Honoring America’s Veterans by providing exceptional health care that improves their health and well-being.
Executive Leadership Team

Director – Ginny Creasman, PharmD, FACHE

Associate Director - Chris Cauley, FACHE

Chief of Staff - Mark S. Hausman, Jr., M.D.

Associate Director for Patient Care Services – Stacey Breedveld, RN, MSN

Assistant Director - Kevin Swallow, MPA

Message from the Director

Being Director of one of the finest healthcare systems in the nation has been a great joy. I came into a delivery system that was already doing very well, yet we’ve achieved so much more this year because of our caring, compassionate and hard-working employees and staff who are characteristic of VA’s all over the country. The first goal was to strengthen our leadership team. We’ve experienced a lot of change in the healthcare system leadership team. So, my first goal was to establish a permanent team, one ready for the long haul. With this seasoned and talented team in place, we’re ready to take on the new challenges in Veterans’ healthcare.

We implemented a comprehensive strategic and tactical plan to guide us forward. Together, with VA healthcare systems in Detroit, Battle Creek, and Saginaw, we’re pioneering advances in virtual healthcare, creating innovative and effective new ways to reach more Veterans, and we’re transforming access to care in the community through investment, resource planning, and strong community relationships. Of course, without great employees, it wouldn’t be possible to accomplish our ambitious goals. Our employees are whole-heartedly devoted to caring for our Veterans. Nevertheless, we continue to improve. Our leadership team visits clinics weekly to learn about the needs they may have to improve their work experience. This year, we increased our All Employee Survey participation to 60%. The results will provide a roadmap for improved morale and enriched engagement.

In government, we often speak in terms of a “feast-or-famine” regarding budgets. Now we’re changing the conversation to one of “Strategic Investment.” We’re right-sizing our personnel budget to better align with innovative patient care and forward-looking strategic investment. We’ve invested more than $150M in new construction projects, our Fisher House will break ground in Spring 2019, and soon construction will begin on a new clinic in western Wayne County.

With so much change, it’s important for us to remember that, ultimately, we continue to provide world-class healthcare to our nation’s Veterans. Every day, in every way, we proudly come to this meaningful work knowing that we’re caring for those women and men who voluntarily placed themselves in harm’s way in service of our great country.

Warmly,

Ginny Creasman, PharmD, FACHE
VA Ann Arbor Healthcare System

Proudly serving Veterans since 1953

Community Clinics

Flint Outpatient Clinic
2360 S. Linden Rd.
Flint, MI 48532
810-720-2913

Green Road Outpatient Clinic
2500 Green Rd.
Ann Arbor, MI 48105
734-769-7100

Jackson Outpatient Clinic
4328 Page Ave.
Michigan Center, MI 49254
517-764-3609

Packard Road Outpatient Clinic
3800 Packard Rd.
Ann Arbor, MI 48108
734-769-7100

Toledo Outpatient Clinic
1200 S. Detroit Ave.
Toledo, OH 43614
419-259-2000

VA Ann Arbor Healthcare System (VAAAHS) provides state-of-the-art healthcare services to the men and women who have proudly served our nation. Nearly 69,000 Veterans living in Southeast Michigan and Northwest Ohio visited the medical center and community-based outpatient clinics for their comprehensive health care needs and completed 814,623 encounters in fiscal year 2018.

VA Ann Arbor Healthcare System is among hospitals providing the highest level of complexity of care. Neurosurgery, coronary artery bypass, deep-brain stimulation, and laparoscopic surgeries are examples of the sophisticated level of care provided at the VA Ann Arbor Medical Center. The facility also includes state-of-the-art ambulatory care clinics, operating rooms, cardiac catheterization suite, intensive care units, laboratory, as well as diagnostic services.

VA Ann Arbor is also a major tertiary care referral center, providing care to Veterans in Toledo, Flint, and Jackson Community-Based Outpatient Clinics (CBOCs). VAAAHS is a robust research center offering the VA Center for Clinical Management Research, and Health Science Research & Development (HSR&D) Center of Excellence.
By the Numbers

$528 million
Annual Operating Budget

2,703 Total Employees (26% are Veterans)

88,911 Veteran Patients

596,185 Outpatient Visits

5,322 Inpatient Admissions

Innovation

- First VA in the U.S. to implement the Real Time Locating System (RTLS) inventory management system.
- Awarded a national Patient Aligned Care Team (PACT) demonstration lab.
- Nationally funded for capability grant “Redesigning the System of Care for Hospitalized Medicine Patients.”
- Partners with the University of Michigan College of Engineering, School of Business, College of Architecture, and School of Art and Design to foster change and innovation.
- Implementing Veteran Centered Care initiatives.
- Received seven National Center for Patient Safety “Cornerstone Gold Awards.”
- One of 11 VA medical facilities to implement the Telehealth initiative: Specialty Care Access Network-Extension for Community Healthcare Outcomes (SCAN-ECHO).
Accreditations & Recognition

• Joint Commission
• Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities, for Compensated Work Therapy, Homeless Program, and Psychosocial Rehabilitation and Recovery Center (PRRC)
• College of American Pathologists (CAP)
• Blood Bank — FDA and CAP accredited
• American College of Radiation Oncology
• Commission on Cancer
• Nuclear Regulatory Commission
• Cancer Program accredited by the American College of Surgeons
• Accredited Pastoral Care Program
• Recognized as a “Leader in LGBT Healthcare Equality” by the Human Rights Campaign (HRC) Foundation

Research

• Over 400 active studies in clinical research, basic science, health services, and rehabilitation.
• Host site of Health Services Research and Development (HSR&D) Center of Excellence, Geriatric Research, Education and Clinical Center (GRECC), and Serious Mental Illness Treatment Resource and Evaluation Center (SMITREC).
• The Center for Clinical Management Research (CCMR) is 1 of 19 VA Centers of Innovation in the nation.

Education

• Affiliated with 112 colleges and universities including the University of Michigan Schools of Medicine, Dentistry, Nursing, Social Work, Public Health, and Engineering, and the University of Toledo College of Medicine.
• More than 1,400 people receive training here each year.
• Most VAAAHS physicians hold joint teaching appointments at the University of Michigan.

VA Ann Arbor Programs

Eligible Veterans can seek care for a range of programs and services at VA Ann Arbor and five Community-Based Outpatient Clinics:
• Neurosurgery
• Cardiac Surgery
• Invasive Cardiology
• Invasive Radiology
• Hemodialysis
• Chemotherapy
• Radiation Oncology
• Veteran Empowerment and Recovery (VEAR) Center
• Mental Health Intensive Care Management (MHICM)
• homeless Outreach Program
• Veterans Justice Outreach (VJO)
• Veterans Integration to Academic Leadership (VITAL)
• Traumatic Brain Injury
• Outpatient Spinal Cord Injury
• Visual Impairment Services
• Deep Brain Stimulation
• Home-Based Primary Care
• Health Education Classes
• Medical Foster Home Program
• Health Services Research & Development (HSR&D)
• Serious Mental Illness Treatment Resource & Evaluation Center (SMITREC)
• Geriatric Research, Education, and Clinical Center
• Patient Aligned Care Teams (PACT)
• Demonstration Lab
• Transcatheter Aortic Valve Replacement (TAVR) Suite
• Bariatric Surgery Program
• Robotic Surgery
• Education Center Simulation Laboratory
• Telehealth Technology
• Women’s Health
Vietnam Veterans Commemoration & Clinic Grand Re-Opening in Flint

In May, VA Ann Arbor Healthcare System (VAAHHS) and Flint VA Community-Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC) hosted a Vietnam Era Veterans Commemoration event and clinic grand re-opening. The Commemoration honored the service and sacrifice of Vietnam Era Veterans and their families. The event, which was open to all Veterans, their families, and the public, also celebrated the completed expansion of the Flint CBOC, which added 3,000 square feet for more reception areas, larger labs, and 12 new exam rooms.

Activities included ribbon-cutting and flag-raising ceremonies, followed by a Vietnam War Commemoration and Pinning Ceremony, with special guest Lt. Col. Charles S. Kettles, a decorated Vietnam War Veteran and Medal of Honor recipient. A Vietnam War 50th Anniversary exhibit was also featured with facts about the history of the war. Staff from the Health Benefits Unit were on hand to present information about VA health care benefits and resources, and to offer enrollment to eligible Veterans.

Services offered to enrolled Veterans at VA Flint CBOC include:
- Primary care
- Anti-coagulation
- Healthcare for Homeless Veterans (HCHV)
- Social work
- Mental Health (including substance abuse)
- Case management
- Nutrition
- Tele-health (CCHT)
- MOVE! Weight Management Program via video-television (V-Tel)
- Laboratory services

Lt. Col. Charles S. Kettles, a decorated Vietnam War Veteran and Medal of Honor recipient, attends the Vietnam Veterans Commemoration & Clinic Grand Re-Opening in Flint, MI. 

(Left to right) Shelly Kenel, Jenny Walsh, Lt. Col. Charles S. Kettles, and Dr. Ginny Creasman, VAAHHS Director, assist with cutting the ribbon for the re-opening of VA’s Flint CBOC.
Better Breathing - 3D Lung Technology Research

Dr. Joseph Potkay and his team could potentially revolutionize how Veterans with lung disease receive treatment by developing a 3D-artificial lung.

Researchers at VA Ann Arbor are excited about their work in developing a three dimensional-printed (3D) artificial lung that is compatible with living tissue. That’s because it could transform how Veterans who have lung disease are treated. Dr. Joseph Potkay, a biomedical engineer, and his team hope to build the first wearable artificial lung, small enough to fit in a backpack or fanny pack. This is the first time that high-resolution 3D polymer printing is being used to create artificial lungs with 3D blood flow networks.

This amazing piece of technology could be used as a short-term option for patients who are waiting for a lung transplant, or to support the work of the lungs while healing. Future versions could potentially run for longer periods of time.

For now, the focus is on patients with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), which affects about 16 percent of Veterans. COPD makes breathing difficult by limiting air flow through the lungs and can lead to life-threatening conditions.
Volunteering with Purpose

Neha Navathe, a high school student in Ann Arbor, has volunteered at VA Ann Arbor Healthcare System (VAAHS) for the past three years.

Last summer, she assisted in the Women’s Health Clinic where she learned about the financial hardship many women Veterans face after having a baby. When she found out that baby diapers are one of the most expensive items for new moms, she wanted to help.

Neha decided to start a diaper drive at her school and in her neighborhood, as well as reaching out to family and friends. The diaper drive was a huge success, raising over one thousand dollars to support the VAAHS 2018 Baby Shower for Women Veterans.

So far, Neha has earned three Presidential Gold Pin awards for volunteering. She wants to study biology and pursue a career in health sciences. VAAHS is thankful to Neha and all the volunteers who help make a difference in the lives of the Veterans we are honored to serve.
Volunteers for Hurricane Disaster Relief

In the wake of the devastating 2018 hurricane season, VA AAAHS employee volunteers were deployed to Puerto Rico and Houston to support national disaster relief and recovery efforts.

This deployment highlights part of VA’s “Fourth Mission,” which includes supporting national, state, and local emergency management, public health, and safety. Through the Disaster Emergency Medical Personnel System (DEMPS), clinical and non-clinical VA employee volunteers were sent to support VA facilities and/or communities in hurricane disaster areas, supplying medical and other services.

In addition to those employees who volunteered, it’s also important to recognize the efforts of VA AAAHS’s DEMPS Qualification Team members, along with the supervisors and co-workers who worked hard to ensure adequate coverage while their team members were deployed.

In total, ten VA AAAHS employee volunteers supported the missions in Puerto Rico and Houston during the August – December 2018 storm season:
- Robert Greco, RN
- Dennis Balow, Biomedical Engineering Technician
- Nicole Harmon, RN
- Dorothy Speer, RN
- CPL David Pardon, VA Police Officer
- Mark Matusik, Biomedical Lead Engineering Technician
- Melissa Barnes, Education Technician
- Paige Williams, Pharmacy Technician
- Emily Ostrom, Medical Support Assistant
- Dion Humphrey, Health Technician
New Option for Prostate Biopsy

The UroNav™ fusion biopsy system was recently introduced at VAAHS as a cutting-edge option for many Veteran patients at risk for prostate cancer. Fusion biopsy uses a new magnetic resonance imaging (MRI)-guided system to target a specific area of the prostate for sampling. Then, suspicious lesions are evaluated using powerful ultrasound images.

This new technology, along with cross-disciplinary teamwork, provides our skilled urologists with greater precision and more accurate results and gives Veteran patients greater peace of mind.

Simulation Center Gets Certified

The VAAHS Simulation Center Program received a two-year Basic Level Facility Certification from the Veterans Health Administration SimLEARN National Simulation Center. Our Simulation Center provides a safe learning environment for a wide variety of multidisciplinary staff training.

By using technology and research-based education, health professionals enhance their core knowledge and skills, and clinical judgement, working through various patient care simulations in collaboration with other health disciplines.

This accomplishment speaks to VAAHS’s commitment to quality improvement, patient safety, accountability in improving Veteran-centered care, and becoming a national leader in multi-disciplinary education for health care providers.

In recognition of the value of collaboration, the VAAHS Simulation Center is also available for training opportunities with community partners and university affiliates.
Physician and Researcher Receives Roger Grekin Research Award

In May, Dr. Carol Kauffman, a VA physician and researcher, received the prestigious Roger Grekin Research Award. This award recognized Dr. Kauffman’s work as a master clinician and educator, as well as a distinguished scientific investigator. Her research interests include prevention and treatment of fungal infections and infections in immunocompromised hosts. Dr. Kauffman has authored or co-authored 340 peer-reviewed manuscripts and 119 book chapters.

In her acceptance speech, Dr. Kauffman paid tribute to Dr. Roger Grekin, the award’s namesake, for being “a wonderful physician and great teacher who steadfastly guided the research program at the VA Ann Arbor Healthcare system for almost 30 years.” The award was presented by VA Neurologist, Dr. Michael Wang, who affirmed that the decision to honor Dr. Kauffman with this award was unanimous among the selection committee members.

Dr. Kauffman is Chief of Infectious Diseases at VAAAHS and a professor of Internal Medicine at University of Michigan Medical School. She is a Master of the American College of Physicians and a Fellow of the Society for Healthcare Epidemiology of America and Infectious Diseases Society of America. Additionally, she is the President of the Board of Directors of the non-profit Veterans Affairs Education and Research Association of Michigan.
Reaching Out to Veterans in Crisis

Suicide prevention awareness is an ongoing goal for the entire VA system. According to recent statistics, twenty Veterans die by suicide per day. Of those twenty, an average of fourteen were not receiving care through the VA. Veterans who receive care through the VA have a reduced suicide risk. The VA is committed to reaching as many Veterans as possible – both within the VA and in the community – to start the conversation about suicide prevention. VISN 10 continues to support Veterans through the ongoing #BeThere campaign to prevent Veteran suicide. We will never stop reaching out to our Veterans in crisis.

Reach Out: Suicide Prevention Resources

Suicide prevention resources are not limited to the healthcare setting. Additional, easily accessible resources can be found where Veterans live:

**Veterans Crisis Line**

Dial 1-800-273-8255 and press 1. This resource is for everyone.

**Ask for help using Siri on an iPhone or Google Assistant on an Android phone.** Say "Call the Veterans’ Crisis Line" and then press 1 to connect.

**The LifeArmor app** has information and tools to assist members of the military with mental health concerns. LifeArmor is available for both iOS and Android devices.

**The VA’s Coaching into Care** phone program offers resources to educate and empower families and friends who are seeking care and/or services for a veteran. Call 1-888-823-7458.

**Virtual Hope Box** app is a mental health support tool that can be personalized with photos, sound, and videos of loved ones to support a Veteran in crisis.