

Oscar G. Johnson VA Medical Center 2011 Annual Report

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Focused on Excellence - Putting Veterans First



VA
HEALTH
CARE

Defining
EXCELLENCE
in the 21st Century

Message from the Director

I am pleased to present you with our 2011 Annual Report, an inaugural edition for the Oscar G. Johnson VA Medical Center (OGJVAMC). Our new slogan, *Focused on Excellence – Putting Veterans First*, reflects our goal to be the health care of choice for Veterans.

Veterans living in rural areas are, on average, 63 miles from their nearest VA primary care provider. Given its presence in the Michigan's Upper Peninsula and northern Wisconsin, much of what OGJVAMC and its seven Community Based Outpatient Clinics do is considered rural health care. In fact, over 96% of our 25,895 enrolled Veterans are living in rural or highly rural areas.

OGJVAMC is a leader in VA rural health care initiatives. In 2011, we received over \$1.97 million in funding from the VA's Office of Rural Health (ORH) to sustain, expand or initiate programs that will improve care that our Veterans receive.

As you read this report, you will notice that we are making strides in ensuring our Veterans receive the very best care. We are increasing access and efficiency through our new Patient Aligned Care Team (PACT) model, award winning Circle of Care Clinic, and expanded Women's Health Program. We are bringing VA health care closer to Veterans' homes by expanding our telehealth technology and home based care. We continue to reach out to Veterans through our OEF/OIF/OND, Veteran Homeless, and E-RANGE programs. We are building a new Outpatient Clinic and Emergency Department providing for much better patient flow and upgraded facilities. Finally, it is the little extra touches that clearly communicate to Veterans and their families that we care about them, like our new Butterfly Wish Program.

We look forward to 2012 as we continue to *Focus on Excellence* and *Putting Veterans First*.



James W. Rice
Medical Center Director



OGJVAMC Leadership

James W. Rice
Medical Center Director

William J. Caron,
FACHE
Associate Medical Center
Director

David S. Curland, D.O.
Acting Chief of Staff

Andrea S. Collins,
RN, MSN
Associate Director
Nursing & Patient Care

Given its presence in the Michigan's Upper Peninsula and northern Wisconsin, much of what OGJVAMC and its seven Community Based Outpatient Clinics do is considered rural health care.

~ James W. Rice, Medical Center Director

OGJVAMC Services Recognized

The Joint Commission Top Performer

OGJVAMC was named by The Joint Commission as one of only 405 U.S. hospitals nationwide – and one of only ten in Michigan - earning the distinction of top performer on key quality measures for attaining and sustaining excellence in performance measures. Of that number, 22 percent are rural hospitals, making the VA Medical Center one of approximately 89 rural hospitals to make the list. OGJVAMC was recognized for achieving these measures for Pneumonia.

Circle of Care Clinic

OGJVAMC's Circle of Care Clinic was one of eight VA clinics nationwide to receive the ***Your One in a Million Award***, for the Primary Care—Mental Health Integration Initiative. See page 9 for more details.

PACT Teams

OGJVAMC's Freedom and Spirit PACTs were recognized as “high performing teams” for being in the top 10% of VA PACTs nationally. Measures included same day access, provider continuity, proportion of care provided by telephone, and patient follow-up.

Environmental Achievement

OGJVAMC was honored to receive the ***2011 Partner for Change, with Distinction Award***. This award recognizes health care facilities that achieved improvements in their mercury elimination, waste reduction, and pollution prevention.



Our Core Values: Integrity, Commitment, Advocacy, Respect & Excellence

In the VA, these values define “who we are,” our culture, and our commitment to Veterans, their families and other beneficiaries.

our Core Characteristics:

Trustworthy, Accessible, Quality, Innovative & Integrated

These define “what we stand for” and help guide how we perform our mission, shape our strategy, and allocate resources to provide the finest health care

Outpatient Clinics/Rural Outreach Clinic



Rhinelander, WI
Outpatient Clinic



Menominee, MI
Outpatient Clinic



Ironwood, MI
Outpatient Clinic



Hancock, MI
Outpatient Clinic



Marquette, MI
Outpatient Clinic



Manistique, MI
Rural Outreach Clinic



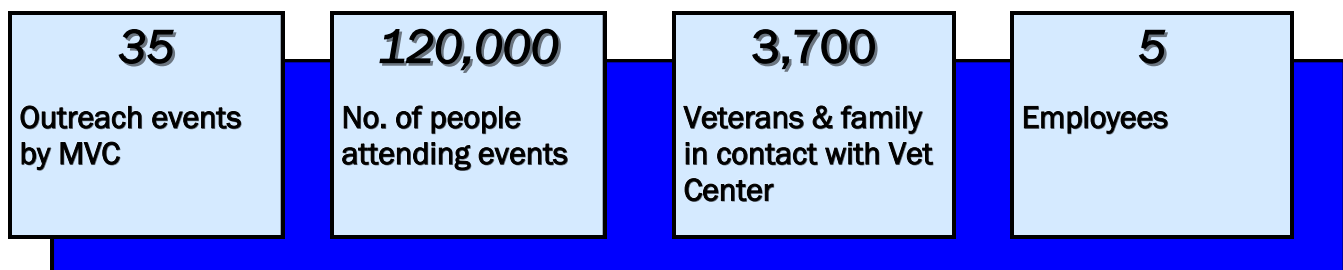
Sault Ste. Marie, MI
Outpatient Clinic



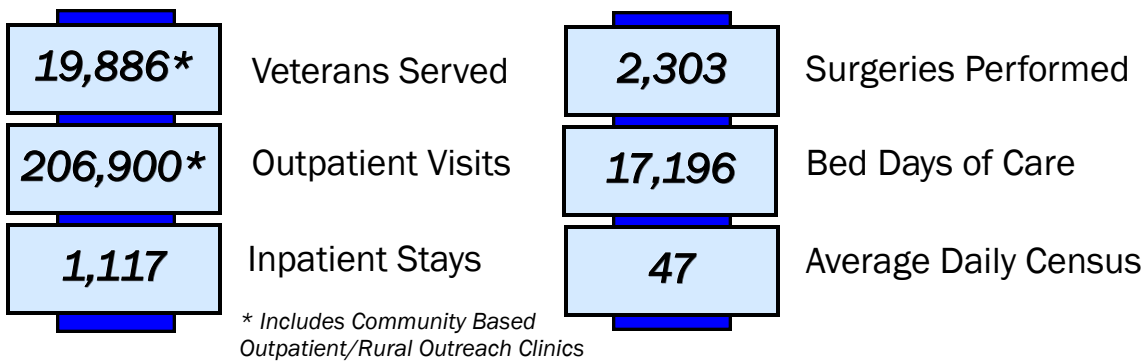
VA Vet Center, Escanaba, MI

The VA Vet Center in Escanaba, MI is one of 300 nationwide, serving Veterans in rural and underserved areas. Its primary mission is to help Veterans readjust to civilian life. This is done by helping the Veteran identify problems and then offering individual, family, and group counseling for a host of issues including Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), military sexual trauma, substance abuse and bereavement..

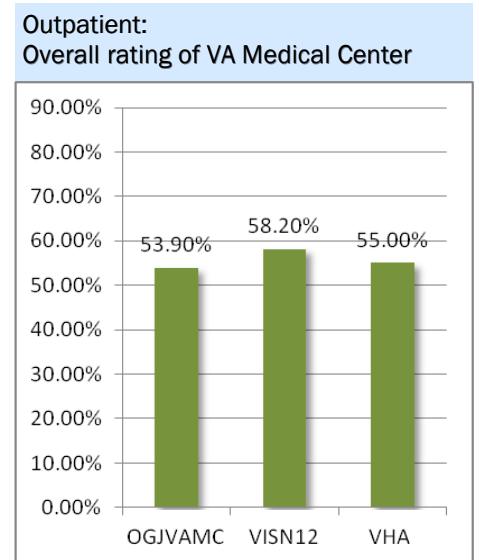
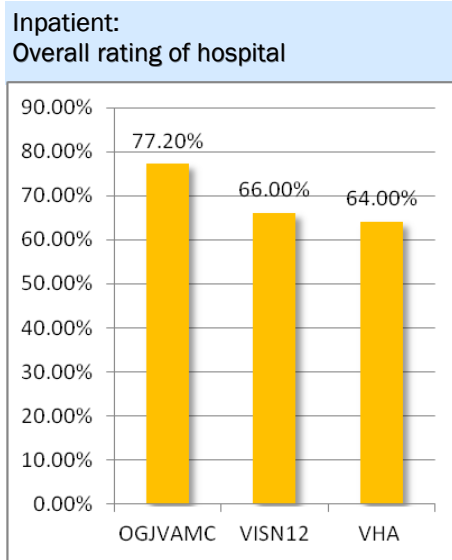
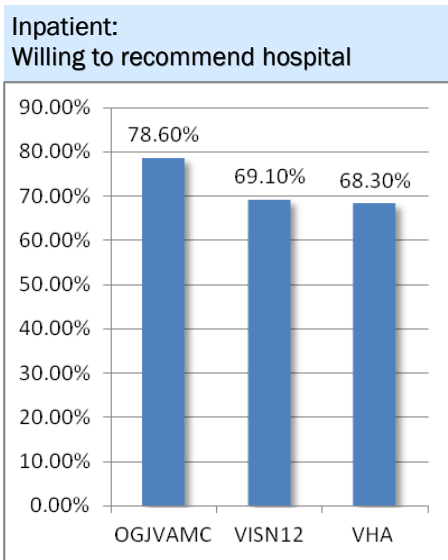
The Mobile Vet Center (MVC) takes the Vet Center mission on the road, going wherever needed to serve Veterans. The internet satellite and onboard generator assures that Vet Center counselors will have real time access to the Veteran's VA records on a secure system. A video conferencing system allows face-to-face visits between the Veteran and a VAMC health provider for such things as medication management.



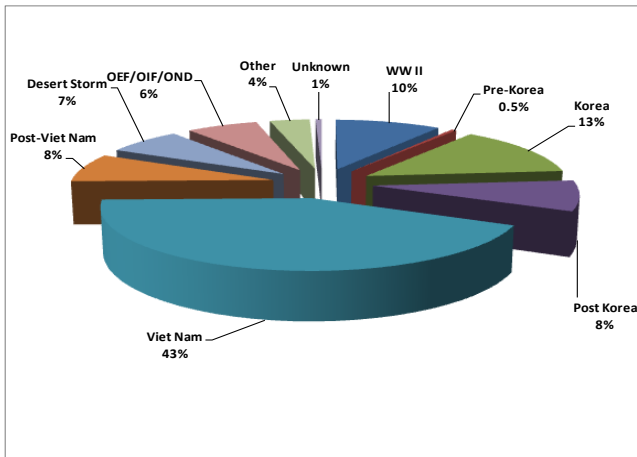
OGJVAMC at a glance



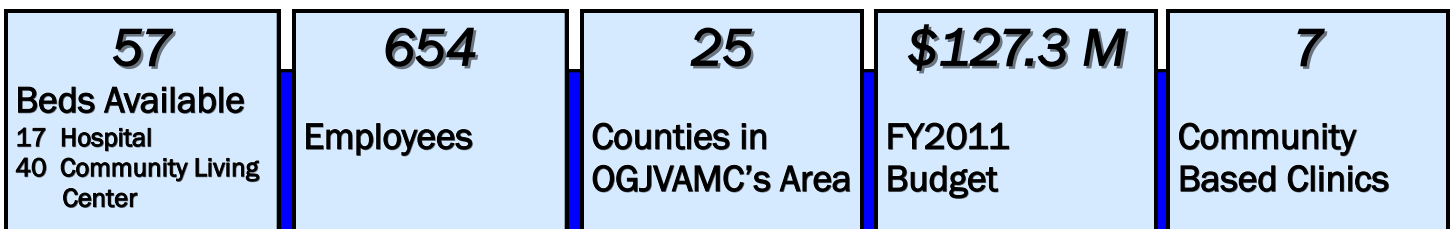
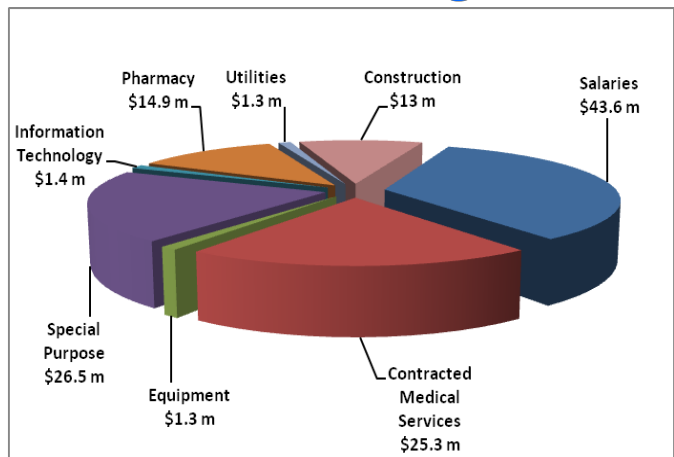
Fiscal Year 2011 Patient Satisfaction Scores



Who We Serve



Fiscal Year 2011 Budget



Volunteers Answering the Call

OGJVAMC partnering with communities

In FY2011, more than **540 VOLUNTEERS** provided **42,023 HOURS OF SERVICE** to help achieve the mission at OGJVAMC. This represents **\$897,611** or the equivalent of **20 FULL TIME POSITIONS.**

In addition, OGJVAMC received **\$227,145 IN MONETARY AND MATERIAL DONATIONS** that benefit the Veterans served at OGJVAMC and its community based clinics.



Helping the Community

CFC

Employees at OGJVAMC raised **\$29,324** for the **2011 Combined Federal Campaign** to help people in the community, exceeding their goal of \$28,000.



Adopt-a-Family

OGJVAMC delivered **190 gifts** for **7 families** in the local area that were adopted by OGJVAMC staff and volunteers.

In 2011, OGJVAMC volunteer drivers logged more than a quarter million miles providing 3,159 rurally based Veterans access to VA health care at OGJVAMC and its clinics.

Rural Health Projects & Collaboration

Increasing services to rural Veterans

The Oscar G. Johnson VA Medical Center continues to make progress in increasing services to rural Veterans. OGJVAMC received over \$1.97 Million from the VA Office of Rural Health (ORH) to sustain or expand rural health care programs, such as telehealth, Home Based Primary Care and Enhanced Rural Access Network for Growth Enhancement (E-RANGE) programs. Additionally, OGJVAMC has collaborated with area tribal nations, to include:

- Working on a Memorandum of Understanding with the Sault Tribal Health Center in Manistique, MI to provide optometry services to Veterans, which will significantly reduce travel and enhance care.
- Co-hosting a Veteran Listening Session with the Sault Tribal Health Service to address Veteran concerns and discuss how Veterans can be better served.
- Providing suicide prevention briefings to the Keweenaw Bay Tribal Police and Ojibwa Health and Education Center.
- Conducting a Veteran Justice Outreach with Sault Tribal Court.
- Meeting with Sault Ste. Marie area Inter-Tribal Council to discuss access to clinical treatment and recovery support for substance abuse.
- Hosting a bi-weekly Native American PTSD treatment group.



Coming in 2012:

Establishing the **Veterans Transportation Service** to increase access to care through efficient transportation assistance to OGJVAMC

Establishing a **second E-RANGE team** in Hancock, MI that will cover the central and western portions of the Upper Peninsula.

\$311,243	\$394,220	\$320,000	\$292,946	\$600,000
Sustain HBPC Program at Watersmeet, MI	Sustain and Enhance Telehealth Services	Sustain Mental Health E-RANGE Program	Sustain ENT & Cataract Programs	Medical Equipment & Supplies



PACT: Patient Aligned Care Teams

A new way of providing VA health care

OGJVAMC has transformed how it delivers care to its Veterans. In 2010 OGJVAMC began implementing the VA's Patient Aligned Care Team (PACT) Model to provide more patient centric care. By mid 2011, the reorganization was complete with seven PACT teamlets at OGJVAMC and between 1-3 teamlets at each of its Outpatient Clinics and Rural Outreach Clinic.

PACT is Team-Based Care: The Veteran works with a core team of health care professionals, known as a teamlet, which includes his or her physician, registered nurse, licensed practical nurse, and administrative clerk. A social worker, pharmacist, dietician and mental health professional may also be on the team. These health care professionals work together as a team to provide comprehensive care for each Veteran.

PACT is a Veteran-Centric Partnership: The Veteran and his or her teamlet work together to assess and treat the whole person, with an emphasis on lifelong preventive health and wellness. This partnership encourages open communication between the Veteran and his or her health care team.

PACT is Increased Access to Care:

The Veteran now has more options in communicating with his or her health care professionals and receiving care – Primary Care visits, telephone follow ups, secure messaging, telehealth appointments, and same day visits with his or her provider and other teamlet members such as the dietician, social worker and Circle of Care Clinic (see article on page 9).

PACT is Coordinated Care: The teamlet coordinates all aspects of a Veteran's health care to include within the teamlet, with specialists in other services or non-VA providers, and the transition from hospital care to ambulatory care. The objective is ensuring seamless coordination and continuity of care.



The Veteran and his or her teamlet work together to assess and treat the whole person, with an emphasis on lifelong preventive health and wellness.

Circle of Care Clinic

Nationally recognized clinic treats the whole Veteran

There is still a stigma in the minds of some Veterans about going to the Behavioral Health Service for treatment. The Oscar G. Johnson VA Medical Clinic is changing that by integrating Primary Care and Mental Health services into a co-located and collaborative care environment. In 2011, OGJVAMC initiated and established the Circle of Care Clinic and located it within the Primary Care Service.

“The name, Circle of Care, really was born out of a discussion with one of our Native American Veterans,” said Karen Krebsbach, LMSW. “He said that when you treat someone, you need to treat the whole person - physical, emotional, mental and spiritual, and that is what we are about.” The *Circle* in the clinic’s name communicates the wholeness of the Veteran.

The Circle of Care team consists of two Licensed Medical Social Workers, a Nurse Practitioner and a Health Technician. The Team was nationally recognized in 2011 as one of eight top innovators in the VA for the Primary Care/Mental Health Integration Initiative, receiving the *Your One in a Million Award*.

“We are an extension of your normal doctor’s appointment,” said Cory Vedin, LMSW and clinic team coordinator.

The Circle of Care Clinic, which can provide same day access, helps the doctor and Veteran develop the best integrated health care plan for whatever the problem is, be it depression, diabetes, insomnia, PTSD, or any other worries or emotional concerns affecting daily life. They also provide recommendations for any specialty care that may be needed and follow up on medication usage for the Primary Care Clinic.

“Veterans are really surprised when we call them to see how they are doing with their meds,” said Cindy Ziller, NP. “They say, ‘wow, you really care’, and we do because it is our passion.”

“What we are finding is that, while some Veterans are resistant to seeing a psychiatrist in the Behavioral Health Service, they are much more open to coming to see us in the Circle of Care Clinic,” said Krebsbach.

“Veterans are really surprised when we call them to see how they are doing with their meds. They say, ‘wow, you really care’, and we do because it is our passion.” ~ Cindy Ziller, NP, Circle of Care Clinic



Health Care for Women Veterans

OGJVAMC's Women's Health Program enhancing services

Women constitute more than 14% of today's active-duty and represent the largest growing subpopulation of the U.S. Armed Forces.

The Women's Veterans Health Care Program at the Oscar G. Johnson VA Medical Center is committed to excellence in addressing health care needs of all women Veterans and ensuring that timely, equitable, high-quality, and comprehensive health care services are provided in a sensitive and safe environment.

OGJVAMC has continued to enhance its Women's health programs throughout FY 2011 and will continue to develop and enhance these services in the future. Notable progress towards these goals include:

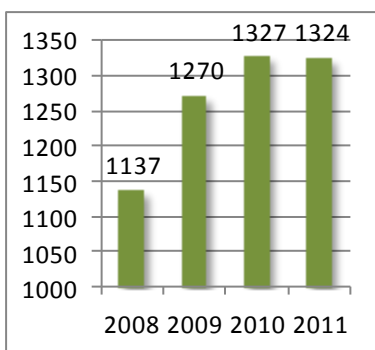
- Fee basis care is now offered to each women Veteran for gynecology services not available at the medical center or clinic location.

- OGJVAMC and each of its seven Outpatient/Rural Outreach Clinics now offer a clinically trained, gender specific health care provider available to all female Veterans to ensure comprehensive health care is available in a single visit.

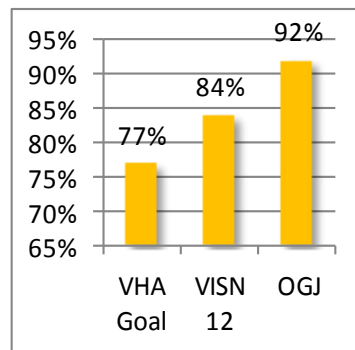


- A separate Women's Health Care clinic area has been completed at OGJVAMC, which offers a private waiting area for female patients and their children while waiting for their appointments.
- OGJVAMC's Women's Health services have continued to demonstrate excellence in clinical practices as evidence by the External Peer Review Process (EPRP) performance measures in breast and cervical cancer screenings (see below).

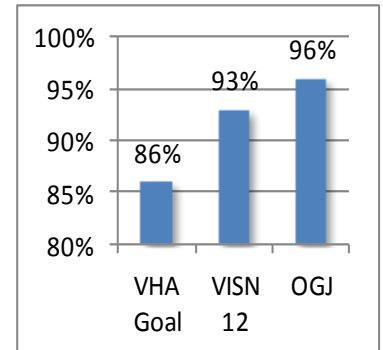
No. of Women Seeking VA Care*
*Includes women using CHAMPVA



Breast Cancer Screenings (age 50-69)



Cervical Cancer Screenings (age 21-64)



OGJVAMC and each of its 7 CBOCs now offer a clinically trained, gender specific VA health care provider available to all female Veterans to ensure comprehensive health care is available in a single visit.

Bringing Care Closer to Home

OGJVAMC expanding telehealth care

Receiving support and funding from the VA's Office of Rural Health (ORH), the Oscar G. Johnson VA Medical Center has been able to expand state of the art telehealth audio/visual technology to deliver services to rural Veterans not close to a VA health care specialty provider.

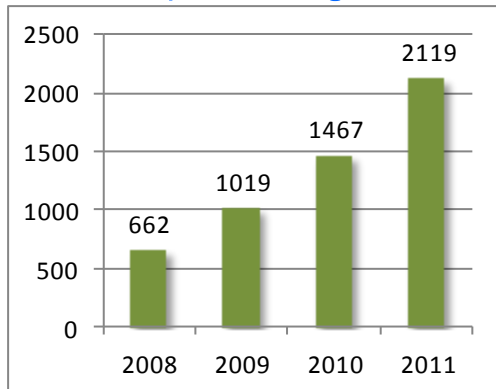
OGJVAMC was one of the first in the nation to implement diagnostic tele-pathology in 1996. It now has expanded use of telehealth technology to its clinics and covers 18 specialty areas from cardiology to psychiatry to retinal imaging.

Additionally, there is now a Tele-



health Clinical Technician assigned at the six community based Outpatient Clinics.

No. of patients using telehealth

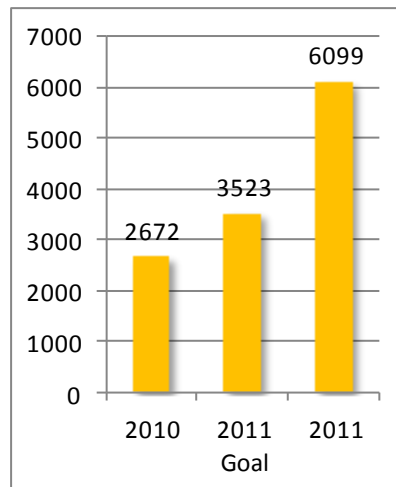


“The feedback we have received from patients using telehealth technology has been extremely positive,” said Jeanne Johnson, Telehealth Coordinator for OGJVAMC and its clinics.

“They really like saving a lot of time and expense not having to travel hours for an appointment,” she said. “As one patient noted, it was like he was right in the doctor’s office receiving the same care without traveling the long distance.”

Goals for 2012 include utilizing telehealth appointments for 15% of all patients and opening 12 new telehealth clinics.

No. of telehealth appointments



Telehealth Services

- Audiology
- Behavioral Health (Gen)
- Cardiology
- Diabetes
- Endocrinology
- Infectious Disease
- Nephrology
- Pre-Op Anesthesia
- Prosthetics
- Psychiatry
- PTSD
- Pulmonology
- Retinal Imaging
- Rheumatology
- Spinal Cord Injury
- Substance Abuse
- Thoracic Surgery
- Weight Management
- *Comp & Pension (2012)*
- *Diabetic Educ. (2012)*
- *Primary Care (2012)*
- *Post-Op (2012)*
- *Pharmacy (2012)*

“As one patient noted, it was like he was right in the doctor’s office receiving the same care without traveling the long distance.”
 ~ Jeanne Johnson, RN, Telehealth Coordinator

Bringing Care Closer to Home

Home & Community Based Care letting more Vets stay at home

The Oscar G. Johnson VA Medical Center has a comprehensive Home and Community Based Care (H&CBC) program that provides needed services to enable Veterans to remain in their home setting as long as possible. H&CBC programs may be provided singularly or in combination with other programs to provide the continuum of home and community services to our Veterans.

The overall target for H&CBC was an average daily census of 196, which was exceeded with an average daily census of 269.6 (137.6% of the target).

team consisting of registered nurses, social workers, registered dietitians, physical therapists, psychologists, pharmacists, nurse practitioners, and a physician.



HBPC was started in 2008 and expanded to a second satellite team at Watersmeet, MI in 2009. To date the program has served over 230 Veterans.

The **Home Telehealth Program** provides in-home monitoring of chronic diseases such as CHF, COPD, diabetes, and hypertension through the use of technology and RN care coordinators. The goal of this program is to reduce visits to the Medical Center and bed days of care (-69% in 2011) as well as provide education to the Veterans.

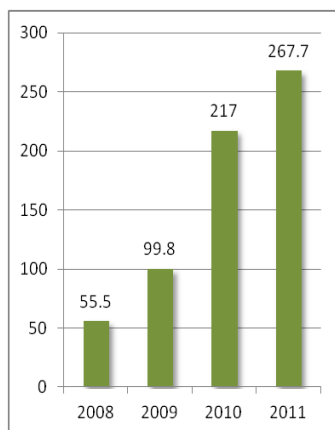
H&CBC Services

- Home Base Primary Care (HBPC)
- Home Telehealth
- Purchased Skilled Home Care
- Outpatient Respite
- Home Hospice
- Homemaker/Home Health Aide
- Contract Adult Day Health Care
- Veterans Directed Home Care
- Contract Nursing Home

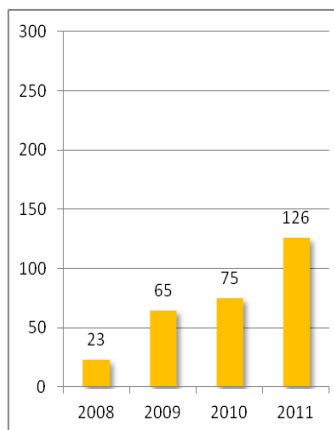
Home Based Primary Care

provides routine care and continuous services for complex chronic disabling diseases in the comfort of the Veteran's home. Care is provided by a comprehensive VA

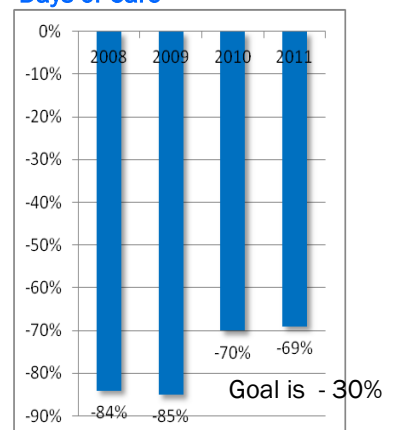
Ave Daily Census for H&CBC



Home Telehealth Enrollment



Telehealth & Decreasing Bed Days of Care



OGJVAMC has a comprehensive Home and Community Based Care (H&CBC) program that provides needed services to enable Veterans to remain in their home setting as long as possible.

Taking Care of Returning Soldiers

OEF/OIF/OND ensures coordination of care

A soldier's transition home after a deployment can be difficult, but OGJVAMC's Operation Enduring Freedom/Operation Iraqi Freedom/Operation New Dawn (OEF/OIF/OND) program is available to assist.

The OEF/OIF/OND program has been active for more than 6 years. The OEF/OIF/OND team works together in a coordinated effort to reach military personnel returning from operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, assisting them in making a seamless transition back to their family and communities and to VA health care.

The OGJVAMC team, working in conjunction with the Escanaba Vet Center through various outreach events, provides important benefit and enrollment information regarding VA health care to National Guard and Reserve Units as well as any active duty service Veteran who returns to OGJVAMC's geographic area.

"We are pleased to welcome home our combat Veterans and help them reintegrate into their communities and civilian life," said Kathy Truax, OEF/OIF/OND Program Manager.

The team's other responsibilities include coordinating the continuity of ambulatory and inpatient care upon discharge or transfer from military hospitals and assessing all newly enrolled OEF/OIF/OND Veterans for community resource needs and care management.



2011 OEF/OIF/OND Outreach

- Welcome Home Event, Marquette County Fair
- Pre-mobilization Event for 1430th ANG Engineers
- Mid-mobilization Event for 1430th Families
- Community Health Fair, Manistique, MI
- Information Presentations at 6 colleges/universities

OEF/OIF/OND Veterans

 **3,680** *No. living in OGJVAMC area*

 **1,968** *No. enrolled in VA health care*

 **10%** *Annual enrollment increase*

A soldier's transition home after a deployment can be difficult, but OGJVAMC's OEF/OIF/OND program is available to assist.

Ending Veteran Homelessness

OGJVAMC partnering with communities

The VA continues to strive toward its goal to end Veteran homelessness by 2015. In the Upper Peninsula and northern Wisconsin, homelessness may not be as visible as in urban areas, but without a doubt it still exists in these rural areas. “Some homeless individuals stay with friends, what we call couch surfing, or at one of the few Homeless Shelters in our rural areas, which are only designed to provide a temporary living accommodation,” said Nicole Foster-Holdwick, OGJVAMC Homeless Program Coordinator.

According to statistics from the Michigan Coalition Against Homelessness, there were 74 homeless Veterans in the Upper Peninsula that sought services from community agencies in 2011 and another 205 Veterans at risk of becoming homeless. The total estimated homeless population in the same region is 4,303, a nearly 80% increase since 2007. No specific data was available on the number of homeless Veterans in northern Wisconsin.

To address the issue of Veteran homelessness, the VA has partnered with the Department of Housing and Urban Development to provide



vouchers to subsidize rental housing for homeless Veterans and their immediate families. The VA screens eligible Veterans and provides case management while HUD provides the rental subsidies from its Housing Choice program. There are currently 14 vouchers being used by Veterans in the Upper Peninsula.

Additionally, the OGJVAMC is meeting with local and state agencies and organizations to develop partnerships to address Veteran homelessness at the community level. In November 2011, OGJVAMC hosted a homeless summit in Marquette, MI with over 50 people in attendance from community agencies and organizations.

“Veterans are a part of their communities, and that is where we can come together to end Veteran Homelessness,” said Foster-Holdwick, “the VA needs to work closely with local community organizations.”

In the Upper Peninsula and Northern Wisconsin, homelessness may not be as visible as in urban areas, but without a doubt it still exists in these rural areas.

E-RANGE

Expanding rural mental health services

The Oscar G. Johnson VA Medical Center is making an impact with the Enhanced Rural Access Network for Growth Enhancement (E-RANGE) program for rural Veterans with serious mental illness. E-RANGE was established in 2010 and is carried out by a small team of field-level VA staff who provide intensive case management for these Veterans. There are currently 18 Veterans in the program.

“The E-RANGE staff assists Veterans with improving their physical and emotional health by providing a critical connection between the VA and the community,” said Dr. Clifford Smith, PhD, Chief, Behavioral Health Service at OGJVAMC.

“This may include assisting Veterans with coordination of VA medical care, transportation, housing, shopping, employment, recreational endeavors, or other critical areas living,” he said.

Veterans in the program are put on an intensive follow up and medication

management schedule to stabilize their conditions and improve daily functioning. The E-RANGE team also assists these Veterans with their general welfare by helping them find adequate safe housing, connecting them with local food banks, and re-engaging them with their family.

Covering Michigan’s Eastern Upper Peninsula (UP), the E-RANGE program has made an impact. The services E-RANGE provides have significantly decreased psychiatric hospitalizations, suicidal behaviors, and substance abuse in this population of historically underserved and severely mentally ill Veterans living in the Upper Peninsula. One Veteran is now attending college.

OGJVAMC has received VA Office of Rural Health (ORH) funding for establishing a second E-RANGE team in Hancock, MI in 2012 that will cover the central and western portions of the Upper Peninsula.

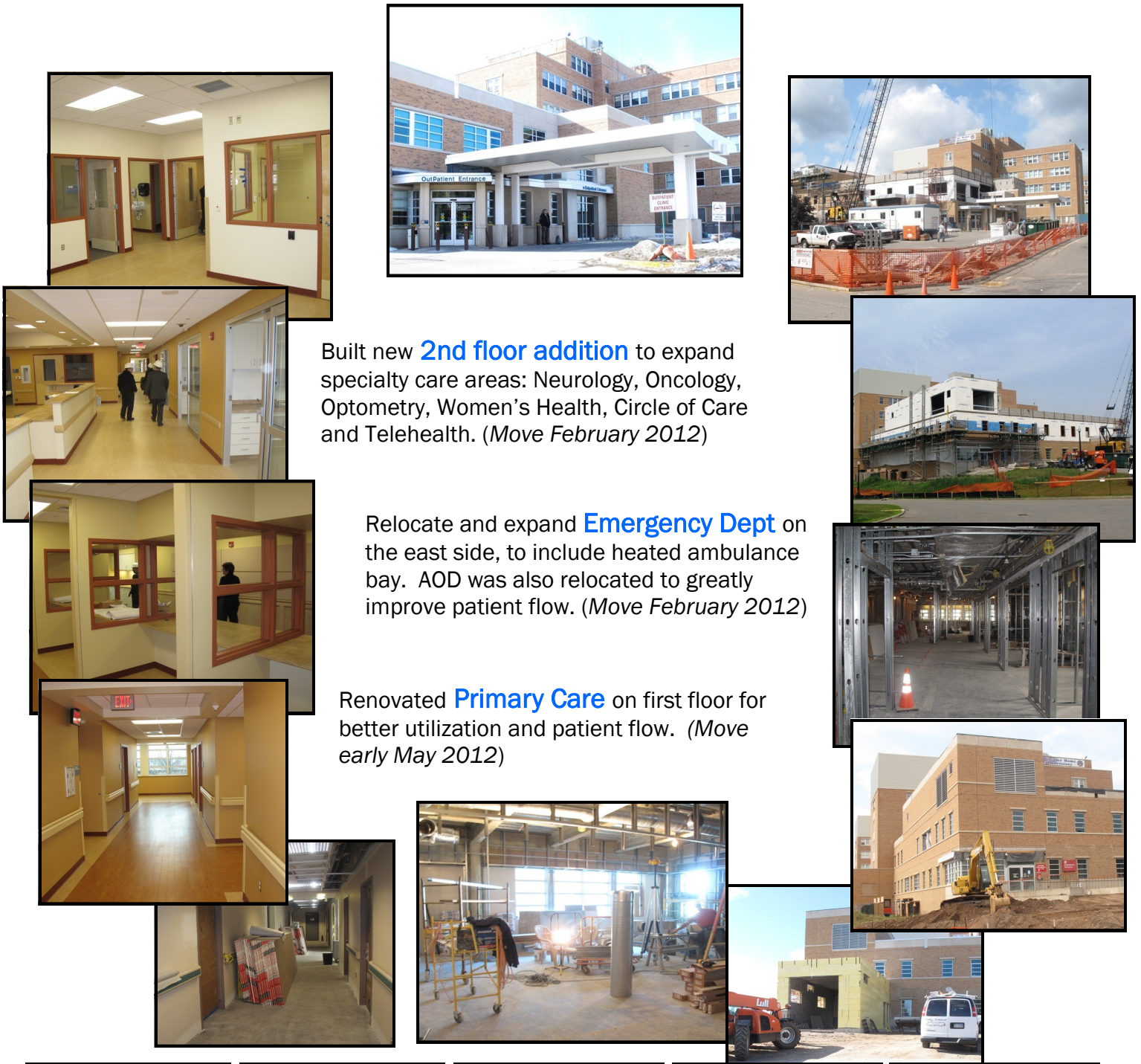
“The E-RANGE staff assists Veterans with improving their physical and emotional health by providing a critical connection between the VA and the community.”

~Dr. Clifford Smith, Chief, Behavioral Health Service.



Construction Update

New spaces for Outpatient /Specialty Care Clinics and Emergency Dept



Built new **2nd floor addition** to expand specialty care areas: Neurology, Oncology, Optometry, Women's Health, Circle of Care and Telehealth. (Move February 2012)

Relocate and expand **Emergency Dept** on the east side, to include heated ambulance bay. AOD was also relocated to greatly improve patient flow. (Move February 2012)

Renovated **Primary Care** on first floor for better utilization and patient flow. (Move early May 2012)

<p>\$6.5M</p> <p>Total cost for Outpatient Clinic Project</p>	<p>\$3.97M</p> <p>Cost of 2nd floor addition</p>	<p>13,284</p> <p>Square footage of new 2nd floor</p>	<p>\$1.17M</p> <p>Cost of renovating Primary Care Clinics</p>	<p>\$1.33M</p> <p>Cost for new Emergency Dept</p>
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Butterfly Wishes

OGJVAMC making wishes come true for Veterans

Through its Butterfly Wish Program, the Oscar G. Johnson VA Medical Center is making wishes come true for Veterans. The program was initiated by the OGJVAMC's Community Living Center (CLC) and Home Based Primary Care (HBPC). "It is similar to the Last Wish or Make a Wish Programs, where hospice and palliative care Veterans are given an opportunity to make a wish as they near the end of their lives," said Selena Okler, Palliative Care RN. "OGJVAMC staff then collaborates to make their wishes come true."

To date, five wishes have been fulfilled. Some wishes have been simple, such as fixing an 8mm viewer so that the Veteran could edit his home movies; a dinner of spiral ham and hamburger helper mac and cheese specially prepared by the kitchen staff; and a Green Bay Packer themed party with Thai food.



Other wishes were more involved yet exceeded expectations. Fresh Maine lobster for two turned into a lobster feast for the whole family.

A request by the family of a life-long Packers fan for a football signed by Aaron Rodgers, Clay Matthews and Donald Driver resulted in surprise presentation by OGJVAMC Director Jim Rice of a football signed by the whole team,



a handwritten card from Aaron Rodgers stating the team was thinking of him and wishing him well, and a Packers fleece blanket, pin and team photo.

Fulfilling these wishes was a big deal for these Veterans and their families, and very much appreciated by them.

"It is similar to the Last Wish or Make a Wish Programs, where hospice and palliative care Veterans are given an opportunity to make a wish as they near the end of their lives."

~Selena Okler, Palliative Care RN



Advocating For Rural Health Care

OGJAMC hosts Congressional hearing

U.S. Representatives Ann Marie Buerkle (R-NY) and Dan Benishek (R-MI) held a Congressional Field Hearing at the Oscar G. Johnson VA Medical Center on June 20, 2011. Congresswoman Buerkle is the Chairwoman of the Committee of Veteran's Affairs Subcommittee on Health, of which Congressman Benishek is also a member. The hearing was held to determine the impact of Congressional efforts to improve health care for Veterans living in rural areas.

Given its presence in the Upper Peninsula and Northern Wisconsin, much of what the Oscar G. Johnson VA Medical Center and its seven field-level clinics do can be considered rural health care.

Representatives from the Oscar G. Johnson VA Medical Center and Veteran service agencies as well as Veteran Services Officers testified at the hearing. Testifying for the VA Medical Center was Mr. James W. Rice, Director, who was also accompanied by Dr. Mary Beth Skupien, National Director for VA's Office of Rural Health; Dr. Dinesh Ranjan, Chief of Surgery at VA Medical Center; and Dr. Clifford Smith, Chief of Mental Health at the VA Medical Center.

Mr. Rice addressed some of the specific efforts taken by the VA Medical Center to improve access to quality health care in the Upper Peninsula. "We are currently supporting rural health projects through funding from VA's Office of Rural Health (ORH) as well as through local resources," Rice testified.



[Link for the Congressional field hearing:](http://veterans.house.gov/hearing/veterans-health-care-michigans-upper-peninsula-where-are-we)

<http://veterans.house.gov/hearing/veterans-health-care-michigans-upper-peninsula-where-are-we>

"We are currently supporting rural health projects through funding from VA's Office of Rural Health (ORH) as well as through local resources."

~ testimony of James W. Rice at Congressional field hearing

**2011
Annual
Report**

Oscar G. Johnson VA Medical Center

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