV office is located in Building 200, Room B1-36. Any veteran requesting DAV transport should call (631) 754-7980. Transportation is provided for morning clinic appointments only. The DAV Transportation Coordinator will determine eligibility and availability of transportation. Since space is limited, you must be scheduled at least two weeks in advance. Please call if you have any questions. Volunteer drivers are always needed. Please consider helping other veterans by volunteering to drive a van!

HOPTEL

Overnight lodging is available to eligible Veterans and their adult family members on a first-come first-served basis. HOPTEL provides temporary lodging for patients receiving time-limited outpatient care **and** who have a travel hardship. Occupancy is limited to a few nights, except for patients receiving some types of long-term outpatient care, such as radiation therapy. VA does not provide medical, nursing or other clinical support to patients in the HOPTEL; Therefore, Veterans and their private caregivers must be able to take care of all personal needs, including medications from home. In times of serious illness, family members of hospitalized veterans may use the lodging services to be near their loved one. All Veterans and their caregivers must be screened and referred by a VAMC healthcare provider. If you have any questions about HOPTEL, please contact your clinic or program social worker or call (631) 261-4400 ext. 7029, Monday to Friday, from 8:00 AM – 4:30 PM.

Interpreter Services

Interpreter services are available for deaf, speech impaired, and non-English speaking veterans and their family members. Please contact your health care team or the Patient Advocate to arrange for interpreter assistance.

Lost and Found

If you lose any personal items while at the VA facility, tell your health care team. If needed, contact VA police. Please take any items you find while at the facility to your health care team or VA police. You may also call our Lost and Found office at 631-261-4400, ext. 2655/2661, Monday to Friday, from 8:00 AM – 4:30 PM.

Minority Veterans Program

Northport VAMC will ensure quality care to all patients regardless of race, origin, religion, gender, or regardless of social or personal characteristics. All patients and family members will receive all of their benefits and services, and will be treated with dignity and respect in all our healthcare settings. Patient and family members are encouraged to feel comfortable providing any information relevant to their care, including information about sexual orientation and gender identity. Contact a member of your health care team if you need assistance.



Myhealth eVet

Myhealth eVet is an internet resource designed to help veterans and their families find health information, maintain their own health records, and refill VA prescriptions. Myhealth eVet helps veterans partner with their health care team, and provides opportunities and tools that help you to make informed decisions.

Visit us at <http://www.myhealth.va.gov>



Patient Education Resource Center (Library)

Library services are available for inpatients, outpatients, and their families in a quiet, pleasant, modern library, located in building 12. Wireless internet access is available in the medical library for use on computer laptops. In addition, there is a computer dedicated to Myhealth eVet for you to access your personal health record. General reading material (books and magazines) are also available. The librarian can provide additional information and assistance on your diagnosis or medications which could be emailed or mailed to your home.

Prescriptions/Pharmacy

As a veteran enrolled in VA Health Care, you are eligible for prescription medications. You may be required to make a co-payment for prescriptions not related to a service-connected condition. VA prescriptions must be written by a VA provider and filled at a VA pharmacy. VA health care providers will work with your private physician to provide you with continuity of care. It is important for you to supply your VA provider with your medical records from your private physician.

Prescription Refills

Refills are processed through the mail and not for pickup at the pharmacy window. They should be requested at least three weeks before you run out of medication. This will allow ample time for processing and delivery. Please be sure to keep VA informed of any changes in your address that would result in your medications being delayed or shipped incorrectly.

New York/New Jersey Pharmacy Call Center

The Pharmacy Call Center staff is here to help you with refills, renewals, medication tracking, and verification of prescription information. It is open Monday through Friday, excluding Federal holidays, from 8:00 AM to 4:15 PM. For your convenience, an automated refill option is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Veterans may reach the Pharmacy Call Center by dialing 1-800-799-3023 or 631-863-4826. You may also request refills or ask pharmacy related questions on your personal computer by using Myhealth eVet at <https://www.myhealth.va.gov/index.html>.

Release of Information

If you need copies of your medical record, lab results, X-rays, disability and/or insurance forms, etc. contact Release of Information (ROI), located on the first floor of Building 200 in room B1-7F. Prior to releasing any information, you will need to sign a consent form allowing us to copy and release your medical records. For more information, call (631) 261-4400, ext. 2639.

Patient Services

Visual Impairment Services

The Visual Impairment Service Team (VIST) assists veterans to obtain health and rehabilitation services that can help with coping and adjusting to vision loss. For more information, please call the VIST Coordinator at ext. 2350.

Veterans Benefits Counselors

Veterans Benefits Counselors can help you with your VA benefits (compensation, pension, government insurance, education, GI loans, vocational rehabilitation, etc.) questions. If you need information or assistance, contact Veterans Benefits at the national toll free number at 1-800-827-1000.

Volunteers

Our voluntary service program provides opportunities for individuals and community groups to give of their time and resources. Volunteers often assist with special events, activities, clerical tasks, and transporting patients to appointments. The Voluntary Service office is located in Building 9, first floor. If you require any information regarding voluntary service programs, or making donations, please contact Voluntary Service at ext. 7182 or 7183

Additional Patient Services

- Imaging Services: X-Ray, MRI, Linear Accelerator, CT
- Laboratory
- In and outpatient Pharmacies
- Recreational Programs/Events
- Pool and Gymnasium
- Veteran Child Day Care (VA Kids Care)

Health Care Information

Dual Care

If you are receiving care from both a VA provider and a private community provider, it is important for your health and safety that your care be coordinated into one treatment plan. Your VA and private community providers should communicate about your health status, medications, treatments, and diagnostic tests.

In order to facilitate this, you need to supply your VA provider the following information about your private community provider's care—especially if you want your VA provider to write a prescription for medication that your non-VA provider recommends:

- ◊Name, address and phone number of your community provider
- ◊Any prescriptions(s) written by your community provider
- ◊Office visit notes supporting the prescription(s)
- ◊Blood work results
- ◊Test results

This information should be brought with you to your VA appointment. If you have any questions, call your VA health care provider prior to coming in for your visit to make sure you have the proper information. Please understand that it is the responsibility of your VA provider to use their own clinical judgment to decide what medical treatments, prescriptions and tests are appropriate and needed.

Emergency Care

Call 911 with sudden difficulty breathing, severe bleeding, chest pain, seizures, deep cuts, broken bones, poisoning from chemicals, a drug overdose or sudden severe headache.

If you have the warning signs of heart attack or stroke or other potentially serious symptoms, call 911 and tell the ambulance driver that you have chest pain or signs of a stroke. Driving yourself to the hospital or driving farther to the VA can delay care! It's too dangerous for you and other drivers.

Emergency care is available at the Northport VA Medical Center. If you cannot wait for your next clinic appointment because of a serious health condition, the Emergency Room (ER) (Building 200) is open 24 hours. However, if possible, we encourage you to contact your PACT team before going to the ER for urgent care needs.

Nurse Care Line 1-800-877-6976

The VA New York/New Jersey Veterans Healthcare Network Telephone Care Program is a network-wide initiative to increase access to care for veterans served in the New York/New Jersey area. Veterans are to call their clinics during the administrative work week Monday-Friday, from 8:00am to 4:30pm, excluding National Holidays.

After 4:30pm and on weekends and Federal Holidays, veterans, their families and significant others are able to contact an experienced and knowledgeable registered professional nurse by calling 1-800-877-6976.

Our triage nurses provide both medical and emotional support. They can help with a wide variety of problems and/or concerns that can include, but are not limited to, the following:

- symptom analysis
- first aid procedures
- stress/anxiety
- medication questions
- lab test results
- patient education concerning specific disease entities, such as diabetes, high blood pressure or high cholesterol
- preparation for certain procedures
- check appointments
- caregiver support

DO NOT CALL the VA Nurse Helpline for an emergency.

If you, or the party of concern, have chest pain, difficulty breathing, loss of consciousness, severe bleeding or injury, poison ingestion, seizure, loss of vision or any other life threatening problem, **CALL 911 IMMEDIATELY.**

When you call the VA Nurse's HELPLINE, we will need to ask you some questions to determine what your needs are. Below are the questions and procedures you will encounter on a typical call:

Caller identification

- What is your name and what is the last 4 numbers of your Social Security Number?
- Which VA Medical Center do you usually go to for medical attention?
- What is the reason for calling the HELPLINE?

Review records on computer

- Nurse asks a series of questions and makes decisions

Intervention

The Nurse will advise you to either

- call 911
- go to the Emergency Room
- call for a clinic appointment
- give you home care instructions and to see your doctor at next scheduled appointment

The phone call is documented in your medical record and all clinical calls are forwarded to your provider.



Health Care Programs



Preventive Healthcare

Prevention is the best medicine. As your health care provider, we are very interested in your health and well-being. Please partner with us by staying up-to-date on your health care screening exams, tests, and lab work. Together we can help insure a better quality of life for you in the future.

Blood Donor Program

If you are having surgery at the VA medical center, you may be able to pre-donate your own blood for the procedure. This will be discussed at your pre-surgical visit. You will be sent to Long Island Blood Services (LIBS) in Westbury for the donation. Your physician and LIBS will coordinate the donation dates and surgical dates. If you have questions about blood donation, speak with your health care team.



MOVE! (Managing Overweight/Obesity for Veterans Everywhere), is a national weight management program designed by VA's National Center for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention (NCP), a part of the Office of Patient Care Services to help veterans lose weight, keep it off, and improve their health. The MOVE! Program is designed for veterans who want assistance with managing their weight. Typically, the program is offered to veterans who are overweight or obese. The program combines nutritional counseling with exercise and ongoing support. It assesses a veteran's personal eating habits, physical activity and behavioral health. Most important, MOVE! addresses a patient's medical conditions to develop a safe and helpful program. Talk with your health care team about MOVE!.



For your Safety

Fire/Disaster Drills

For the protection of patients and staff, each medical center has its own fire and disaster plan. If you discover a fire, tell a staff member right away. If you are in an area that needs to be evacuated, follow the instructions from the staff. Signs show the location of emergency exits. Do not use elevators! Fire alarms are near each exit.

Smoking

Northport VA Medical Center is going smoke-free. Staff, visitors, volunteers, and patients may not smoke anywhere indoors or within 35 feet of any exits/entranceways. Please be considerate of non-smokers and only smoke outside in designated areas. VA police may issue fines if the smoking policy is not obeyed. This may be a good time to quit smoking, so call extension 6797 and ask about our Smoking Cessation Clinic.

Police

Our medical center has federal police officers on duty 24 hours/day for your well-being and protection. If you need assistance, or your family/friends need an escort to their cars after nightfall, contact VA police by dialing the telephone operator (0).

Cell Phones, Cameras, Video, Tape Recorders

For reasons of patient privacy, all photography and audio or video recording is prohibited. Patients and visitors should not bring cameras, video equipment, tape recorders, and cellular phones to patient care areas of the medical center. If your family or friends wish to bring in one of these items, special arrangements can be made with your health care team in collaboration with the Public Affairs Officer. Cellular phone usage is limited to non-patient care areas, and should never be used within six feet of any medical equipment in any area of the Medical Center.

Safe Environment

To maintain a safe environment for patients, staff, visitors, and volunteers, our Medical Center has a zero tolerance for violence. Behavior that is disruptive, threatening or violent will result in immediate action.

Prohibited Items

Persons on the grounds of this Medical Center are not permitted to have alcoholic beverages, narcotics, firearms, ammunition, knives, other weapons, lighter fluid, non-safety matches, or straightedge razors. If anyone is in possession of these items, he or she may be subject to arrest.

Outpatient Information

The purpose of your Outpatient visit is to

- Receive a complete physical examination along with a comprehensive assessment of your health status, medical history, life style, etc.
- Receive consultations with other physicians, or health care providers, depending on your needs.
- Develop a treatment plan based on your examination and assessment. This plan will be developed and discussed with you and will address acute and chronic problems and risk factors.
- Receive referrals to health promotion/disease prevention classes such as managing diabetes, weight reduction, stop smoking, and stress management.
- Receive prevention screening for blood pressure, cholesterol, diabetes, etc., and evaluation and counseling on diet and exercise.

Outpatient visits are pre-scheduled clinic appointments. You should make every effort to keep your scheduled appointment time. If you must reschedule your appointment, please call as soon as possible so we can fill that appointment slot with another patient.

Before Your Appointment

- Complete all the paperwork that is given to you or mailed to you.
- Think about what you want to know about your health. Write down the questions you want to ask.
- List one or two of your most pressing concerns.

At the Appointment

If you think you might have trouble understanding or hearing, consider bringing a relative or friend to help you ask questions. Repeat what the provider says to you in your own words to be sure you understand. Keep the conversation on track. Focus on the questions that matter to you. Tell the provider if you don't understand. It's okay to say, "wait a minute, I don't get it," or to ask what a word means.

The Day of Your Appointment

Follow any instructions you are given—especially if you are told not to eat or drink before your appointment. Bring a list of all your medications, including any herbs and nutritional supplements you may be taking. Include the name, strength or dose amount, and number of pills you take each time and what time(s) of day you take them. Bring any logs, diaries or records of your symptoms that you have kept. Wear clothing that is easy to take off and put on. Be on time and be sure to check in. Remember to bring/wear your glasses and/or hearing aid(s).

Closing the Visit

What is the next step in your care? Let the provider know if you cannot or will not do what is suggested. Ask for written information about your medication(s), condition, illness and treatment. Make sure you know exactly how to take your medication(s), including the time of day you should take it/them. Make sure you know who to call if you have questions or concerns.

Don't leave without understanding what to do to be as healthy as possible.



Inpatient Visits

Should you have the need to be admitted for a short visit, you will be given an Inpatient Handbook that was developed to provide you with all the necessary information you may need during your stay.



Care Decisions

Advance Directives/Health Care Proxy

An Advance Directive is a legal document comprised of a Health Care Proxy and/or Living Will that allows you to decide what health care treatment you want to receive if you become too ill or unable to communicate for yourself. The Health Care Proxy form allows you to name a health care agent/health care proxy to make health care decisions for you. Your agent/proxy should know your health care wishes and values. The Living Will allows you to state in writing what kind of treatment you want to receive if you become ill and unable to make your wishes known. If you have no Living Will, this decision will be based on what your health care agent/proxy or family knows about you.

A Mental Health Advance Directive is for patients whose future decision-making capacity may be at risk due to a mental illness. In this directive, you are able to indicate preferences about future mental health care and treatment choices.

If you would like to complete a Health Care Proxy, Living Will, or Mental Health Preferences Worksheet, your VA social worker can assist you. If you already have a Health Care Proxy, Living Will, Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care, or Mental Health Preferences Worksheet, please tell our staff and provide us with a copy for your record. If you have an Advance Directive and you wish to change your mind, please tell our staff right away. You do not have to complete an Advance Directive to receive treatment.

Advanced Illness and Palliative Care

Facing an illness that is not getting better and cannot be cured can be difficult. You may have many questions about your illness and the choices you must make. A member of the Palliative Care Consultation Team can help you obtain information, offer support and guidance, help with choices, coordinate your care, work with your health care team, and help you and your loved ones deal with issues of advanced illness. Ask a member of the health care team to contact them for you.

Discharge Against Medical Advice (AMA)

Patients have the right to request to leave the Medical Center against doctor's advice. If you choose to leave before your treatment is complete, your treatment team will ensure that you are provided and fully understand the information needed to make this decision, and advise you of the risks you are taking by leaving. In circumstances where a person lacks the mental capacity to make decisions, the team will involve the health care proxy or next of kin to assist. Your treatment team is here to help you. Please tell your doctor, nurse, or social worker if you are thinking about leaving before you finish treatment so your concerns can be addressed. Please do not leave without alerting a staff member; patients who do are treated as missing and a search is initiated by the nursing staff and the police. The staff is concerned for your well-being and wants to partner with you in making the safest discharge plan possible.

Consent for Treatment

You have the right to be informed about, and to accept or refuse, any medical treatment or procedure. Be sure that you understand what the consent says. Do not hesitate to ask questions until you feel comfortable about what you are signing. If you do not understand it, ask someone to explain it to you. Do not assume that the staff knows what is best for you. Make sure that you know what you are agreeing to! Tell your doctor who your health care proxy is, in the event that you cannot make a decision for yourself. Make sure that this person understands your wishes.

Do Not Resuscitate (DNR)

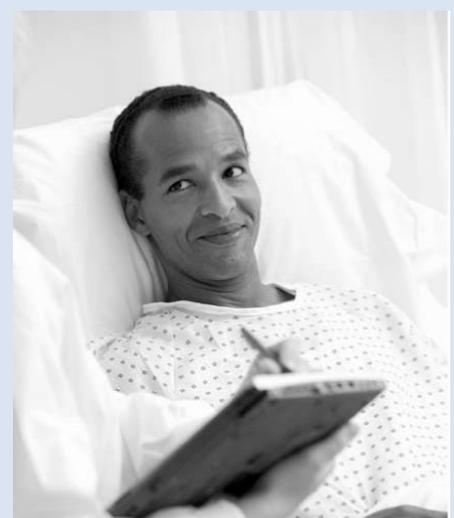
DNR means cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and/or other heroic health or life saving measures will not be started when cardiac or respiratory arrest occurs. After talking with your doctor, you can make the DNR decision. If you are too ill to make that decision, your family, or health care proxy/power of attorney can make that decision with your doctor. The order is not permanent and may be stopped at any time. You will also be asked if you want to carry this DNR request to your home or another healthcare facility, also known as an Out of Hospital DNR. If you agree to an Out of Hospital DNR, a DNR bracelet will be issued from Pharmacy at discharge.

Ethics Advisory Committee

The Ethics Advisory Committee is a group of VA staff who can provide guidance if you are having trouble making choices about your care (i.e. performing heroic measures at the end-of-life, feeding tube, etc.). If you or your family have questions about the ethics of any treatment or other issues, talk to your health care team. If you still have concerns, you may ask for a review of those issues with the Ethics Advisory Committee. To request this review, ask your health care team for a referral.

Organ Donation

Veterans can make organ, eye, tissue, body, and other anatomical gifts. Talk to your family members about organ and tissue donation so they know your wishes. Donations will always be handled with discretion and sensitivity to you and your family's circumstances, beliefs, and desires. Under no circumstances will a patient or family member be pressured into making anatomical gifts. Speak with your social worker for more information and to complete the necessary forms.



Continuing Care

Veterans often require some on-going care when they leave the hospital. Your needs upon leaving the hospital will depend on the severity and type of illness for which you were hospitalized and who is available and able to care for you. Available services include:

- **Community Home Health Services** include community and private programs that offer medical, nursing, personal assistance and follow-up care in the home. VA or Medicare/Medicaid or other third party insurance may pay for these services depending upon the coverage and criteria for either skilled or non-skilled home care.
- **Home Delivered Meals** can be provided by a social service agency or community group if you cannot cook for yourself.
- **Hospital Based Primary Care (HBPC)** is a VA program providing medical and related health care supervision to support patients in their homes. To be eligible for this program, you must have a caregiver or can independently arrange care, and be essentially homebound.
- **Support Groups** Northport VAMC offer a wide range of assistance for veterans and their families. Support groups may also be found in the community. Your social worker can assist you with referrals.
- **Psychosocial Rehabilitation Recovery Center (PRRC):** The PRRC is a large outpatient mental health program, accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) and The Joint Commission. It provides a supportive environment where veterans can develop the skills and confidence necessary to live satisfying lives and function successfully in the community. Therapeutic activities include peer support services, group therapy, psycho-educational programs, skills training groups, socialization, recreation, and self help activities.
- **Adult Day Care Programs** are community-based and provide a range of supervised activities including social, recreational and physical programs for the elderly. Veterans who continue to meet eligibility criteria (need for significant personal care services, need for skilled nursing services such as wound care, physical therapy, bowel and bladder care, etc) may receive VA-paid ADHC services. Non service-connected veterans and non-compensable zero percent service-connected veterans may be subject to co-payments when the placement is paid by the VA contract.
- **Mental Health Care** Northport VAMC provides a range of services and programs to assist veterans and their families with specialized assistance to cope effectively with emotional and psychological problems. These programs include Outpatient Mental Health Clinic, PTSD Recovery Center, Substance Abuse Treatment Services, Dual-diagnosis Recovery Center, Inpatient Acute care, Emergency/Crisis Stabilization, Psychosocial Rehabilitation and Recovery Program, Community Case Management, Health Psychology, Sexual Trauma Services, and the L.I. Vet Center.
- **Residential care** If you are unable to return to your home due to physical limitations or psychiatric disability and you have no available social supports, placement in a community adult home/assisted living facility may be appropriate for you. Veterans use their own funds to pay for these placements. Veterans with insufficient funds may be eligible for Social Security.

Long Term Care

Community Living Center

The Community Living Center is a skilled nursing facility located at this VA Medical Center providing transitional, rehabilitative, palliative, and post-surgical or restorative care. The purpose of the Community Living Center is to provide compassionate and expert care to restore and preserve the health of the veteran. The interdisciplinary team will develop a treatment plan with the veteran and his/her family. This plan is flexible and will change with the patient's changing needs. Veterans must meet VA eligibility criteria and demonstrate clinical need for this service.

The Geriatric Evaluation and Management Program (GEM)

The GEM program utilizes an interdisciplinary approach to evaluate and treat problems of the elderly. Its goals are to improve the veteran's level of physical and psychological function and to find and treat previously undetected problems. The veteran must have the mental capacity to learn new skills. Emphasis is placed on meeting all the veteran's needs and discharging patients to home. The usual length of stay on the GEM unit is four weeks or less.

Short Stay Unit (SSU)

The Short Stay Unit program uses an interdisciplinary approach to the treatment of the elderly. Its goals are to improve the veteran's level of function, to complete initiated treatment, and to implement the discharge plan. Emphasis is on discharging patients to home or a facility other than a Skilled Nursing Facility (SNF). The usual length of stay on the Short Stay Unit is less than 60 days.

Palliative Care Unit

The Palliative Care program provides terminally ill patients who have completed desired and definitive treatment, with a supporting, understanding, and sustaining setting. Its goal is to help patients to live free from pain and symptoms.

Respite Program

The Respite program provides chronically ill veterans with short-term stays in the VA community living center (CLC) in order to support and relieve their caregivers and help the veteran to continue to live at home. Contact your Primary Care team's Social Worker for details.

With the exception of Palliative Care, all patients must meet the VA eligibility criteria for long term care and will be assessed regarding LTC co-payments prior to evaluation for the program.



Important Phone Numbers

Medical Center Operator	(631) 261-4400, Ext 0
Admissions Office	(631) 261-4400, Ext 2661
Appointments/ Clinic Scheduling.....	(631) 754-7978
Central Intake (update Address/Insurance/Financial info)..	(631) 261-4400, Ext 2661/2658
Chaplaincy.....	(631) 261-4400, Ext 7194
Compliance and Business Integrity.....	(631) 261-4400, Ext 5911 or 5912
Registration/Eligibility	(631) 261-4400, Ext 2657/2659/2660
Library	(631) 261-4400, Ext 2966
Lost and Found	(631) 261-4400, Ext 2655/2661
Nutrition Outpatient Clinic.....	(631) 261-4400, Ext 7472
OEF/OIF/OND	(631) 261-4400, Ext 2173/2051
Patient Advocate Office.....	(631) 261-4400, Ext 5326/7009
Public Affairs Office	(631) 261-4400, Ext 7749
Release of Information	(631) 261-4400, Ext 2639/2635/2637
Social Work Department.....	(631) 261-4400, Ext 7194
VA Police (For general assistance).....	(631) 261-4400, Ext 7187
Women’s Wellness Program	(631) 261-4400, Ext 5779

Other Emergency Contact Numbers

Poison Control

1-800-222-1222 212-689-9014 (TTY)

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)

1-800-621-3362 1-800-462-7585 (TTY)

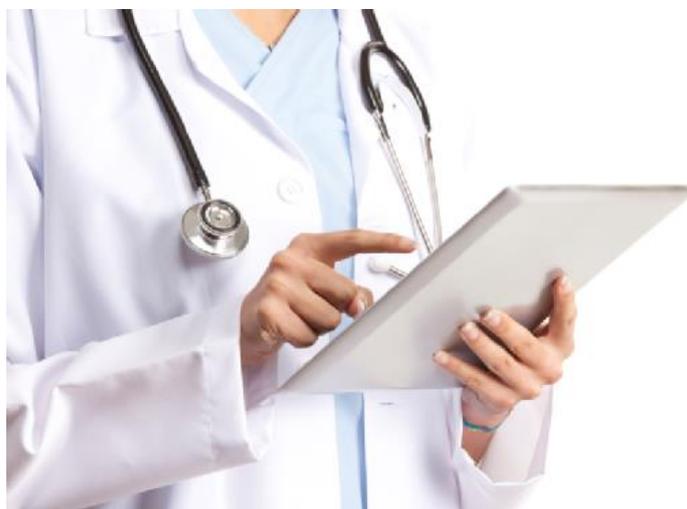
American Red Cross

516-747-3500 Press 1 (800)220-4095 (TTY)

Local Community Emergency

911 7-1-1 (TTY, NY residents only)

.....
This handbook provides basic information to help you and your family participate in your care and recovery. The information contained in this booklet is provided solely for general guidance purposes. Your individual eligibility for programs or services may vary, so please speak with a VA eligibility specialist.



Visit these VA Websites

Northport VAMC	http://www.northport.va.gov
VISN 3	http://www.nynj.va.gov
National VHA	http://www.va.gov
MyHealtheVet	https://www.myhealth.va.gov