2019 Annual Report To Our Community

VA ANN ARBOR HEALTHCARE SYSTEM

Choose VA

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About VAAAHS

Since 1953, VA Ann Arbor Healthcare System (VAAAHS) has provided state-of-the-art, evidence-based, Veteran-centered healthcare services to Veterans residing in Southeastern Michigan and Northwestern Ohio. VAAAHS is a level 1b tertiary care referral healthcare system and provides care at Community-Based Outpatient Clinics (CBOCs) in Toledo, Ohio, and Jackson and Flint, MI, as well as at community clinics at Packard and Green Roads in Ann Arbor, MI. VA Ann Arbor has 102 Acute Care Beds distributed among Medicine, Surgery, Critical Care, and Psychiatry Services, as well as 40 Community Living Center Beds (CLC).

Message from the Director

One of the highest honors of my life has been serving our military Veterans for the past 30 years alongside compassionate, conscientious VA professionals at all career levels. The work is sometimes difficult and tough decisions must be made every day, but when we keep the Veterans at the center of these decisions, we can go forward knowing that we are doing the right thing. Keeping our Veterans at the center reliably serves as the touchstone that drives all our accomplishments. It is for them that we do this work. And it is for them that we continue to improve, grow, and make smart investments in our future.

We've achieved a lot in the two years since I came to Ann Arbor as the Medical Center Director. As I have mentioned, our healthcare system is already a recognized leader among healthcare systems nationally. Nonetheless, we've spent the past couple years focused on building and strengthening our foundation to more effectively meet and exceed our Veterans' needs so that we remain their choice for exceptional, state-of-the-art healthcare well into the future.

Thinking in terms of one Michigan Market rather than four individual healthcare systems, we've embarked on several large-scale strategic initiatives. Through these efforts, we will improve efficiencies and align services in a way the makes sense for the delivery of services while offering a world class customer experience to our Veterans.

This year we've realigned several of our high-profile services into a leadership structure that makes more sense for a rapidly changing healthcare environment. This realignment affords us the agility necessary to fulfill our strategic initiatives. Our culture is rapidly implementing the tenets of High Reliability Organizations and Just Culture. Through these initiatives, VA Ann Arbor Healthcare System will enhance the experience and engagement of our Veterans, our staff, and our stakeholders. Always remember the ICARE Model. If you bring Integrity and Commitment, provide Advocacy and Respect, Excellence will inevitably follow. I've witnessed this in practice time and time again in my career. We have the most caring, committed, and professional staff of any healthcare system. Through them we will continue to fulfill our nation's promise to our Veterans.

A look back - pictured is the medical center in Ann Arbor shortly after opening in 1953.

Executive Team

Chris Cauley, MHA, FACHE - Associate Director

Before coming to VAAAHS, Mr. Cauley was the Associate Director of the Aleda E. Lutz VA Medical Center in Saginaw, MI since November 2016. Prior to that he served as the Executive Assistant to the Associate Director at the VA Ann Arbor Healthcare System. Mr. Cauley has worked for VA for more than 22 years. He has a Bachelor of Science degree in Kinesiology from the University of Illinois and a Master's Degree in Health Administration from Independence University. He is a Fellow of the American College of Healthcare Executives and board-certified in healthcare management.

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

Dr. Hausman is a graduate of Yale University and the University of Michigan Medical School. He completed his training in Anesthesiology and his fellowship in Critical Care Medicine at the University of Michigan, and is board certified in both disciplines. Dr. Hausman joined the medical staff at VA Ann Arbor Healthcare System in 2014, and since has served in various leadership roles including Chief of Anesthesiology and Perioperative Care, Associate Chief of Staff for Ambulatory Care, and has been the Chief of Staff for the healthcare system since July 2018.

Stacey Breedveld, CENP, MSN, RN - Associate Director, Patient Care Services

Ms. Breedveld has held a variety of clinical and management positions including staff nurse, head nurse, clinical nurse specialist, associate director of Emergency Services and Director of Patient Care Services throughout her career. Before coming to VA, Ms. Breedveld held the position of Executive Director of the Saint Joseph Mercy Saline Hospital in Saline, Michigan. Ms. Breedveld obtained her Bachelor's of Science in Nursing from the University of Michigan and her Master's of Science in Nursing from Wayne State University. She is a member of Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society.

Zana Bouda, MHA, RHIA - Assistant Director

Mr. Bouda joined VA Ann Arbor Healthcare System in 2016 as Chief of Health Administration Service. Prior to that, Mr. Bouda served as the Assistant Chief of the Business Office at the John D. Dingell VA Medical Center. Before his VA career, Mr. Bouda worked for the State of Michigan Department of Community Health as well as the Department of Corrections as a Health Information Manager. His education includes a Bachelor of Science in Health Information Management from the University of Cincinnati and a Master of Healthcare Administration from the University of Phoenix.

Ann Arbor Fisher House

First Michigan Fisher House Nearing Completion

Finding affordable accommodations for loved ones will be a thing of the past for Veterans and Service Members receiving care at the VA Ann Arbor Healthcare System Medical Center when its Fisher House opens its doors in 2020. Built by the Fisher House Foundation, it will be gifted to VAAAHS upon completion and is expected to open in Spring 2020. The Fisher House program, established in 1990 by Zachary and Elizabeth Fisher, provides free temporary lodging to family members of hospitalized Veterans and active duty military personnel.

Fisher House Foundation is committed to improving the quality of life for our men and women in uniform, Veterans, and their families. A family's love is always the best medicine. When a loved one is injured or ill, Fisher House unites families and relieves the financial and emotional strain of being away from home. The Fisher House will provide families a "home away from home" while their loved one is undergoing inpatient or extensive outpatient treatment at VAAAHS.

On June 14, 2019, VAAAHS along with the Fisher House Foundation hosted a groundbreaking ceremony next to the build site on the medical center campus that was attended by hundreds of supporters. U.S. Representative Debbie Dingell, National VA Fisher House and Family Hospitality Program Manager Jennifer Koget, Fisher House Foundation President David Coker, and others joined Dr. Ginny Creasman for the groundbreaking, announcing the start of the new home.

Once completed, the VA Ann Arbor Fisher House will join 86 other Fisher Houses operating in the United States and Europe. Located on the medical center campus, the 13,400 sq. ft. "comfort home" will feature 16 suites, each with a private bedroom and bathroom. Common areas will include a spacious kitchen, large communal living, dining and family rooms, laundry room and patio.

This project has benefited from the tireless efforts of Fisher House Michigan, a non-profit organization, who have been champions in raising awareness about the Fisher House program for several years. Volunteers have hosted countless fundraisers, including the annual "Stories of Service" Veterans' story-telling event that draws hundreds. Fisher House Michigan has already raised $7 million of their $20 million goal to support the construction of any Fisher House built in Michigan and to support the families utilizing the houses once built.

For more information about the VA Ann Arbor Fisher House, contact Fisher House Manager-April LaRock at (734) 845-3055 or April.LaRock@va.gov

MISSION Act of 2018

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs launched its new and improved community care program on June 6, 2019, implementing portions of the VA Maintaining Internal Systems and Strengthening Integrated Outside Networks Act of 2018 (the MISSION Act), which ends the Veterans Choice Program and establishes a new Veterans Community Care Program.

Under the new and improved Veterans Community Care Program, Veterans can now work with their VA health care provider or other VA staff to see if they are eligible to receive community care. Eligibility for community care does not require a Veteran to receive that care in the community; Veterans can still choose to have VA provide their care. Veterans are eligible to choose to receive care in the community if they meet any of the following six eligibility criteria:

1. A Veteran needs a service not available at any VA medical facility.

2. A Veteran lives in a U.S. state or territory without a full-service VA medical facility. Specifically, this would apply to Veterans living in Alaska, Hawaii, New Hampshire and the U.S. territories of Guam, American Samoa, the Northern Mariana Islands and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

3. A Veteran qualifies under the "grandfather" provision related to distance eligibility for the Veterans Choice Program.

4. VA cannot furnish care in a manner that complies within certain designated access standards. The specific access standards are described below:

a. Average drive time to a specific VA medical facility

- 30-minute average drive time for primary care, mental health and noninstitutional extended care services.
- Sixty-minute average drive time for specialty care.

Note: Average drive times are calculated by VA using geo-mapping software.

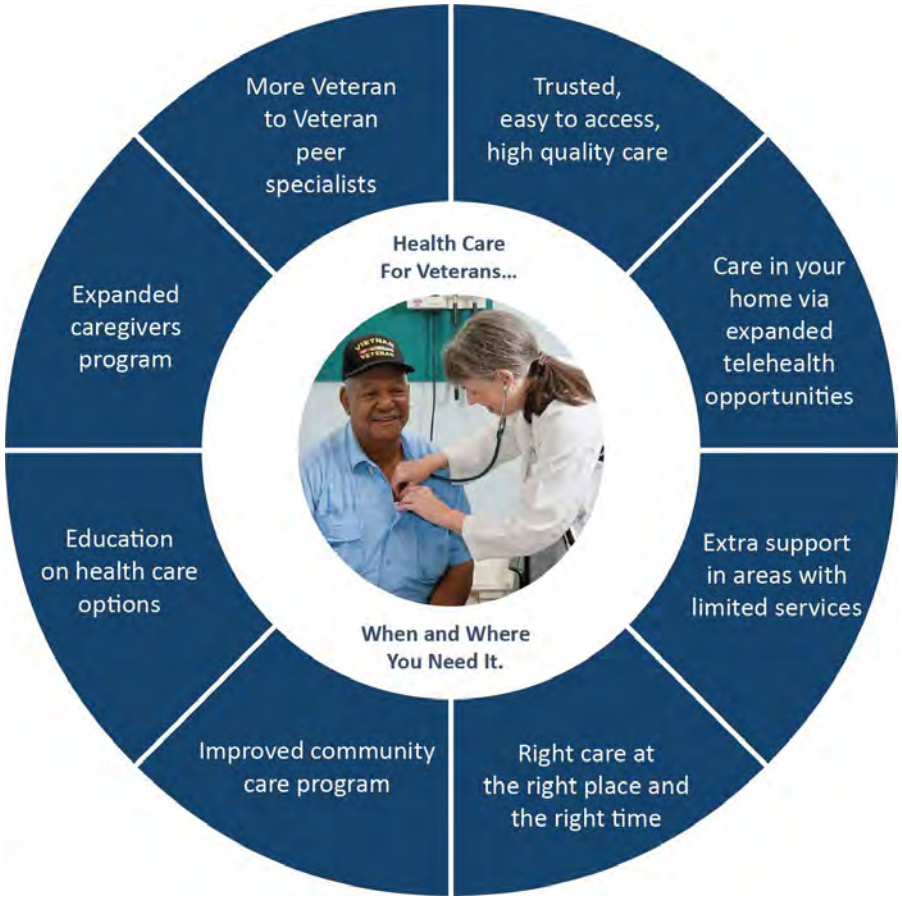
b. Appointment wait time at a specific VA medical facility

- Twenty days for primary care, mental health care and noninstitutional extended care services, unless the Veteran agrees to a later date in consultation with his or her VA health care provider.
- Twenty-eight days for specialty care from the date of request, unless the Veteran agrees to a later date in consultation with his or her VA health care provider.

5. The Veteran and the referring clinician agree it is in the best medical interest of the Veteran to receive community care based on defined factors.

6. VA has determined that a VA medical service line is not providing care in a manner that complies with VA's standards for quality.

The MISSION Act strengthens the nationwide VA Health Care System by empowering Veterans to have more options in their health care decisions.



Clearing the Air

The Department of Veterans Affairs banned smoking at all VA facilities and grounds across the nation effective October 1st, 2019. The Veterans Health Administration's (VHA) smoke-free policy applies to cigarettes, cigars, pipes, any other combustion of tobacco and non-Federal Drug Administration approved electronic nicotine delivery systems, including but not limited to electronic or e-cigarettes, vape pens or e-cigars. VA offers tobacco treatment services for all enrolled Veterans and employees. Smoking is already banned on the campuses of more than 4,000 healthcare systems across the nation, including several in the Ann Arbor region.

Veteran Welcome Center

On Memorial Day weekend, the medical center held a ribbon cutting ceremony for the grand opening of the newly constructed Veteran Welcome Center. Besides being a beautiful space, the area includes a front desk where Red Coat Ambassadors welcome Veterans and visitors, as well as easy access to Veteran Service Organizations, Eligibility offices, and Patient Advocates. Additionally, a comfortable shuttle waiting area for Veteran Travel services was included.

Pictured right: Congresswoman Debbie Dingell (D-MI) and Congressman Tim Walberg (R-MI) present Dr. Creasman with the Congressional Record recognizing VA Ann Arbor Healthcare System for it dedication to Veteran health care. Below: staff and Veterans gather in the the rotunda of the Welcome Center

VA ANN ARBOR HEALTHCARE SYSTEM
2019 STATS AT A GLANCE

ACUTE BEDS
102

CLC BEDS
40

20 DAYS
AVERAGE NEW PATIENT WAIT TIME TO SEE A PRIMARY CARE PHYSICIAN

RANKED
6TH
IN THE NATION FOR OVERALL RATING OF THE HOSPITAL
VA FACILITIES ONLY
(SHEP DATA IN SAIL)

VAAAHS QUALITY OF CARE IS BETTER THAN IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR IN 14 OF 15 QUALITY MEASURES.

$ $ $
572.9M
ANNUAL OPERATING BUDGET

MICHIGAN IS HOME TO
634,000
VETERANS

RANKED 8TH NATIONALLY IN VA RESEARCH (VERA)

610, 652 TOTAL OUTPATIENT VISITS

830,089 COMPLETED APPOINTMENTS

5.6 DAYS AVERAGE LENGTH OF STAY

89,068 ENROLLED VETERANS

VA ANN ARBOR HEALTHCARE SYSTEM TOTAL NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES:

ALL EMPLOYEES - 2,849

VETERAN EMPLOYEES - 868

Choose VA

VA Ann Arbor Healthcare System

VA Research & Development

Improving Veterans' Health and Wellbeing for More Than 90 Years

Prostate Cancer Foundation's $50M Partnership with VA

On November 29, 2016, the United States Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and the Prostate Cancer Foundation (PCF) entered into an ambitious 5-year, $50 million partnership with the goal of developing a Precision Oncology Program for Cancer of Prostate and to deliver precision oncology to all veterans battling prostate cancer. This collaboration will speed the development of new treatment options and cures for prostate cancer patients in the VA. Results and knowledge gained from this program will be generalizable to prostate cancer patients worldwide. The VA-PCF partnership serves as the first of its kind model for applying precision oncology to all veterans in 167 medical centers for all 287 forms of cancer.

Veterans Education and Research Association of Michigan (VERAM) received the PCF Stewart J. Rahr Foundation Precision Oncology Center of Excellence Award on behalf of the VA Ann Arbor Healthcare System in April 2018. The award provides $2.5 million over five years. With the help of this funding the Principal Investigator Dr. Ajjai Alva and the VA Ann Arbor Oncology team are working to establish a next generation sequencing platform. We have opened several precision medicine clinical trials sponsored by industry to reach a larger number of Veterans. In addition, we are working with VISN 10 partners to start sending patients to other VAs that have clinical trials open. This will support veterans with mutations for which a study targeting that lesion is available in the VISN.

The PCF-VA Network of Precision Oncology Centers of Excellence now includes 11 locations around the country. One of the major goals is to institute a standardized approach common to all centers for ordering germline and somatic sequencing for all patients with metastatic prostate cancer at each center.

Prostate Cancer Foundation

Curing Together.

Wearable CO2 Removal Artificial Lung

This SPiRE funded work aims to develop and optimize a wearable artificial lung for Veterans with lung disease. Patients suffering from severe lung disease are often unable to remove enough CO2 from the bloodstream, making even simple daily tasks exhausting. A portable, wearable artificial lung to aid CO2 removal can drastically improve rehabilitation and quality of life for Veterans with lung injury or chronic lung disease. In collaboration with the ECLS Lab at the University of Michigan, we have previously demonstrated a novel artificial lung design which incorporates a unique circular blood flow path to drastically improve gas exchange performance compared to current clinical artificial lungs. With improved gas exchange performance, devices can be made much smaller, more portable, and can be operated using air as the sweep gas rather than pure oxygen – potentially eliminating the need to carry a compressed gas tank. Currently, we are using simulation techniques to determine the optimal design that we will use in the next stages of testing, which are the validation of device performance at the benchtop and in short-term, large animal studies.

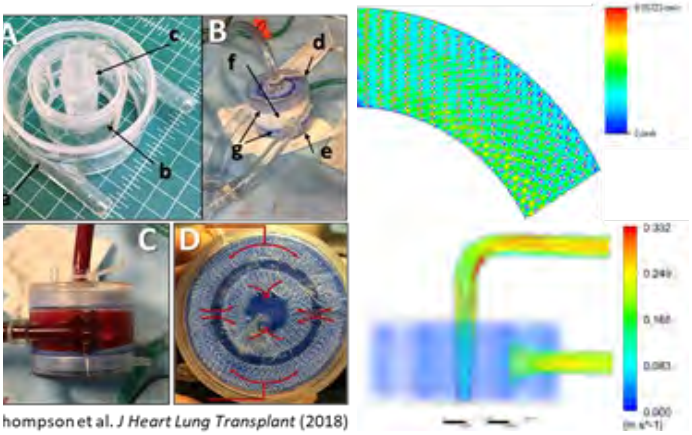


Figure 1. (Left) Basic topology for the CORAL device including (a) outer housing, (b) gate insert, (c) blood outlet, (d,e) end caps, (f) fiber bundles, and (g) the blue silicone potting. The pictured artificial lung (B,C,D) is intended for pediatric patients; in this work we leverage CFD simulation techniques to develop a device that is optimized for CO2 removal in adults. Velocity profiles of blood flow in the device generated using ANSYS Fluent simulation software (Right) can inform design choices and predict areas in the device which may be prone to clot formation.

Meeting Today's Challenges

New Clinical Chiefs in Pharmacy, Mental Health, Surgery, and Ambulatory Care

Timothy Ekola, Pharm.D., MBA - Chief of Pharmacy

Dr. Ekola served in the US Navy and Navy Reserve for 24 years. He began his military career as a Hospital Corpsman and in 1996 received his commission as an MSC Pharmacy Officer. During his career in the Navy, Dr. Ekola served as the Officer in Charge for several Navy Medical Reserve Units, the Executive Officer for the West Africa Training Cruise 2005 Humanitarian Exercise to Gabon and Cameroon, Africa. In 2007, he received the Pharmacist of the Year Award for his service at Landstuhl Army Regional Medical Center in Germany. He holds a BS in Pharmacy from Ferris State University, a Doctor of Pharmacy from Shenandoah University, and an MBA in Healthcare from the University of Michigan-Flint.

Charles Surber, M.D. - Chief of Mental Health

Dr. Surber has served in a variety of leadership roles including Director of the Adult Psychiatric Consultation-Liaison Service and Associate Director of Psychiatry Hospital Services at University of Michigan. Prior to his tenure at UM, he was on faculty at Harvard Medical School and Brigham and Women's Hospital. Dr. Surber joined the United States Army Reserve in 2013. He's served as a psychiatrist in the 883rd Combat and Operational Stress Control Unit since that time. He deployed with the 3rd Medical Command in July 2017-April 2018 where he served as the Chief of Behavioral Health for the Middle East theater.

Ted Skolarus, M.D. - Chief of Surgery

Dr. Skolarus is a Fellow of the American College of Surgeons in general urology and urologic oncology, as well as telemedicine and cancer survivorship care. He joined our medical staff in 2010, and has served as Section Chief of Urology since 2016. He completed fellowships in urologic oncology and health services research at the University of Michigan after finishing urologic surgery residency at Washington University in St. Louis. He has published over 100 peer-reviewed papers across a spectrum of urology, cancer care, and healthcare implementation topics. Recently, he was a Visiting Senior Lecturer at King's College London where he studied the National Health Service (NHS) to learn best practices within and across national healthcare delivery systems, including VA.

Adam Tremblay, M.D. - Chief of Ambulatory Care

Dr. Tremblay graduated from Dartmouth College in 1995 and Dartmouth Medical School in 1999. He completed his Internal Medicine Residency training at the University of Michigan in 2002 and began working at the VA Ann Arbor the same year. He has been Director of Primary Care since February 2003 and has been an Assistant Residency Program Director at the University of Michigan since 2006. Dr. Tremblay has been a valuable member of several administrative committees including the Clinical Executive Board, Chief of Staff Advisory Board and Executive Quality Leadership Board. In 2010 Dr. Tremblay was recognized as an outstanding educator of medical students by the University of Michigan Medical School where he won the prestigious Richard Judge Award.

State of the Art Care in Modern Facilities

Facility Improvements and Expansions Top $150M

Total reconstruction and renovation of the Intensive Care Unit into a state of the art patient care unit. Being transformed from a cramped 16-bed space into an expansive 12-bed facility, each with private bathrooms and enlarged window views. Project completion is Winter 2020. Below: Architectural rendering of the completed, spacious, technologically advanced ICU.

8th Floor Renovation & West Side Addition

Renovation of our dated 8th floor administrative space and the creation of a new west side entrance into the medical center.

Construction began in September with a projected completion date of Winter 2021.

Pictured above left: Rendering of the new Patriot Brew Cafe and Coffee Shop. Left: View of new west side entrance into the medical center.

Below: Construction of our now completed East Parking Structure addition, which increased our parking capacity by over 300 spaces.

Toledo CBOC Nabs Nat'l Award

Our Veteran Justice Outreach program in Toledo, OH headed by Leslie Witherell, LISW-S won the National Community Partnership Challenge this year. While 40 VA's applied, only 3 were selected. Applicants needed to demonstrate a strong community partnership with an agency that does not receive government funding, present a media story highlighting their program, receive testimonials from the agency and participants, and present outcome data. Our program in Toledo was awarded this based on the need for viable employment for Justice Involved Veterans (and other Veterans). The trades who are part of Helmets to Hardhats give preference to Veterans, do not discriminate because of past or present legal issues and provide a hearty income. Ms. Witherell sat on many committees including Judiciary, Trade Agents, and DoJ.

Leslie Witherell, LISW-A, Veteran Justice Outreach Coordinator with Lawrence Connell, VHA Chief of Staff.

VAVS Volunteer of the Year

Congratulations to Mariann Hamann who was named VA Ann Arbor's first National VAVS Female Volunteer of the Year. She was honored in San Antonio, TX at the NAC meeting. Mariann is our VAVS Representative for the VFWA on our VAVS Committee and serves as the Secretary/Treasurer of the VAVS Executive Committee.

She has been a major supporter of the annual Female Veteran Baby Shower for the past seven years. She has organized donations and volunteers from the various VFW Auxiliaries in our area, collecting items from the groups as well as monetary donations, which she uses to purchase even more items for the expectant mothers. Mariann also took it upon herself to inventory all donations and wrap everything for the showers. She also coordinates volunteers from the VFW Auxiliary to work at the event, making it a special day for those Veterans and their families in attendance.

In addition, Mariann serves as the Chair for our medical center's Adopt-A-Veteran Program, a position she has held for the past four years. Under her leadership, this program has provided gifts for approximately 320 Veterans and their families in their time of need during the holidays.

Mariann has also volunteered weekly with the staff in Research, where she called Veterans who quit smoking. She checked on their progress and offered encouragement to these Veterans. She also assisted the Research staff with other projects as needed.

She also served on our Country Store Planning Committee and was present the entire time—from set-up to close over a two-day period, for all four Country Stores held to date. Proceeds from this fundraiser go to the VAVS Committee. Mariann comes in every week to assist the staff in the Voluntary Service Office. Her duties include greeting visitors to the office, fielding telephone calls, and posting volunteer hours in VSS. She also helps with the various projects that other departments ask us to support.

Mariann is a great leader for the VFWA and provides support whenever possible. No matter what the need, Mariann makes it her mission to be there for our Veterans.

Her dedication and unwavering support of our Veterans, their families, and the mission of the VA demonstrates why Mariann has been selected as the NAC Female Volunteer of the Year.

Outpatient Clinics

VA Toledo Community Based Outpatient Clinic
1200 South Detroit Avenue
Toledo, OH 43614
(419) 259-2000
Serving 3,774 Veterans

VA Jackson Community Based Outpatient Clinic
4328 Page Avenue
Michigan Center, MI 49254
(517) 764-3609
Serving 3,499 Veterans

VA Flint Community Based Outpatient Clinic
2360 Linden Road
Flint, MI 48532
(810) 720-2913
Serving 16,008 Veterans

New Canton CBOC

VA Ann Arbor Healthcare system announced this year the location of a new Community Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC) on the border of Canton and Westland, off N. Lotz Road, near the intersection of Ford Road and I-275, behind the Super Walmart.

Architectural rendering of Canton CBOC

Once built, the almost 40,000 square foot clinic will serve Veterans in Western Wayne County, and will allow for the full implementation of the Patient-Aligned Care Team (PACT) model of care delivery, improving operational efficiencies and the Veteran experience. Not only will the new clinic provide Primary Care, but it will also include Mental Health, Laboratory and Pathology, and Imaging services to Veterans in a right-sized, state-of-the-art, energy efficient health care facility serving over 14,000 Veterans.

Johnson Development, LLC was awarded the contract. Design of the $12M-$15M project will begin in October 2019 with anticipated completion in late 2021. The site was chosen based on many factors including; a demonstrated need to serve more veterans in the Plymouth/Canton area and ease of access with very close proximity to the I-275 and Ford Road interchange.

Expected groundbreaking will be April 2020.

VA

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Veterans Health Administration

VA Ann Arbor Healthcare System

2215 Fuller Rd.
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48105
(800) 361-8387 | (734) 769-7100

annarbor.va.gov