

Veterans Healthy Times

L A T E S T G E N E R A T I O N C O M M I T T E E

Shinseki Sworn In, Vows 21st Century Service to Veterans

Retired Army Gen. Eric K. Shinseki took the oath of office January 21st 2009 as the Nation's seventh Secretary of Veterans Affairs, assuming the leadership of the Department of Veterans Affairs following Tuesday's confirmation by the Senate.

"The overriding challenge I am addressing from my first day in office is to make the Department of Veterans Affairs a 21st century organization focused on the Nation's Veterans as its clients," Shinseki said.

Shinseki plans to develop a 2010 budget within his first 90 days that realizes the vision of President Obama to transform VA into an organization that is people-centric, results-driven and forward-looking.

Key issues on his agenda include smooth activation of an enhanced GI Bill education benefit that eligible Veterans can begin using next

fall, streamlining the disability claims system, leveraging information technology to accelerate and modernize services, and opening VA's health care system to Veterans previously unable to enroll in it, while facilitating access for returning Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans.

Shinseki, a former Army Chief of Staff, takes the reins of a 284,000-employee organization delivering health care and financial benefits to millions of Veterans and survivors under a \$98 billion budget authorized this year through networks of regional benefits offices and health care facilities from coast to coast.

Born in 1942 on the island of Kauai, Hawaii, Shinseki graduated from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, N.Y., in 1965. He served two com-

bat tours and was wounded in action in Vietnam. He served with distinction in Europe, the Pacific and stateside, eventually becoming the Army's senior leader from June 1999 to June 2003.

Retired from military service in August 2003, Shinseki's military decorations include three Bronze Stars and two Purple Hearts.



VA Boston
Healthcare System



This year we expect to see some new changes in the My HealtheVet website. Check these out!

- On the pharmacy tab, there is a new “blended” medication view. Your VA meds will be entered from the pharmacy package and we recommend that you enter all other medications, vitamins and herbal preparation you take. As part of our effort to provide you with the best and safest care, our doctors are required to give you a list of your current medications whenever your meds are adjusted during a visit or hospitalization. By printing out your list from My HealtheVet and bringing this list to your doctor at each visit, you help us to help you!!!
- In 2009 veterans will begin seeing their appointments when they click on the Get

Care Tab and then the new Appointment Tab. They can use this Appointment List View or click on the Health Calendar and view them on their calendar. Veterans with personal e-mail addresses can request 14 day and 3 day prior email notifications of their appointments.

- In 2009, veterans will be able to see the first Hematology/Lab results by clicking on the Track Health Tab and then Labs and Tests. There will be a seven day delay from the time a test is completed and results received, to give the providers a change to contact the veterans if they need to discuss the results.
- In 2009, veterans will be able to see Wellness Reminders by clicking on the Get Care Tab. There will be 12 reminders in the first release.

Examples are reminders for Flu Vaccination, Hypertension, Mammogram Screening, Body Mass Index, Foot Exam for Diabetes etc.

To create an account you will need to complete the **In Person** Authentication Security Process to be able to take advantage of all the features offered at www.myhealth.va.gov !

To receive an E-newsletter or request assistance with any of the features of My-HealtheVet, send an email to VABostonMy-HealtheVet@va.gov !

Be aware that this is not an encrypted email and you should not give out your personal identifiers such as social security numbers...

Making VA Community more like Home

Our VA Community Living Center was built at a time when nursing homes resembled acute care hospitals – long hallways, semi-private rooms, fluorescent lighting, nurse’s stations, etc. Although we can not do much about the existing design and structure of the CLC, we can try to establish areas within the Center where residents and their family and guests can go to escape the sterile and institutional feeling of the building and relax. The Islands of Home Project, developed locally at our CLC, seeks to develop areas within the CLC that resemble living or family rooms in a home. Voluntary Service has purchased four faux fireplaces, five wall-mounted Westminster chime clocks, and two flat screen televisions for the day rooms to date. Several other items have been purchased and the CLC is awaiting their arrival.



What should I know about advance directives?

As a VA patient you have a say in the health care you receive. When you are ill, your doctor should explain what treatments there are for your illness so that you can decide which one is best for you. But if you were too ill to understand your treatment choices or to tell your doctor what treatment you want:

Who would you want to make decisions for you? What type of health care would you want? What health care wouldn't you want? Questions like these may be hard to think about, but they're important. That's why VA wants you to know about a legal form you can complete. It's called an advance directive.

What is an advance directive?

An advance directive is a legal form that helps your doctors and family members understand your wishes about health care. It can help them decide about treatments if you are too ill to decide for yourself. For example, if you are unconscious or too weak to talk. There are two types of advance directives: durable power of attorney for health care and living will.



Should I have an advance directive?

Yes, it's a good idea to have one. An advance directive helps protect your right to make your own choices. It helps make sure people respect your values and wishes if you can't speak for yourself. *Your advance directive is used only when you aren't able to make decisions yourself.*

How do I complete an advance directive?

Fill out VA Form 10-0137, "VA Advance Directive: Durable Power of Attorney and Living Will." Or use any valid state advance directive form. Talk to a health care professional at your local VA health care facility. This might be a social worker or your primary care doctor. Or talk to your spiritual advisor or attorney. Your VA health care team can make your advance directive part of your medical record.



We're on the Web
<http://www.boston.va.gov>



VA Boston Healthcare System
1400 VFW Parkway
West Roxbury, MA 02132

What's New at the VA

THE WEST ROXBURY YMCA PROVIDES SUPPORT TO MILITARY FAMILIES AS PART OF NEW \$31-MILLION INITIATIVE

As part of the new Armed Services YMCA (ASYMCA) and Department of Defense (DoD) Outreach Initiative, The West Roxbury YMCA will provide military families access to youth development, family strengthening, and health and well-being programs at community YMCAs nationwide. Membership fees will be underwritten by the DoD and administered through Military OneSource, an information and referral service for military families. YMCA of the USA, the national resource office for America's 2,686 YMCAs, will help launch the initiative at participating YMCAs across the country.

The eligible individuals/families must give the YMCA a completed eligibility form, as well as show their military ID and the Deployment papers at the time of enrollment. Independent Duty personnel must provide their Military ID, completed eligibility form, and the IDP Request for Fitness Memberships form, that can be located on www.militaryonesource.com.

More information about the West Roxbury YMCA and the ASYMCA-DoD Outreach Initiative can be found by visiting www.ymcaboston.org/westroxbury and www.asymca.org.

"May we give you a lift?"

Our **Patient Courtesy Van** provides transportation from our parking lots to the hospital and back again.

Operating Monday - Friday
8:00am - 4:00pm (closed 11:30 - 12:30pm)

Drop Off/Pick Up Locations:
-Main entrances of buildings 2 & 3
-Designated areas of parking lots near buildings 2 & 3

Vans run intermittently.
Contact DAV Office x35627 or Voluntary Service x35135

The advertisement features a white van with a driver and several passengers, including a child and a dog. The background shows a stylized hospital building and a winding road leading to it. The text is in various colors (yellow, red, blue, green) and fonts to draw attention.