

THE KEYS TO EXCEPTIONAL CARE

VA Pittsburgh Healthcare System
2009 Annual Report





INNOVATION MOMENTUM CONNECTION COMMITMENT

To all our partners

As you flip through this publication, you will see that we have divided our annual report into four distinct categories this year.

Innovation, Momentum, Connection, Commitment.

These four simple words might not take up a lot of space on this page, but they speak volumes about how our health care system excelled in 2009.

I like to call them our “keys to exceptional care,” and I am happy to report that they add up to one very extraordinary year.

For starters, in 2009, we embraced **innovation** (page 4), which drove us to ask questions and seek answers.

We also gained **momentum** (page 8), which helped to energize us and prepare us for tomorrow’s challenges and triumphs.

Then there’s **connection** (page 12); we spent the last year reaching out and building stronger, smarter relationships along the way.

Finally, we honored an important **commitment** to others (page 16).

Here at VA Pittsburgh, our grandest goals always boil down to one, noble function: to serve Veterans. I am pleased to say that we performed this service in 2009 with great warmth, responsibility and reverence.

So—please—take a big breath, flip the page and read away. I am certain that you will share in my awe at what we’ve accomplished in just 12 short months...and we are just warming up! I have said it before and I will say it again—I am very proud to be the director of this health care system.

Thank you all for another wonderful year, and here’s to an equally successful and satisfying 2010.

Sincerely,

Terry Gerigk Wolf, FACHE
Director and Chief Executive Officer
VA Pittsburgh Healthcare System





INNOVATION

*“If everybody **is thinking alike**, then somebody isn’t thinking.”* GEN. GEORGES. PATTON JR.

In this past year, VAPHS led a drive to revolutionize the health care industry—and, wow, did we succeed. Our staff thought outside the box. We developed avant-garde technologies. We reinvented the wheel with old-fashioned, unfussy elbow grease. All in all, we changed the way that people practice medicine. Read on to learn some of the many ways that VA Pittsburgh pushed the creative clinical envelope in 2009.



OUR TEAM SET OUT TO EMPOWER
NURSES TO TAKE CHARGE OF GLYCEMIC
MANAGEMENT WITHOUT DIRECT
PHYSICIAN INPUT...AND WE SUCCEEDED.

NURSE CANDACE CUNNINGHAM

A 2009 INNOVATION HIGHLIGHT

Pittsburgh: The New Silicon Valley?

In 2009, a small team of employees at VA Pittsburgh developed and piloted a new type of medical software called Glycemic Expert for Nurse Implemented Euglycemia (GENIE). This software—which the Veterans Health Administration is working to patent—“allows nurses to reliably and easily monitor and control a patient’s post-operative glucose levels with minimal physician supervision,” says patient care services nurse Candace Cunningham, who developed GENIE alongside Dr. Harsha Rao, a VAPHS endocrinologist, and industrial engineer Peter Perreiah. Stabilizing an individual’s glucose levels is very important, especially after surgery, adds Cunningham, who notes that the risk of adverse effects—such as infection and multisystem organ failure—can greatly increase for a patient whose glucose levels spiral out of control. To date, the software is unique to VAPHS, but other health care facilities plan to adopt the program in 2010.





2009 INNOVATION ROUNDUP



Giving Veterans a Space to Relax

Patients of Highland Drive's 1-3 east, an extended care psychiatric ward, will soon be able to unwind and de-stress in the unit's new, cutting-edge relaxation room. Visitors to the room will be able to listen to soft music or watch soothing images—such as stars or an aquarium scene—on the walls. The room will also have massage tools, a writing desk and crayons, a rocking chair and thick, weighted blankets. "The concept of a relaxation room is relatively new to the world of behavioral health," says Joni Parise, the unit's assistant nurse manager, who points out that these types of rooms are frequently used in dementia units and to calm children with autism. "The goal is that our patients will sense when they are getting agitated or anxious and then they will use the room's tools to calm themselves," says Parise. The staff of the 26-patient unit created this room, which opened in early 2010, after receiving a \$10,000 national patient safety award.



One Stop Shop for Research Help

In September 2009, VA Pittsburgh's research office introduced the research concierge service, a customer-service driven program that mirrors a hotel's concierge service. The program's goal is "to provide frontline support to investigators, coordinators and research staff as they navigate the VA research process," according to Associate Chief of Staff of Research and Development, Dr. Ali Sonel. In order to reach this goal, the research office has tapped a point person to work the concierge service full-time and help answer any researcher's questions.



Honoring Nursing Pioneers

VA Pittsburgh nurses scored an unprecedented three of 10 national Nursing Services Innovations Awards in 2009. The awards, which recognize nursing leadership in quality improvement, will enable VA Pittsburgh's nurses to develop programs to reach out to homeless Veterans, offer in-home anticoagulation management and deliver high-quality preventive care to rural areas.



Engineering Health Care Solutions

In June 2009, the Veterans Health Administration honored VA Pittsburgh with a three-year, \$3.6 million grant to establish a Veterans Engineering Resource Center (VERC). This grant will enable VAPHS to collaborate with the University of Pittsburgh to apply engineering principles to common health care hurdles. "The multidisciplinary VERC will empower health care teams to work more efficiently and effectively—and in turn give Veterans the best care and services possible," says the VERC's newly-appointed director, Robert Monte. VA Pittsburgh was the only stand-alone facility and one of only four VA organizations nationwide to receive this award.



Veteran Ron Haney of Lemont Furnace, Pa., rolls down the halls of 4-west with his "VA dog."

A 2009 **MOMENTUM** HIGHLIGHT

Helping Veterans Heal Faster

Real animals are not allowed on 4-west, a post-surgery ward at University Drive. Yet, thanks to a unique program called "Operation Walk the Dog," a rotating cast of some 25 dogs—and even a few cats—play a crucial role in patients' recovery. The program, which launched in early 2009 and is the first of its kind in the VA, utilizes a gallery of laminated 8x10" photos of furry friends to get patients moving after surgery. "Research shows that there are a lot of benefits to getting up and moving around after an operation," says Darlene Dietrich, the nurse manager of 4-west. "The whole inspiration behind this program was, 'You have to walk your dog today, too, so why don't you get up?'" Patients can choose not to participate in the program, but those who do are free to name their adopted dog (the most popular moniker? Butch, according to Dietrich) and keep the pet's picture in their hospital room throughout their stay. When Veterans do take man's best friend for a stroll, they often hang the pet's photo from their IV pole or around their neck. The end result is that "there are always dogs on the floor," says Dietrich, laughing. "It's a pretty fun—and effective—program."



MOMENTUM

*“Success doesn’t come to you...**you go to it.**”* MARVA COLLINS

Here at VA Pittsburgh, we move. Fast. The future—and securing our success in it—is a challenge that we take seriously. To stay ahead of the game, we invest in people, in projects and in dreams. This year was no exception. In fact, we worked harder than ever to lay the groundwork for an amazing tomorrow and affirm our position as a leader in the health care industry for years to come. Keep reading to learn more about some of the long-term projects we set into motion in 2009.



VA PITTSBURGH IS BUILDING FOR TOMORROW. THAT'S A GREAT FEELING. AS A YOUNG VETERAN, I LIKE HOW BRIGHT MY FUTURE LOOKS IN THE VA'S HANDS."

OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM VETERAN
JESUS RODRIGUEZ JR.

A 2009 MOMENTUM HIGHLIGHT

Expanding Facilities to Enhance Care

As part of the VA Pittsburgh Expansion Project, VAPHS broke ground on two monumental new facilities in 2009.

Both buildings—which are slated for completion in 2011—will utilize cutting-edge technologies and the latest innovations in health care design.

The largest building, a six-floor, \$75.8 million Consolidation Building at University Drive, will integrate primary care and behavioral health and serve as a one-stop center for many Veterans' health care needs. As a result, Veterans will be able to access a wider array of services more quickly and smoothly while experiencing less stress.

The second building, a three-floor, \$38.2 million Ambulatory Care Center at the Heinz Division, will house primary care offices as well as a variety of specialty services, such as audiology, prosthetics and physical rehabilitation. Patients will benefit from an array of quality-of-life enhancing perks, such as therapeutic healing gardens and an extended network of sidewalks for outdoor exercise.

VA Pittsburgh's Expansion Project also includes plans for a \$30 million research building outfitted with a heliport at the University Drive Division. This three-story construction—while still in the blueprint stages—will span 65,000 square feet and is scheduled for completion in 2012.

These three new facilities will help secure VAPHS's position at the forefront of medicine for years to come.





2009 **MOMENTUM** ROUNDUP



Leading the Way in Wheelchair Research

The Department of Veterans Affairs selected VAPHS's Human Engineering Research Laboratories (HERL) as a national center of excellence in 2009. Thanks to this award, HERL will receive \$5 million in funding over the next five years. "This third award as a center of excellence is both a testament to the work done over the past decade and a commitment to continue to be at the vanguard for wheelchairs and related technologies," said Rory Cooper, the founding director and a research scientist at HERL. Some future projects HERL researchers plan to tackle with the help of this award include: evaluating and creating new wheelchair technologies, building a GPS community of wheelchair users to track mobility patterns and studying veterans who transition from using prosthetics to wheelchairs. "Our work touches the lives of many of our Veterans with severe disabilities," says Cooper.



Stimulus Funds Fast Track Construction

VA Pittsburgh received nearly \$11 million in funds allocated under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. The money is earmarked for three construction projects at VA Pittsburgh's University Drive division. Two projects—upgrading the facility's emergency power distribution system and replacing its plumbing system—are slated for completion in March 2011. The third project, revamping the site's surgical intensive care unit, is expected to wrap up in the summer of 2010.



Upgrades at University Drive

In 2009, VAPHS allocated more than \$23 million in funds to complete two dozen maintenance projects at all three sites. Some areas of the health care system to benefit from these projects include: the Healthy Women's clinic, the canteen, radiation therapy, same day surgery and the soon-to-be relocated Heroes Hall at University Drive.



Outreach Program Takes Off

In 2009, VA Pittsburgh laid the foundations for renewed outreach efforts by participating in approximately 60 community health and benefit events. In all, the burgeoning program connected with more than 3,000 Veterans and eligible service members.

Some of the locations VAPHS's outreach team visited include:

Veterans Job Expo at Soldiers and Sailors Museum / Toby Keith Concert / Kennywood / Community Based Outpatient Clinic Open Houses / UFC Cage Fight at Mellon Arena / County Fairs

"This was a great start, and we are aiming to expand our outreach efforts in 2010," says VAPHS Outreach Coordinator Heather Frantz. "Our goal, now and in the future, is to remind our local heroes that we will travel anywhere—even to a UFC cage fight—to ensure that they are getting the benefits and health care help that they have earned and deserve."



A 2009 **MOMENTUM** HIGHLIGHT



Veteran Baylor (No. 8)
breaks a sweat playing
wheelchair rugby.

Gearing up For the Big Game

Have you heard? Pittsburgh is hosting the National Veterans Wheelchair Games—the largest wheelchair sporting event in the world! VAPHS and the Paralyzed Veterans of America (PVA) are co-hosting the event, which will unfold during the first week in August 2011 and showcase the athletic talents of more than 500 wheelchair-bound Veterans from across the country. The Pittsburgh Games “are a great chance for family and friends and the local area to get a better view of what sports can do for the rehabilitation of disabled persons.” says wheelchair athlete and Veteran Jerry Baylor, 63, of Allegheny Township, Pa. With the help of the Pittsburgh-based Keystone PVA, VAPHS has spent the last year confirming event venues, kicking off fundraising efforts and recruiting volunteers. The pace of preparations will surely quicken in 2010, with everyone working toward the same goal: giving Veterans the best Games ever!



CONNECTION

*“Wheresoever you go,
go with all your heart.”* CONFUCIUS

Our health care system is devoted to giving Veterans the best care anywhere. This means going the extra mile inside our own hospital walls. It also means venturing far beyond our offices and operating rooms to embrace an age-old custom in medicine: taking the show on the road. Today—more than ever before—our patients receive top-notch care in their own neighborhoods and homes. At VA Pittsburgh, we are making health care personal again and here’s how:



THIS PROGRAM SAVED MY LIFE...MARY FRANCES
GAVE ME BACK THE HOPE, AND THAT WAS THE KEY.

ARMY VETERAN RAYMOND WEBB (WITH PILARSKI)

A 2009 CONNECTION HIGHLIGHT

Extending a Hand to End Homelessness

VA Pittsburgh's Health Care for Homeless Veterans (HCHV) program aims to help homeless and underserved Veterans achieve their highest level of health and independence. "Our goal is to try to step in and offer help before a Veteran actually ends up on the street," says Mary Frances Pilarski, the program's coordinator. "We want to prevent homelessness—not just react to it."

To do this, Pilarski and her HCHV team often get creative in an effort to connect with Veterans early and often. The group has partnered with community organizations, spoken to local committees and utilized new media tools such as YouTube videos and blogs. In addition, Pilarski has participated in radio interviews and a national documentary for the Discovery Channel. "Ninety percent of this job is outreach," she says. "We are trying to find different ways to get the word out there about the VA and VA care."

The soft-spoken, quick to smile nurse is also no stranger to the streets and local homeless shelters. "Making the effort to get out there with them is very important," she says. "We're willing to do whatever it takes."

The efforts of Pilarski and the HCHV team have not gone unnoticed. The Pennsylvania American Legion Housing For Homeless Veterans Corporation has repeatedly recognized the work of Pilarski and her colleagues. On a national stage, the Veterans Health Administration recently honored the HCHV team with a prestigious VA Office of Nursing Services Innovations Award.



2009 CONNECTION STATS

Patients Served **60,141** Total Outpatient Visits **538,436**
Total Inpatient Visits **10,763** Employees **3,113**



2009 CONNECTION ROUNDUP



Linking to Care From Anywhere

In 2009, an increasing number of VAPHS Veterans used My HealthVet, a Web-based health care program that allows users to refill prescriptions, keep a personal food journal, research medical topics and more—all with the click of a mouse. “My HealthVet empowers Veterans to work right alongside their clinicians to monitor and improve their health,” says Dr. Rajiv Jain, the chief of staff at VA Pittsburgh. “By keeping track of their daily choices and reviewing the program’s educational materials, our Veterans can help their clinicians make the best possible decisions for their care.”



Long Distance Learning

In 2009, VA Pittsburgh initiated an exciting, new academic partnership with Waynesburg University in Waynesburg, Pa. Though the university’s physical campus is one hour south of Pittsburgh, VAPHS nurses can now take classes virtually at Highland Drive and earn a bachelor’s degree in nursing in just 13 months. In addition, any employee with a master’s degree in nursing or a related field can apply to become faculty at Waynesburg University and help educate the health care system’s future leaders. “I’ve always wanted to educate or teach in some way, and I am very proud to have had this wonderful opportunity come along,” says VAPHS nurse Donna Liston, who is currently teaching a class for the program.



Making House Calls

In VA Pittsburgh’s home-based primary care program, a rotating cast of some 20 medical experts provide home care to Veterans who are unable to travel to the hospital or doctor’s office. In 2009, this program conducted 6,893 visits and cared for nearly 600 unique patients. “We get to see their house and their medications, and we get to know their family. We get a better sense of what’s going on in their home. The program is a win-win for everyone involved,” says Dr. Judy Plowman, a primary care physician who directs the program and who was named a 2009 “Physician of the Year” at VAPHS.



A Communication Champion

In 2009, VAPHS Director and CEO Terry Gerigk Wolf maintained a staff message board and penned 19 blog entries for employees. Throughout the year, her message board received more than 300 posts and her blog generated close to 100 comments and almost 1,000 views, and her message board received more than 300 posts. In 2010, VAPHS and Wolf will boldly enter the world of social media, starting with the launch of a Director’s Facebook page. “It is my goal to engage everyone—from frontline employees to Veterans and their families—in conversation here at VA Pittsburgh,” says Wolf, who recently received the prestigious Communications Visionary Award from the Veterans Health Administration.



A 2009 CONNECTION HIGHLIGHT



Veteran Dickerson at home with his telehealth machine.

Telehealth Program Takes Off

The Care Coordination Home Telehealth (CCHT) program relies on simple technologies to give Veterans improved access to health services and information.

In 2009, VA Pittsburgh's CCHT program served 436 Veterans, making it the largest program of its kind in VISN 4 and one of the largest CCHT programs nationwide.

Despite this impressive foundation, the program is still growing. In the last 12 months, VAPHS added five new CCHT staff members (up from seven) and two new telehealth services. Now, in addition to aiding Veterans with congestive heart failure, diabetes and hypertension, the CCHT program also assists patients battling depression and post-traumatic stress disorder.

"It is very easy, and I like that I don't have to go to the doctor every week and that I can do my readings from home," says Army Veteran Clarence Dickerson, 69, of Pittsburgh, who uses a telehealth machine to help monitor his diabetes. "It has changed my life for the better."

Dickerson is not alone. The program seems to be increasingly popular among Veterans, with enrollment expected to jump by 50 percent in the next two years, according to Jennifer Wengryn, VAPHS's program manager for home-based primary care.



COMMITMENT

*“Let us **not be blind** to our differences.”* JOHN F. KENNEDY

At VA Pittsburgh, our Veterans and staff represent slices of history rich in diversity, adversity and experience. To cater to this unique demographic, we avoid cure-alls. We shy away from blanket solutions. Instead, we create and support a wide-variety of specialized health and education programs. We cater to the individual. The intimate group. In 2009—more than ever before—these programs helped enrich the lives of Veterans and employees at VAPHS. Read on to learn how...



A 2009 COMMITMENT HIGHLIGHT

Helping Veterans Involved in the Justice System

In November 2009, VA Pittsburgh helped launch the Veterans Treatment Court, one of only 16 such courts nationwide.

The program's main objective is to provide support to Veterans facing legal ramifications for substance abuse and behavioral health issues, according to Beverly Vanderhorst, VAPHS's newly-appointed Veterans justice outreach specialist.

In the program, eligible individuals can opt to navigate the Veterans Treatment Court in lieu of traditional justice system case processing. Once enrolled, participants are:

- provided intensive treatment and other services required to get and stay clean and sober
- paired with a Veteran mentor who supports them in their recovery process
- held accountable by the Veterans Treatment Court judge for meeting their obligations to the court, society, themselves and their families
- rewarded for doing well or sanctioned if they fall short of expected benchmarks

The Veterans Treatment Court is part of a larger movement—the Veterans Justice Outreach Program—which VAPHS also launched in 2009. This umbrella program helps Veterans struggling with a wide range of issues receive prompt access to VA services while avoiding unnecessary criminalization and incarceration. As part of this program, VAPHS has forged new working relationships with the Allegheny County courts and the Allegheny County Department of Human Services.

THANKS TO THESE PROGRAMS, VA PITTSBURGH WILL HELP GIVE MANY OF OUR LOCAL HEROES AN IMPORTANT SECOND CHANCE TO GET THEIR LIVES BACK ON TRACK."

VETERANS JUSTICE OUTREACH
SPECIALIST BEVERLY VANDERHORST



2009 COMMITMENT STATS

Community Gifts and Donations **\$509,012.53**
Youth Volunteers **183** | Volunteers **1,152**



INNOVATION
MOMENTUM
CONNECTION
COMMITMENT

2009 COMMITMENT ROUNDUP



Hospice Volunteer Program Begins

In October 2009, VA Pittsburgh's 28-bed hospice unit launched its own unique volunteer program. Participants—who spend two days in training before working in the program—can contribute in a variety of ways. Volunteers may visit with patients, send bereavement letters to family members or hold a vigil at a Veteran's bedside. "I got into it because if I'm really sick, you just want somebody to hold your hand," says hospice volunteer Claudia Shields, 65, from Penn Hills, Pa." Adds Dr. Sandra Blakowski, the chief of hospice/palliative care at VAPHS: "The goal of the program is to provide our Veterans with the best quality of care at the end of life, and hospice volunteers are an important part of this mission. We hope to watch this program grow immensely in the next few years."



Giving Homeless Veterans a Fresh Start

The new Veterans Recovery Center, which is the first VA facility of its kind to offer transitional housing and vocational support to homeless Veterans in a residential-style setting, served 186 individuals in 2009. Of these Veterans, 144 completed the two-phase program, with 85 percent moving to a stable living arrangement and 73 percent employed or receiving an income at the time of their discharge.



Special Support for Newly-Returned Combat Veterans

Social worker Daniel Ziff leads a Operation Enduring Freedom/Operation Iraqi Freedom (OEF/OIF) war zone recovery class designed to help newly-returned combat Veterans readjust to civilian life. "The class empowers Veterans to use their camaraderie as therapy and to help each other heal," says Ziff. OEF/OIF Veterans can also access a variety of behavioral support services at the VA, such as family counseling, marital counseling and psychoeducational counseling.



Enriching Employees

The first class of 13 employees from VAPHS's School At Work (SAW) program graduated in September 2009 after eight months in the classroom. "I am very proud of this new program," says VA Pittsburgh's Director Terry Gerigk Wolf. "It gives employees the skills they need to successfully apply and compete for higher level positions."



A Unique Program for ex-POWs

For the last 25 years, VA Pittsburgh has hosted support groups for former prisoners of war. Today, these monthly sessions still offer a unique blend of primary care seminars, benefits help and behavioral health support to more than 100 men. Camaraderie among the groups' remaining members—including many who served in World War II—is extremely high. "We're a band of brothers and sisters," says Army Veteran and ex-POW John Petruska, 86, of Pittsburgh, Pa. "This is the best thing that ever happened in this area."



A 2009 COMMITMENT HIGHLIGHT



Mitchum stands near VAPHS's new full-field digital mammography unit.

Advancing Women's Health

In 2009, VA Pittsburgh extended its commitment to women Veterans by purchasing world-class, cutting edge equipment for the Women Veterans Center. One of the most exciting additions in the center is a new, full-field digital mammography machine, which streamlines care and enables radiologists to provide patients with nearly instant feedback.

“This new machine will alleviate patient stress and reduce the chance of callback appointments due to unclear scans,” says Women Veterans Program Manager Deborah Mitchum. “It is one more very powerful tool that can help us provide women Veterans with seamless, integrated, comprehensive care.”

In 2010, VAPHS will begin construction on a new Women's Center, which will include a private women's waiting area, a children's waiting area and a suite of modern exam rooms. The newly-renovated space will also house a women's resource center where patients can access publications and online resources about women's health.

A YEAR OF EXCEPTIONAL CARE

LOOKING BACK AT SOME OF
VA PITTSBURGH'S GREATEST
MILESTONES IN 2009



1

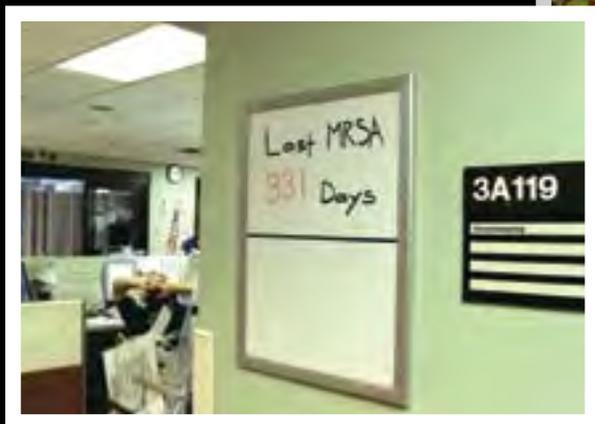
● **INVESTING IN HIGH-TECHNOLOGIES**
VAPHS purchased or installed more than \$7.8 million in cutting-edge health care equipment in 2009

● **PUTTING VETERAN FAMILIES FIRST**
VAPHS finalized plans to help bring a Fisher House to University Drive. The house—which is slated for a fall 2010 groundbreaking—will give loved ones of patients a place to stay, free of charge.

● **SETTING AN INTERNATIONAL STANDARD**
Today, VA Pittsburgh's MRSA prevention program is now in practice at all VA medical facilities throughout the country, and the healthcare system remains a global leader in preventing hospital acquired Methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) infections.



2



3



1



1 BUILDING STATE-OF-THE-ART FACILITIES In 2009, VAPHS broke ground on two new state-of-the-art medical facilities—the \$75.8 million consolidation building and the \$38.2 million ambulatory care center.

2 BREAKING RECORDS FOR CHARITY VAPHS and VISN 4 office employees smashed a \$260,000 fundraising goal for the annual Combined Federal Campaign by raising an unprecedented \$274,255.14 for charity.

3 ADVANCING PATIENT-CENTERED CARE VAPHS's Community Living Center (CLC) scored impressive marks according to the Artifact Tool, a 360-point system that gauges how successfully hospitals transition from an institutionalized setting to a vibrant, patient-centered community. In 2009, the CLC's score jumped 34 percent—to 271 points—compared to 2008.

4 OFFERING SUPERIOR CUSTOMER SERVICE On average, VA Pittsburgh Healthcare System's anchor sites and five community-based outpatient clinics completed more than 99 percent of all clinic appointments within 30 days of the Veteran's desired appointment date.



2

4



3

VA Pittsburgh Healthcare System's Leadership Team Reflects on their Proudest Moments of 2009



Terry Gerigk Wolf, FACHE
Director and Chief Executive Officer since April 2007

“ I am proud of our outreach efforts, which enabled VAPHS to serve more than 60,000 Veterans in 2009—an all-time high for our health care system. We also provided those Veterans the best care anywhere, as demonstrated through various evidence-based measures of clinical excellence. In addition, we began an unprecedented transformation of how we do our work using systems redesign concepts—and we’ve only just begun. 2009 was just the beginning for these three accomplishments. 2010: Full Steam Ahead! ”



Bonnie S. Graham, MBA
Associate Director since December 2007

“ I am extremely proud of our continual improvement on both our Veteran Satisfaction Surveys and our All Employee Survey. This significantly contributes to our journey to provide the highest quality Veteran-centered Care. With continual Veteran feedback, and an engaged, enthusiastic and creative workforce, we can exceed meeting the needs of Veterans of all ages. ”



Dr. Rajiv Jain, FACP
Chief of Staff since November 2000

“ I am really proud of having achieved 96 percent threshold for the No Veteran Left Behind initiative for several consecutive months and for decreasing the waiting times in specialty clinics. I look forward to a continued focus on Veteran-centered care as we develop an integrated referral network for Veterans living in western Pennsylvania. ”



John Gennaro, FACHE, MBA, MHSA
Associate Director for Site Management since May 2008

“ I am most proud of the fact that VAPHS providers worked together to reach a milestone in caring for more than 60,000 unique Veterans in fiscal year 2009! We will continue to improve the Veteran experience and enhance our delivery system over the next fiscal year by focusing on infrastructure improvements related to the consolidation efforts. ”



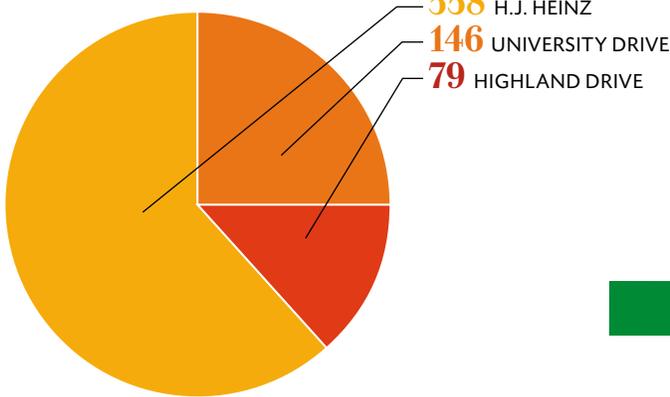
Ira J. Richmond, RN, MS, CS, CNAA
Associate Director for Patient Care Services since March 2002

“ I am extremely proud that VAPHS provides award-winning patient-centered, innovative and creative patient care. VAPHS Nursing Services “Walks-the-Talk” when it comes to demonstrating excellence in nursing practice. For three consecutive years, VAPHS Nursing has received the prestigious VHA’s Office of Nursing Service Innovation Award, winning three separate awards (more than any other VA Medical Center) in 2009. ”

VA Pittsburgh's Operating Statistics for 2009

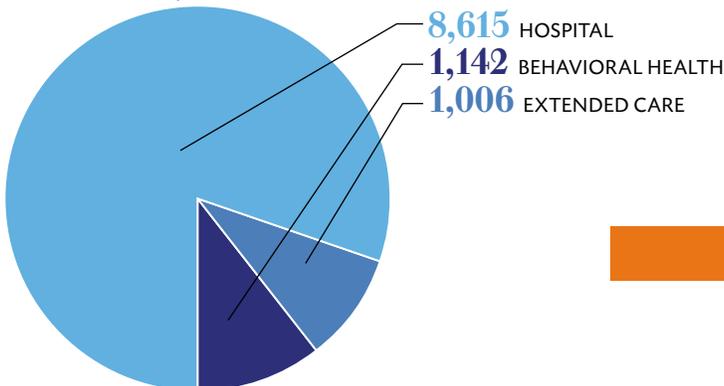
TOTAL OPERATING BEDS

583



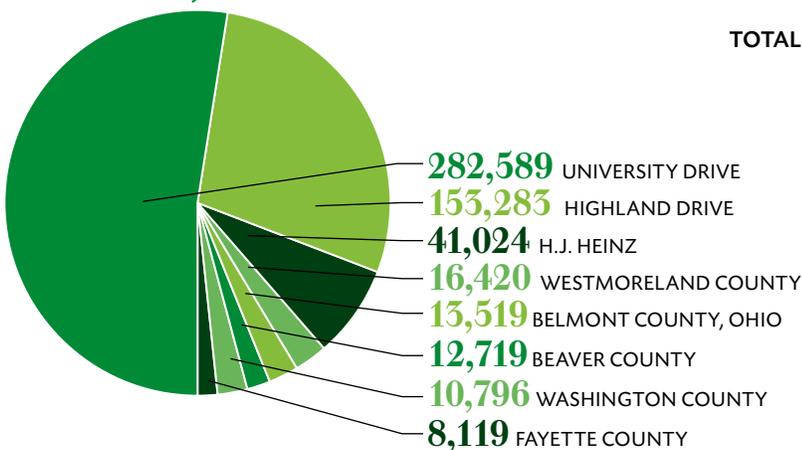
TOTAL INPATIENTS TREATED

10,763



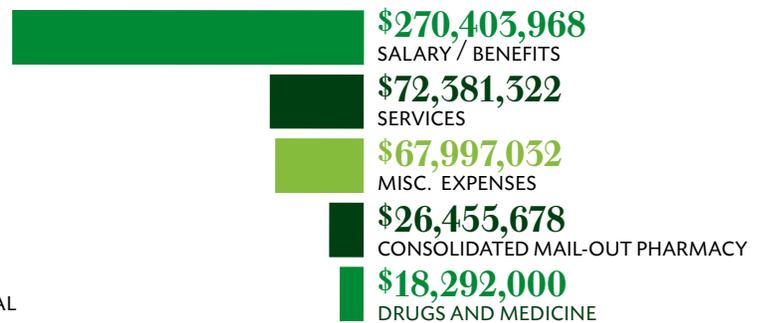
TOTAL OUTPATIENT VISITS

538,469



TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES

\$455,530,000



TOTAL STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

4,442



TOTAL COMMUNITY GIFTS AND DONATIONS

\$509,012.53

TOTAL MEDICAL CARE COLLECTIONS FUND

\$21,321,784



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