



**KENNETH H. MIZRACH**  
**Director**

**Department of Veterans Affairs New Jersey Health Care System**

Thank you for your service to our country. On behalf of our employees, volunteers, Veterans' groups, and community members supporting our mission, I extend to you a warm welcome to the Department of Veterans Affairs New Jersey Health Care System (VANJHCS).

We are a multi-facility, full-service provider of health care for Veterans of the United States armed services. Our mission is to honor America's Veterans by providing exceptional health care that improves their health and well-being. We take pride in developing innovative and multidisciplinary health care programs that combine the most up-to-date health care techniques to serve our Nation's Veterans.

This handbook has been prepared to assist you during your stay with us. If you have any questions about our facilities or programs, please feel free to ask our staff members for assistance.



## VETERANS HEALTH ADMINISTRATION

### Mission Statement

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

### Vision Statement

To be a patient centered integrated health care organization for Veterans providing excellence in health care, research, and education; an organization where people choose to work; an active community partner and a backup for national emergencies.

### Core Values

1. Trust
2. Respect
3. Excellence
4. Compassion
5. Commitment

### Domains of Value

1. Quality
2. Access
3. Function
4. Satisfaction
5. Cost Effectiveness
6. Healthy Communities

### Eight for Excellence

1. Continuously improve the quality and safety of health care for Veterans, particularly in those health issues associated with military service.
2. Provide timely and appropriate access to health care by implementing best practices.
3. Continuously improve Veteran and family satisfaction with VA care by promoting patient-centered care and excellent customer service.
4. Promote diversity, excellence, and satisfaction in the workforce and foster a culture which encourages innovation.
5. Promote excellence in business practices through administrative, financial, and clinical efficiencies.
6. Focus research and development on clinical and system improvements designed to enhance the health and well-being of Veterans.
7. Promote excellence in the education of future health care professionals and enhance VHA partnership with affiliates.
8. Promote health within the VA, local communities, and the Nation consistent with VA's mission.

# **VA NEW JERSEY HEALTH CARE SYSTEM FACILITIES**



**Medical Center  
385 Tremont Avenue  
East Orange, NJ 07018  
(973) 676-1000**



**Medical Center  
151 Knollcroft Road  
Lyons, NJ 07939  
(908) 647-0180**

**Patient Handbook**  
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## **PUBLIC NOTICE**

**The Joint Commission (TJC) will conduct an unannounced triennial accreditation survey of the Department of Veterans Affairs New Jersey Health Care System (VANJHCS).**

**The purpose of the survey will be to evaluate the organization's compliance with nationally established Joint Commission standards. The survey results will be used to determine whether, and the conditions under which, accreditation should be awarded the organization.**

**The Joint Commission standards deal with organizational quality of care issues and the safety of the environment in which care is provided. Anyone believing that he or she has pertinent and valid information about such matters may contact the Joint Commission's representatives. Information will be carefully evaluated for relevance to the accreditation process. Such requests should be addressed to:**

### **Division of Accreditation Operations**

**Office of Quality Monitoring  
The Joint Commission  
One Renaissance Boulevard  
Oakbrook Terrace, IL 60181  
1 800-994-6610**

**Or**

**Faxed to 630-792-5636**

**Or**

**E-mailed to [complaint@jointcommission.org](mailto:complaint@jointcommission.org)**

**Your care, treatment, and services at VANJHCS will not be adversely affected by reporting a safety or quality of care concern to the Joint Commission.**

**This notice is posted in accordance with the Joint Commission's accreditation participation requirements.**

## **Integrated Ethics Advisory**

**Medical technology has made great advances in the last few years. New treatments and technology provide life-sustaining possibilities, which under normal circumstances can be a benefit. However, there are circumstances where these benefits may, in fact, create a difficult situation for the health care team provider, patient and family.**

**To assist you with these special situations, the VA New Jersey Health Care System is making strides in the realm of health care ethics with the Integrated Ethics initiative. Integrated Ethics seeks to establish a standardized and comprehensive approach that ensures ethical practices in the VA health care system are based on both rules and values. This program involves all services to develop and implement policies, provide educational programs and assist staff, patients, families, and caregivers with resolutions of such dilemmas before they happen.**

**Through the lens of Integrated Ethics, VA New Jersey health care leaders and staff are provided the necessary tools to consistently improve the manner in which ethical situations are understood and managed. As an organization built on providing the best quality care to Veterans and their families, VA New Jersey's community, administration, medical staff and employees pledge to ensure an exceptional ethical environment through ethics consultation services, preventive ethics, and ethical leadership. Your Ethics Consultation Team is provided to respond to any ethical questions or concerns that may arise.**

**For further information on Integrated Ethics and/or to speak with a member of the Ethics Consultation Team, you may contact any one of the following:**

- **Chaplain Service Office**
  - **East Orange: (973) 676-1000, extension 1305**
  - **Lyons: (908) 647-0180, extension 6741**
- **Asking your physician, nurse, or social worker to contact Chaplain Service and/or an Ethics Consultation Team Representative**
- **Contacting a Patient Representative, who will assist you in reaching an Ethics Consultation Team Representative**

## Community Based Outpatient Clinics

**James J. Howard Outpatient Clinic**  
970 Route 70  
Brick, NJ 08724  
(732) 206-8900

**Elizabeth CBOC**  
654 East Jersey Street  
Elizabeth, NJ 07206  
(908) 994-0120

**Fort Monmouth CBOC**  
Patterson Army Health Clinic  
Building 1075, Stephenson Avenue  
Fort Monmouth, NJ 07703  
(732) 532-4500

**Hackensack CBOC**  
385 Prospect Avenue  
Hackensack, NJ 07601  
(201) 487-1390

**Jersey City CBOC**  
115 Christopher Columbus Drive  
Jersey City, NJ 07302  
(201) 435-3305

**Morristown CBOC**  
340 West Hanover Avenue  
Morristown, NJ 07960  
(973) 539-9791

**Newark CBOC**  
20 Washington Place  
Newark, NJ 07102  
(973) 645-1441

**New Brunswick CBOC**  
317 George Street  
New Brunswick, NJ 08901  
(732) 729-0646

**Paterson CBOC**  
275 Getty Avenue, Building 275  
Paterson, NJ 07503  
(973) 247-1666

**Trenton CBOC**  
171 Jersey Street, Building 36  
Trenton, NJ 08611  
(609) 989-2355

## Patient-Centered Care

**Patient-centered care is the core of a high quality health care system and a necessary foundation for safe, effective, efficient, timely and equitable care. At the VA New Jersey Health Care System, we believe that:**

*A patient is an individual to be cared for, not a medical condition to be treated.*

*Each patient is a unique individual with diverse needs.*

*Each staff member is a caregiver whose role it is to meet the needs of each patient.*

*Our patients and their families are our partners and have knowledge and expertise that is essential to their care.*

*Access to understandable health information is essential to empower patients to participate in their care.*

*The opportunity to make decisions is essential to the well-being of our patients. It is our responsibility to provide access to this information and maximize patients' opportunities for choices and to respect those choices.*

*Our patients' well-being can be enhanced by an optimal healing environment, including access to healing arts, satisfying food, and complementary therapies.*

*To effectively care for patients, we also care for our staff members by supporting them in achieving their highest professional aspirations as well as their personal goals.*

*The VA New Jersey Health Care System exists to serve our patients and our community. We are honored to be here for you.*

# **PATIENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Veterans Health Administration (VHA) is pleased you have selected us to provide your healthcare. We want to improve your health and well-being. We will make your visit or stay as pleasant for you as possible. As part of our service to you, to other Veterans and to the Nation, we are committed to improving healthcare quality. We also train future healthcare professionals, conduct research, and support our country in times of national emergency. In all of these activities, our employees will respect and support your rights as a patient. Your basic rights and responsibilities are outlined in this document. Please talk with VA treatment team members or a patient advocate if you have any questions or would like more information about your rights.

## **I. Respect and Nondiscrimination**

- You will be treated with dignity, compassion, and respect as an individual. Your privacy will be protected. You will receive care in a safe environment. We will seek to honor your personal and religious values.
- You or someone you choose has the right to keep and spend your money. You have the right to receive an accounting of any VA held funds.
- Treatment will respect your personal freedoms. In rare cases, the use of medication and physical restraints may be used if all other efforts to keep you or others free from harm have not worked.
- As an inpatient or Community Living Center resident, you may wear your own clothes. You may keep personal items. This will depend on your medical condition.
- As an inpatient or Community Living Center resident, you have the right to social interaction and regular exercise. You will have the opportunity for religious worship and spiritual support. You may decide whether to participate in these activities. You may decide whether or not to perform tasks in or for the Medical Center.
- As an inpatient or Community Living Center resident, you have the right to communicate freely and privately. You may have or refuse visitors. You will have access to public telephones. You may participate in civic rights, such as voting and free speech.
- As a Community Living Center resident, you can organize and take part in resident groups in the facility. Your family also can meet with the families of other residents.
- In order to provide a safe treatment environment for all patients or residents and staff, you are expected to respect other patients, residents and staff and to follow the

facility's rules. Avoid unsafe acts that place others at risk for accidents or injuries. Please immediately report any condition you believe to be unsafe.

## **II. Information Disclosure and Confidentiality**

- **You will be given information about the health benefits you can receive. The information will be provided in a way you can understand.**
- **You will receive information about the costs of your care, if any, before you are treated. You are responsible for paying your portion of any costs associated with your care.**
- **Your medical record will be kept confidential. Information about you will not be released without your consent unless authorized by law (an example of this is State public health reporting). You have the right to information in your medical record and may request a copy of your medical records. This will be provided except in rare situations when your VA physician feels the information will be harmful to you. In that case, you have the right to have this discussed with you by your VA provider.**
- **You will be informed of all outcomes of care, including any potential injuries. You will be informed about how to request compensation for any injuries.**

## **III. Participation in Treatment Decisions**

- **You, and any persons you choose, will be involved in all decisions about your care. You will be given information you can understand about the benefits and risks of treatment. You will be given other options. You can agree to or refuse treatment. You will be told what is likely to happen to you if you refuse treatment. Refusing treatment will not affect your rights to future care but you take responsibility for the possible results to your health.**
- **Tell your provider about your current condition, medicines (including over-the-counter and herbals), and medical history. Also, share any other information that affects your health. You should ask questions when you do not understand something about your care. Being involved is very important for you to get the best possible results.**
- **You will be given, in writing, the name and title of the provider in charge of your care. As our partner in healthcare, you have the right to be involved in choosing your provider. You also have the right to know the names and titles of those who provide you care. This includes students, residents and trainees. Providers will properly introduce themselves when they take part in your care.**
- **You will be educated about your role and responsibilities as a patient or resident. This includes your participation in decision making and care at the end of life.**
- **If you believe you cannot follow the treatment plan, you have a responsibility to notify your provider or treatment team.**

- **You have the right to have your pain assessed and to receive treatment to manage your pain. You and your treatment team will develop a pain management plan together. You are expected to help the treatment team by telling them if you have pain and if the treatment is working.**
- **As an inpatient or Community Living Center resident, you will be provided any transportation necessary for your treatment plan.**
- **You have the right to choose whether you will participate in any research project. Any research will be clearly identified. Potential risks of the research will be identified and there will be no pressure on you to participate.**
- **You will be included in resolving any ethical issues about your care. You may consult with the Medical Center's Ethics Consultation Service and/or other staff knowledgeable about healthcare ethics.**
- **If you or the Medical Center believes that you have been neglected, abused or exploited, you will receive help.**

#### **IV. Complaints**

- **You are encouraged and expected to seek help from your treatment team or a patient advocate if you have problems or complaints. You will be given understandable information about the complaint process. You may complain verbally or in writing, without fear of retaliation.**

## Visitor Information-East Orange/Lyons Campus

The VA New Jersey Health Care System recognizes that visitors make a valuable contribution to the comfort, healing, and recovery of a hospitalized patient. Visitors are welcome as we strive to personalize, humanize, and demystify the health care experience for patients and their families.

Family and significant others of patients on *most* units are encouraged to visit at all times as long as the patient's condition and patient and/or physician request allows. However, visiting hours are limited on the following units:

<i>Location</i>	<i>Days/Time</i>
<b><i>East Orange Campus</i></b>	
<b>18B</b>	<b>Sunday &amp; Holidays 2:00p.m. – 5:00p.m. Tuesday 6:30p.m. – 8:00p.m.</b>
<b>12B</b>	<b>Monday – Friday 1:00p.m. – 3:00p.m. 6:00p.m. – 8:00p.m. Saturday, Sunday &amp; Holidays 1:00p.m. – 3:30p.m. 5:30p.m. – 8:00p.m.</b>

<i>Location</i>	<i>Days/Time</i>
<b><i>Lyons Campus</i></b>	
<b>Domiciliary</b>	<b>Monday – Friday 4:30p.m. – 8:00p.m. Saturday, Sunday &amp; Holidays 1:00p.m. – 8:00p.m.</b>
<b>L-143CC</b>	<b>Monday – Friday 2:30p.m. – 8:00p.m. Saturday, Sunday &amp; Holidays 9:00a.m. – 8:00p.m.</b>
<b>L-143CW</b>	<b>Monday – Friday 1:00p.m. – 3:00p.m. 6:00p.m. – 8:00p.m.</b>

	<b>Saturday, Sunday &amp; Holidays</b> <b>1:00 p.m. – 3:30p.m.</b> <b>5:30p.m. – 8:00p.m.</b>
<b>L-143CN</b>	<b>Monday – Friday</b> <b>2:30p.m. – 8:00p.m.</b> <b>Saturday, Sunday &amp; Holidays</b> <b>9:00a.m. – 8:00p.m.</b>
<b>L-143BE</b>	<b>Monday – Friday</b> <b>5:00p.m. – 8:00p.m.</b> <b>Saturday, Sunday &amp; Holidays</b> <b>9:00a.m. – 9:00p.m.</b>
<b>L-143CE</b>	<b>Monday – Friday</b> <b>5:00p.m. – 8:00p.m.</b> <b>Saturday, Sunday &amp; Holidays</b> <b>9:00a.m. – 9:00p.m.</b>

**Please check with unit staff for guidelines regarding recently discharged patients visiting other patients.**

**Children are welcome to visit. Visitation by children under the age of 17 should be at the discretion of the parent/legal guardian, patient, and/or physician.**

**Rest and quiet are essential. Visitors are asked to please keep noise levels low and supervise young visitors. As a courtesy and in respect for patient privacy, the number of visitors in a semi-private room may need to be limited.**

**Visitors are reminded to please wash your hands when entering and leaving a patient's room. Do not visit if you are ill.**

# WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW AT ADMISSION

## Arrival on the Inpatient Unit

After admission, you will be escorted to your inpatient unit. There you will be interviewed by a member of the treatment team, and you will be settled into your room. You will be provided information regarding your stay, as appropriate.

The treatment team is available to help you become acquainted with the facility and its various programs. You are encouraged to ask any questions you may have about the VA New Jersey Health Care System and your treatment plan. The goal of the treatment team is to help you understand the causes and nature of your illness and to provide the care necessary to return you to your community as quickly as possible.

## PATIENT REPRESENTATIVE

The Patient Representative is available to you to serve as liaison between the patient and the medical center staff, to assist in the resolution of problems or complaints you may have that cannot be solved by your ward team. During your stay, a Patient Representative will visit you to inquire on any questions or requests that may arise. Language assistance may also be provided. The Patient Representatives may be reached as follows:

### Lyons

**Inpatient - Room N-110, Building 143, Ground Floor  
(908) 647-0180, extension 4595, Pager: 87-141**

**Outpatient - Room M-201, Building 3, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor  
(908) 647-0180, extension 4762, Pager: 87-103**

### East Orange

**Outpatient/Ambulatory Care - Room 1-133, First Floor  
(973) 676-1000, extension 3399, Pager: 88-106**

**Inpatient/C&P/ER - Room 165, Eighth Floor  
(973) 676-1000, extension 2169, Pager: 88-595**

## **SOCIAL WORK**

**Social Workers will assist you with any personal, family, or economic difficulties associated with your hospitalization. They can discuss these and other concerns with you and provide needed assistance through counseling and referral to community agencies. They can also help you and your family deal with the emotional stress that often accompanies issues related to hospitalization and illness. Social Workers are available to work with you and other members of your health team to coordinate arrangements for your aftercare, and other items such as Organ Donation, Advance Directives, and Living Wills. Advance Directives and Living Wills are documents that allow you to express your choices for health care and life sustaining treatment. They allow you to direct your health care if you become incapacitated and provide guidance to your loved ones about your treatment preferences. Social Workers are assigned to all units. Contact a member of your treatment team to arrange a meeting with your Social Worker.**

## **CHAPLAIN SERVICE AND WORSHIP SERVICE**

**Chaplain Service provides for the spiritual needs of patients and their families. Chaplains are available 7 days a week for individual beside pastoral care. Chaplain offices, Interfaith chapels and Blessed-Sacrament chapels are located in Buildings 7 and 143 on the Lyons Campus and space is provided for daily worship at the Community Living Center. In East Orange, the chapels and a Musallah prayer area are located on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor of the main building. Chaplains work with treatment teams to visit individual Veterans, respond to emergencies, pastorally support Veteran's family members and coordinate support from community clergy. For worship schedules, chaplain appointments and spiritual care information, call Chaplain Service at the following extensions:**

<b>East Orange</b>	<b>1305</b>
<b>Lyons</b>	<b>6741</b>

## **VISUAL IMPAIRMENT SERVICES**

**Visually impaired patients will be assisted by the Visual Impairment Service Team (VIST) Coordinator located on the East Orange Campus, 10<sup>th</sup> Fl., Rm. 10-176 and may be reached at (973) 676-1000, extension 1842 or 3213, pager (973) 397-0288, Monday 12:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m. and Tuesday–Friday 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.**

## **PERSONAL BELONGINGS, VALUABLES AND CLOTHING**

Upon admission, you will be asked to change into hospital clothing furnished by the hospital. Your wardrobe while a patient in the facility should be consistent with the type of care you will be receiving and personal clothing not taken home by your family/friends will be kept in your room.

The VA New Jersey Health Care System is unable to provide storage for large amounts of clothing or bulky items such as television sets. Such things must be sent home with your next of kin.

Patients assigned to Residential and Behavioral Units may wish to bring an extra pair of shoes and additional items not to exceed six pairs of washable trousers, twelve shirts, twelve sets of underwear, and a sweater or jacket (in season).

For long-term patients, a limited amount of “out of season” clothing will be accepted for storage in the clothing room at the Lyons Campus.

We urge you not to bring excess items with you at admission and to have things you will not need taken home by your family members. We particularly urge you to send valuables home with your next of kin for your own protection. The VA New Jersey Health Care System is not responsible for the reimbursement of any valuables which are not deposited for safekeeping.

## **PERSONAL FUNDS**

The VA New Jersey Health Care System will only assume responsibility for your funds if they are deposited with the Agent Cashier. We cannot assume responsibility for funds retained in your possession. We would like to suggest that you take advantage of the services of the Agent Cashier, and only keep a small amount of change in your possession for incidental needs.

Funds deposited with the Agent Cashier or Patient Funds are placed in non-interest bearing accounts. Please be advised that certain checks deposited to Patient Funds Accounts are subject to a deferment of 10 to 21 workdays. During this period, withdrawals against these checks may not be made. This deferment does not apply to checks issued by the

**U.S. Treasury, Cashier's or Bank Teller Checks, Postal or bank money orders, and state or county welfare checks.**

**You are urged not to maintain excessive balances in your Patient Funds Account, since no interest can be paid. You are encouraged to deposit funds in excess of your needs in an appropriate financial institution (Bank, Savings and Loan Assoc., etc.) where you may take advantage of all the benefits offered. In addition, withdrawals from your account, including upon your discharge, may be limited to a combination of cash, voucher, and/or check. A maximum amount of \$100 cash may be withdrawn. Up to \$2500 will be issued in a convenience check, and a treasury check will be issued for any remaining balance. Money on deposit not withdrawn at the time of discharge will be mailed to you in a check. Check withdrawals may take 10 – 15 days for processing.**

**In accordance with the regulations governing Personal Funds of Patients, found in this booklet, the following information is provided relative to the withdrawal of personal funds which have been placed on deposit. On the East Orange campus, the Health Unit Coordinator can provide you with a withdrawal fund slip upon request. The withdrawal slip can be presented to the patient funds clerk on A-level Monday through Friday. At the Lyons campus, the Patient Funds Clerk and Agent Cashier are located in Building 143, Room W110 and open Monday through Friday.**

### **MAIL**

**During your inpatient stay at the VANJHCS, your mailing address will be:**

#### **East Orange Campus:**

**(First Name Last Name)  
(Ward Number)  
VA New Jersey Health Care System  
385 Tremont Avenue  
East Orange, NJ 07018**

#### **Lyons Campus:**

**(First Name Last Name)  
(Ward Number)  
VA New Jersey Health Care System  
151 Knollcroft Road  
Lyons, NJ 07939**

## **POST OFFICE**

At the East Orange campus, the Post Office is open daily, Monday through Friday, 10:30 a.m. – 12:00 noon and 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. Money Orders, Registered, Certified, and Express Mail service, etc., are available. The Post Office is located on the third floor near the auditorium.

At the Lyons campus, the Post Office is open Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. The Post Office is located in the Basement of Building 6. Post Office Boxes are also available on the Lyons campus, please check with Post Office Staff.

## **CANTEEN SERVICES**

### **Cafeteria**

Our cafeterias serve a full line of breakfast and lunch items Monday through Friday, 7:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. at East Orange and 7:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. at Lyons. At East Orange, the cafeteria is located on the third floor, C-Wing. At Lyons, the cafeteria is located in Building 6 on the first floor. Check with your nurse manager if you have any questions about visiting the cafeteria.

### **Coffee Shop**

At East Orange, the Starbucks Coffee Shop is located in the main lobby. It serves an assortment of breakfast and lunch items Monday through Friday, 7:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. Check with your nurse manager if you have any questions about visiting the Coffee Shop.

### **Retail Store**

At both campuses, the Retail Store is located adjacent to the Cafeteria. It provides clothing, gift items, candy and snacks, electronics, and health and beauty items you may need during hospitalization. Master Card, VISA, and Discover are all accepted for purchase, as well as patient coupon books. Sales tax is not charged on items sold in the Retail Store. Hours of operation are Monday – Friday, 8:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. both campuses. Check with your nurse manager if you have any questions about visiting the Retail Store.

### **Vending Machines/ATM**

**At East Orange, an Automated Teller Machine (ATM) is located in the lobby on the A Level. At Lyons, the ATM is located in the Vending area, near the Pharmacy, Building 3, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor and in the Community Living Center, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, near the main elevators.**

**Vending machine areas are located throughout the facility on both campuses.**

### **Barber Services**

**At East Orange, contact the unit manager for barber services. At Lyons, the barber is open Monday through Wednesday, 12:00 noon – 2:30 p.m. and is located in the basement of Building 6.**

## **SPEAK UP INITIATIVE**

VA New Jersey Health Care System encourages you to

### **SPEAK UP**

**To become involved with your care and help to prevent errors in your care**

**We encourage you to do so.**

**We would like to communicate with you and your family about all aspects of your care, treatment, and services.**

**We think this is an important characteristic of our culture of safety at VANJHCS.**

**We would like to help you and your family discuss concerns about safety with your health care team.**

**Our Speak Up Initiative helps us to provide the best care to our Veterans by:**

- **preventing errors in care delivered;**
- **avoiding mistakes in a Veteran's surgery;**
- **encouraging Veterans to prevent infections; and**
- **avoiding mistakes with procedures, tests, or medications.**

### **SPEAK UP**

**You have the right to know**

**Speak up if you have a question or concern. If you still don't understand, ask again. It's your care, you have the right to know.**

**Pay attention to the care you get. Always make sure you're getting the right treatment and by the right health care provider.**

**Educate yourself about your illness. Learn about the medical tests you get and your treatments.**

**Ask a trusted family member or a friend to be your advocate (advisor or supporter).**

**Know what medicines you take and why you take them.**

**Medicine errors are the most common care mistakes.**

**Use a hospital, clinic, surgery center, or other type of health care organization that has been accredited by the Joint Commission, who visits hospitals to see if they are meeting quality standards. VANJHCS is accredited.**

**Participate in all decisions about your treatment. You are the center of the Health Care Team.**

## **VA NEW JERSEY RAPID RESPONSE TEAM**

**A Rapid Response Team is a group of nurses, respiratory therapists, and doctors who are trained to help when there are signs that a patient is getting sicker. The purpose of a Rapid Response Team is to help before there is a medical emergency such as a heart attack. Rapid Response Teams take action very quickly when a patient's medical condition changes/worsens/or when patients get sicker. They may suggest laboratory tests, x-rays, medications, or even moving the patient to an intensive care unit. These actions can help patients get better and live longer. Problems can happen any time a patient is in the hospital. This includes just after surgery, during medical tests, or when a patient is recovering from an illness.**

**Warning signs that a patient is getting sicker:**

- Changes in the heart or breathing (respiratory) rate.**
- A drop in blood pressure (it gets much lower).**
- Changes in how much urine is made.**
- Confusion or other mental status (thinking) changes.**
- When something just does not look or seem right with the patient.**
- If you are concerned, ask a staff member to call the Rapid Response Team.**

**Family members can learn more about Rapid Response Teams at [www.ihl.org](http://www.ihl.org).**

## **ACCESS TO INFORMATION**

**The VA New Jersey Health Care System encourages patients and their family members to be involved in their care. Doing so improves the health care experience and enables the patients to become active participants in their care. The following are available for patients to use during their visits at the VANJHCS:**

- **Open Access to Information – inpatients are encouraged to read their medical records and be informed partners in their care. You may ask your provider to set up a time to review:**
  - **Laboratory and test results;**
  - **Symptoms;**
  - **Diagnoses;**
  - **Overall condition; and/or,**
  - **Medications.**

**You may also ask nursing staff to arrange for you to speak with the inpatient pharmacist if you have additional questions related to over-the-counter medications, herbal supplements, vitamins, and/or minerals.**

- **Patient Education Resource Centers (PERCs) – offer patients and families a wide range of topics on health and medical information. They are located at East Orange (room 3-144), Lyons (Building 4 basement room 15), and at the James J. Howard (Brick) Community Based Clinic; all are open from 8:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m.**
- **My Health<sub>e</sub>Vet (MHV) – is a web-based application designed specifically as a one-stop shop for Veterans and their families. It provides access to:**
  - **Trusted health information;**
  - **Links to federal and VA benefits and resources;**
  - **A Personal Health Journal; and,**
  - **Online VA prescription refills.**

**My Health<sub>e</sub>Vet is a powerful tool to help you better understand and manage your health. When using My Health<sub>e</sub>Vet for the first time, In-Person Authentication is required in order to access your personal health information from your medical record. You may visit a PERC for more information or contact the Veterans Health Education Coordinator, at extension 2876. The link to the website is [www.myhealth.va.gov](http://www.myhealth.va.gov).**

## **PHARMACY SERVICE**

**When your prescription has refills:**

**We recommend you use the mail out program to refill prescriptions. You may also order refills by calling 800-480-5590 or through the internet at [www.myhealth.va.gov](http://www.myhealth.va.gov) 24 hours 7 days a week. Veterans receiving a NEW prescription after a clinic visit may fill it at our outpatient pharmacy locations.**

**You may always speak to a pharmacist by calling 800-480-5590 and wait for the appropriate prompt.**

### **East Orange**

**Building 1, A-level (Near Main Elevator)**

**Mon-Fri 8:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m., Closed Saturday, Sunday and Holidays  
800-480-5590**

### **Lyons**

**Building 3, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor (Near Vending Machine Area)**

**Mon-Fri 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m., Closed Saturday, Sunday and Holidays  
800-480-5590**

### **James J. Howard Outpatient Clinic and All Community Based Outpatient Clinics**

**Near Main Entrance**

**Mon-Fri 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m., Closed Saturday, Sunday and Holidays  
800-480-5590**

## **WHILE YOU'RE HERE**

### **Smoking Policy**

**Smoking has been proven to be hazardous and dangerous to life and property. Smoking is restricted in the facilities for your safety. The VA New Jersey Health Care System is a smoke-free facility.**

**If you are a smoker, there are designated smoking areas located adjacent to facility buildings. Contact a member of your treatment team for the location of the nearest designated smoking shelter/area.**

### **Medications**

**Please do not bring any medications with you during your hospital stay. Medications brought into the hospital will be destroyed if they are VA prescriptions or mailed to your home if they are from a private Pharmacy. All medication brought into the facility will be turned in to the Pharmacy. While you are in the hospital, you may take only medication prescribed by your hospital physician. Please make an accurate list of all prescription and nonprescription medications you are currently taking and bring that list to review with your doctor. Prior to discharge, a pharmacist will speak with you about your medications. Please ask your nurse, your doctor, or your pharmacist if you still have any questions about the medication you are taking.**

### **Identification Bands**

**An inpatient identification band will be placed on your wrist to assure proper identification during your stay. The band should not be removed until you are discharged. If your ID band becomes illegible, please obtain a new one from your Health Unit Coordinator. Our hospital also uses color-coded ID bands to indicate allergies and other important treatment information. If you have questions about the color-coding, ask a member of your treatment team to explain it to you.**

## **Nutrition and Food Service**

**The diet prescribed for you is an important part of your overall treatment plan. You are encouraged to take an active part in the management of your nutritional care by adhering to any dietary modification(s) indicated by your physician. A registered dietitian will discuss your diet with you. If you wish further information on any nutrition-related topic, please ask to speak with your dietitian.**

## **Patient Billing**

**The VA New Jersey Health Care System also provides services to help you with any questions or concerns regarding patient billing.**

**Medical Care Cost Funds/ Billing – Extensions 1514/1594**

## **Tipping, Borrowing, Gambling, and Soliciting**

**The VA New Jersey Health Care System provides its services to all patients without favoritism. No tips can be accepted by any staff member, therefore, none should be offered. If you wish to express your appreciation, please inquire about our Oak Leaf Awards Program. We created the Oak Leaf Awards Program to reward employees who deliver exceptional service and who demonstrate the organization's values to achieve Veteran satisfaction. For more information regarding the Oak Leaf Awards Program, please contact the Planetree Office at extension 2672 or 2377.**

**No financial transactions of any kind are permitted between patients and staff members.**

**Gambling in any form is forbidden. This includes the use of money, chips, tokens, matches, etc., in games of chance.**

## **Drugs, Alcohol, and Sexual Relations**

**Administering a well-run medical facility, which enables us to provide you with the best possible medical care and treatment, requires abiding by certain rules and regulations. The most important of these rules are:**

- 1. Sexual activity on the premises is prohibited.**
- 2. Possession, use, or distribution of illegal drugs or intoxicating beverages is not permitted.**
- 3. Only medication prescribed and provided by the Medical Center may be used.**

## **Transportation**

**If possible we ask that you do not bring a car to the Medical Center when reporting for admission because parking space is extremely limited. It is your responsibility to make transportation arrangements for your admission to and discharge from the Medical Center.**

**At the East Orange campus, public transportation by bus is available. Current bus schedules may be obtained from the information desk in the main lobby.**

**At the Lyons campus, VA provides regularly scheduled transportation to the Lyons train station. Departures for the train station are from Building 1 at 9:20 a.m., 11:30 a.m., and 3:20 p.m., Monday through Friday. On Saturdays, Sundays, and Holidays, transportation between the Lyons train station and the VA will be made by VA Lyons Police upon phone request to (908) 647-0180, extension 3000.**

**Train transportation is provided by New Jersey Transit on the Gladstone Branch of the Morris and Essex Lines, and may be reached by phoning toll-free 1-800-772-2222.**

## **East Orange-Lyons Shuttle Bus**

**A shuttle bus runs each hour, on the hour, Monday through Friday, 7:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m., with a last bus running at 4:30 p.m. Patients who are to be seen by care providers at the other campus will be given a trip ticket to ride the shuttle, and escorted by a staff member as appropriate.**

## **DISCHARGE**

**At the conclusion of your inpatient hospital stay, you will receive written discharge instructions from your treating physician. This includes directions about diet, medications, and return visits.**

**Please make certain that you receive all of your belongings prior to your departure.**

## IMPORTANT TELEPHONE NUMBERS

<p><b><u>Main Campuses</u></b>  <b>East Orange</b>  <b>(973) 676-1000</b></p> <p><b>Lyons</b>  <b>(908) 647-0180</b></p>	<p><b><u>DAV Representative</u></b>  <b>East Orange</b>  <b>(973) 676-1000 Ext. 1966</b></p> <p><b>Lyons</b>  <b>(908) 647-0180 Ext. 4495</b></p>
<p><b><u>Veterans Benefits Office</u></b>  <b>East Orange</b>  <b>(973) 676-1000</b></p> <p><b>Ext. 1445, 1455, 2050, 3434, 3479, 3480</b></p> <p><b>Lyons</b>  <b>(908) 647-0180</b></p> <p><b>Ext. 4020/6970</b></p> <p><b><u>VA Regional Office</u></b>  <b>(800) 827-1000 (Newark)</b></p> <p><b><u>Suicide Hotline</u></b>  <b>(800) 273-TALK (2855)</b></p>	<p><b><u>Women Veterans Coordinator</u></b>  <b>East Orange</b>  <b>(973) 676-1000 Ext. 3117</b></p> <p><b><u>Operation Enduring Freedom/Operation Iraqi Freedom Program</u></b>  <b>Brick – (732) 206-8900 Ext. 6106</b></p> <p><b>East Orange – (973) 676-1000 Ext. 1727</b></p> <p><b>Lyons – (908) 647-0180 Ext. 4788/4398</b></p> <p><b><u>Visual Impairment Service Team Coordinator</u></b>  <b>East Orange</b>  <b>(973) 676-1000</b>  <b>Ext. 1842 or 3213</b></p>
<p><b><u>Centralized Scheduling</u></b>  <b>Both Campuses</b>  <b>(800) 661-8177</b></p>	<p><b><u>Telephone Triage</u></b>  <b>East Orange</b>  <b>(973) 676-1000</b>  <b>Ext. 7242</b></p> <p><b>Lyons</b>  <b>(908) 647-0180</b>  <b>Ext. 4473</b></p> <p><b>Toll-Free (Both Campuses)</b>  <b>(800) 315-7909 or (800) 877-6976</b></p>

# IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR YOU

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**Your Physician**

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**Your Nurse Manager**

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**Your Social Worker**

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**Your Dietitian**

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**Other Care Staff**

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# NOTES



