FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 5, 2017

Important Notice - Media Advisory

Roseburg VA Leadership Team Responds to VA Secretary

Quality Improvement Journey

This week Veterans Affairs Secretary David Shulkin clearly stated the challenges facing the Department of Veterans Affairs. Let me explain what is happening here, at the Roseburg VA Health Care System (RVAHCS) and what we are doing to improve services to our Veterans.

Greater Choice for Veterans

Roseburg VA HCS is currently in the process of implementing several changes to its Community Care program to develop a simpler, more Veteran-centric program, with a robust customer service capability that will provide timely access to quality care when the services are not readily available in the VA. One of these changes include realignment of the Office of Community Care under the Chief of Staff in order to provide a more streamlined transition between VA providers and providers in the community while also providing direct clinical responsibility. Additionally, a new Community Care Oversight Council is being established to ensure compliance with National laws and policies, efficient utilization of community care funds, and oversight of the quality of care being provided to our Veterans in the community. Lastly, we are working to further expand our network of community providers, which currently consists of 1,830 contracted providers, in order to meet the needs of our veterans. The 1,830 includes 188 Provider Agreements, the remaining 1642 are TriWest Providers. We are excited at the proposed changes to the Community Care program and are actively working to swiftly implement these changes in order to best serve our Veterans.

In an effort to showcase the great work we have accomplished in our Health Care System we submit to the VA Diffusion Hub which is a website for the entire VA and is aimed at spreading and implementing best practices to improve care for our Nation’s Veterans. As VA moves towards a true spirit of innovation through the MyVA initiative, leadership and staff across the country are pitching in their time, creativity, passion, and a true understanding of Veterans’ needs to help improve the VA experience. Below we have listed the best practices that we as a health care system have submitted to the Diffusion Hub with the hope that these practices will be used by others within the VA.
These “innovations” address the Under Secretary for Health, Dr. David Shulkin’s top priorities including:

- Access
- Employee Engagement
- Care Coordination
- Best Practices
- Veterans’ Trust in VA Care

Quality of care (star rating & SAIL)

The SAIL model (Strategic Analytics for Improvement and Learning) considers dozens of health care measures that result in an overall rating each quarter, with five stars being the best. SAIL measures quality, access, and Veterans perception to care and Veteran/staff satisfaction.

During the past year SAIL reporting and monitoring has changed and the star rating system is now assigned at the end of the fiscal year. We continue to work diligently on the specific opportunities for improvement.

SAIL considers dozens of factors and shows that overall Roseburg provides quality care. It also shows Veterans' frustrations with lack of access to that care, impacting the overall score. These frustrations affect the Veterans' experience at the hospital, which can be anything from how long they wait for an appointment to interaction with the staff.

Improving care on the Roseburg Medical Telemetry Unit (MTU) is one key area for improvement. Since April 2017, we have implemented a process in which Utilization Management reviews all admissions from the emergency department and a two reviewer system will review transfers from external hospitals. Utilization Management will maintain their process of reviewing all continued stay days to ensure we maximize Veteran length of stay criteria. The most significant intervention has been the implementation of the Discharge Clinic. All Veterans that discharge from our MTU will be placed in the Discharge Clinic that will provide continuity of care between discharge from MTU and access in Primary Care.

Improving the quality of care in Primary Care sensitive conditions has been a significant focus. We have implemented an Ambulatory Care Sensitive Conditions (ACSC) team that is reviewing all high risk Veterans to determine opportunities to optimize care with the goal of preventing hospitalizations. To support identified opportunities of care we are developing clinical pathways for each sensitive condition. For example, Clinical Pharmacy Specialists have established advanced care for heart failure and COPD Veterans.

Currently in Primary Care we are establishing a scorecard system for each Patient Aligned Care Team (PACT) team. The scorecard will monitor team performance in areas of access, Quality measures, admissions to hospitals, and much more. This will allow management and PACT teams to understand their performance as a team, plan for specific improvements, and monitor further accountability for improvements.
Focus on resources

Accountability
The executive leadership team at Roseburg demands a high level of accountability from all employees within the health care system. In an effort to improve staff accountability the RVAHCS Human Resources department conducts training sessions for the supervisors and managers. As with any organization we do have disciplinary actions pending and these are being worked diligently to be resolved in an efficient and fair manner.

Staffing
The Roseburg VA Health Care System currently has numerous positions approved for recruitment. Current vacancy announcements are posted on WWW.USAJOBS.GOV for Roseburg, Eugene, Brookings, and North Bend. We have tentative offers that HR is currently processing. Currently RVAHCS has multiple open certificates which include positions pending the interview and selection process for all sites of care.

A staffing Rapid Process Improvement Event (RPIE) has reviewed standard work for HR Specialists, Managers in regards to improving the initial stage of the Speed of Hire process. Position requests are being reviewed thoroughly by HR Specialists leading to incomplete packets being returned to service managers rather than being sent forward to the Position Management Committee (PMC). We are happy to report that the RVAHCS is currently meeting the National Speed of Hire measure with a rate of 94%.

Building Resources
The Roseburg VA Health Care System has many new projects currently in process and pending completion. These projects are designed to improve the current infrastructure of our old and outdated buildings to provide a safer and more conducive healing environment for our Veterans. Below is the current list of construction projects.

New Substance Abuse and Residential Rehabilitation Treatment Program (SARRTP) Building - Planned move in August 4, 2017.
Upgrade Boiler Plant - Completion planned for December 2017.
Install (Heating Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC) in Building 3 - Completion planned for June 2017.
Correct Electrical Deficiencies - Construction award planed for FY17 Q3.
Upgrade Roseburg Laundry Facility - Project completion planned for June 2017.
CT scanner ready for Veteran use June 19.

This year we have activated the new Eugene VA Healthcare Center which replaced old buildings that were utilized to serve Veterans in Eugene and surrounding areas. The new building increased the overall available health care space from 25,000 square-feet, into one location with 120,000 square-feet of usable space. The additional space allows VA to significantly increase services that are currently not previously
available. The building services include: Primary Care, Outpatient Mental Health, Ambulatory Surgery, Audiology, Cardiopulmonary, Dental, Dispensing Pharmacy, Gastroenterology, Imaging, Laboratory, Ophthalmology / Optometry / Orthopedics, Podiatry, Prosthetics, Speech Pathology, Urology, Physical and Occupational Therapy.

Acute Psychiatric Unit is a state of the art facility that has a physical capacity for 14 beds. The 17,690 square foot acute psychiatric mental Health Building is a mixture of single and double occupancy rooms. This unit is designed

Medical Telemetry Unit was renovated to create a more homelike environment that is less clinical. Each room now has their own private restroom which allows for more Veteran privacy. The new space has 11 beds with four isolation rooms.

Sterile Processing Service received a major upgrade to the department with a new space of 10,000 square feet located closer to the Operative Care Department. We received and installed all new sterile processing equipment for the department which allows for better processing of Reusable Medical Equipment resulting in improved patient safety.

**Improve Timeliness of Services**

**Access to Care**

Our focus at Roseburg has been to improve Veterans’ access to healthcare, quality of care, and satisfaction. Roseburg’s transformation began several years ago with our QUEST for Excellence Initiative to become and sustain a High Reliability Organization (HRO). QUEST stands for Quality Communication, Understanding the Veteran Experience, Engaged Leadership, Staffing Improvements, and Team Building.

Our QUEST journey included the implementation of a focused, standardized process improvement program that is widely used in healthcare and service industries (Lean/Six Sigma). Using this program, we train employees and local Veteran representatives. We developed Veteran and employee-driven plans to improve access, quality, and satisfaction.

Roseburg had the third largest improvement in the nation last year in SAIL mental health measures. These measures include Primary Care-Mental Health Integration (PCMHI) penetration rate, same day access in Mental Health for patients in crisis, and improved access, quality, and evidence-based treatment. Evidence-based treatments offered at Roseburg include Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), Substance Abuse, Depression, and Severely Mentally Ill Veterans. Currently, our PCMHI penetration rate and access within 30 days are above national average.

In order to support our expanded treatment, we have increased mental health staffing and opened a new state-of-the-art acute mental health building for inpatient care. In addition, a new building for residential PTSD and substance abuse care is under construction and expected to open this summer.

For highly rural Veterans, we expanded capacity by using tele-health for Veterans to receive mental health care where they live.

We continue to expand primary care teams to improve access, quality, and satisfaction. We have achieved
same-day access at our Eugene Health Care Center with most of the providers and are working towards this goal for all teams throughout our system. Several Veteran and employee-driven teams are analyzing our processes in primary care clinics from check-in to checkout to improve access, quality, and satisfaction.

In Fiscal Year 2016, overall Telehealth use in the Roseburg VA Health Care System was 18.32% of the local Veteran population; exceeding the national standard of 16%.
We offer various services addressing such issues as: speech therapy, amputee rehabilitation, Parkinson’s Disease research, arrhythmia, dermatology, cardiology, dementia, and pulmonary, mental health care, and primary care.

We invite you to review the VA’s new website for Access and Quality in VA Health Care and how we compare to other hospitals in the area.
http://www.accesstocare.va.gov/Healthcare/QualityOfCare

Suicide Prevention

Suicide prevention and awareness is one of the foremost priorities in our health care system. Our Mental Health teams have ramped up programming within their service lines. We have a goal of becoming the best in Suicide Prevention in the country with our Improved Suicide Prevention programing which includes but not limited to improved resources for suicide risk reduction assessment and treatment in our outpatient clinics. We have educated, trained, and empowered our staff at the outpatient clinics to engage in effective suicide prevention. Signs, Ask, Validate, and Encourage (S.A.V.E) training classes have been completed for our front line Medical Support Assistants at all sites of care. Currently updating the Collaborative Assessment and Management of Suicidality (CAMS) clinical notes in the electronic health record and will begin training in July 2017. We provided Mental Health Service staff with evidenced based research on the efficacy of caring cards as a suicide risk reduction intervention. Provided S.A.V.E. training and information about VA access to care for college GI Bill counseling staff at the annual conference in Eugene. We are finding that by leveraging Veteran Peers Support can immensely aid in the recovery of our Veterans who find themselves in difficult times. Implementing the REACH VET dashboard to assist in the caring of our Veterans.

The Roseburg VA Health Care System does truly care for the Veterans whom we serve and are working hard to not only improve the services available in our health care system but also to enrich the lives of those Veterans. We would like to extend a welcome to anyone who wishes to see our facilities first hand, we would be happy to show you around and explain our services.

Shanon Goodwin, Acting Public Affairs Officer
Public Affairs Office
541-440-1000 ext. 43084
shanon.goodwin@va.gov