



# “VA 101”

**A BRIEF INTRODUCTION TO THE  
UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS (DVA)**



# OVERVIEW



- Mission
- Organizational Structure
- Veterans Healthcare Administration
- Partners and Service Organizations
- Behavioral Health Programs



- To fulfill President Lincoln's promise:

*“To care for him who shall have borne the battle,  
and for his widow, and his orphan” by serving and  
honoring the men and women who are America’s  
Veterans.*



# DVA Mission



To serve America's Veterans and their families with dignity and compassion and to be their principal advocate in ensuring that they receive medical care, benefits, social support, and lasting memorials promoting the health, welfare, and dignity of all Veterans in recognition of their service to this Nation.



# DVA Organization



- DVA Central Office (VACO) located in Washington, DC
- >300,000 employees, 2<sup>nd</sup> largest cabinet agency
- Three distinct business lines:
  - **Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA)**
  - **National Cemetery Administration (NCA)**
  - **Veterans Healthcare Administration (VHA)**



# Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA)



VBA is the nationwide provider of other benefits for Veterans:

- Compensation for service-connected injuries and illness
- Pension for low income Veterans and survivors
- Education Benefits
- Insurance
- Home Loan Guarantees
- Vocational Rehabilitation
- Burial Benefits



# Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA)



- 57 Regional Offices
- 4 Regional Processing Centers for Education benefits (Buffalo, Atlanta, St. Louis, Muskogee)
- 1 Insurance Center (Philadelphia)



# Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA)



VBA has Regional Offices in  
Buffalo and New York City



# National Cemetery Administration (NCA)



NCA honors Veterans with final resting places in national shrines and with lasting tributes that commemorate their service to our nation.



# National Cemetery Administration (NCA)



- 131 National Cemeteries
- 33 Soldier's Lots and Monuments
- 24 Overseas Veterans Cemeteries



# National Cemetery Administration (NCA)



**NCA has facilities in seven  
locations in New York State**



# VHA MISSION STATEMENT



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



# Veterans Healthcare Administration



VHA is the nationwide healthcare provider network for Veterans:

- Primary Care
- Specialty Care
- Behavioral Health
- Geriatrics



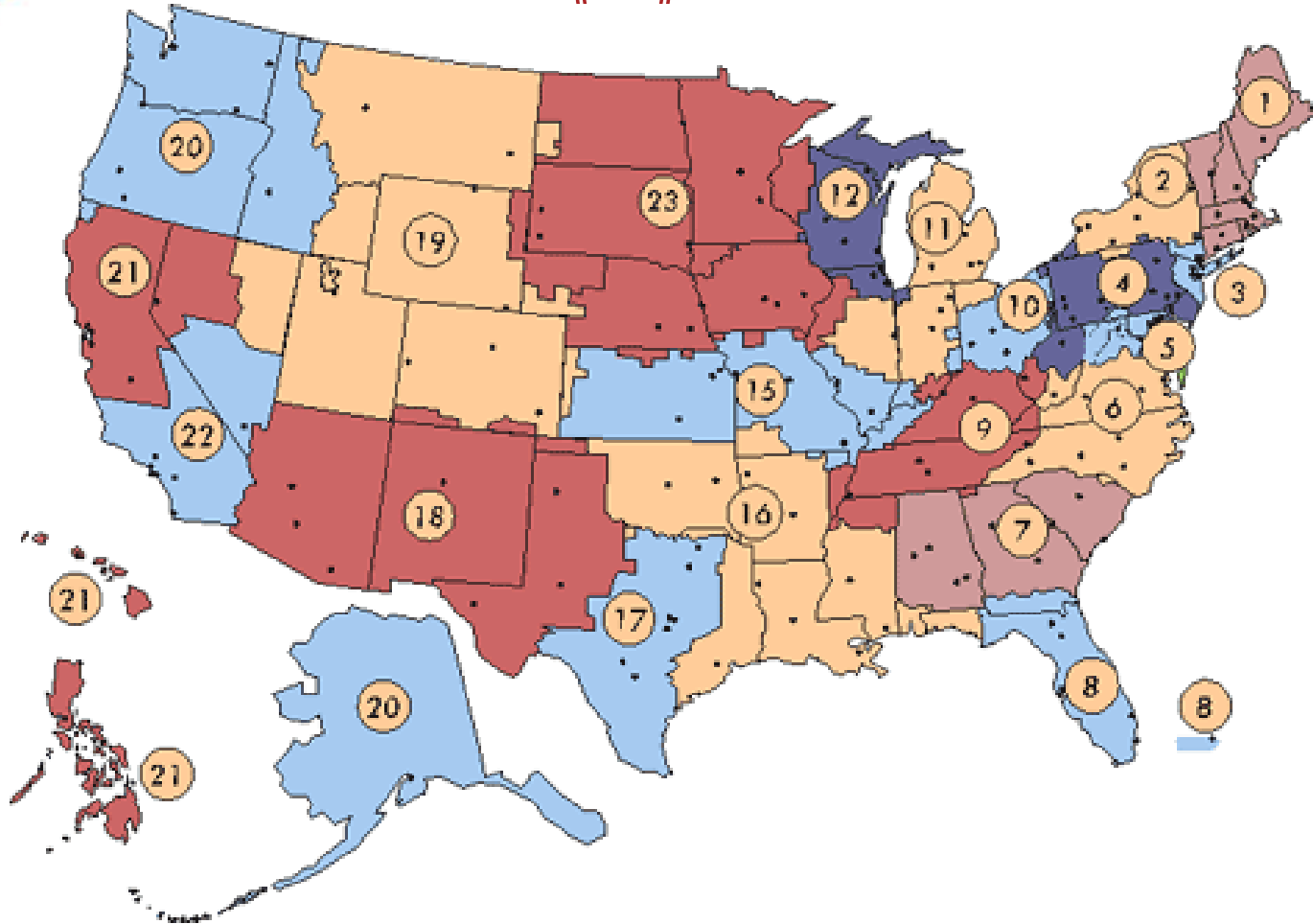
# Veterans Healthcare Administration



- 153 Hospitals
- 773 Community Based Outpatient Clinics
- 135 Community Living Centers
- 47 Residential Rehabilitation Programs
- 260 Readjustment Counseling Centers (Vet Centers)



# Veterans Healthcare Administration



VHA facilities are organized into 21 Veterans Integrated Service Networks (VISNs)



# Veterans Healthcare Administration



VISN 2, headquartered in Albany, provides care for the majority of upstate New York north of Kingston

## 5 VA Medical Centers

- Buffalo,
- Bath,
- Canandaigua,
- Syracuse,
- Albany

## 28 Community Based Outpatient Clinics





# Vet Centers



Vet Centers provide confidential readjustment counseling and outreach services to all Veterans who served in any combat zone. Services are also available for their family members for military related issues.



- Albany
- Babylon
- Binghamton
- Bronx
- Brooklyn
- Buffalo
- Manhattan
- Harlem
- Middletown
- Queens
- Rochester
- Syracuse
- Staten Island
- Watertown
- White Plains



# Community Partners



Non-VA groups that work on behalf of Veterans and their families:

- Veteran Service Organizations
- State Offices of Veterans Affairs
- County Veteran Service Agencies
- Nonprofit Service Providers



# Veteran Service Organizations



- National membership groups such as the American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars, AMVETS, Vietnam Veterans of America, Disabled American Veterans, Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America:
  - Advocate for national Veteran issues
  - Support Veterans through local programs
  - Participate in VA Voluntary Service events



# State Departments of Veterans Affairs



- Each state has a Department of Veterans Affairs that provides benefits (federal, state, and local) counseling and application assistance, as well as employment information, educational assistance, and referrals for services not available from VA.
- State offices are frequently located in VA Medical Centers and Clinics.



# County Veteran Service Agencies



- Most counties also have a Veteran Service Agency that reports to county leadership and supports Veterans in a similar manner to the state organizations.
- County agencies frequently operate transportation for local Veterans to VA facilities.



# Nonprofit Service Providers



- Many communities also include nonprofit agencies that serve Veterans, particularly in the areas of housing, employment, and education.



# BEHAVIORAL HEALTH PROGRAMS



- Outpatient Mental Health
  - Located in all Community Based Outpatient Clinics
- 16 bed inpatient acute psychiatric unit
- Integrated Primary Care
  - Behavioral Health Consultants co-located in Primary care clinics
- Home Based Primary Care



# BEHAVIORAL HEALTH PROGRAMS



- Support Community Living Center
- OEF /OIF and Polytrauma Program Support
- Mental Health Intensive Case Management Services
- Psychosocial Rehabilitation and Recovery Center/Community Transitions Program



# BEHAVIORAL HEALTH PROGRAMS



- Neuropsychological/Psychological Assessment
- Vocational Rehabilitation Services
  - General Vocational Counseling
  - Compensated Work Therapy/Supported Employment /VIP//Poly Trauma:
  - Self Employment Assistance



# BEHAVIORAL HEALTH PROGRAMS



- Health Care for Homeless Veterans
- Substance Treatment Services
- Suicide Prevention
- Post-traumatic Stress Disorder Clinical Team



**Many Thanks to  
George Basher,  
VISN 2**

**Health Systems Specialist**



# CONTACT INFORMATION



- [Judy.Hayman@va.gov](mailto:Judy.Hayman@va.gov)