



**Paralyzed Veterans
of America**

New England Chapter

CORDWORD

The Monthly News Magazine of the New England Chapter of Paralyzed Veterans of America

Maine Veterans Home Ground Breaking



INSIDE THIS EDITION

COMMUNITY CARE

HOME COOKING



NEW ENGLAND CHAPTER OFFICES

VA SEC. WILKIE ON MISSION ACT	5
MAINE VETERANS' HOME	6
VA FACILITIES GO SMOKE FREE	10
NORTHEAST PASSAGE EVENTS	12
VA MISSION ACT TOP QUESTIONS	17
INDIVIDUAL ALLOTMENT POLICY	19



PVA Issues Statement on the VA Implementation of the Veterans Community Care Program.

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Home Cooking at Brockton VAMC SCI Bldg 8 Long-Term Care Residents.

BROCKTON, Mass. -- Residents of VA Boston's Spinal Cord Injury unit in Brockton have been fixing up some home cooking as part of an ongoing program which promotes community, incorporates nutrition education and focuses on creating healthy and wholesome dishes.

Veterans living with spinal cord injuries have been cooking their own meals bi-weekly for a little over a year butcontinued on page 14.

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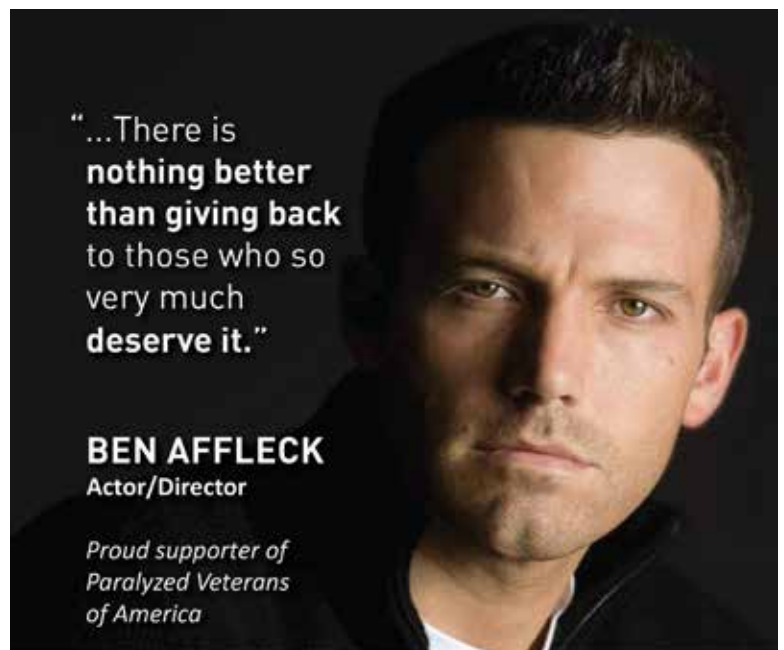


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PVA Issues Statement on the VA Implementation of the Veterans Community Care Program

PVA Website - Liz Deakin, Director of Communications



Carl Blake, Executive Director of Paralyzed Veterans of America issues the following statement regarding the VA implementation of the Veterans Community Care Program. “Today, Paralyzed Veterans of America marks a new beginning for veterans’ health care with VA’s launch of the Veterans Community Care Program as required by the VA MISSION Act. As with any change, we know there will be challenges, but we believe this opportunity will lead to a better partnership between the VA and community health

care providers. Ultimately, the new community care program should improve access to health care for veterans, ensuring they have the ability to get the care they need when they need it and where it is most appropriate.

The VA health care system is integral in the everyday lives of Paralyzed Veterans of America members. Veterans living with spinal cord injury and disease like ALS and MS, have unique health care challenges and the holistic view of care present at the VA is unmatched. Our members rely on the success of the VA, its irreplaceable capabilities and the important research that takes place within the system to help them lead unstoppable lives.

Paralyzed Veterans of America has long been a champion of, and one of the most influential voices for, VA reform. We believe all veterans deserve the benefits they have earned through their service and sacrifice. The new community care program is a positive step toward that goal. We stand ready to support the VA, our members and the wider veteran community, as the VA MISSION Act is implemented.”

Urgent Care – Where and When You Need It

via My HealtheVet at www.myhealth.va.gov



You’ve probably seen news about the MISSION Act, which expands same-day services in primary care and mental health, as well as expanded telehealth to Veterans in their homes. Under the MISSION Act, urgent care is now a supplemental benefit for eligible Veterans. Urgent care in VA or the community (i.e., non-VA) is for those minor injuries and illnesses that do not require emergency room care. This support for urgent care does not replace the important relationship that you have with your VA health care team.

If you need to use the new urgent care benefit, it is important that you

go to an urgent care location in your community that is within the newly established VA contracted network.

It is also important to know the following details about the prescription component of the benefit:

- If the urgent care provider gives you a prescription, you can fill a 14-day supply of that medication at the VA or in a pharmacy within the VA contracted network.
- If you choose to fill an urgent care prescription at a pharmacy outside of the VA network, you will be required to pay for the prescription at the time of pick up and then file a claim for reimbursement at your local VA medical facility.

If you arrive at an urgent care network location and have any difficulty receiving care, you can call 866-620-2071 to receive assistance.

You can also call your local VA facility 24/7 for advice, or logon to My HealtheVet and send a Secure Message (login required) to your health care team. Any Secure Message should get a response within 3 business days (usually fewer).

From the Secretary of Veterans Affairs Robert Wilkie, to all of our Veterans and supporters across the country, a note explaining the MISSION Act.

VA Public Affairs Office via www.va.gov



Imagine if Republicans and Democrats worked together to pass reforms that improve the lives of millions of people.

And imagine if those reforms put America's Veterans at the center of their healthcare decisions, leading to better customer service for our Nation's heroes.

This isn't hypothetical. It happened last year when Congress passed the MISSION Act.

Through state-of-the-art facilities, cutting-edge technology, and increased clinician recruiting and retention incentives, VA continues to enhance its coordinated care system through high-quality VA health care and community care provider networks.

The legislation sailed through Congress with overwhelming bipartisan support and the strong backing of Veterans' service organizations.

President Donald J. Trump's signature put us on a path to implementing these reforms. On June 6, the MISSION Act will enable VA to consolidate the Department's community care efforts into a single, simple-to-use program that will empower Veterans with the ability to choose the healthcare providers they trust.

So what can Veterans expect on June 6?

Less red tape, more satisfaction and predictability for patients, more efficiency for our clinicians, and better value for taxpayers.

Veterans will be eligible to get community care for a variety of reasons, including when VA can't provide the treatment they need or when care outside our system is in the best medical interest of the patient.

We listened to Veterans and heard they preferred standards based on drive times rather than driving mileage because those standards better reflect Veteran experiences, especially in large urban areas with lots of traffic.

To ensure our Veterans are spending their time getting care instead of driving to it, patients facing an average drive time of 30-minutes or more for VA primary or mental healthcare, or non-institutional extended care services, will have the option of choosing a community provider closer to home. For specialty care, the drive-time standard will be an average of 60 minutes.

And to get Veterans the care they need when they need it, VA patients facing a 20-day or more wait time for primary or mental healthcare, or non-institutional extended care services, will have the option of choosing

a community provider who can deliver that care faster. For specialty care, the wait-time standard will be 28 days.

For additional convenience and timely treatment, eligible Veterans will also have access to urgent, walk-in care that gives them the choice to receive certain services at participating community clinics in their communities. (To access this new benefit, Veterans will select a provider in VA's community care network and may be charged a copayment.)

Veterans will be encouraged to ask VA about these new options, and well-trained staff will be available to help them quickly understand their choices.

These exciting and important changes speak to my top priority – delivering the best medical customer service and offering Veterans more healthcare choices.

While we still have more work to do, the VA is making progress.

We are seeing more patients than ever before, more quickly than ever before and studies show VA now compares favorably to the private sector for access and quality of care – and in many cases exceeds it.

And Veterans have noticed.

Patients' trust in VA care has skyrocketed to 87.7 percent, and in the last fiscal year VA completed more than 58 million internal appointments – a record high and 623,000 more than the year before.

VA employees are noticing improvements as well. VA ranked sixth out of 17 Federal Government agencies in the Partnership for Public Service's most recent "Best Places to Work" survey, up from 17th the year prior.

To maintain the trust of our Veterans, we must continue to deliver. And we will constantly innovate, upgrade, and pursue ways to better serve our Nation's heroes.

The MISSION Act is a vital part of this effort, giving VA the ability to implement the best practices we've learned in our nearly 75 years of experience offering community care.

The core of the doctor-patient relationship is trust. President Trump promised Veterans that this core value would shape the VA.

With the MISSION Act, the future of the VA healthcare system will lie in the hands of Veterans – precisely where it should be.

That's exactly what President Trump promised, it's exactly what Congress voted for, and it's exactly what VA will deliver to America's Veterans.

We will provide more information and progress updates over the next several weeks.

For more information on the Mission Act, and what this will do for all Veterans, please go to www.MISSIONAct.va.gov

Maine Veterans' Home Development to Begin

Contributed by *Maureen Milliken, Staff Writer MaineBiz*

AUGUSTA — Construction of a new Maine Veterans' Homes long-term care center in the northeast end of the city is beginning this month, a plan that's been five years in the making.

Trees on the 44-acre site across Old Belgrade Road from the MaineGeneral Alford Center for Health are expected to start coming down next week.

The \$90 million, 179,000-square-foot, four-building complex will be completed by early 2021, Maine Veterans' Homes CEO Kelley Kash said on Tuesday.

Once it's done, the "small-house"-design complex will be unique among long-term care homes in the state, said Kash.

It will also be another major project in a long undeveloped area of the city that's poised to become the next development hot spot.

The design of the 138-bed long-term-care residence is built around the overall physical, mental and emotional needs of those who will be using it, said Kash and Deb Fournier, COO of Maine Veterans' Homes.

"The old traditional way is really built on a hospital model," Fournier said. Those care centers have long hallways, central nursing stations and semi-private rooms. "They're meant to mimic what you see in a hospital."

The new Augusta care center, which replaces a 36-year-old building on Cony Road, is designed to be more like a home, with clusters of private rooms around a living room, dining room, den and kitchen. The four separate two-story buildings are all connected.

Fournier said that studies show that those who live in long-term care centers that are more like a home than a hospital do better physically and mentally. Specific benefits include better sleep, less agitation and a higher level of comfort and self-worth. They're also less prone to infection and other health issues.

Changes in needs, technology



COURTESY / MAINE VETERANS' HOMES

A rendering of the Maine Veterans' Homes long-term care center exterior. The four buildings are connected.

Maine Veterans' Homes is an independent nonprofit established by the Legislature in 1977. The Cony Road center, which opened in 1983, was the organization's first long-term care home. It's headquarters is at 460 Civic Center Drive, close to the planned new care home.

That "hospital-model style" home has aged out, not so much because of the building itself, but because of changes in care and technology.

Kash said that while the life expectancy of a building is usually about 40 years, the technology has changed even faster, and the buildings from the 1980s don't accommodate the needs of the 21st century.

For instance, he said, "rehabilitation was not a big part of the planning."

"We'd like to include small house concepts to a degree in all our homes," Kash said.

The organization has six homes — in Augusta, Scarborough, Bangor, Machias, Caribou and South Paris.

A master plan evaluation in 2014 determined that changes were needed, and would be needed in the decades to come.

"Augusta and Scarborough [which opened in 1990] were our top priorities," he said.

Augusta was chosen for replacement because of availability of land and the fact it was the the oldest building, he said.

The planning process involved asking residents, staff, families and other stakeholders what they'd like to see in a new care center.

Connectivity and community



COURTESY / MAINE VETERANS' HOMES

A rendering of the rooms at the planned Maine Veterans' Homes long-term care center in Augusta.

They weren't surprised that private rooms and bathrooms were at the top of the list, Kash and Fournier said.

But an outcome that surprised them was that clients in the secure units felt too restricted, and that those living at the center need to feel connectivity with the community.

The staff also toured centers around the country, gathering ideas.

What resulted are rooms that appear, from the outside, to be part of a village, with different faces. The design helps with both memory care — residents can more easily find their room — and also with comfort levels.

Fournier said they also gathered information from around Maine, and designed the room facades and other elements with an eye toward that region of the state's architecture and familiar elements.

A University of New England program that places medical students in center as residents for 10 days also helped with feedback. One student who participated was an architect who gave them some design feedback.

"It was kind of happenstance," Fournier said, but it added some efficiencies to the room design.

Rooms will have small tables, desks, chairs and areas for residents to visit and have privacy and socialize comfortably in their rooms, rather than have visitors stand or sit on the bed, Kash

Aside from more comfortable rooms, the common areas will make it a household. "They'll participate in daily living activities," he said.

Each living area will have its own laundry area, and while staff generally do the laundry, “If [residents] want to do their laundry, they can,” he said.

Ground-floor rooms will have patio areas, and outdoor space on the rolling wooded property will include raised beds for gardening and other outdoor activities.

After input from those participating in research, they also added a pond that will be stocked for fishing.

The fourth building will include those things that are necessary now that weren’t thought of when the Augusta center was built in 1983, including a larger rehab pool, a gym and more extensive multi-purpose room.

But it will also have a “village center,” with “shops” that offer coffee, ice cream and gelato, beauty salon and barber services, small market and a business center that looks like a bank.

While the number of veterans in general is decreasing, the number of senior veterans who need long-term care is not.

Team design, building approach



COURTESY / MAINE VETERANS’ HOMES

A rendering of the facades to the rooms in the planned Maine Veterans Homes long-care center in Augusta.

The search for ideas also included a search for architects and builders familiar with the small house design concept, Kash said.

The result is a team of architects, including Gawron Turgeon Architects, of Scarborough, and Plunkett Raysich Architects, of Wisconsin.

The building team is Cianbro, of Pittsfield, and VJS Construction Services of Milwaukee, Wisc.

Kash said the individual cottage front design by the Wisconsin builders and architects was one of the many selling points.

The \$90 million price tag for the project is up from the \$76 million estimate when the project was approved by the Augusta Planning Board in early 2017.

“The cost escalation has been enormous [over the past two years],” Kash said.

A U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs State Home construction grant of \$50 million will help pay for the project.

While Maine Veterans’ Homes would love to do the same type of project for all the locations in the future, in the present the other locations are doing what they can, Kash and Fournier said.

In Scarborough, the dining area has been reconfigured to be restaurant-style.

In Bangor, a \$4.5 million renovation underway is reconfiguring common areas in the 20,000-square-foot building to add some of the comfort aspects the new Augusta center will have, and also adding 5,000 square feet of space. A \$2.7 million federal VA grant helped support that project.

‘Service center within a service center’

One of the attractions of the location in the largely undeveloped north-east area of Augusta is proximity to the MaineGeneral hospital, which opened in 2013, Kash said.

The new development, on side road Henry’s Way, will share a traffic light with the hospital.

Adjacent to the hospital is the Alford Center for Cancer Care, which opened in 2013.

Along with the hospital and cancer care center came a new Interstate 95 exit — Exit 113 — that opened that end of the city up to more development.

The city also established a medical development zone in the area around the hospital, meant to attract development like the long-term care home.

The area around Exits 112A and B, which is a mile from the new Maine Veterans Home site, includes the Augusta Civic Center and the large Marketplace of Augusta shopping area.

The pastoral Maine Veterans Memorial Cemetery separates the two areas.

The National Guard opened a 101,000-square-foot joint headquarters next to the cemetery earlier this year.

A 250-unit apartment complex is planned for 15 acres on Civic Center Drive, also near the new Maine Veterans’ Homes development.

Much of the open land in that section of Augusta, which only started development in the past 20 years, now has signs from a variety of real estate brokers.

“North Augusta is clearly ripe for continued development,” said Keith Luke, Augusta’s deputy director of economic development. “MaineGeneral, the Alford Cancer Center, Maine Veterans’ Home combined with a recently approved 250-unit rental housing project will all concentrate activity in and around Exit 112 and 113 for years to come.”

He said, “In many respects, North Augusta has become a “service center within a service center.”

Unique population

Fournier and Kash say the needs of Maine Veterans’ Homes clients are unique in some ways.

While the majority of the population in long-term care is female, the majority in Maine Veterans’ Homes six locations, which is 86% veterans, is male. The organization also provides services to spouses of veterans and parents who have lost a child in combat.

That means design also took into account larger occupants, as well as a focus on things that may calm anxiety and symptoms of PTSD.

Kash, who is a retired U.S. Air Force colonel, said there is a camaraderie among the residents of the homes, borne of shared experience.

That extends to the extensive network of volunteers the homes have, many of them veterans.

“We have volunteers who are there every day,” he said, and the variety of activities and services provided by volunteers are a huge benefit to the homes.

Two of the centers — Machias in 2018 and Scarborough in 2016 — were awarded the American Health Care Association Quality Gold Award. Only 38 nursing homes nationwide have won the award since it was first given out in 2004, and the two centers are the only Maine Gold winners.

While both the Augusta and Bangor projects benefited from U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs State Home construction grants, Maine Veterans’ Homes is not part of the federal department, but an independent non-

Maine Veterans' Home cont.

Continued from page 7.

profit.

That means funding is similar to that of other nonprofit long-term care organizations — Medicaid, Medicare, grants, donations and other sources.

Kash said the federal grant for the Augusta project will pay about three-fifths of the estimated \$90 million cost, but a capital campaign will launch soon.



Secretary of Veterans Affairs Robert Wilkie



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May and June Wrap-Up!

By Debra A. Freed, Chapter Executive Director

Wow, this may or may not be my last article for the PVA New England CordWord.

How quickly the month of May went by. As I didn't go to the 73rd PVA Convention, I'll have to leave that for the Chapter National Director and the Chapter President to share any other information. I did participate in the Association of Chapter Executive Directors (ACED) Meeting via teleconference. Unfortunately, PVA Finance could not make the ACED meeting, but PVA's Communications Department did. I remain proud of the work the group has done over the years and continues to do. My hope, even though I am no longer a part, that they all continue. Their dedication and loyalty really are second to none.

May was somewhat of a quiet month. One monthly event, the Brockton Pizza Party, had a very good turn-out. There is always getting ready for the Vet Games, through the weekly training of handcycling, Air-guns, Boccia, Ping-pong, billiards, etc. There are 20 plus athletes getting ready to head to Louisville, Kentucky between July 10 and the 17th. And thanks to the Board of Directors, we do have a truck, Ryder this time. Additional thanks need to go to Bill Whitten and Holly Warshaw for driving down and back.

On May 24th, Denise Pease and I went down to the Veterans Appreciation Event held at Quinnipiac University in Hamden. It came about by an Asst Principal who also taught Social Studies who overheard his students comment how they were looking forward to Memorial Day without understanding or appreciating the sacrifices of why they were getting a three-day weekend. Over Memorial Day weekend, I had the privilege of sharing in the placement of flags at some of the 40,000 plus graves at the Bourne National Cemetery, in Bourne, MA. Many thanks to the volunteers who were there either the day before or early that morning placing bins of flags so folks wouldn't have to carry them around. It was an amazing site.

June will have had the Chapter Board meeting (6.5), The Women Veterans Conference (Springfield) (6.15), The West Roxbury Pizza Party (6.17); Chapter elections – please tell me you voted (ballots due back 6.21). The Women Veterans Health Fair (Bedford 6.22), the Brockton Community meeting (6.26) and of course, the Chapter annual banquet (more on this last one later).

Getting back to the Vet Games: A huge shout out must go to Delta Airlines, the airline of record for the Vet Games. They have been super cool to work with and will give our travelling athletes a good ride down and back. Also, a shout out to Ryder of Braintree. My sincere thanks to them for supporting our veteran athletes. And, of course, all of the venue hotels, the Galt, the Marriott, and the Embassy Suites. Finally, a note thanking the Telephone Pioneers for providing the Chapter with a \$500 gift card for gas for the trip down.

PVA and the VA have found novel ways to continue to support its military veteran athletes. Although a number of changes have affected how things are done, between 550 and 700 sign up each year to attend this 18+ event week. Again, the Chapter is sending over 20 athletes. However, without their families and caregivers, they/we would not be able to go.

Lastly, please come out to the Chapter banquet June 28th. You can now either register at www.eventbrite.com/72nd-annual-new-england-pva-banquet or you can contact Ms. Jennifer White @ West Roxbury A2 or Dan Shaul at Bldg 8. Please know we must have a valid/solid count by June 21st. It will be a nice time, 6p to 11p and Moseley's On the Charles. An opportunity to win some nice raffle prizes with the grand prize being \$250 gift card!!!!

VA Health Care Facilities to Go Smoke-Free

VA Public Affairs Office via www.va.gov



WASHINGTON — As part of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs' (VA) commitment to provide excellent health care for Veterans, the department will implement a new policy restricting smoking by patients, visitors, volunteers, contractors and vendors at its health care facilities by October.

Although VA has historically permitted smoking in designated areas, there is growing evidence that smoking and exposure to secondhand and thirdhand smoke creates significant medical risks, and risks to safety and direct patient care that are inconsistent with medical requirements and limitations. Accordingly, VA's Veterans Health Administration (VHA) has collaborated with key stakeholders to update and recertify the policy to be consistent with the department's commitment to Veterans and the community.

A recent VA survey revealed that approximately 85% of responding facility leadership support smoke-free campuses, and this new policy

for patients, visitors, volunteers, contractors and vendors allows VA to ensure the health and well-being of VA staff, patients and the public.

"We are not alone in recognizing the importance of creating a smoke-free campus," said VA Secretary Robert Wilkie. "As of 2014, 4,000 health care facilities and four national health care systems in the U.S. have implemented smoke-free grounds. This policy change coincides with additional VHA efforts to help us become the provider of choice for Veterans and the reason why Veterans will ChooseVA."

VHA's new smoke-free policy applies to cigarettes, cigars, pipes, any other combustion of tobacco and non-Federal Drug Administration approved electronic nicotine delivery systems (ENDS), including but not limited to electronic or e-cigarettes, vape pens or e-cigs.

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We offer online registration. If you need information or instructions for creating an online account, please click [here](#). If you need your username and password re-sent, please contact us (please do not attempt to create a new account).

Or please contact Northeast Passage at 603-862-0070 or northeast.passage@unh.edu and we will gladly take care of your registration.

Payment can be made to Northeast Passage by credit card over the phone (603-862-0070) or at the event. We accept check, cash and all major credit cards.

Northeast Passage Water Ski Essential Eligibility:

To participate in these events, all participants must meet the following criteria:

- Be able to breathe independently, not require medical devices to sustain breathing.
- Be able to maintain a closed mouth/lips while under water.
- Independently hold head upright without neck/head support.
- Be able to independently turn from face down to face up and remain floating face up while wearing a properly fitted personal flotation device.
- Get out of a capsized waterski independently, when floating in deep water.

Participants must successfully demonstrate the above criteria through a water test prior to their first ski of the season, if they have modified their ski fitting or are trying a new piece of equipment and/or if they have experienced a change in medical status since their previous water test.

Be able to manage personal care independently, or with the assistance of a companion who accompanies you.

Find all dates and register online on our calendar.

Tuesday Evening Events:

Per Northeast Passage policy, interested water skiers can sign up for TWO Tuesday sessions to start off the season. You are welcome to add yourself to the waitlist for other dates and we will register you accordingly as space becomes available. Since our spots are limited, we want to give everyone the opportunity to get out on the water this summer. Thank you for your understanding.

Choose 4:00-6:00pm OR 6:00-8:00pm

Fee: \$25/per session

Come experience the freedom of carving across the wakes and catching some big air on NEP's adaptive water skis. Northeast Passage offers adaptive sit down skiing, stand up skiing, and tubing.

Barrington, NH: 6/18, 7/9, 7/16, 8/6

Merrimac, MA: 6/25, 7/2, 7/23, 7/30, 8/20, 8/27

We do not ski in extreme weather conditions (thunder & lightning). If your session is cancelled, we will do our best to fit you into a makeup or weekend day but our water ski dates are extremely popular and we cannot guarantee a replacement date. Thank you for your understanding.

Water Ski Weekends

Water ski weekend dates do not count towards the two session limit, sign up for one or both (even if you have Tuesday nights!).

NEW HAMPSHIRE

Saturday, July 27 - Wolfeboro, NH

Morning or afternoon sessions available

Fee: \$25/per session

VERMONT

Saturday, August 17 - Wilmington, VT

Morning or afternoon sessions available

Fee: \$25/per session

Make a weekend of it! Ask us about local lodging options.



Summer Paddlesports Schedule

Pre-registration is required for all events. Space is limited, so sign up soon!

We offer online registration. If you need information or instructions for creating an online account, please click [here](#). If you need your username and password re-sent, please contact us (please do not attempt to create a new account).

Or please contact Northeast Passage at 603-862-0070 or northeast.passage@unh.edu and we will gladly take care of your registration.

Payment can be made to Northeast Passage by credit card over the phone (603-862-0070) or at the event. We accept check, cash and all major credit cards.

Per Northeast Passage policy, interested paddlers can sign up for TWO sessions to start off the season (2 kayak, 2 paddleboard). You are welcome to add yourself to the waitlist for other dates and we will register you accordingly as space becomes available. Since our spots are limited, we want to give everyone the opportunity to get out on the water this summer. Thank you for your understanding.

To participate in these events, all paddlers must meet the ACA's Essential Eligibility Requirements. Please let us know if you have questions about these requirements.

Paddling Instruction and equipment (kayak/paddleboard, PFD, and paddle) provided for all events. All paddling events are guided by ACA Certified Paddling Instructors.

Find all dates and register online on our calendar.

Adaptive Kayak Tours

June 17, 3:00-5:00PM, Nottingham, NH: Join us for a Summer paddle, exploring the shoreline of Pawtuckaway Lake!

July 22, 2:00-4:00PM, Rye, NH: Explore the classic tidal harbour shorelines of Odiorne Point, Little Harbor, and the quiet waterways accessible at high tide.

August 2, 11:00AM-1:00PM, Rye, NH: Explore the classic tidal harbour shorelines of Odiorne Point, Little Harbor, and the quiet waterways accessible at high tide.

August 3, 11:00AM-1:00PM, Dover, NH: Come utilize the new public dock in Dover, NH and explore the scenic Cocheco river at high tide.

Fees: \$30, \$40 for tandem, \$5 if you have your own boat

Adaptive Kayak Fish

June 24, 6-8:00PM, Kayak Fish, Nottingham, NH: Join us for a Summer paddle and fishing along the shoreline of Pawtuckaway Lake! You are welcome to bring your own rod/reel, tackle, and kayak, if in good working order.

Fees: \$30, \$40 for tandem, \$5 if you have your own boat

Adaptive Paddleboarding

Join us for an introductory skills session in Paddleboarding! We are continuing to develop adaptation techniques and would love for you to join us in this endeavor.

We are developing strategies to provide seating supports, and transfer assistance for individuals whom it is necessary to paddle from a supported seated position on the board. Please expect to spend additional time outfitting seating supports.

You are guaranteed to swim and get wet during this program.

Instruction and equipment (paddle board, PFD, and paddle) provided. All paddling events are guided by ACA Certified Paddling Instructors. Personal Flotation Device (PFD) required.

June 28, 1:00-3:00PM, Weare, NH

July 26, 10:00AM-12:00PM, Kingston, NH

August 19, 4:00-6:00PM, Weare, NH

FEES: \$30 + Park Entrance Fee (\$4/adult, \$2/child ages 6-11)



Paralyzed Veterans
of America

WHEELS HELPING
WARRIORS

Your donated vehicle can go far in helping severely injured veterans. Donations are sold at auction with proceeds going toward programs and services for veterans and their families. You may also receive a tax break, too!



WheelsHelpingWarriors.org / 866-204-4548
Paid for by the Jeffrey Carlton Charitable Foundation

Home Cooking at Brockton VAMC Bldg 8 SCI Long-Term Care Residents

Contributed by VA Boston Healthcare System Public Affairs



BROCKTON, Mass. -- Residents of VA Boston's Spinal Cord Injury unit in Brockton have been fixing up some home cooking as part of an ongoing program which promotes community, incorporates nutrition education and focuses on creating healthy and wholesome dishes.

Veterans living with spinal cord injuries have been cooking their own meals bi-weekly for a little over a year but have recently taken the program in a new direction by incorporating a shopping trip. A handful of Veterans are bussed over to the local supermarket every other Friday morning and purchase, with the assistance of staff members, all the ingredients needed for the evening meal.

"Grocery shopping is the next level we have decided to take with this group to really get them back into the community," said Jessica Boutin, Occupational Therapist, VA Boston Healthcare System. "We only have so much room on the shuttle, so we try to take between three to five Veterans each time."

The shopping trip is a very welcome excursion where the group of veterans get to interact with new people in an everyday type of environment.

"It was so nice going to the supermarket," said Patricia Thomas, Veteran and SCI resident. "It's been a long time."

The residents pick a dish and the recipe is modified, if necessary, to make it as healthy as possible. The shoppers can purchase anything they want in addition to the recipe items but generally stick to healthy items.

Thomas who was one of the first participants in the cooking group, said she picked up some pistachios and cooking sauces in addition to the recipe items on her list.

Participants credit Boutin with creating the program which sees the Veterans plan each meal, purchase the ingredients and prepare the meal together with their fellow residents.

"This cooking program started from an idea I had from a previous job, where we did a breakfast club," said Boutin. "It was really the whole team that came together to pull the idea together."

Boutin said the true motivation for the creation of the group was from the residents.

"It's really beneficial for these guys to do a lot more for themselves," said Boutin. "So, this cooking group was inspired by some people we have here that were chefs, some people that loved cooking prior to being injured and we wanted them to get back to that level of cooking again."

Benefits of the cooking group aren't limited to eating a delicious and healthy meal. Participants feel as though they have contributed to the community and the bonds with their fellow SCI residents grows stronger.

"It helps that they have to work together and with the comradery," said Gayle Phaneuf, Licensed Dietitian, VA Boston Healthcare System. "Some in this group already have very healthy habits and they want to share that with the group."

After the shopping is complete meal prep starts and the dining hall transforms into an extension of the kitchen as the Veterans, staff and volunteers get to work. Each Veteran gets to chop, peel, and mix the ingredients together for a meal that feeds their entire community.

"We are making a Chicken Curry, we're doing a group exercise where everyone pitches in and does what they are able to do," said James Wilcox, Veteran and SCI resident. "After we put it all together, we end up with a very nice homemade meal."

Working together as a team was a common sentiment among the staff and Veterans who labored in the kitchen.

"I love the sense of community, it pulls everyone away from the everyday mundane tedium," said Larry Berry, Veteran and SCI resident. "There is a lot of friendly banter and everyone gets a sense of accomplishment."

"I like learning things and the comradery," said Thomas. "We be doing great together. I like the cooking and I guess I like the eating too."

Joy isn't found in just the eating of the meal for many it is about the process of cooking. The cooking program represents a return to a lifelong passion for one veteran.

"I have had an interest in cooking all my life," said Berry "The smells of the kitchen, the mayhem, there's always mayhem when you get a bunch of people cooking and I like that. I just wish we could do it every day."

The simple act of cooking a meal may not seem life changing but for those who spend their days in a wheel chair and face a life of limited mobility it is a welcome change to their routine.

"Ultimately, my goal for this group was to give them an increased quality of life and to really help them function at their maximum potential," said Boutin. "It's a great group and I really hope these Veterans really enjoy it."

"There is something to having a personal touch to your dinner," said Wilcox "It's a nice community activity, it makes a nicer living environment, it makes a difficult situation a little less difficult."

Connect With What Matters



Being there makes a difference

Recently the Ride-Away team joined forces with MobilityWorks so that we could provide our veterans with the largest selection of mobility solutions that best fit their physical capabilities and lifestyle. Veterans have unique needs so we treat each of them as individuals. First of all, we listen. Then, we work together find the best solution. Collectively, Ride-Away and MobilityWorks will continue to build on our mission to help veterans connect with who and what matters most.

MobilityWorks has more than 50 locations across the country with the largest selection of accessible vehicles and adaptive solutions:

- Minivans, full-size vans and trucks
- The latest in adaptive technology
- Complete maintenance and service
- Rental vans — veterans receive a 10% discount

MobilityWorks is committed to serving you. Contact us today so we can evaluate your needs and find a solution that best fits your lifestyle.



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Gray, ME 04039
207-747-2064

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54 Wentworth Avenue
Londonderry, NH 03053
603-210-4610

Norwood

333 Boston Providence Turnpike
Norwood, MA 02062
781-222-3622

Essex Junction

5C David Drive
Essex Junction, VT 05452
802-222-0265

North Attleboro

57 George Leven Drive
North Attleboro MA 02760
508-859-0940

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VA MISSION Act: Top Questions Answered

via VAntagePoint Blog



Last week, VA implemented changes to community care under the VA MISSION Act. The changes included expanded eligibility for community care and a new urgent care benefit.

As part of our outreach and engagement efforts, we collected the top questions received from Veterans and provided answers to each one below. Our goal is to make it easier to access the care you have earned.

General health care

When can I receive community care? Eligibility for community care depends on your individual health care needs or circumstances. You should discuss community care eligibility with your VA care team to determine if you are eligible. This video provides a quick overview of Veteran community care.

Can I get dental care through the MISSION Act? Eligibility for dental services has not changed under the MISSION Act. You should talk to your VA care team about eligibility for dental services. Click here for more information about dental care.

How does a community provider know I am eligible to receive community care? If your VA care team has determined that you are eligible for community care and you chose a community provider, VA will send the provider a referral and authorization prior to you receiving care. You must receive approval from VA prior to obtaining care from a community provider in most circumstances.

I was authorized for community care under the Choice program. What happens now? The Choice program expired on June 6, 2019, and specific Choice eligibility for community care is no longer being used. If you were eligible for community care under Choice, you should speak with your VA care team or a VA staff member at your local VA medical facility about updated eligibility for community care. This video also provides a quick primer regarding community care eligibility under the new Veteran community care program.

Urgent care

How do I become eligible for the urgent care benefit? You must be enrolled in VA health care and have received care through VA from either a VA or community provider within the past 24 months to be eligible for the urgent care benefit.

How can I find an urgent care provider? To find an urgent care location in VA's contracted network, use the VA facility locator at <https://www.va.gov/find-locations/>. Select the link entitled "Find VA approved urgent care locations and pharmacies near you".

What is the difference between urgent care and emergency care? Urgent care consists of medical services provided for minor illnesses or injuries that are not life-threatening such as strep throat, pink eye, or influenza. Emergency care consists of inpatient or outpatient hospital services that are necessary to prevent death or serious impairment of health such as severe chest pain, seizures or loss of awareness, heavy uncontrollable bleeding, or moderate to severe burns.

Do I have to pay a copayment if I receive urgent care that relates to my service-connected condition? Copayments for urgent care are different from other VA medical copayments. Copayments for urgent care depend on your assigned priority group and the number of times you visit any urgent care provider in a calendar year. Visit the Urgent Care webpage for more information about copayments.

How do I get prescription medication related to an urgent care visit? VA will pay for or fill prescriptions for urgent care. For urgent care prescription medication longer than a 14-day supply, the prescription must be submitted to VA to be filled. For urgent prescriptions written by an urgent care provider, you can fill a 14-day supply of medication at a contracted pharmacy within the VA network, in VA, or at a noncontracted pharmacy. If a noncontracted pharmacy is used, you must pay for the prescription and then file a claim for reimbursement with your local VA medical facility.



Chapter Election BIODs

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Wayne Ross - I care about veterans and I care about the NEPVA. I am running for the executive board and welcome the opportunity to once again serve our members in this position. I have served faithfully on the executive board and I have attended every board meeting (barring hospitalization) since 1999. I held the Vice President position from 2011-2015 and Chapter President from 2015-2017. Executive board member 2018. I have represented the chapter on countless occasions at the West Roxbury and Brockton VA Medical Centers. I have volunteered at numerous fundraising and other events. Educated at Norwich University in Northfield Vermont the Nations oldest private military school. I was commissioned a second

lieutenant and served in the United States Air Force from 1989 – 1992. I became a quadriplegic in 1996 while bicycling from Alaska to Chile in an effort to raise funds and awareness for the Multiple Sclerosis Foundation. Always a positive attitude. I will compete in my 22nd National Veterans Wheelchair Games this summer and attended 21 of the 22 New England Winter Sports Clinics along with most of the New England Summer Sports Clinics. I have attended the National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic 20 times the National Veterans Summer Sports Clinic and many other veterans programs in New England. I promise to work hard for the chapter and our members please allow me to serve in this important role your vote will make this possible. I care about veterans.



Paralyzed Veterans of America

ANNUAL AIR RIFLE & AIR PISTOL PROGRAM

Camp Pendleton Air Gun Tournament
December 4-5, 2018
Oceanside, CA

Cal-Diego Air Rifle and Pistol Tournament
January 28-29, 2019
San Diego, CA

Mid-Atlantic Air Rifle and Pistol Tournament
March 6-7, 2019
Richmond, VA

Wisconsin Air Rifle and Pistol Tournament
March 30-31, 2019
Milwaukee, WI

New England Combined Air Rifle and Boccia Tournament*
April 26-28, 2019
Brockton, MA

Buckeye Air Rifle and Pistol Tournament
April 26-27, 2019
Geneva, OH

**indicates combined events*

PARALYZED VETERANS NATIONAL SHOOTING SPORTS CIRCUIT

North Central Trapshoot
September 8-9, 2018
Sioux Falls, SD

Mid-Atlantic Shooting Sports Tournament and Handgun Shoot
November 9-11, 2018
Charles City, VA

Cal-Diego Shooting Sports Tournament & Pistol Tournament
March 29-31, 2019
Redlands, CA
Pistol Shoot - March 29, 2019
Lytle Creek, CA

Wisconsin Shooting Sports Tournament & Pistol Tournament
May 17-19, 2019
Rifle/Pistol Shoot - May 17, 2019
Green Bay, WI

Vaughan Shooting Sports Tournament
May 31-June 2, 2019
Elburn, IL

Iowa Shooting Sports Tournament & Pistol Tournament
June 14-16, 2019
Pistol Event - June 14, 2019
Cedar Rapids, IA

Lone Star Shooting Sports Tournament
June 21-23, 2019
Waxahachie, TX

PARALYZED VETERANS BOATING/FISHING TOUR

Mid-America Bass Tournament
September 21-23, 2018
Eufaula, OK

Vaughan Bass Tournament
October 5-7, 2018
Whittington, IL

Florida Gulf Coast Bass Tournament
March 29-31, 2019
Tavares, FL

Kentucky-Indiana Bass Tournament
May 3-5, 2019
Kuttawa, KY

Mid-Atlantic Bass Tournament
June 7-9, 2019
Henrico, VA

ANNUAL PVA/NWPA BILLIARDS TOURNAMENT SERIES

Mid-South Billiards Tournament
October 12-13, 2018
Memphis, TN

Mid-Atlantic Billiards Tournament Battle at the Beach
November 16-18, 2018
Virginia Beach, VA

Mid-America Billiards Tournament
April 5-7, 2019
Oklahoma City, OK

Mid-Atlantic Billiards Tournament Chuck Willis Mem
April 26-28, 2019
Midlothian, VA

Buckeye Billiards Tournament
June 14-15, 2019
Wickliffe, OH

Mountain States Billiards Tournament
June 21-22, 2019
Fountain, CO

BOCCIA

Gateway Boccia Tournament
October 18-20, 2018
St. Louis, MO

Bayou Boccia Tournament
February 1-2, 2019
Gulfport, MS

Cal-Diego Boccia Tournament
February 19-20, 2019
San Diego, CA

New England Combined Air Rifle and Boccia Tournament
April 26-28, 2019
Brockton, MA

Mid-Atlantic Boccia Tournament
May 3-4, 2019
Hampton, VA

ANNUAL PVA/AWBA BOWLING TOURNAMENT SERIES

Great Plains Bowling Tournament
July 12-15, 2018
Council Bluffs, IA

Mountain States Bowling Tournament
August 15-18, 2018
Colorado Springs, CO

Mid-Atlantic Bowling Tournament
September 28-30, 2018
Glen Allen, VA

Nevada Bowling Tournament
November 29-Dec 2, 2018
Las Vegas, NV

Florida Gulf Coast Bowling Tournament
February 21-24, 2019
Tampa, FL

Mid-America Bowling Tournament
April 12-14, 2019
Shawnee, OK

Vaughan Bowling Tournament
May 23-26, 2019
Romeoville, IL

HANDCYCLING RACING

Off-Road Spring Expo
April 19-21, 2019
Chesterfield, VA

PVA Learn to Race Camp
April 23-26, 2019
Gettysburg, PA

Blue and Gray Half Marathon and Criterium
April 27-28, 2019
Gettysburg, PA

Pittsburgh Marathon
May 5, 2019
Pittsburgh, PA

Wichita Omnium
June 14-16, 2019
Wichita, KS

PVA Para-Triathlon Camp
June, 2019
Colorado Springs, CO

PVA Racing Mini-Camp
June 19-26, 2019
Delafield, WI

Tour of America's Dairylands
June 20-23, 2019
Milwaukee, WI

NATIONAL VETERANS WHEELCHAIR GAMES



For more information, visit:
pva.org/sports

Member Individual Allotment Policy

Member Individual Allotment Program

The Individual Allotment (IA) Program's purpose is to improve the quality of life of New England PVA's members by assisting in the expansion of both the quality and quantity of opportunities in sports, recreation, events and entertainment, especially those activities which enhance lifetime health and fitness, both physical and mental.

IA Funding Availability

The Chapter annually budgets for IA requests based on its fiscal funds available. The amount budgeted may vary from year-to-year based on these funds and its availability is not guaranteed. The budgeted amount is drawn down against on a first-come-first-served basis by BOD approved Individual Funding Requests. Once these funds have been depleted, no more Individual Funding Requests will be accepted for the current Fiscal year.

IA Funding Amount(s)

The maximum total amount allowable per individual per fiscal year is \$500. This amount may be drawn against cumulatively, as separate funding requests submitted throughout the year, or entirely through a single funding request. An individual may not request funding above the maximum amount allowable for the fiscal year.

IA Program Minimum Eligibility Participation Requirements

1. Must be a New England Chapter member in Good Standing;
2. Must receive Annual SCI/D physical at the West Roxbury, MA, VAMC SCI Center in accordance with VHA Handbook 1176.01.
3. Must not have any outstanding receipts, funds, materials or equipment due to the Chapter at the time of request.

IA Request Submission Procedure

All (IA) requests shall be submitted in writing a minimum of 30 days prior to the event, function or trip requested for use. The Request should be as detailed as possible, with regard to the activity and intended use of the requested funds. Requests may be either a written letter of request mailed to the Chapter office at 1208 VFW Parkway, Suite 301, West Roxbury, MA 02132, Attention: Individual Allotment Request or email to info@newenglandpva.org, with "Individual Allotment Request" in the subject line.

IA requests received after the event, function or trip has occurred will not be accepted or considered for reimbursement.

IA Eligibility Review

Requests will be reviewed by Chapter administration to determine if the applicant is eligible for IA and what level of funding is available to the applicant at the time of request. Those applicants meeting the IA eligibility requirements, with funds available, will have their IA request forwarded to the BOD for review.

IA Funding Approval Process

All IA requests received by the BOD will be individually reviewed and discussed by the BOD for approval consideration. The BOD has sole discretion and authority to approve, deny or modify any IA request, in whole or in part, for any reason they determine to do so.

Receipt of IA Funding

IA Funding is based on the reimbursement of an individual's expenses as detailed in their IA Funding Request. Actual reimbursement(s) will only be provided for expenses submitted with a corresponding receipt. Reimbursement(s) will not exceed the amount initially requested in the Funding Request or the amount approved by the BOD, if the BOD approved an amount less than the initial amount requested.

Under no circumstance will any IA funds be distributed or release to an individual in advance of receiving the required expense receipts or required Newsletter article.

Required Newsletter Article

In addition to submitting the required receipts for reimbursement, the IA recipient is also required to compose and submit a minimum 500 word article, with pictures, about the event or activity the IA funding was use for. This article will be provided to the CordWord Editor for publishing consideration.

IA funding will not be approved for disbursement prior to receiving this required article.

IA Program's usage for Sports Clinics - As long as funding is available, the Chapter will continue to cover the expense of one half the room rate for members participating in the New England Winter Sports Clinic, New England Summer Sports Clinic, and the National Veterans Wheelchair Games. Since the Chapter is covering the participant's portion of the room cost, participants may not request IA funding for the purpose of applying it to the other half of the room cost.

Paralyzed Veterans of America
New England Chapter
1208 VFW Parkway, Suite 301
West Roxbury, MA 02132

T 800-660-1181
F 857-203-9685

info@newenglandpva.org
www.newenglandpva.org

Office Hours
Mon-Fri, 9:00am - 4:30pm



COMING EVENTS AND IMPORTANT DATES

Jun 19: West Roxbury Pizza Party A2/Rehab Medicine Only, WX VAMC

June 22-23: Sail To Prevail – Disabled Veterans Weekend, Newport, Rhode Island

Jun 26: Northeast Passage Off-Road Cycling - 6:00-8:00PM, Stratham, NH

Jun 28: Chapter Banquet – Moseley’s On The Charles, West Roxbury, MA

No Chapter Board meeting in July

Jul 10–17: National Veterans Wheelchair Games, Louisville Kentucky

Jul 18: Northeast Passage Off-Road Cycling - 6:00-8:00PM, Stratham, NH

Jul 26: Worcester Bravehearts Military and Veterans Night, Worcester, MA

Jul 27: Run to Home Base, Fenway Park, Boston, MA

Aug 1: Northeast Passage Off-Road Cycling - 6:00-8:00PM, Auburn, NH

Aug 31: Lake Hiawatha Cookout, Boat Rides and Fishing

Sep 6: Bellingham Shoot

Sep 6-8: Winnepesaukee Fishing - Camp Robindel, Moltonborough, NH

Oct 4-6: Pine Tree Camp Maine Bass Trail

For more information on upcoming sporting events please contact the Chapter office at (800) 660-1181.

Mike Guilbault - Sports Director

Mike Moran - Asst. Sports Director



New England PVA’s Official Facebook Page

www.facebook.com/NEPVA1947

Serving Paralyzed Veterans and the Disabled Community Since 1947.