



# Patient Information Guide

## Bay Pines VA Healthcare System



Welcome to the Bay Pines VA Healthcare System. Our goal is to provide all of our Veterans with the highest quality healthcare. We are dedicated to serving you with compassion and respect.

We want you to be comfortable here, so we prepared this guide for you. It contains general information about our facilities and the services we provide. We hope you find it useful. Thank you for choosing the VA for your healthcare.

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## Welcome

Bay Pines VA Healthcare System (VAHCS) has been providing healthcare to Veterans since 1933. Bay Pines VAHCS includes the Bay Pines VA Medical Center, the Fort Myers Outpatient Clinic, and seven Community Based Outpatient Clinics (CBOC's). Bay Pines VAHCS provides physical, emotional, and psychological support to more than 95,007 Veterans and treats over 4,000 patients a day.

## Bay Pines VAHCS Mission, Vision, and Values

The Bay Pines VAHCS Mission, Vision, and Values guide our employees' actions and choices. We strive to be an excellent, caring healthcare community in which people are valued, trusted, and respected.

**Mission:** To honor America's Veterans by providing exceptional healthcare that improves their health and well-being.

**Vision:** To be a patient centered integrated healthcare organization for Veterans providing excellence in healthcare, research and education; an organization where people choose to work; an active community partner and a back-up for national emergencies.

**Core Values:** Trust, Respect, Excellence, Compassion, Commitment

## General Information

**Website for Bay Pines VAHCS:** [www.baypines.va.gov](http://www.baypines.va.gov)

### Telephone Numbers

Pinellas County: (727) 398-6661, or toll-free (888) 820-0230

The toll-free number is only valid in Florida outside of area code 727.

### Street Address

Bay Pines VA Healthcare System  
10000 Bay Pines Blvd.  
Bay Pines, FL 33744

### Mailing Address

Bay Pines VA Healthcare System  
P.O. Box 5005  
Bay Pines, FL 33744-5005

## Holidays

Appointments are not scheduled on the following federal holidays: New Year's Day, Martin Luther King Day, President's Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Columbus Day, Veterans Day, Thanksgiving, and Christmas.

**Note: The Emergency Department is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week.**

## The Joint Commission

Bay Pines VAHCS and its clinics are accredited by The Joint Commission (TJC). We are regularly inspected to make sure we comply with The Joint Commission standards on safety, quality of patient care, and environmental issues. If you have a concern, you may contact The Joint Commission by telephone, mail, fax, or e-mail.

Division of Accreditation Operations  
Office of Quality Monitoring  
The Joint Commission  
One Renaissance Boulevard  
Oakbrook Terrace, IL 60181

Telephone: (800) 994-6610  
Fax: (630) 792-5636  
E-mail: [complaint@jointcommission.org](mailto:complaint@jointcommission.org)  
Website: [www.jointcommission.org](http://www.jointcommission.org)

## Your Safety

If you have concerns about your patient care and safety, such as:

- You think you may have received the wrong medication.
- You think the staff may have confused you with another patient.
- You notice that your caregivers have not washed their hands or used alcohol gel before providing care to you.
- Something just does not seem right to you.

If you have any of these concerns, report them to:

- Any supervisor, service chief, or other management official at the Bay Pines VAHCS
- Bay Pines VAHCS Quality Systems at (888) 820-0230, ext. 4121
- Bay Pines Safety Hotline at (727) 319-1355
- The Joint Commission

## **PATIENT AND NURSING HOME RESIDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **(Patient and Community Living Center Resident Rights and Responsibilities)**

The Veterans Health Administration (VHA) is pleased you have selected us to provide your healthcare. We want to improve your health and well-being. We will make your visit or stay as pleasant for you as possible. As part of our service to you, to other Veterans and to the nation, we are committed to improving healthcare quality. We also train future healthcare professionals, conduct research, and support our country in times of national emergency. In all of these activities, our employees will respect and support your rights as a patient. Your basic rights and responsibilities are outlined in this document. Please talk with VA treatment team members or a patient advocate if you have any questions or would like more information about your rights.

#### **I. Respect and Nondiscrimination**

- You will be treated with dignity, compassion, and respect as an individual. Your privacy will be protected. You will receive care in a safe environment. We will seek to honor your personal and religious values.
- You or someone you choose has the right to keep and spend your money. You have the right to receive an accounting of any VA-held funds.
- Treatment will respect your personal freedoms. In rare cases, the use of medication and physical restraints may be used if all other efforts to keep you or others free from harm have not worked.
- As an inpatient or nursing home resident, you may wear your own clothes. You may keep personal items. This will depend on your medical condition.
- As an inpatient or nursing home resident, you have the right to social interaction and regular exercise. You will have the opportunity for religious worship and spiritual support. You may decide whether to participate in

these activities. You may decide whether or not to perform tasks in or for the Medical Center.

- As an inpatient or nursing home resident, you have the right to communicate freely and privately. You may have or refuse visitors. You will have access to public telephones. You may participate in civic rights, such as voting and free speech.
- As a nursing home resident, you can organize and take part in resident groups in the facility. Your family also can meet with the families of other residents.
- In order to provide a safe treatment environment for all patients and residents and staff, you are expected to respect other patients, residents, and staff, and to follow the facility's rules. Avoid unsafe acts that place others at risk for accidents or injuries. Please immediately report any condition you believe to be unsafe.

## **II. Information Disclosure and Confidentiality**

- You will be given information about the health benefits you can receive. The information will be provided in a way you can understand.
- You will receive information about the costs of your care, if any, before you are treated. You are responsible for paying your portion of any costs associated with your care.
- Your medical record will be kept confidential. Information about you will not be released without your consent unless authorized by law (an example of this is State public health reporting). You have the right to information in your medical record and you may request a copy of your medical records. This will be provided except in rare situations when your VA physician feels the information will be harmful to you. In that case, you have the right to have this discussed with you by your VA provider.
- You will be informed of all outcomes of care, including any potential injuries. You will be informed about how to request compensation for any injuries.

## **III. Participation in Treatment Decisions**

- You, and any persons you choose, will be involved in all decisions about your care. You will be given information you can understand about the benefits and risks of treatment. You will be given other options. You can agree to or refuse treatment. You will be told what is likely to happen to you if you refuse treatment. Refusing treatment will not affect your rights to future care, but you take responsibility for the possible results to your health.

- Tell your provider about your current condition, medicines (including over-the-counter and herbals), and medical history. Also, share any other information that affects your health. You should ask questions when you do not understand something about your care. Being involved is very important for you to get the best possible results.
- You will be given, in writing, the name and title of the provider in charge of your care. As our partner in healthcare, you have the right to be involved in choosing your provider. You also have the right to know the names and titles of those who provide you care. This includes students, residents and trainees. Providers will properly introduce themselves when they take part in your care.
- You will be educated about your role and responsibilities as a patient or resident. This includes your participation in decision making and care at the end of life.
- If you believe you cannot follow the treatment plan, you have a responsibility to notify your provider or treatment team.
- You have the right to have your pain assessed and to receive treatment to manage your pain. You and your treatment team will develop a pain management plan together. You are expected to help the treatment team by telling them if you have pain and if the treatment is working.
- As an inpatient or nursing home resident, you will be provided any transportation necessary for your treatment plan.
- You have the right to choose whether you will participate in any research project. Any research will be clearly identified. Potential risks of the research will be identified and there will be no pressure on you to participate.
- You will be included in resolving any ethical issues about your care. You may consult with the Healthcare System's Ethics Consultation Team, who are available 24 hours a day/7 days a week by calling the operator at "0", and/or other staff knowledgeable about healthcare ethics.
- If you or the Medical Center believes that you have been neglected, abused or exploited, you will receive help.

#### **IV. Complaints**

- You are encouraged and expected to seek help from your treatment team or a patient advocate if you have problems or complaints. You will be given understandable information about the complaint process. You may complain verbally or in writing, without fear of retaliation.

# Your Clinic Visit

## Appointments

To make or change appointments at Bay Pines VAHCS, call (727) 398-6661, ext. 5525, or toll-free (888) 820-0230, ext. 5525, or call (727) 398-9325.

We want to make it easy for you to get your healthcare at a time that is convenient for you. To do this, we will mail you a reminder two weeks before your next follow-up appointment is due. This notice will be in the form of a sealed post-card or letter. It will tell you when your next appointment is or that it is time to make your appointment. It is important that we have your current address so you will receive these reminders.

Our goal is to see you at your scheduled appointment time. This may not always be possible, but we will try not to keep you waiting for more than thirty minutes. To help us reach this goal:

- Do not come in to be seen without an appointment.
- Be on time for your appointment. If you will be late or if you have to cancel, please call the Scheduling Desk.
- Come earlier if you have lab work or other medical tests scheduled.
- Follow any fasting or special instructions given to you.
- Do not be a "no-show!" If you cannot keep your appointment, tell us as soon as possible so that we can give you a new appointment and give another Veteran your original appointment time.

Things to bring with you:

- All medical records, reports, labs, and test results from another facility or from non-VA providers
- All bottles of medicines you take, including over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, food supplements, or herbal remedies
- Advance Directive (if not on file or if it has been changed)
- A list of questions you may have for your provider
- A list of your medical problems to discuss with your provider
- Your blood pressure or blood sugar readings, if you have them
- Your health insurance information
- Two forms of identification, such as your VA Identification Card, Social Security card, or driver's license to verify who you are

## Healthy Living and Calendars

Prevention is the key to healthy living. The *Healthy Living* pamphlet and the VISN 8 "Salute to Our Veterans" calendar have valuable information on nutrition, diabetes, exercise, blood pressure, and more. Ask your Primary Care provider for copies.

## Immunizations

Each year in the U.S. over 40,000 people die from vaccine-preventable diseases or their complications. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the American College of Physicians recommend these immunizations for adults:

- **Seasonal Flu:** Adults over 50 (especially those older than 65) should get a flu shot every year. It can prevent over 50% of hospitalizations and 80% of deaths from influenza-related complications. Seasonal flu shots are usually given October through March.
- **Pneumonia:** Adults (especially those older than 65) should get this shot every five years. It is over 60% effective in preventing pneumonia.
- **Tetanus:** Adults should get a booster shot every ten years. People know they need a tetanus shot if they step on a rusty nail, but they can also get tetanus other ways, such as by puncture wounds of any kind.
- **Diphtheria:** Immunization against this bacterial infection usually is given with the tetanus-pertussis vaccine. Adults should be vaccinated against this. They also need a booster shot every ten years.
- **Hepatitis:** There is a safe and effective vaccine for Hepatitis A and B infectious liver diseases. Hepatitis A can be spread by people, drinking water, or eating shellfish infected with the virus. If you eat shellfish, or if you are an older adult traveling abroad, it is recommended that you get a Hepatitis A vaccine.

## Pain: The Fifth Vital Sign

When you come for an exam, your healthcare provider will check your five vital signs: blood pressure, pulse, temperature, respiration, and **pain**. You have the right to receive treatment for pain. Treatment means relieving, controlling, and managing your pain.

Pain scale from 0 to 10:

“0” = no pain;

“10” = worst pain imaginable

You will be asked the following questions about your pain:

- **Where** is it?
- **When** did it start?
- **How long** has it lasted or does it last?
- **What** makes it better or worse?
- **Which medications** have you tried?
- **Have any treatments** worked well?

There are many ways to control or treat your pain. Some of these are:

- **Home remedies:** heat, ice, elevation, rest
- **Stretching and exercise:** physical and occupational therapies
- **Medication:** the kind prescribed depends on the type and degree of pain
- **Invasive therapies:** surgery, blocks, and/or injections
- **Non-invasive therapies:** massage, acupuncture, biofeedback, transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation (TENS). TENS is a device that uses electricity to block pain signals going to the brain.

When you are treated for pain:

- Give a complete report of your health history, including high blood pressure, ulcers, heart, kidney, liver problems, etc.
- Report any side effects to drugs, such as allergies or reactions.
- Report all medicines you are now taking, including prescriptions, over-the-counter drugs, and nutritional and/or herbal supplements.
- Take your medicines as prescribed.
- Do not drink alcohol or use other drugs when you take your pain medicine unless your provider says it is safe to do so.
- Do not drive if your medicine makes you drowsy.

## **Primary Care and Primary Care Providers**

Primary Care allows you to identify one physician and team responsible for serving all of your healthcare needs. This coordinated effort will help you

stay healthy and have a better quality of life. A Primary Care Provider can be a physician, nurse practitioner, or a physician's assistant. A Primary Care Team is a group of healthcare professionals who will coordinate your care. You will be assigned a Primary Care Provider and Team.

Can you get medicines at the VA which are prescribed by a non-VA/private physician?

*No.* Prescription medications require monitoring and evaluation for effectiveness, side effects, and potential interactions with your other medicines. If our provider writes you a prescription, that provider is responsible for the effects of that medicine. Your provider needs to see you regularly to monitor your health and to write your prescriptions. In order to get your medicines at the VA, your primary healthcare must be monitored by the VA.

Can you get primary care here and see a non-VA/private physician?

*Yes.* However, we discourage you from doing this. It is best if your Primary Care Team coordinates your care and medications. If you do see a private physician, you need to bring copies of your health records every time you have an appointment at a VA facility.

Will you be able to get the same medicines you received from your non-VA/private physician?

*Possibly.* During your first visit here, your medicines will be reviewed, including any over-the-counter drugs such as aspirin or cold tablets. Your VA physician or pharmacist will decide if there is a suitable alternative from the VA Pharmacy if we do not have the same medicines you were receiving from your private physician.

## **Advance Directives**

An Advance Directive is a set of legal forms you fill out and sign to let others know about your healthcare wishes when you cannot speak for yourself. If you are not able to make your own decisions, a healthcare surrogate chosen by you can make them on your behalf. Your healthcare surrogate and Advance Directive forms will let your Primary Care Team know how you feel about:

- Being brought back to life if your breathing or heart stops
- Having a machine breathe for you
- Being tube-fed
- Receiving donated blood

There are two types of forms used to make an Advance Directive. These are the **Living Will** and the **Durable Power of Attorney for Healthcare** (Surrogate Decision Maker).

**Living Wills** are documents stating your healthcare choices when you are unable to make decisions for yourself. This form meets Florida's legal requirements. You can change your Living Will any time. If you already have a Living Will, make sure it still meets your wishes.

**Durable Power of Attorney for Healthcare** allows you to choose someone else to make decisions about your healthcare if you cannot make these decisions for yourself. This lets your Primary Care Team know who is responsible for making these decisions and how to contact them. Make sure this person knows your wishes! That person may have to make a life or death decision about your care.

Your nurse, social worker, chaplain, or member of your Primary Care Team can provide you with these forms. You do not need a lawyer to complete the forms. Two people must witness your signature when you sign the forms. The forms state who can be your witnesses. After filling out the forms, give copies to your Primary Care Team and your surrogate. A copy will be placed in your medical records. Keep the original for your records.

It is very important that your Primary Care Team knows your wishes. It is your right to accept or refuse medical care. You can change your mind any time about your decisions for treatment, but let us know if you do. You may also have your Advance Directive prepared by a non-VA source. If you do, please bring a copy with you for your VA medical records.

Remember:

- You can choose to be treated for one illness and not another if you have more than one health problem.
- You can always change your mind about any of your decisions.
- Talk to any member of your Primary Care Team or your social worker for more information on Advance Directives.

It is important that you ask yourself these questions:

- Are my legal affairs in order?
- Do I have a Will?

- Does my family know where my Will and other important papers are?
- Do I need to make plans for my spouse and/or family's care?
- Do I want to be an organ or tissue donor? Does my family know?
- Does my family know how and where I want to be buried?

## Telephone Programs

### Pharmacy Telephone Care System

The Pharmacy Telephone Care System is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. You may use it to:

- Order your prescriptions refills **at least two weeks before** you run out of your medicines.
- Check on a prescription.
- Talk to Pharmacy staff (Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. - 4:15 p.m.)

To access the system, dial (727) 398-6661, or toll-free (888) 820-0230, then select option "1" and follow the instructions.

Before you call, have your Social Security number ready. You will need the prescription number(s) to request refills.

Please read the pamphlet "Pharmacy Telephone Care System: The Key to Ordering Your Prescription Refills" for instructions. Ask your VA provider or VA pharmacist for a copy. You may also order prescription refills online by using the My HealthVet (MHV) website. See page 18 of this guide for more information on MHV.

### Telephone Call Center

The Telephone Call Center is a patient information telephone line. Registered Nurses and other staff with special training are available to answer questions about your care, appointments, medications, and medical concerns. They will help you or contact your Primary Care Provider. Please leave your telephone number and the best time to call you back.

The Telephone Call Center is open Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Their number is: (727) 398-6661, or toll-free (888) 820-0230. Follow the message prompts to get to the right service. After hours and holidays, follow the above instructions, or call toll-free (877) 741-3400 and you will be connected to the after-hours line.

The Telephone Call Center may save you a trip, but it is not an emergency service. **If you have a medical emergency, call 911 immediately!**

When should you use the Telephone Call Center?

- If you have questions about your eligibility for care at Bay Pines VAHCS
- If you have a problem or health concern, but no appointment
- If you have an appointment, but want to see a doctor for a different problem
- If your next clinic appointment is several months away and you are having new problems or symptoms
- If you have questions about your medicines
- If you are having a reaction to any of your medicines.
- If you cannot keep your appointment or you need to change it

## Helpful Services

### Billing (Insurance and Co-payments)

The VA is required by Congress to bill private health insurance companies for non-service connected treatment and to charge co-payments for inpatient hospital care and treatments, outpatient care, extended care, and medications to certain Veterans. Co-payment amounts are set annually by Congress. If you have questions, call the Customer Call Center toll-free at (866) 793-4591. For questions about CHAMPVA/Tricare, call the Non Veteran Healthcare Coordinator at toll-free (888) 820-0230, ext. 7464 for more information. There is no co-payment for the MOVE! program. See page 18 for more information on the MOVE! program.

### Chaplain Service/Chapels

The staff of the Chaplain Service cares about your spiritual needs and is always available for you. You can call them at (727) 398-6661, or toll-free (888) 820-0230, ext. 4264. The Veterans Chapel is in Bldg. 2, Room 111A, and is open Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. There is also a Chapel in Bldg. 100 on 5C which is open 24 hours a day, seven days a

week. Both Chapels can be used by patients, family, and staff for prayer and meditation.

## **Clinical Trials**

Clinical Trials are controlled experimental treatments for certain conditions and diseases. These trials test newer therapies that may become the treatments of the future. Information about clinical trials is available from your provider. The VA does not pay for clinical trials at non-VA facilities.

## **Decedent Affairs (Details Office) and National Cemetery**

The Decedent Affairs (Details Office) is in Bldg. 100, Room 5C158. They provide information on burial benefits and arrangements. They are your contact between Bay Pines VAHCS and the funeral home. Their hours are Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Their phone number is (727) 398-6661, or toll-free (888) 820-0230, ext. 5550. After hours call the Administrative Officer of the Day (AOD) at ext. 4104.

The National Cemetery Administration can answer your questions about memorials and burial in national cemeteries. Their phone number is (727) 398-9426, or toll-free (888) 820-0230, ext. 5626.

## **Education of Patients and Family**

It is important that you take an active role in your healthcare so that you can receive the best care possible. The Bay Pines VAHCS offers many materials and programs on diabetes, cardiac care, stroke, weight management, oncology, smoking cessation, and other health topics. Tell your Primary Care Team if you are interested.

The Patient Education Resource Center (PERC) is open to Veterans and their families and has books and videos that Veterans can use in the PERC. You can ask the PERC staff to prepare a package of health information for you. The staff can have it ready for you to pick up in the PERC or they can mail it to you. For more information, call the PERC at (727) 398-6661, or toll-free (888) 820-0230, ext. 4375 or 7958.

Veterans can access the Internet on the computers in the PERC for health, job, and government sites only. They can also access the My HealthVet and MOVE! websites from these computers.

## **Eligibility**

If you have questions about your eligibility for care at Bay Pines VAHCS, go to the Eligibility Office in Bldg. 100, Room 1E109. You can also call (727) 398-6661, or toll-free (888) 820-0230, ext. 5684 for more information.

## **Fisher House and Lodgetel (Temporary Lodging)**

Bay Pines VAHCS has two types of temporary lodging programs to assist our Veterans and their families. To be eligible for either program, the Veteran and/or family members must live more than 50 miles from the Bay Pines VAHCS main campus. During regular business hours Bay Pines VAHCS' Social Work Service reviews guests for these programs and makes referrals if eligible. After hours, this is done by the Administrative Officer of the Day (AOD) at ext. 4104.

**Fisher House** is located on the grounds at Bay Pines. It is a home away from home for families of acutely hospitalized Veterans. The Fisher House has kitchen and laundry facilities. Guests must take care of their personal needs, maintain their own rooms, and keep common areas clean. There is no maid service.

**Lodgetel** is an off-site program that provides temporary lodging for Veterans who have problems with their medical appointments due to distance and time of day. The Lodgetel program is a self-care program and there are no clinical services available.

## **Hearing Aids**

Hearing Aids are repaired or adjusted **by appointment only**. Call Audiology at (727) 398-6661, or toll-free (888) 820-0230, ext. 4545 to make an appointment.

## **Hospice**

The Inpatient Hospice and Palliative Care Unit is available for patients in the final stages of a terminal illness. It is located in Bldg. 100, 5C. Emotional and spiritual support are provided in a home-like setting where family and friends can be together 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Ask your Primary Care Team to contact the Hospice Coordinator for more information.

## **Interpreters and Limited English Proficiency**

If you need an interpreter for hearing, vision, speech, foreign language, or limited English proficiency, tell your healthcare team. Language interpretation is provided through *Interpretalk*. Ask your nurse for more information on this service.

## **MOVE!**

MOVE! ([www.move.va.gov](http://www.move.va.gov)) is a weight management program for Veterans to help them lose weight and keep it off. It focuses on nutrition, healthy behavior and physical activity. There is no co-payment for this program. Talk to your Primary Care Team if you are interested in the MOVE! program.

## **My HealthVet (MHV)**

My HealthVet ([www.myhealth.va.gov](http://www.myhealth.va.gov)) is a secure VA website that allows Veterans to take an active part in their healthcare. MHV lets Veterans order prescription refills online for home delivery, receive Wellness Reminders, maintain food diaries, and record and graph their blood pressure, cholesterol, weight, and more. Veterans interested in using MHV need to register online for MHV and go to Release of Information (ROI) in Bldg. 100, Room 1E303 with two forms of identification to verify their identity. There are computers in the PERC library that Veterans may use to access the MHV website. For more information on MHV, Veterans can call (727) 398-6661, or toll-free (888) 820-0230, ext. 5566 or 5008.

## **Operation Enduring Freedom/Operation Iraqi Freedom (OEF/OIF) Veterans**

The Operation Enduring Freedom/Operation Iraqi Freedom (OEF/OIF) office has a Program Manager, a Transitional Patient Advocate, nurses, and social workers to address the needs of Iraqi and Afghanistan returning Veterans. This office has information about OEF/OIF programs, benefits, and services. The OEF/OIF office is in Bldg. 100, Room 1E241, ext. 7541 or 5893.

## **Optical Dispensary (Eyeglasses)**

The Bay Pines VAHCS provides corrective eyeglasses at no charge when prescribed by a VA or fee-basis ophthalmologist or optometrist. Low fees

are charged for special features (such as tint, UV-filter, scratch coating, etc.) Services are not restricted to Veterans. Minor adjustments can be made to eyeglasses while you wait.

The Optical Dispensary is located in the Breezeway between Bldg. 1 and Bldg. 22 in Room CC1. They are open Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Their telephone number is (727) 398-6661, or toll-free (888) 820-0230, ext. 4069.

### **Patient Advocate**

Bay Pines VAHCS strives to provide our Veterans the best healthcare possible, in the most courteous and efficient manner. The Patient Advocate staff is the official representative of our Director. They will ensure that the proper people address your concerns. The Patient Advocate Office is in Bldg. 100, Room 1E144. Their hours are Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. You can call them at (727) 398-9524 or (888) 820-0230, ext. 4024. Call the Administrative Officer of the Day (AOD) at ext. 4104 if you have concerns at other times.

### **Release of Information (ROI)**

In order to better serve you, your Primary Care Team needs to know about the medical care you receive from non-VA facilities. ROI has the forms you need to request and send your medical information from and to outside medical facilities. ROI may charge for some services. The ROI Office is in Bldg. 100, Room 1E303. They are open Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

ROI's telephone number is (727) 398-6661 or toll-free (888) 820-0230, ext. 4169. ROI can help you register for My HealthVet (MHV) and complete the In-Person Authentication process for you. See page 18 for information on MHV.

### **Reporting Non-VA Emergency Care**

If you are admitted for non-VA emergency care, be sure to tell the non-VA Emergency Room and hospital facility that you are a Veteran. You must report your non-VA inpatient admissions and/or emergency room visits within 72 hours to the Fee Services Unit at the Bay Pines VAHCS. Their telephone numbers are (727) 398-3236 or (727) 398-3227 or toll-free (888) 820-0230, ext. 3236 or 3227.

You are required to sign a Release of Information form at the non-VA facility to allow them to release your medical records to the VA. The Fee Basis Service at the Bay Pines VAHCS needs copies of your non-VA medical records before they can consider making payments. However, notifying the Bay Pines VAHCS and/or providing your medical records to them do NOT guarantee VA payment.

The mailing address for the Fee Basis Service is:

Bay Pines VAHCS  
Fee Basis Service (11FB)  
P.O. Box 5005  
Bay Pines, FL 33744

### **VA Regional Office and Veterans Services Offices**

The VA Regional Office (VARO) and the Florida Dept. of Veterans Affairs counselors provide information on benefits and services, eligibility, compensation and pension, home loans, jobs, etc. The VARO is located on the Bay Pines campus. The St. Petersburg Vet Center provides readjustment counseling and outreach services to Veterans.

#### **VA Regional Office (VARO)**

9500 Bay Pines Blvd.  
Bay Pines, FL 33708  
Monday through Friday  
8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.  
(800) 827-1000

#### **Disabled American Veterans**

Bldg. 22, Room 107  
Monday through Friday  
8:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.  
(727) 398-6661, ext. 5604  
Toll-free: (888) 820-0230, ext. 5604

#### **Florida Dept. of Veterans Affairs**

Bldg. 22, Room 117  
Monday through Friday  
8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.  
(727) 398-6661, ext. 5489  
Toll-free: (888) 820-0230, ext. 5489

**St. Petersburg Vet Center**  
6798 Crosswinds Drive, Bldg. A  
St. Petersburg, FL 33710  
(727) 549-3633

## **Voluntary Service**

Volunteers provide a personal touch by helping our Veterans and staff in clinical and non-clinical areas. It's a way to say thank-you to our Veterans. Voluntary Service accepts donations such as magazines, paperbacks, clean clothing, and money. A "Patient Needs List" identifies items that are needed. Money can be donated toward the purchase of these items.

Hardback books, magazines older than 3 months, or used equipment such as crutches and wheelchairs are not accepted. Donation slips and guidelines are in the Voluntary Service Office in Bldg. 2, Room 105. For more information on volunteering or donations, call (727) 398-6661, or toll-free (888) 820-0230, ext. 5594.

## **Women's Health**

The Bay Pines VAHCS provides many services for women Veterans, including a Breast Clinic, Gynecology services, and Maternity care. If you would like an appointment for a Well Women's exam, ask your Primary Care Provider for a consult. If you have questions about the Women Veterans Health Program, call the Women Veterans Program Manager at (727) 398-6661 or (888) 820-0230, ext. 4312.

## **Things to Know**

### **Alcohol, Illegal Drugs, and Gambling**

Alcohol, illegal drugs, and gambling are not allowed at the Bay Pines VAHCS. The Bay Pines VAHCS Police can arrest you for these offenses.

### **ATM Machines**

ATM machines are located in the public dining area in Bldg. 1, the vending area by the elevators in Bldg. 100, and outside the Credit Union.

## **Barber Shop**

The Barber Shop is located in Bldg. 1, Room A130. It is open Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. The current cost of a haircut is \$8.00 - \$10.00.

## **Fire/Disaster Drills**

Practice fire and disaster drills are held routinely. If you hear the fire alarm, stay calm and follow the instructions from the staff.

## **Food Court, Coffee Time Cafe', and Vending Machines**

The Food Court is located in Bldg. 1. It is open Monday through Friday from 7:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. and is closed on weekends and holidays. The Food Court has a grill, salad, Country Cooking, 5th Avenue Deli, Papa's Best Pizza, and Chicken Express.

There is a Coffee Time Cafe' in Bldg. 100, Room 1D165. It is open Monday through Friday, 6:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. It offers Starbucks coffee, salads, sandwiches, and snacks.

Vending machines with food and drinks are in Bldg. 100 by the Outpatient entrance and by the elevators on the first floor. Vending machines are also located in Bldg. 1 on the first floor. The vending areas are open 24 hours a day, seven days week.

## **Information Desks**

The Information Desks are located in Bldg. 100 at the main lobby and Outpatient entrances. Volunteers are at the desks Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Information is available about community resources, such as bus schedules, restaurants, and motels.

## **Lost and Found**

The Lost and Found Office is in Bldg. 100, Room 1E110A, ext. 4844. They are open Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. After hours, lost and found items are given to the Administrative Officer of the Day (AOD), ext. 4104. You are responsible for your belongings.

## **Parking Lots and Shuttle Service**

A map of the Bay Pines campus parking lots is on the back cover of this guide. Handicapped spaces are located near all buildings and in the parking lot in front of the main hospital (Bldg. 100). Always lock your car.

The Shuttle Service makes continuous loops to and from the Credit Union parking lots, the Lakeside Clinic, and the main hospital. There is also a separate shuttle that runs between the VA Regional Office and the Outpatient entrance. The shuttle service runs Monday through Friday, 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., excluding holidays.

## **Pets/Animals**

Pets are not allowed on VA property, except for service animals or those involved in pet therapy programs. Do not leave pets in your car.

## **Post Office**

The Bay Pines Post Office is in Bldg. 20. It is open Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., excluding holidays. It is closed for lunch from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

## **Retail Store**

The Retail Store is in Bldg. 1 and is open Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., excluding holidays. It sells men's and ladies' clothing, electronics, and personal items. There is also a Special Order Kiosk outside the Retail Store where you can order specialty items such as tires, jewelry, personal computers, and appliances.

## **Smoking**

The Bay Pines VAHCS is a smoke-free facility. **Smoking is not allowed inside any building.** There are designated smoking areas outside Bldg. 100, on the east side (courtyard area) of Bldg. 1, and outside the Lakeside Clinic/Domiciliary.

## **Telephones**

There are telephones for visitors and patients to make free local calls, or long distance calls with a calling card. These telephones are on the first

floor in Bldg. 100 (in the main entrance hallway east of the elevators, by MOD A, and by the Emergency Department Waiting Room); on the second floor in Bldg. 100 (in 2A by Room 199 and Room 105B); in Bldg. 1 (by the first floor elevator lobby and by the third floor elevator lobby); and in the Domiciliary, Room D15.

## **Weapons**

For your safety and the safety of others, no weapons of any kind are permitted on VA property. People entering buildings must consent to the inspection of all packages. Refusing to allow inspection of packages can result in denial of entry onto VA property.

## **Fort Myers Clinic and CBOC's Addresses and Telephone Numbers**

Note: The Ellenton CBOC will relocate in Spring, 2010 to Bradenton

### **Bradenton (Ellenton) CBOC**

#### **Current address for Ellenton CBOC:**

4333 US Hwy 301 North  
Ellenton, Florida 34222  
(941) 721-0649

#### **Current address for Ellenton Mental Health Clinic:**

5283 Office Park Blvd.  
Bradenton, Florida 34203  
(941) 721-0649, ext. 6880

#### **Future address for Bradenton VA Clinic and the Bradenton Mental Health Clinic:**

Morgan Johnson Office Park  
5530 State Road 64  
Bradenton, Florida 34208  
(941) 721-0649  
Mental Health Clinic: ext. 6880

### **Fort Myers Outpatient Clinic**

3033 Winkler Extension  
Fort Myers, Florida 33916  
(239) 939-3939  
Toll-free: (888) 513-0045

### **Naples CBOC**

VA Primary Care Clinic  
2685 Horseshoe Drive S., Suite 101  
Naples, Florida 34104  
(239) 659-9188

### **Palm Harbor CBOC**

#### **Future address for Palm Harbor CBOC:**

VA Primary Care Clinic  
35209 U.S. Hwy 19 North  
Palm Harbor, Florida 34684  
(727) 734-5276

### **Port Charlotte CBOC**

VA Primary Care Clinic  
4161 Tamiami Trail, Suite 401  
Port Charlotte, Florida 33952  
(941) 235-2710

### **Sarasota CBOC**

VA Primary Care Clinic  
5682 Bee Ridge Road, Suite 100  
Sarasota, Florida 34233  
(941) 371-3349

### **Sebring CBOC**

VA Primary Care Clinic  
3760 US Hwy 27 South  
Sebring, Florida 33870  
(863) 471-6227

### **St. Petersburg CBOC**

Scheduled to open in January 2010  
VA Primary Care Clinic  
840 Martin Luther King St. N.(9<sup>th</sup> St.)  
St. Petersburg, Florida 33705  
Phone number: To be announced

## Emergency, Poison, Suicide, and Crisis Hotline Numbers



**If you have a medical emergency,  
call 911 immediately!**

Call **Poison Control** at (800) 222-1222 if you have a poison emergency.

If you think you want to hurt or kill yourself, call for help before it is too late!

**The Suicide and Crisis Hotline numbers in Pinellas County are:**

- 211
- (727) 562-1542

You can also call:

- **The National Hopeline:** (800) SUICIDE (784-2433)
- **The National Suicide Prevention Hotline:** (800) 273 -TALK (8255)

These services are available to help you 24 hours a day, seven days a week. If you need help, please call immediately!

Suicide prevention websites:

[www.agingcarefl.org/aging/suicide\\_prev/Resources](http://www.agingcarefl.org/aging/suicide_prev/Resources)  
[www.mentalhealth.va.gov](http://www.mentalhealth.va.gov)

# Notes and Questions



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# Telephone Numbers



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# BAY PINES VA HEALTHCARE SYSTEM

