

THE WAHLEN

SUMMER 2019

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Heart-transplant recipient and two-time cancer survivor says partnership saved her life





From the Director

VA Salt Lake City Health Care System is fortunate to have amazing community partners who complement our mission to improve health and wellbeing. Robust and collaborative partnerships are essential to the work we do for our Veterans. VA SLCHCS collaboratively works with each partnership to identify and develop solutions to the complex issues Veterans often face. These partnerships are innovative and life-changing, impacting the men and women who have served our nation. The breadth of our partnership spans from robust academic affiliations with the University of Utah, to recreational equine therapy provided at the National Ability Center. Our partnerships are Veteran-centric and adapt regularly to meet the needs our servicemen and women.

We understand that healthcare extends outside of our campus and community clinics. We would not be as successful without these partnerships and we rely heavily on our community for support.

There is something special about the communities VA SLCHCS serves and the commitment our partners devote and honor our nations heroes. The positive relationships we have built over many years of collaboration have enhanced our Veteran and employee experience. I am truly grateful to our communities for their passion for service to our Veterans.

With deepest respect and gratitude,

Shella Stovall

Shella Stovall, Director

VA Salt Lake City Health Care System



VA



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Veterans Health Administration
VA Salt Lake City Health Care System

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In this edition, we highlight the value of community partnerships. Our community partners help provide access to programs and services for our Veterans.

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↑ Tab the thumbnails above to enlarge. (Interactive only)

Veteran forms non-profit to help fellow soldiers

Continue Mission helps Veterans heal through exercise and community

By Jeremy Laird, Public Affairs Specialist

When U.S. Army Veteran Josh Hansen returned home from Iraq in 2007, after completing two combat tours, his wife was blindsided by the fact that the man who left to go to war wasn't the same person who returned home to her – emotionally, physically or mentally.

"He was a completely different person," said Melissa Hansen. "He wasn't the man I married."

In 2007, while in Iraq, a vehicle Hansen was driving was struck by an IED, wounding him seriously

enough to require a medical evacuation. Eventually he was medically retired in 2010, due to traumatic brain injury. And while Hansen appeared healed on the outside, it was evident he was also suffering from depression and post-traumatic stress disorder. The once active soldier struggled to leave his house, or even his couch. He gained 45 pounds.

Like many military families, the couple adapted their lives to accommodate their new reality. However, things changed for Josh Hansen when one of his fellow soldiers, who was like a son to the couple, committed suicide.

“We get comments all the time from family members that they haven't seen a smile on their Veterans face since they've been home from the war.”

– Josh Hansen, U.S. Army Veteran

Melissa Hansen said that tragedy triggered something in Josh and he felt he needed to either change or become a statistic. Hansen started by forcing himself to become active – beginning with just walking around the block, to bike riding, skiing and other outdoor activities. Soon, he saw some relief to his depression.

Hansen thought, perhaps, he had stumbled across a solution that may help other Veterans and in 2014, he and his wife, who now serves as the executive director, launched Continue Mission, a nonprofit organization. Hansen said he wanted to create an organization that serves Veterans with physical, mental and emotional injuries from their time in service and allow them to get out into the community, participating in activities so they could focus on getting their lives back while enjoying the outdoors and nature.

“He started to enjoy life again,” his wife said. “He started to enjoy being with other Veterans and enjoying the camaraderie that he found there.”

In its first year, Continue Mission served 13 Veterans. A year later, they served 774, and last year, the number grew to more than 2,600 men and women who participated in a myriad of recreational activities ranging from pickleball to river rafting. While it may seem like just fun and games, family members notice the difference in their Veteran.

“We get comments all the time from family members that they haven't seen a smile on their Veterans face since they've been home from the war,” said Josh Hansen. “It's really been a huge impact for us and it's healing to me to see the Veterans heal through the program.”

In addition to recreational activities, Continue Mission provides Veterans with resources and referral services on everything from employment

to community services, and they take an active role in suicide prevention and mental health awareness through their involvement with the Utah Suicide Prevention Coalition and Davis HELPS Suicide Coalition.

If you would like to learn about Continue Mission, visit their website at <https://www.continuemission.org/>.



Continue Mission provides a variety of **recreational activities** to Veterans with service connected injuries.

They also provide **research and referral** services, connecting Veterans with Veteran-related service providers and organizations.

Continue Mission's approach to healing focuses on **health and wellness**. They share ideas about good nutrition, personal goals, and provide support and encourage along the way.





VSOs offer a helping hand

Veterans Service Organizations partner with VA to help with claims, benefits

Donna J. Bell, Public Affairs Specialist



Transitioning out of the military or filling out federal claims and forms can sometimes be daunting, and Veterans and their families may feel the need to ask for additional aid to navigate the ins and outs of the system. While the Department of Veterans Affairs provides assistance, there are times when a Veteran turns to Veterans Service Organization (VSO) for help.

VSOs were established to advocate on behalf of Veterans and exist as a “partnership agency” to help service members in a variety of ways. You probably already recognize the names of some VSOs, including: American Veterans (AMVETS), Disabled American Veterans (DAV), The American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) and more.

Many of these organization are federally-chartered (officially recognized by Congress) and are mostly private, non-profit organizations run by both volunteers and paid employees. The federally-chartered designation is especially important when considering using a VSO to help file a claim, as the chartered organizations are also officially recognized by the VA to represent you.

VSO assistance will vary depending on the agency, but in general these agencies offer claims assistance with VA benefits including education, home loan information, medical claims, career and transition assistance, job training, even substance abuse counseling or referrals to qualified counselors. No

two VSOs are the exactly the same or offer the same type of services. It’s also important to note that a VA-accredited/federally chartered VSO cannot charge Veterans a fee for help in claiming benefits.

A VSO representative, typically known as a Veterans Service Officer, can help with preparation, presentation and prosecution of claims. Once a claim is filed, they track the claim through the VA system, act as a liaison between the Veteran and the VA and are the Veteran’s official representative and act as a power of attorney (POA). To be an accredited VA representative, individuals must pass an exam, submit to a background check and take continuing education courses. These recognized organizations and individuals can legally represent you before the VA. Non-recognized individuals are able to provide information but cannot be your official representative.

“A lot of Veterans wait a long time after they get out of the service to file their claim. That can be costly because those Veterans are missing out on benefits they earned,” said Jim Marszalek, who leads DAV’s benefits advocacy efforts. “The first step any claimant needs to take is to visit their VSO and start the process. Once you do, you lock in an effective date for your claim and any benefits you may have been entitled to are back dated to that initial filing.”

For information and to find a VSO, go to the VA’s e-Benefits site to find a searchable database of VSOs. This [site](#) allows you to search by city, state, zip code and/or organization name.

VA MISSION Act

Empowers Veterans and enhances their healthcare options

We make it our mission to:

- ✓ Improve the process for access to care in the community
- ✓ Expand care where and when Veterans need it to include more options for telehealth
- ✓ Establish access to community urgent care walk-in
- ✓ Expand eligibility for caregiver services to all eras of Veterans
- ✓ Strengthen VA's workforce and infrastructure

Discuss how the **MISSION Act** impacts your care with your provider during your next appointment.

Veterans are eligible for care in the community when any of the following criteria are met:

1. VA does not provide the service needed.
2. Veteran was receiving care under the Choice Program distance criteria.
3. Veteran is more than a 30-minute drive from primary and mental health care and more than a 60-minute drive from specialty care.
4. Veteran must wait more than 20 days for a primary care appointment and more than 28 days for specialty care from the day they ask for the appointment.
5. Veteran and provider agree that it is in the Veteran's best interest to be seen in the community.

Why should Veterans Choose VA?

VA wants to be your lifetime healthcare partner through careful care coordination and specialized treatment programs unique to Veterans' needs.

- ✓ VA offers dedicated Veteran providers and facilities
- ✓ Your VA family includes your fellow Veterans
- ✓ We maintain your entire medical history with VA's electronic medical record
- ✓ Veterans trust in our healthcare system is extremely high: VA is seeing more patients than ever before, more quickly than ever before, and Veterans are more satisfied with their care
- ✓ Transparent by comparing wait time data with the private sector for informed decisions



Choose VA



For more information, visit www.missionact.va.gov or call 801-582-1565, option 6.



.....
Navy Veteran
Pat Malan
practicing skills
he learned
as part of the
driver rehab
program.



DRIVERS REHAB: Steering Veterans to freedom

■ By Jeremy Laird, Public Affairs Specialist

Driver Rehabilitation Specialists and Occupational Therapists, Robyn Little and Bonnie Fernelius, work with Veterans to evaluate their driving skills and instruct them to safely and confidently use a motor vehicle with or without adaptive equipment. They say the program opens doors that many Veterans thought were closed.

Change in Ability

A change in driving ability often leads Veterans to driver rehab. Veterans are commonly referred by their doctor due to concerns about physical or cognitive disability, aging, or an illness that may impair driving ability.

The assessment usually takes two visits, each lasting about two hours. During the initial assessment, Fernelius and Little go through a series of evaluations to determine physical and cognitive driving abilities.

The assessment covers medical history, a physical evaluation using state-of-the-art simulator and cognitive health and vision. After the testing, the pair help the Veteran determine goals and how to achieve them.

Navy Veteran Pat Malan has had multiple sclerosis for 30-years and noticed he was having problems feeling the pedals.

"I felt it might be a good idea for me to start taking steps to be safer on the road," Malan said. "You know you have to be aware of those shortcomings and not just push them aside."

After Malan's assessment, Fernelius sat down with him to find hand-controls.

"I like the push-pull," Malan said, sitting in the simulator and demonstrating the method. "You can push it (the hand-lever) forward to brake and pull it back to accelerate."

Utah requires a retest of driving skills when hand

controls or any adaptive technology is used, and Little and Fernelius work to make sure Veterans are confident using adaptive equipment. Malan said the training gave him his confidence back.

"I just feel so much safer—like I have control of what I'm doing, and so for that reason, driver rehab is just worth its weight in gold."

Ready to hit the highway

Other Veterans are looking to get back behind the wheel – including those with physical limitations like an amputation or a mild form of paralysis.

U.S. Marine Corps Veteran Keith Robinson was not able to drive for two years after his right leg was amputated. With Little by his side, Robinson began using hand controls in a parking lot, moved to neighborhood and city driving, and finally to the highway.

"If you want your sense of freedom back," Robinson said of the adaptive equipment. "It's the best thing I've done since I have been at the VA."

Happy Barton echoed those thoughts. The Navy Veteran, injured by a Scud missile attack that resulted in a spinal cord injury in the Gulf War, gained her freedom through a driver rehab program back in 1999.

"Pure independence," she said, recalling that first day back behind the wheel. "I never again had to ask somebody to take me somewhere."

Recently, Barton noticed that her left arm had become weaker. She is now back with Fernelius learning once again, how to adapt to driving.

"Free yourself, get out there," Barton said. "It's real. Driver's rehab saved my life and it can save yours."

Riders need training too

Driver rehab can also help those who are unable or may not want to drive. Veterans are taught the safest and most effective way to enter and exit the vehicle and how to safely secure their mobility device (like a

wheelchair).

"The goal is to help these Veterans have the same opportunity to access the community as everyone else," said Fernelius, "Whether that be to attend medical appointments or a football game with friends."

U.S. Army Veteran Mark Sargent was diagnosed with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS) two years ago. ALS is a progressive neuromuscular disease that degenerates the motor neurons in the brain and spinal cord, leading to loss of voluntary muscle control and eventually, death. Sargent recently quit driving and is now using a power wheelchair and a wheelchair accessible van with his wife as his primary driver. The driver rehab program ensured he, and his wife, were trained to safely secure him and his wheelchair in the vehicle's wheelchair docking system.

"The office has been training my caregiver how to hook up the wheelchair restraints," said Sargent. "This really helped my wife feel like she can do this."

The VHA can assist eligible Veterans in funding equipment to enter/exit their vehicle, regardless of service connection. First, the Veteran must be seen by a driver rehab specialist to determine the equipment needed before going to a medical committee for their claim. For assistance with equipment to drive a vehicle, the Veteran must apply for the Automobile Adaptive Equipment grant through the VBA. Regardless of how the equipment was obtained, driver rehab can provide the training.

Barton had this closing thought for her fellow Veterans, "Come in, give yourself the freedom of being that 16-year-old girl or boy and getting your driver's license again."

Please note, due to state and federal laws, any Veteran interested in returning to driving must be willing to complete a full driving evaluation and training before any equipment can be recommended.



Driver Rehab Program

If you, or a fellow Veteran, are interested in the driver rehab program, talk to your primary care provider about placing a driver rehab consult. You can also reach out to Fernelius at 801-582-1565, ext. 1577 or Little at ext. 4027 with questions.

To learn more, visit the **Rehabilitation and Prosthetic Services** or download the VA Driver Training fact sheet below.

[Download pdf here.](#)





Life-saving partnership

Heart-transplant recipient, and two-time cancer survivor, says the VA and University of Utah Health partnership saved her life -- not once, but twice.

■ By Jeremy Laird, Public Affairs Specialist

VA Salt Lake City Health Care System partners with many organizations throughout the Intermountain West, but one of the most influential and enduring partnerships has been with University of Utah Health. And arguably, no Veteran knows the benefits of that partnership which began nearly 75 years ago after WWII, better than Vernique Lynn.

Since getting out of the Navy Lynn has faced three significant health “walls” and VA Salt Lake City and University Health collaborated to help her survive two.

Breast Cancer

After spending eight years in the Navy, Lynn got out, eager and anxious to enter civilian life, didn’t feel the need to look into VA benefits or health care. She became a surgical tech and started raising her two kids in Georgia.

In 2006, at the age of 33, Lynn was diagnosed with breast cancer.

“It was very aggressive,” she said. Lynn battled breast cancer like a true warrior, going through numerous chemotherapy treatments. She eventually broke free of cancer’s grip and was declared a breast cancer survivor, but the toll

was high-- especially on her heart.

Congestive Heart Failure and Transplant

"Five years later, I went into full congestive heart failure," said Lynn. "The chemotherapy killed my heart."

As she was visiting her doctor, he mentioned VA health care. "At that point, I had gone through the first cancer episode, and I didn't know I could have VA benefits, which is one thing that we need to really truly advocate for I believe."

Lynn enrolled and in 2011 and received word that VA Salt Lake City and the University of Utah would perform a heart transplant.

"These hospitals were the only ones that said 'okay' because of the cancer episode," Lynn said.

VA moved Lynn to Salt Lake City in 2014 to wait for her new heart to become available. After nine restless months, Lynn finally decided she was not going to worry about when she would receive her new heart, and would just "chill," the next day she got the call that allowed her to scale her second wall.

Lynn still recalls the entire day. She and a friend went to a movie, out to lunch, a visit to Red Butte Garden, and a tour of downtown Salt Lake City. They were trying to find their way back to her hotel using her car's GPS when her phone kept ringing interrupting the directions. She finally decided to answer the call.

"I said, 'I'm sorry I cannot talk to you right now. Can I call you back?'" Lynn recalled. "And the woman on the other end said, 'Oh no, I don't think you want to call me back on this. This is University of Utah and we have a heart for you.'"

She and her friend immediately broke into tears. "We were just amazed, frantic, happy and tears were streaming from both of us."

Lynn received her new heart on March 29, 2015, at the University of Utah. She was transferred to the George E. Wahlen VA Medical Center a few days later, where she continued to recover.

"It wasn't a long recovery for me," Lynn said. "I

actually got up walking as soon as possible. I left the hospital early because I was just so ready to go."

Ready to go back to her daughter and son in Georgia. For two years, she raised her kids and lived life to the fullest with her new heart. That's when she faced her third wall. Unfortunately, her health suffered yet another blow.

Cancer Returns

In 2017, Lynn got word that her breast cancer had returned. Her VA health care teams in Georgia and Salt Lake collaborated with her doctors at the U, and they determined it was best for her to come back to Salt Lake City for treatment through Huntsman Cancer Center. The treatment was successful and, on May 21, 2017, Lynn was declared cancer-free for a second time.

Just like the day she got the call telling her she had a new heart, Lynn clearly remembers her cancer-free day. "Oh my gosh, I was so ecstatic. I was skipping leaving the Huntsman Cancer Center hugging everybody."

Now, two years later, she is living in Utah, back to work, and looking forward to seeing her daughter graduate from high

school. Lynn also is a proponent of the VA's Whole Health program. VA Salt Lake City was tapped to become a flagship facility to implement the VA's radical new redesign of health care where doctors and staff form a partnership with Veterans and their families to look at all aspects of the Veterans life – not just their symptoms or illness.

"I'm always looking to feed my body, mind, and soul and that's what the whole health system here does," Lynn said.

The Navy Veteran, heart-transplant recipient, and two-time cancer survivor, who says she didn't defeat cancer but loved it away, is grateful for a lot of things. On that list is the VA and University of Utah Health partnership that saved her life not once but twice.

"It's a beautiful thing that they were able to bring me down here so that I could have this excellent care," said Lynn. "I'm grateful, to say the least."

*"The George E. Wahlen
VA Medical Center
and University of Utah
Hospital are the two-best
hospitals in the world"*

– Vernique Lynn, U.S. Navy Veteran





MINDFUL MEDITATION: Developing skills to help tackle life's troubles

■ By Jeremy Laird, Public Affairs Specialist

Meditation conjures up images of solitary individuals, but Salt Lake Vet Center's Mindful Meditation group is changing that.

"As soldiers, as Veterans, we are used to being part of a team," said Richard Hooper, Vet Center Readjustment Counselor, Army Veteran, and the group's facilitator. "Being together we learn. I bring what I know, everyone brings what they know, and we are all better off."

Hooper sees three types of Veterans come to the group: Veterans that already practice or have practiced mindfulness and meditation; Veteran that are aware of mindful meditation, and is interested and those who know little to nothing about the practice, but is willing to give it a try.

Air Force Veteran Janine Smith is one of the regular participants in the group. She falls into Hooper's first group.

"I meditate by myself every day," Smith said after a recent group meeting, "but when you do it with a

group, it's just more powerful."

US Marine Corps Vietnam Veteran Dean Crawford falls into the last group. He was invited to the group by a long-time friend and fellow Veteran.

"I never really even thought about it before then," Crawford said. "I came and I really enjoyed it."

No matter their level of knowledge—many Veterans hope the group helps them deal better with some of life's obstacles. Stress, anxiety, anger, and sleep problems—research shows that mindful meditation can help with all those issues.

"Nothing about our culture says, 'oh stop and be mindful,'" said Smith "It's just so loud, and meditation is a place where you can just calm all that down."

The group helps "calm all that down." Their weekly catch-up helps group members get to know each other a little better and discuss how they've used mindfulness in their daily lives. Members can share as little or as much as they would like. Hooper then walks them through a mindful meditation exercise. There's a definite camaraderie among the group and they feel like a team tackling life's challenges.

"It's far surpassed anything that I could have come up with myself," said Smith. "Just to know that every week I can come back. If I have a problem, I can run it

past these people and they can assist me to get to the next level."

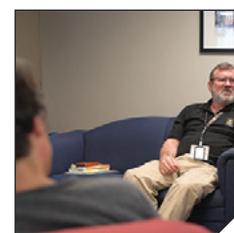
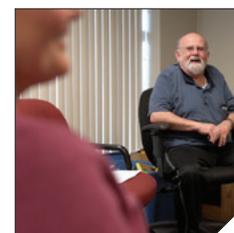
"I really love it," said Crawford. "I don't know exactly how it works. I don't know all the ins and outs of it, but all I know is it just makes me feel so much calmer. And before I used to get all keyed up inside and I don't do that anymore."

As for Hooper he loves to see the differences in Veterans who attend the group and practice mindful meditation. "It's really fun to see them transition from kind of being out of control to realizing they have a lot of control."

The Mindful Meditation group meets at 1 p.m. every Thursday at the Salt Lake Vet Center and is open to any Veteran eligible for Vet Center services. The Vet Center is located at 22 West Fireclay Avenue in Murray. For more information, contact the Salt Lake Vet Center at 801-266-1499.



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Mindful Meditation group gather for their weekly meeting at Salt Lake Vet Center.



Advanced Low Vision Rehabilitation Clinic

The Low Vision Clinic works collaboratively with the VIST Coordinator to assess the Veteran's needs and interests as well as determine goals to assist the Veteran in adjustment to vision loss.

801-582-1565, ext. 1574

Community Residential Care (CRC) Program

CRC provides supervision to eligible Veterans who are not in need of hospitalization or nursing home placement but who, because of mental health or psychosocial conditions, would benefit from living in a home setting.

801-582-1565, ext. 1259

Decedent Affairs

Patient Representatives are here to assist you when a loved one passes. We can answer all of your questions about burial reimbursements, grave markers and bereavement assistance.

801-582-1565, ext. 1432

Fisher House

This home away from home provides a place for families (who live 50 miles away or farther) to stay, free of charge, while their loved one is receiving treatment. Reservations are required.

801-582-1565, ext. 5900

Health Promotion Disease Prevention (HPDP) program

It is VA's goal to keep Veterans "well and well-informed." We strive to improve the quality of life for Veterans by providing VA clinicians with evidence-based health promotion and disease prevention practices. For more information on classes and programs, contact

801-582-1565, ext. 4246

- **Living well with Chronic Conditions**
This is a six-week program to help any Veteran with any chronic condition to manage symptoms, work with your health care team and improve your health. Learn self management techniques and skills needed in the day-to-day management of any type of ongoing health condition.

801-582-1565, ext 4246

Community locations also available at www.livingwell.utah.gov

- **MOVE! Weight Management program**

VA's weight management program designed to help Veterans lose weight, keep it off and improve their health. The MOVE! program offers patients several weight management options from group classes focusing on topics of nutrition, behavior modification and exercise.

801-582-1565, ext. 2149

- **Walk with Ease walking class**

Twice a week walking program to reduce pain and improve overall health. Available at the Salt Lake City VA Medical Center, plus Orem and St. George CBOC's.

801-582-1565, ext. 2149

- **Tobacco Cessation program**

Our Tobacco Cessation program is designed to help Veterans quit smoking, chew or e-cigarettes. The program consists of tobacco cessation group treatment, pharmacist consultation, telephone coaching and text coaching. VA telephone quit-line: Counseling free of charge, any time between 6 a.m. and 6 p.m. Mountain time. The quitsmoking telephone coaches provide up to four phone calls and can be reached

1-855-QUIT-VET (1-855-784-8838)

- **VA 24/7 texting support service**

For Veterans that can receive text messages. Sign up by texting VET to 47848 from your mobile phone, or visit www.smokefree.gov/ VET. When you need support they will text you tips and encouragement.

801-582-1565, ext. 2088

- **Living Well classes for specific diseases**

These four-week classes will help you manage and reduce your risk for specific conditions. Also available at VA community-based outreach clinics via Telehealth.

Living Well with Heart Disease

Living Well with Chronic Lung Disease

Living Well with Diabetes

801-582-1565, ext. 4286 or 4289

- **Stepping On, fall prevention program**

A seven week program shown to help adults improve balance and

reduce the risk of falls.

801-582-1565, ext. 4286

Holistic Medicine

Holistic Medicine provides pain medicine, palliative care and integrative health services to our Veterans.

- **Pain Medicine service** provides care for patients with persistent or "chronic" pain, including medicines to control pain and psychological care.
801-581-1565, ext. 4942
- **Palliative Care service** provides supportive care for patients with serious medical illness, pain and management symptom control, psychosocial and spiritual care; advanced care planning, end of life care and bereavement support to families.
801-581-1565, ext. 2059
- **Integrative Health service** offers several options for patients: acupuncture, meditation, manual therapies, hypnosis, Qigong, Yoga and a Choose to Heal class to introduce various strategies and multicultural approaches to physical, emotional, spiritual wellbeing and better health.
801-581-1565, ext. 2661

Referrals from your primary care provider are required.

Home Based Primary Care (HBPC)

The mission of HBPC is to provide a comprehensive, interdisciplinary, and primary care in the homes of Veterans with complex medical, social and behavioral conditions for whom routine clinic-based care is not effective. The team evaluates needs, identifies resources and assists with obtaining federal or community services. Veterans must meet criteria to be eligible for HBPC.

Referrals to the HBPC program are made by a the VA primary care provider.

Library

The library features regular and large print books and magazines. Internet access is also available.

Bldg. 14, basement

Monday – Friday form 7 a.m. to 6 p.m.

801-582-1565, ext. 1209

Medical Foster Home program

MFH is a voluntary program that offers safe, long-term care in a home setting. MFH is a great alternative to institutionalized care. The program includes regular comprehensive case management visits by a VASLC Home Care Team.

801-582-1565, ext. 6317

My HealthVet

My HealthVet is VA's online personal health record that allows Veterans to take charge of their own healthcare.

- Communicate with your VA providers and clinics through secure messaging
- Access your VA medical records through the Blue Button
- View appointment information
- See lab results
- Prescription refills
- Get personalized wellness reminders ...and much more!

801-584-1209

www.myhealth.va.gov

Nutrition and Food Services (NFS)

NFS provides expertise in nutrition assessment, diagnosis and intervention to help the Veteran improve his/her nutrition condition, medical outcomes and overall quality of life. We provide group or one-on-one sessions.

801-582-1565, ext. 5447

Pain Management

Pain Medicine service provides care for patients with persistent or "chronic" pain, including medicines to control pain and psychological care. A referral from your primary care provider is required.

801-581-1565, ext. 4942

Other VA pain management programs:

- **Women's Comprehensive Pain program**
801-582-1565, ext. 2151
- **Chronic Pain Management group (Cognitive Behavioral Therapy)**
A six-week class designed to improve your quality of life and physical/emotional functioning despite the presence of pain.

801-582-1565, ext. 3497

Pathways

Coping with life's problems and/or mental illness can be difficult but getting help should not be. Pathways can help you access the right care. This is not a therapy group; it is an orientation group. Walk-ins welcome! Bldg. 16, Bear Lake classroom
Tuesdays 4:30 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.

801-582-1565, ext. 2321

Recreation Therapy

Recreation Therapy is a process that utilizes recreation interventions based on the interests, abilities and needs of individuals with illnesses and/or disabling conditions. Veterans can choose from dozens of seasonal activities including skiing, bowling, golf, water volleyball, fishing, rock climbing, art, guitar, singing and many more.

801-582-1565, ext. 1559

Sweat Lodge

Healing Native American Sweat Lodge ceremonies are held at 7 p.m. each Friday; and a women's only ceremony is held at 2 p.m. the third Saturday of each month at the Purtkwahgahm Healing Ground (southeast corner of Bldg 4).

801-582-1565, ext. 4556

Call for information about other Native American Ceremonies.

Transfer & Lodging Center (TLC)

Lodging is available for Veterans traveling more than 50 miles for medical appointments in Salt Lake City. Veterans should check in at the Transfer & Lodging office. Bldg. 1, first floor, room 1B31 Monday - Friday 8 a.m. - 4:15 p.m. After hours, weekends and holidays check in through the Emergency Department. Veteran Directed Home and Community Based Services program (VD-HCBS) An alternative for (long-term) nursing home placement, Veterans are able to live in their own home.

801-582-1565, ext. 2492

VA Mission Act

Serving Veterans waiting more than 30 days for an appointment or living greater than 40 miles away from the closest VA facility.

801-582-1565, option 6

www.missionact.va.gov

Veterans Transportation Service (VTS)

The Veterans Transportation Service in partnership with Utah, Idaho, Wyoming and Nevada Veteran Service Organizations proudly support the transportation needs of Veterans traveling for appointments in Salt Lake City. Van service is available from Ely and Elko, Nevada; Idaho Falls and Pocatello, Idaho; Afton and Rock Springs, Wyoming; and from Vernal, Price, Richfield, Logan, and St. George, Utah. Wheelchair transportation is available on some routes.

801-582-1565, ext. 2003 or 1079

1-800-613-4012

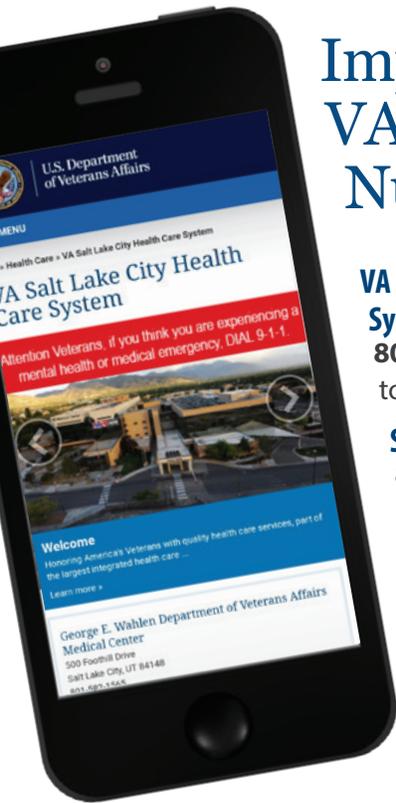
Whole Health Program

Whole Health is an approach to health care that empowers YOU to take charge of your health and well-being.

801-588-5991

- **QiGong**
Gentle movements performed in a relaxed meditative state to promote health and healing.
 - **Choose to Heal**
Expand awareness of how mind, body and spirit integrate to promote healing.
 - **Mind Body Bridging**
Integrates mind, body, and spirit in a self-help therapeutic process.
 - **Intro to Mindfulness**
Explore the basic mindfulness practices and concepts.
 - **Meditation and Relaxation Training**
Experiential group that includes participating in a 40-minute mindfulness exercise.
 - **Mindfulness and Compassion**
Helps manage stress, chronic pain, physical disease and mental health disorders.
 - **Warrior Yoga**
Focuses on breath and body awareness to increase relaxation and mental clarity for wellbeing, management and prevention of disease.
 - **Mind-Body Skills**
Breathing techniques, gentle body movement and postures to reduce stress and promote health.
- 801-582-1565, ext. 2325**





Important VA Phone Numbers

VA Salt Lake City Health Care System

801-582-1565 or
toll-free 1-800-613-4012

Scheduling an Appointment

801-584-2575, ext. 1 or
toll-free at 1-800-613-4012,
ext. 2575

Veterans who need to schedule, cancel or reschedule an appointment for all primary care clinics can call Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Automated Prescription Refill Line

801-584-2525 or toll-free at 1-800-579-0540

Veterans who need to request a refill of a prescription or check the status of refills can call 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Have your social security number and prescription numbers ready when calling.

VA Benefits (other than health care)

1-800-827-1000

Veterans who need information on VA benefits including VA pension and compensation, home loans, and education can call the VA Regional Office.

Billing Questions

801-582-1565, ext. 2547 or toll-free at 1-866-393-1846

Veterans who have questions about a bill can call Billing.

Veterans Crisis Line

1-800-273-TALK (8255), Press 1 for Veterans

Veterans can call the Veterans Crisis Line to talk to trained professionals 24 hours a day, seven days a week or visit www.veteranscrisisline.net.

My HealtheVet

www.myhealth.va.gov

Veterans can manage their health by logging onto My HealtheVet, which offers access to Veteran health benefits and services.

For more information on VA related topics, visit
www.saltlakecity.va.gov.

Follow us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.



Looking for more ways to improve
your health and well-being?



Veterans Health Library

Your source for health information

The Veterans Health Library is a free resource in partnership with My HealtheVet to help Veterans stay well and healthy, and take an active role in their health care. It provides Veterans, family members, and caregivers 24/7 access to comprehensive Veteran-focused health information including more than 1,500 health sheets, more than 150 videos, go-to-guides and flipbooks that have been approved by VA experts. These include topics specific to Veterans, for example, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), combat-related traumatic brain injury and Agent Orange.

www.veteranshealthlibrary.org

