

*Focused on Excellence - Putting Veterans First*

# Oscar G. Johnson VA Medical Center

## 2013 Annual Report



OGJVAMC Executive  
Leadership Team

## Message from the Director



James W. Rice  
Medical Center Director

It is my privilege to present to you the Oscar G. Johnson VA Medical Center's 2013 annual report. Our motto, *Focused on Excellence – Putting Veterans First*, reflects our goal to be the health care of choice for Veterans and be recognized as a leader in rural health.

As you read this report, you will notice that we strive every day to deliver the right care that is *personalized, proactive* and *patient-driven* for all Veterans at the right time. We continue to seek opportunities to invest in our current and future employees through VA leadership, mentoring, and internship programs. We are also committed to using state-of-the-art technologies to provide better patient-centered care to our Veterans.

This report demonstrates our commitment to provide every Veteran with a positive experience through our programs such as Veterans Transportation Service, expanding telehealth technology, enhanced coordination of maternity services for our women Veterans, construction initiatives, and expanding rural mental health services to the most underserved Veterans.

In 2013 we began our journey to develop a Patient Centered Care culture by partnering with the Office of Patient Centered Care and Cultural Transformation. Finally, we made a concerted effort in 2013 to reach out to Veterans and stakeholders through Veteran Town Halls, health fairs and visits to area hospitals.

We look forward to 2014 as we continue to redefine the patient experience and *take patient-centered care to the next level.*

James W. Rice  
Medical Center Director



William J. Caron  
Associate Director



Grace L. Stringfellow, MD  
Chief of Staff



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



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Hancock, MI



Ironwood, MI



Manistique, MI



Marquette, MI



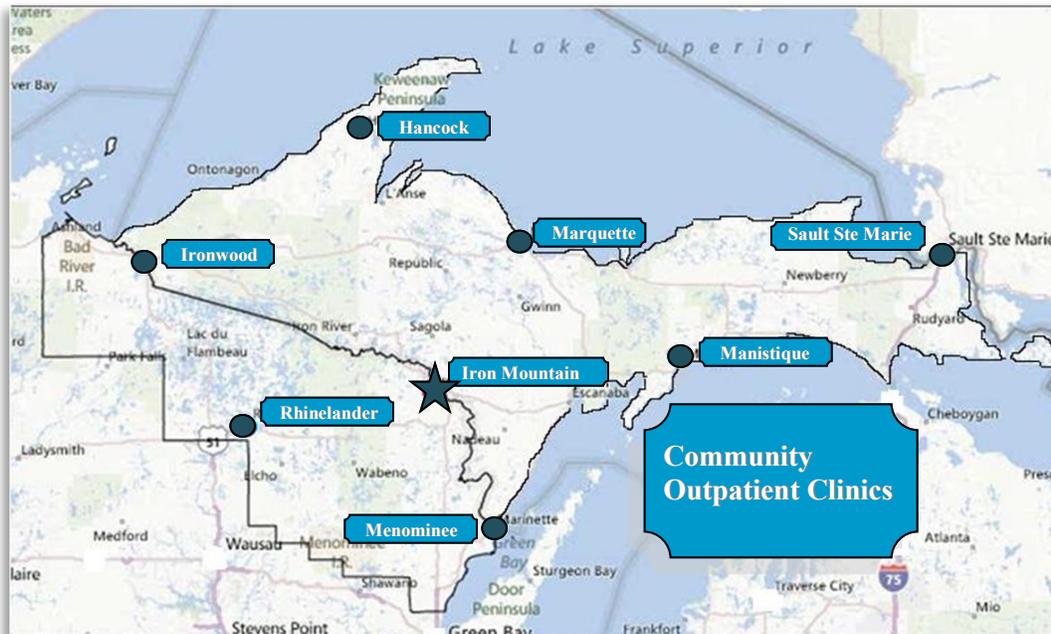
Menominee, MI



Rhinelander, WI



Sault Ste Marie, MI



## OGJVAMC's Log Cabin

### Mission:

**Honor America's Veterans by providing exceptional healthcare that improves their health and well-being.**

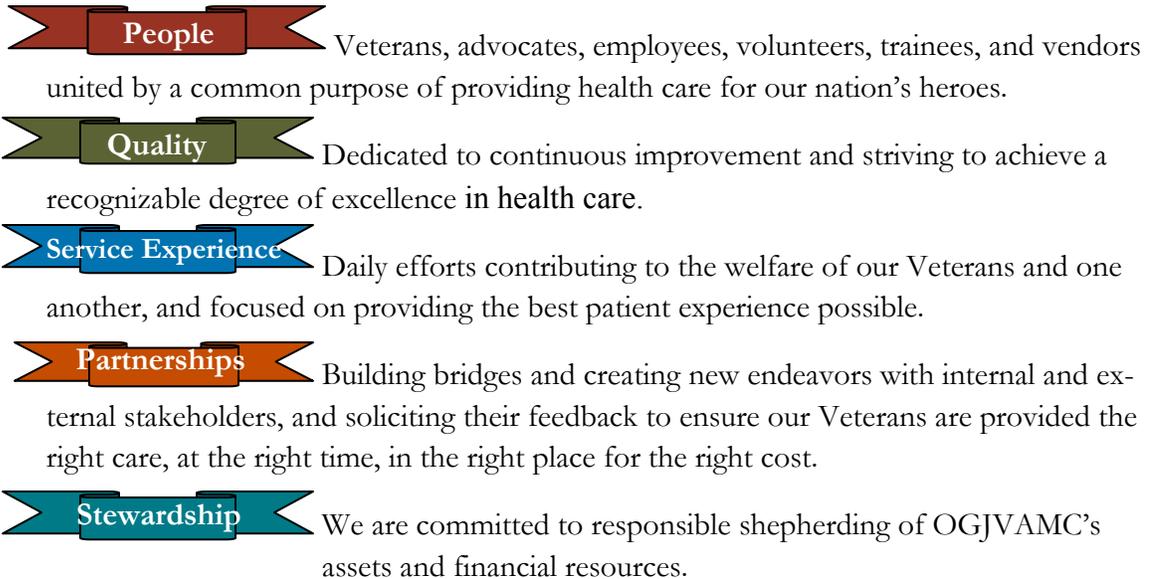
Over the last two years OGJVAMC developed a strategic plan and revised its mission and vision statements, best summed up in its motto, *Focused on Excellence-Putting Veterans First*. The goal of OGJVAMC is to remain a leader in rural health care, and a provider and employer of choice. To pursue this goal, OGJVAMC has partnered with the Office of Patient-Centered Care & Cultural Transformation (OPCC/CT) and embarked on a journey toward *personal, proactive, patient-driven* care (see page 16).

way forward, a log cabin was “built.” The *foundation* of OGJVAMC’s log cabin is the VA Core Values of I CARE (**I**ntegrity, **C**ommitment, **A**dvocacy, **R**espect, and **E**xcellence). These core values, i.e., “who we are,” are the base elements of how we go about our work, how we interact with each other, and which strategies we employ to fulfill our mission. Most importantly, they are the principles we use every day in everything we do. The *columns* of the log cabin are OGJVAMC’s guiding principles, the main strategic direction to achieve the mission and realize the vision. These are:

### Vision:

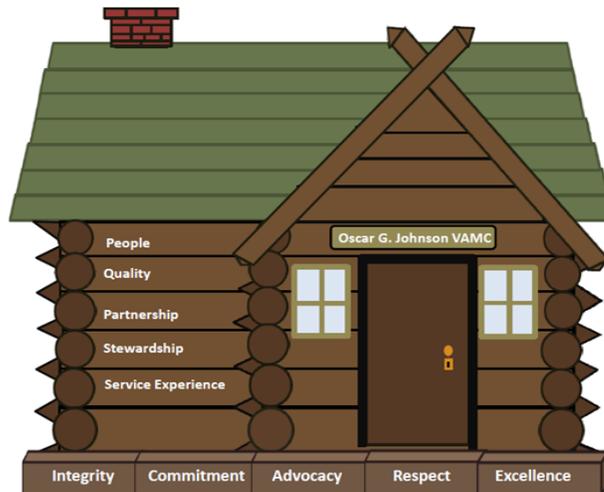
**Leaders in Rural Healthcare - Focused on Excellence - Putting Veterans First.**

To best illustrate OGJVAMC’s strategic



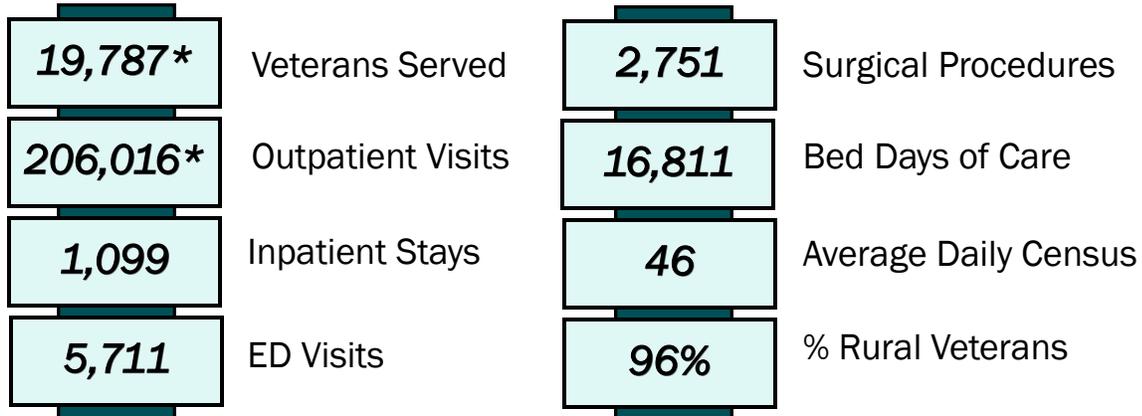
### Motto:

**Focused on Excellence - Putting Veterans First.**



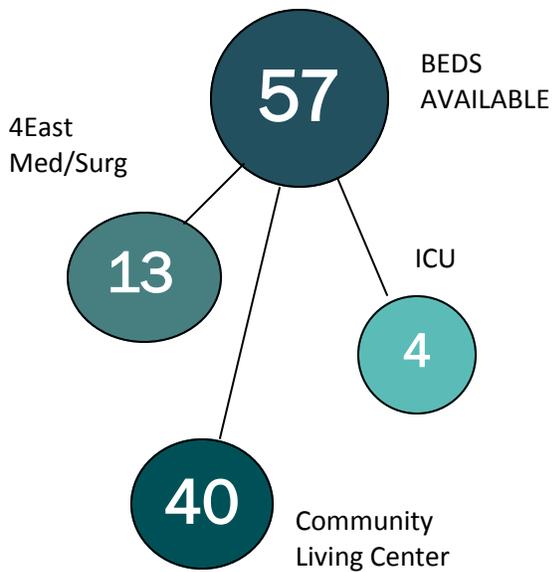
# OGJVAMC at a Glance

## Clinical Statistics



\* Includes Community Outpatient/Rural Outreach Clinics

## Operating Beds



## Staffing

- ★ 658 Employees
- ★ 32% Veteran Employees
- ★ 637 Volunteers
- ★ 67 Licensed Physicians
- ★ 164 Nurses
- ★ 58 Mental Health Professionals

## Geographic Area



## FY 2013 Budget

**\$129.8M** Operating Budget

**\$9.9M** Construction Funds

**\$1.78M** Rural Health Funds

# Our Most Valuable Resource

The honors and accreditations on page 8, patient satisfaction scores on page 9, and clinical measures throughout this report would not be possible without our most valuable resource – **PEOPLE**. These honors and achievements are a testament to OGJVAMC employees – from housekeepers to clinical providers - and volunteers

for their commitment to Veterans and fulfilling our motto, "Focused on Excellence - Putting Veterans First." Additionally, our employees are on the forefront as we begin our journey providing our Veterans with *personal, proactive, and patient-driven care* (see page 16).

People



*These honors and achievements are a testament to OGJVAMC employees – from housekeepers to clinical providers - and volunteers and their commitment to Veterans.*

# Our Most Valuable Resource



People

## ***Priestap Drive Honors Former VA Employee***

OGJVAMC dedicated the James D. Priestap Dr. on Saturday, May 25, 2013. The circle drive in front of the main medical center was named in honor of Sergeant First Class James Priestap, who was a VA Police Officer at the medical center when he deployed to Iraq with the 46<sup>th</sup> Military Police Company in July 2006. He was killed by a sniper's bullet on Thanksgiving Day 2006 while on duty at a check-point in Baghdad.



*Our employees are on the forefront as we begin our journey providing our Veterans with personal, proactive, and patient-driven care.*

## Developing Current & Future Employees

OGJVAMC continues to pursue opportunities to prepare the next generation of VA employees and leaders through leadership programs, intern opportunities, and career fairs for local high school students (*see page 25*).

### LEAD Program



Four employees graduated from the 2013 LEAD program. The 10-month leadership program is offered annually to employees to increase their knowledge of VA operations, develop their leadership skills and techniques, and enhance their ability to contribute to achieving the medical center's goals while performing current duties.

### RN Transition-to Practice Program



OGJVAMC graduated two nurses from its inaugural Registered Nurse Transition-to-Practice Program. The 12-month program uses a comprehensive VA curriculum designed to assist the post-graduate nurse in

the transition from entry-level advanced beginner nurse to competent nursing professional.

### Psychology Internship Program



In 2013, OGJVAMC graduated its first class of Pre-Doctoral Interns in Psychology. The medical center is pursuing accreditation with the American Psychological Association (APA) for its Pre-Doctoral Internship in Psychology program.

### Pathways & National Diversity Internship Programs



OGJVAMC hosted 20 student interns in 2013, providing hands on experience in clinical and administrative careers. [Pathways](http://mycareeratva.va.gov/Careerpath/Internships/Pages/default.aspx) emphasizes long-term development and the diversity internship recruits from various organizations that conduct targeted outreach to diverse student populations. Both programs provide opportunities to become a VA employee. For more information on internships: <http://mycareeratva.va.gov/Careerpath/Internships/Pages/default.aspx>

*OGJVAMC continues to pursue opportunities to prepare the next generation of VA employees and leaders.*

# Volunteers are a Force Multiplier

OGJVAMC volunteers are a force multiplier, providing 44,767 hours of service in 2013, which is the equivalent of 21.5 full-time employees.

These volunteers, 637 strong, filled assignments in 18 program areas including Recreation Therapy, Nursing and Patient Care, Outpatient, Chaplain Service, Pharmacy, Library, Human Resources, Prosthetics, Voluntary Service, Surgery, Veteran Transportation, Pet Therapy, Volunteer Escorts, Radiology, Comp & Pen, Education, VBA, and State Veterans Home.

There were 147 dedicated volunteer drivers in the Veterans Transportation Network. They transported 1,782 Veterans a total of 166,594 miles.

Volunteers have been instrumental in helping OGJVAMC's Butterfly Wish Program fulfill wishes for Veterans in hospice and palliative care. Additionally, volunteers assisted the medical center staff in conducting 26 special events, outings, and ceremonies for the benefit of Veteran patients.



- 2013 OGJVAMC Volunteers**
- 637 Volunteers
  - 51 Youth Volunteers
  - 44,767 Hours served
  - \$975,473 Equivalent labor costs
  - 21.5 Equivalent full time employees
  - 166,594 Miles driven by volunteers transporting Veterans

## VA Employees Helping the Community

### Adopt-a-Family



Gifts donated & delivered to **6 families.**

### CFC



Raised **\$34,628** for the 2013 **Combined Federal Campaign** to help people in the community.



# OGJVAMC Services Recognized



## ***Quality and Efficiency***

OGJVAMC has consistently scored 4 and 5 stars in quality and efficiency in the Strategic Analytics for Improvement and Learning (SAIL) Model each quarter, ending Fiscal Year 2013 with 4 stars in both quality and efficiency.



## ***Accreditation from The Joint Commission***

OGJVAMC received accreditation from The Joint Commission for the Hospital, Home Care Program, Behavioral Health Care Program, and Long Term Care Program. The Joint Commission is the leading accreditor of health care organizations in America.



## ***Accreditation from CARF International***

OGJVAMC's Healthcare for Homeless Veterans (HCHV) Program received accreditation from CARF International, an independent nonprofit organization that accredits specialized services. The CARF inspection and survey made no recommendations, which is an extraordinary achievement as only three percent of CARF surveys result in no recommendations.



## ***Accreditation from College of American Pathologists***

OGJVAMC's Pathology and Laboratory Service received accreditation from the College of American Pathologists (CAP), and is now one of more than 7,000 CAP-accredited facilities worldwide. The U.S. federal government recognizes the CAP Laboratory Accreditation Program as being equal to or more stringent than the government's own inspection program.



## ***RCA Cornerstone Gold Award***

OGJVAMC received the 2012 RCA (Root Cause Analysis) Cornerstone Gold Award from the VA National Center for Patient Safety. OGJVAMC completed 9 RCAs and all safety alerts/advisories on time 100% of the time.



## ***Environmental Excellence Award Winner***

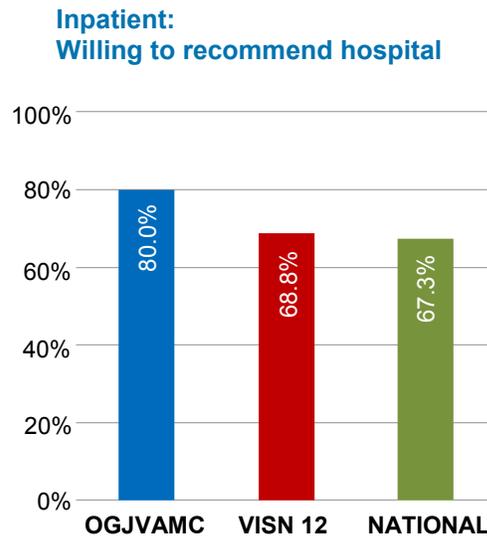
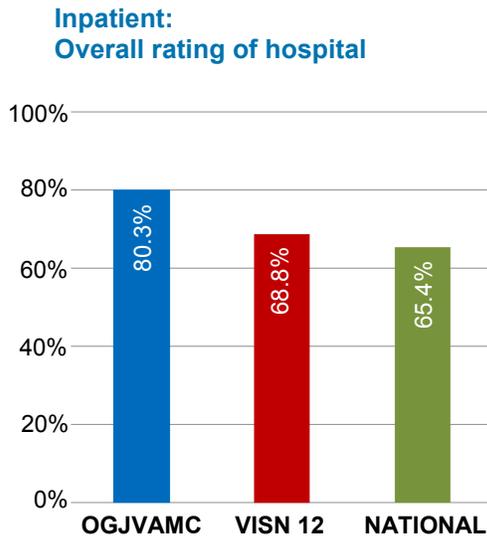
OGJVAMC was selected as a winner of the 2012 Practice Greenhealth Environmental Excellence Award .

Quality

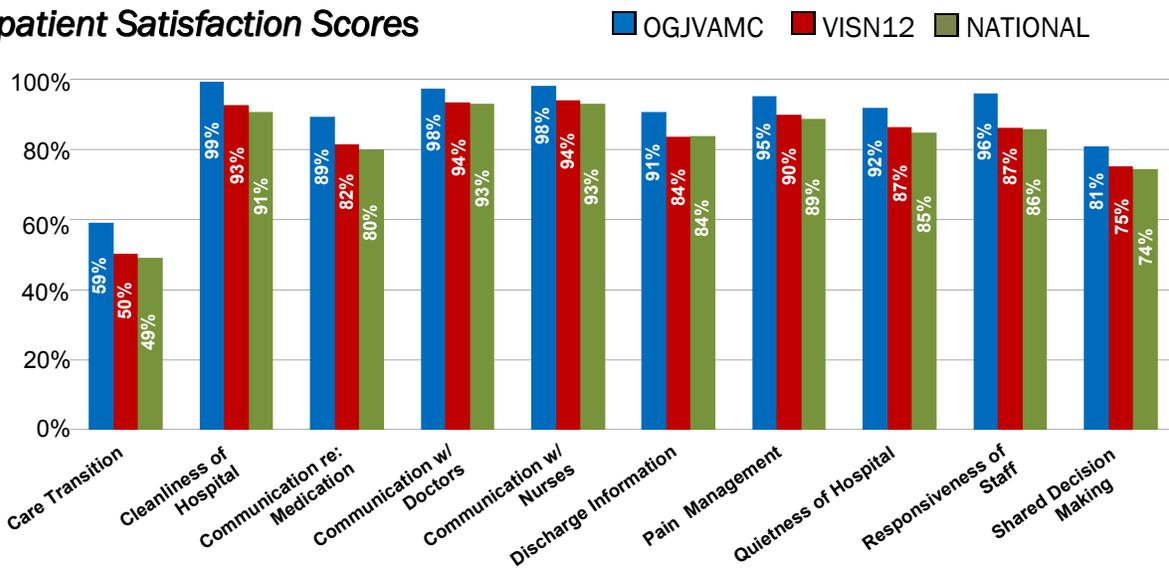


# Patient Satisfaction

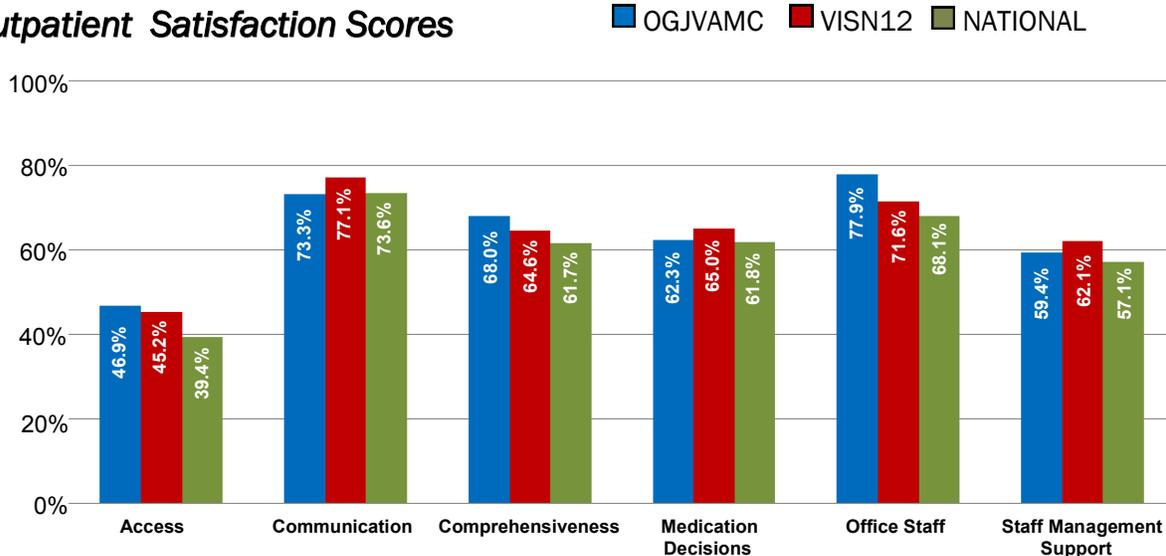
## Overall Rating of OGJVAMC



## Inpatient Satisfaction Scores



## Outpatient Satisfaction Scores



Quality

# PACT: Patient Aligned Care Teams

OGJVAMC uses the VA's Patient Aligned Care Team (PACT) Model, implemented in 2011, to provide patient centric care. There are seven PACT teamlets at OGJVAMC and one to three teamlets at each of its six community Outpatient Clinics and one 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.

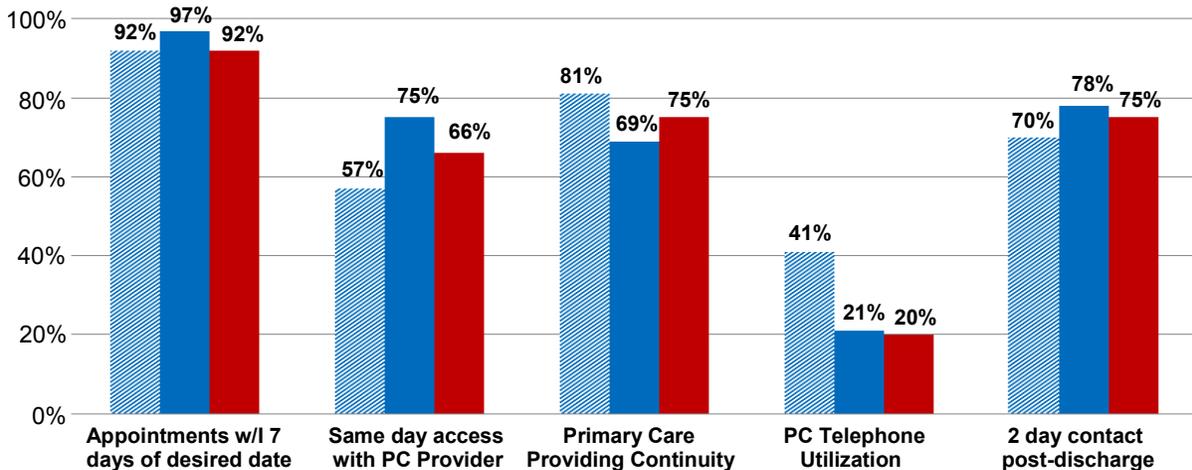
**PACT is Increased Access to Care:** The Veteran now has more options in communicating with his or her health care professionals and receiving care – Primary Care visits, telephone follow ups, secure messaging, telehealth appointments, and same day visits with his or her provider and other teamlet members such as the dietician, social worker and Circle of Care Clinic .

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



PACT Clinical Measures for FY 2013

OGJVAMC 2012 OGJVAMC 2013 Target



# Helping More Vets Stay at Home

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. H&CBC programs may be provided singularly or in combination with other programs. The overall target for H&CBC was an average daily census of 242, which was exceeded with an average daily census of 257 (106.3% of the target).

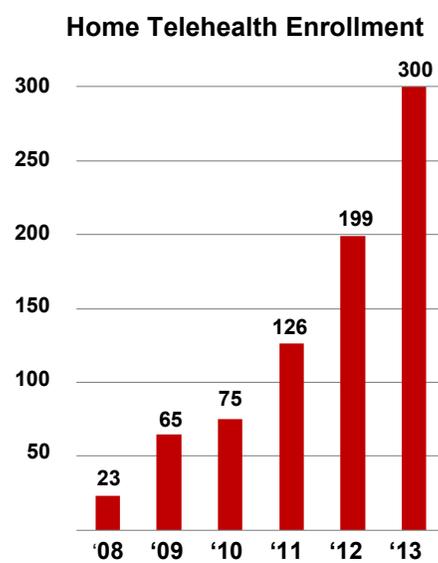
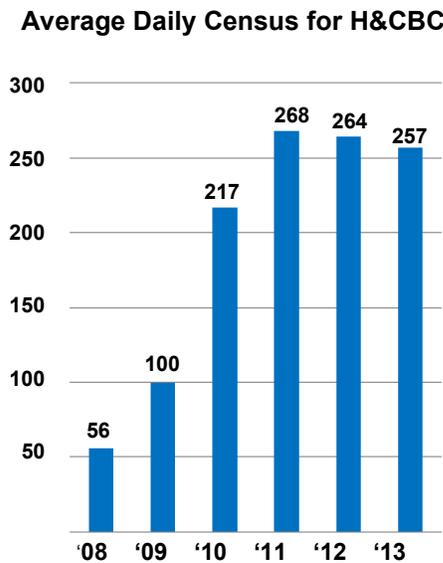
**Home Based Primary Care** brings health care to the comfort of the Veteran's home, providing routine care and continuous services for complex chronic disabling diseases. HBPC was started in 2008 and expanded to a second satellite team at Watersmeet, MI, in 2009. To date, the program has served over 300 Veterans.

**Home Telehealth Program** provides in-home monitoring and care coordination for Veterans with chronic diseases such as CHF,



COPD, diabetes, and hypertension. The program has further expanded into supporting Veterans with behavioral health needs such as PTSD, substance abuse, schizophrenia, tobacco cessation, weight management, and bipolar disorder. Care coordinators assist Veterans with navigating their healthcare and promoting self-management skills through education and case management.

- 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



*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.*

Service Experience

# Health Care for Women Veterans

OGJVAMC and its seven community outpatient clinics offer clinically trained, gender specific health care providers to all female Veterans to ensure comprehensive care is available in a single visit.

OGJVAMC has continued to enhance its women's health programs in 2013. Notable progress includes:

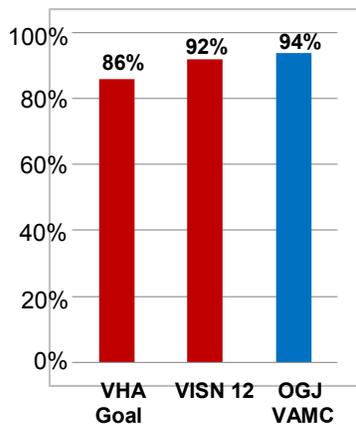
- The Women's Health Clinic at OGJVAMC offers enhanced privacy for our female patients with a private waiting area available to our women Veterans while waiting for their comprehensive primary care appointment from a specialty trained Women's Health primary care provider .
- Nine designated women's health nurses attended a women's health mini-residency training in 2013.
- Enhanced care coordination of VA maternity care services is offered through our non-VA care (purchased care) program.



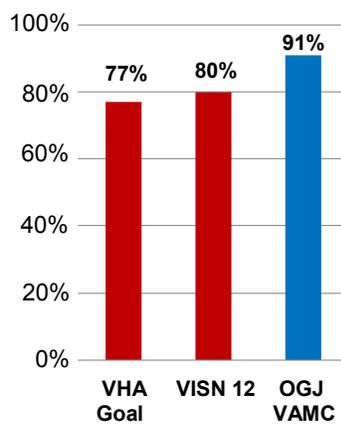
- OGJVAMC's women's health services have continued to demonstrate excellence in clinical practices. This is evidenced by the External Peer Review Program (EPRP) clinical measures in breast and cervical cancer screenings (see below).
- A strategic plan was developed by an interdisciplinary team to guide the efforts of the Women's Health Services and to ensure the delivery of the highest quality, evidence-based, comprehensive health care to our female Veterans.

Service Experience

**Cervical Cancer Screenings (age 21-64)**



**Breast Cancer Screenings (age 50-69)**



## OGJVAMC & its 7 Community Outpatient Clinics:

- Served **1,521** female patients: **1,281** Veterans and **240** ChampVA spouses.
- Conducted **13,534** women's wellness health care visits.

*Clinically trained, gender specific health care providers are offered to all female Veterans to ensure comprehensive care is available in a single visit.*

# Expanding Telehealth Care

OGJVAMC continues to expand state of the art telehealth audio/visual technology services to rural Veterans not close to a VA health care specialty provider. Telehealth services include Clinical Video Conferencing, Store and Forward, and Home Telehealth (see page 13).

The benefits of telehealth appointments are increased access to specialty care services not available locally and the reduced travel time and costs for the Veteran. However, telehealth is not meant to replace face-to-face care but rather to enhance the overall health care experience in a convenient, efficient and cost effective manner.

Feedback received from patients has been positive. “Our younger Veterans voice that it is much more convenient to take off one hour from their job to attend a telehealth



appointment close to their home, rather than a full vacation day to travel to Iron Mountain or Milwaukee,” said Jeanne Johnson, Telehealth Coordinator at OGJVAMC. “The alternative for some is to postpone their health care. Telehealth is helping to bridge this gap.”

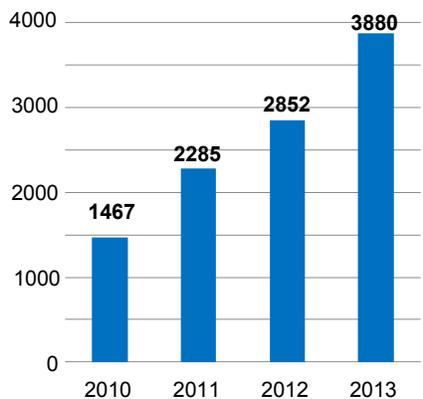
## Telehealth Services

- Audiology
- Behavioral Health (Gen)
- Behavioral Health (MSW)
- Behavioral Health (Psych)
- Behavioral Health (PTSD)
- Cardiology
- Cardio arrhythmia
- Comp & Pension (MH)
- Diabetes
- Diabetic Education
- Endocrinology
- Infectious Disease
- Nephrology
- Nutrition
- Nutrition-Diabetes
- Pharmacy
- Post-Op Surgery
- Pre-Natal
- Pre-Op Anesthesia
- Surgery
- Primary Care
- Prosthetics
- Psychiatry
- Pulmonology
- Retinal Imaging
- Rheumatology
- Spinal Cord Injury
- Substance Abuse
- Thoracic Surgery
- Weight Management
- Cardiac Device (2014)
- Dermatology (2014)
- Oxygen Renewal (2014)
- Spirometry (2014)

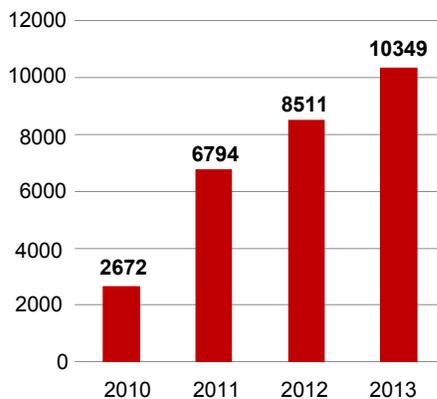
**36%** OGJVAMC Patients using some form of virtual care: telehealth, secure messaging, and e-consults.

**30** Specialty clinics using telehealth to treat Veterans (see table to the right).

No. of patients using telehealth\*



No. of telehealth appointments\*



\* Does not include Home Telehealth (see page 13)

*“Our younger Veterans voice that it is more convenient to take off one hour from their job to attend a telehealth appointment rather than a full vacation day to travel to Iron Mountain or Milwaukee.”*

*~ Jeanne Johnson, RN, Telehealth Coordinator*

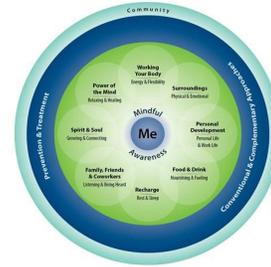
# Journey Toward Patient-Centered Care

OGJVAMC is embarking on a journey to providing *personalized, proactive, patient-centered care*, which is critically important as OGJVAMC strives to be a leader in rural health care and provider of choice for Veterans in the U.P. and northern Wisconsin.

So what is *Patient-centered Care*? Built on VA's core values of Integrity, Commitment, Advocacy, Respect, and Excellence (I CARE), patient-centered care combines the clinical practice of medicine with personalized, proactive care. Care is provided through a patient-driven health care team within healing environments and relationships.

It is the VA treating the whole health of a Veteran—physical, mental, emotional and spiritual— and taking into account self care, professional care, and community relationships. It is often illustrated as a circle with the Veteran at the center followed by self care, professional care and then community.

The Office of Patient Centered Care and Cultural Transformation (OPCC&CT) came to OGJVAMC to provide infor-



## VA Whole Healthcare

mation sessions to leadership and employees on the VHA model of Patient-centered Care and to see patient-centered care examples that OGJVAMC is already employing.

OGJVAMC has already initiated some programs to improve the experience of Veterans, such as the Butterfly Wish Program, Veterans Transportation Service, parking lot shuttle, flower and vegetable gardens for residents in the Community Living Center, and a new Computrition menu system with improved functionality, flexibility and more food options, to name just a few.

In 2014, OGJVAMC will be partnering with OPCC&CT to fully implement the Patient-centered Care model as well as local initiatives that are focused on both the *practice* and *experience* of Veterans.

Veterans committed their lives, health, and well-being to mission success in defense of our country. Our goal is to design a system where we partner with our Veterans to be mission ready for their lives, optimizing their health in ways that matter to them most.



*Patient-centered care combines the clinical practice of medicine with personalized, proactive care, which is provided through a patient-driven health care team within healing environments and relationships.*

Service Experience

## Cutting Edge Technology at OGJVAMC

In 2013, OGJVAMC pursued cutting edge technology suggested by employees to provide patient-centered care for our Veterans.

### New Dental Technology

Through the VA's Innovation Fund Program, OGJVAMC recently received a completely integrated, state-of-the-art system that allows for computer aided digital imaging and onsite milling for crowns, bridges and other restorative work all in one appointment.

The system used by OGJVAMC uses a full color 3D OmniCam camera to capture digitally what is in the mouth and then transfer it via radio signal to the milling unit in the dental lab. It is the only system that looks at adjacent teeth and makes a tooth design that will replicate the patient's anatomy as opposed to a pre-fabricated design.



### New PT Satellite Clinic

OGJVAMC recently opened a Physical Therapy (PT) satellite clinic in its Community Living Center, the medical center's long term care and short term rehabilitation unit. The state-of-the-art equipment

includes the latest models of recumbent steppers, upper and lower extremity conditioning bikes, and full power adjustable parallel bars. This equipment will provide the Veteran with the most up to date rehabilitation techniques for recovery from brain and spinal cord injuries.



### New Interactive Patient Education

OGJVAMC installed an interactive patient education and communication system, which integrates patient education for in-patients into the Veterans Health Information Systems and Technology Architecture (VistA), and the VA's Computer Patient Record System (CPRS). When the patient turns on the hospital room TV, he or she is greeted by name with a customized homepage. It features a menu system that allows the patient to view health education videos tailored to his or her diagnosis; browse additional health-related educational materials; learn about resources for Veterans; and watch TV, movies and relaxation channels in high-definition. When a patient finishes viewing educational videos, the system automatically records their viewing history as well as their questions and comments into VistA and CPRS.

*A completely integrated, state-of-the-art system that allows for computer aided digital imaging and onsite milling for crowns, bridges, and other restorative work all in one appointment.*

Service  
Experience

# Taking Care of Returning Soldiers

## OEF/OIF/OND

OGJVAMC's Operation Enduring Freedom/Operation Iraqi Freedom/Operation New Dawn (OEF/OIF/OND) program has been active for more than seven years.

The OEF/OIF/OND team works in conjunction with the Escanaba Vet Center and other VA offices to reach out to military personnel returning from operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, and assisting them in making a seamless transition back to their family and communities and to VA health care.

The team provides important benefit and enrollment information regarding VA health care to Veterans returning to OGJVAMC's geographic area. They help combat Veterans reintegrate into their communities and civilian life.

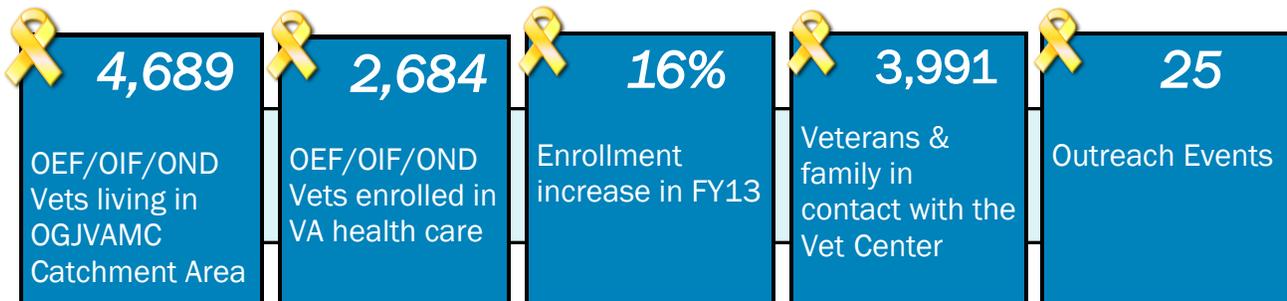
The team's other responsibilities include coordinating the continuity of ambulatory and inpatient care upon discharge or transfer from military hospitals and assessing all newly enrolled OEF/OIF/OND Veterans for community resource needs and care management.

## Escanaba Vet Center

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 combat Veterans and Veterans who have been victims of military sexual trauma 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 VA health provider for such things as medication management.

Service Experience



## Welcome Home for the 1432nd Eng. Co.

OGJVAMC hosted the Michigan Army National Guard's 1432nd Engineering Company during their drill weekend of September 7-8, providing medical appointments to establish care for the soldiers within the VA health care system. The Kingsford-based unit returned last March from a combat tour in Afghanistan.

Soldiers also attended presentations by VA staff on how being in a combat theater impacts soldiers as well as the full range of services provided by the medical center.

"The benefit of hosting these units on the weekend is that it alleviates the need for soldiers to take time off from work or school to come to the VA for a medical appointment," said Kathy Truax, OEF/OIF/OND Program Coordinator.

Held in conjunction with the visit by the 1432nd was OGJVAMC's annual "Welcome Home" VA health and benefit fair, which was open to all Veterans, their families and the general public on both



days. The event featured information booths with medical center staff, Veteran Service Officers, the VA Vet Center and other reps on hand to discuss VA health care and other benefits, such as VA home loans, education benefits and federal employment opportunities.

This was the second time OGJVAMC opened its doors on a weekend to accommodate a National Guard unit returning from combat. The 1430th Eng. Co. was hosted in March 2012.



*"The benefit of hosting these units on the weekend is that it alleviates the need for soldiers to take time off from work or school to come to the VA for a medical appointment."*

*~ Kathy Truax, OEF/OIF/OND Program Coordinator*

Service  
Experience

## Expanding Rural Mental Health Services

# Service Experience

OGJVAMC is making an impact with the Enhanced Rural Access Network for Growth Enhancement (E-RANGE) program for rural Veterans diagnosed with serious mental illness. These Veterans are those that traditionally have been underserved, had historically high psychiatric hospitalizations, and/or been (or at risk of being) homeless.

E-RANGE services are carried out by small teams of RN's and Master's Licensed Social Workers (LMSW) who provide intensive case management for these Veterans. There are currently 57 Veterans in the program. They are put on an intensive follow up and medication management schedule to stabilize their conditions and improve daily functioning. The E-RANGE teams also assist Veterans with coordination of medical care, transportation, housing, shopping, employment, recreational endeavors, and re-engaging them with their family.

E-RANGE was established in 2010 at the Manistique, MI VA Rural Outreach Clinic. In the last two years, the program expanded with the much needed addition of two teams located at the Outpatient Clinics in Rhinelander, WI and Hancock, MI.

At the longest running program at Manistique, the services E-RANGE provides have decreased psychiatric hospitaliza-

tions, by 70 percent and medical hospitalizations by 57 percent. Suicidal behaviors and substance abuse also decreased significantly.

### Manistique

Covering seven counties in Michigan's eastern Upper Peninsula, the Manistique team serves 19 Veterans. In 2013, a Social Skills Training Group was established to teach

effective social and communication skills and has significantly improved the Veterans' interaction in the community. Also, three Veterans graduated from the program into independent stable lives.

### Rhinelander

The Rhinelander team serves 19 Veterans in northern Wisconsin and Michigan's western Upper Peninsula. Social Skills Training Groups are established and conducted in the Veterans' homes on a rotating basis, providing a more personal way to interact and practice social skills.

### Hancock

The Hancock team serves 19 Veterans in the central region of the Michigan's Upper Peninsula. The team has establish weekly group outings with the Veterans, such as bowling, fishing, lunch, and county fairs in order to get them into the community and interact socially.

*The services E-RANGE provides have significantly decreased psychiatric hospitalizations, suicidal behaviors and substance abuse.*

# Overcoming Transportation Barriers

OGJVAMC’s Veterans Transportation Service (VTS) is designed to overcome barriers to accessing VA health care by increasing transportation resources and options. This not only includes VA owned resources but those from Veteran Service Organizations and community transportation services as well. While this free service is available to all Veterans, it is particularly targeted for Veterans who are visually impaired, elderly, or immobilized due to disease or disability, and those living in rural and highly rural areas.

Currently, the VTS program at OGJVAMC consists of two 16 passenger vans accommodating oxygen tanks and up to three wheel chairs each; seven van routes operated by volunteers from the Disabled American Veterans (DAV); and one coach bus for bi-weekly trips to Milwaukee VAMC for specialty care treatment.

Each VA bus carries a Certified Nursing Assistant to provide care to Veterans as necessary.

“As the VTS program continues into the third year of operations, its value to Veterans is undeniable,” said Isaac Armstrong, OGJVAMC VTS Coordinator. “Strong relations with the DAV program, community resources, and other VTS sites have allowed us to facilitate thousands of rides for Veterans who otherwise would not have had access to health care. We are honored and humbled to provide the service; eagerly looking forward to the future.”

*Once scheduled for a medical appointment, Veterans needing transportation should call the VTS Coordinator at 1-800-215-8262, extension 33849 to set up travel arrangements (on a first come-first serve basis) or to be referred to the most efficient means of travel from their location.*



## Reaching out to Vets and Stakeholders

OGJVAMC leadership determined that outreach to Veterans and partner stakeholders would be a FY2013 strategic initiative. To accomplish this, two multidisciplinary Outreach Teams were chartered: one team to reach out to Veterans and their families, and a second team to reach out to regional hospitals that provide non-VA care to VHA-enrolled Veterans.

### **Veteran Outreach Team**

The Veteran Outreach Team was chartered to increase awareness of benefits and services, promote VA's high quality of care, receive feedback on Veteran's needs and services, and address access gaps. The team included representatives from Nursing, Behavioral Health, Women's Health, Patient Administrative Service, and Public Affairs.

Working with local Veteran Service Officers, Veteran service organizations, and tribal and community representatives, the Outreach Team coordinated and participated in 25 outreach events in FY2013, including nine at area tribal nations, with a potential outreach to over 2,200 people. These events included 13 health benefit fairs, six OGJVAMC-hosted Veteran Town Halls,



and six presentations to community and Veteran organizational stakeholders.

### **Clinical Outreach Team**

The Clinical Outreach Team was chartered to address the problems of disjointed coordination of care and lack of understanding of VA terminology and procedures with various regional hospitals. These problems resulted in extended stays beyond patient stabilization, increasing cost to the Veterans.

The team is comprised of representatives from Nursing, Utilization Management, Non-VA Care Coordination, and Patient Administrative Service. They developed a presentation that described VHA services, legal authorities, eligibility requirements, definitions of key terms, and procedures for coordinating care with the VA. It also provided scenarios to illustrate proper coordination of care. In FY2013, the team made presentations to key staff at 12 regional hospitals with notable decreases from FY2012 to present in aggregate Bed Days of Care at non-VA facilities (from 542 days to 168 days per month) and average cost per non-VA hospital stay (from \$8,213 to \$6,039).

***Working with local Veteran Service Officers, Veteran service organizations, and tribal and community representatives, the Outreach Team coordinated and participated in 25 outreach events in FY2013.***

## Ending Veteran Homelessness

Progress is being made towards VA's goal to end Veteran homelessness by 2015. Nationwide, Veteran homelessness has dropped by 23 percent in 2013.

OGJVAMC's **Health Care for Homeless Veterans (HCHV)** program staff provides services and continuum of care for homeless and at-risk Veterans, including outreach, behavioral health assessment, case management, and referrals for medical and mental health care. HCHV staff had contact with 252 Veterans in 2013.

### Housing Assistance

Since 2011, OGJVAMC has partnered with the Great Lakes Residential Recovery Center, located in Marquette, Michigan, to provide contract transitional housing services to homeless Veterans. The HCHV program also assists Veterans with obtaining and maintaining independent living within the community. The VA, in partnership

with the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), provides vouchers to subsidize rental housing for homeless Veterans and their immediate families.

### National Veteran Homeless Call Center

The VA established the National Call Center for Homeless Veterans hotline to ensure that homeless Veterans or Veterans at-risk for homelessness have free, 24/7 access to trained counselors.

OGJVAMC's HCHV staff addressed 83 crisis calls to the National Veteran Homeless Call Center.

*Homeless or at risk Veterans can call the National Call Center for Homeless Veterans at: 1-877-4AID-VET (1-877-424-3838).*

### Homeless or At Risk Veterans - 2013

- **10** using Contract Residential Housing
- **14** using HUD-VASH vouchers
- **89** homeless
- **107** at risk of homelessness.
- **83** called National Veteran Homeless Call Center

## OGJVAMC Hosts Mental Health Summit

Meeting the needs of Veterans and their families requires collaboration and partnership between VA, other federal agencies, and local communities.



As part of a national initiative to improve mental health care for Veterans, OGJVAMC hosted a Mental Health Summit on September 25, 2013.

Representatives from local human services agencies, hospitals, Congressional staff and Veteran Service Officers met and discussed topics such as engaging Veterans, coordinating mental health services and strengthening community collaborations.

The summit was also broadcast live via video conferencing at each of the seven VA community-based Outpatient Clinics.

***OGJVAMC's Health Care for Homeless Veterans Program addressed 83 crisis calls to the National Veteran Homeless Call Center.***

# OGJVAMC on the Air

Since December of 2011, OGJVAMC has partnered with WJNR Radio, 101.5 FM, and the local Dickinson County Veteran Service Officer (VSO) for a monthly live radio show called Veterans Information Hour. Hosted by long time radio personality Aaron Harper and VSO Chuck Lantz, the medical center has provided subject matter experts each month to talk about the various benefits and services on the one-hour, live broadcast. Both Aaron and Chuck, Viet Nam and Desert Storm Veterans respectively, are both users and strong supporters of OGJVAMC. Check out the 2013 guests and topics below.

# Partnerships



Executive Leadership Team



Military Sexual Trauma



Home & Community Based Care



Voluntary Service



Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation



Peer Support Groups



MyHealtheVet



Non-VA Care Coordination



Suicide Prevention



Veteran Homelessness, VA2K Walk & Health Fair, and Escanaba Vet Center.



*OGJVAMC partners with WJNR Radio, 101.5 FM, and the local Dickinson County Veteran Service Officer for a monthly live radio show called Veterans Information Hour.*

## Students Learn About VA Careers

For a second year OJVAMC hosted 180 high school juniors from the Kingsford and Iron Mountain High Schools May 21-22 for a tour of the medical center and a first-hand look at VA careers.

“The future of our medical center will someday be in the hands of the next generation,” said MaryAnne Gibler, the medical center’s EEO Program Manager. “I hope that the students who explored some of the career booths will consider taking the needed steps to make their future part of our future.”

After a welcome by medical center leadership and a facility tour, students attended two career booths of their choice, of the eight available, where they learned about two to three VA careers at each booth.

Students were exposed to a variety of professions ranging from social work, nursing, physician, rehabilitation medicine, engineering, law enforcement, human resources, biomedical technology and health care management. In all, 17 careers were available for students to explore.

In some of the sessions, students participated in hands-on demonstrations such



as installing an air tube with the latest technology or checking vitals of a fully computerized, life like patient mannequin.

“This was fantastic; even beyond the career opportunities the VA presented, they provided students with the opportunity to see what this facility does for our Veterans and community in general,” said Maryann Boddy, Principal of the Iron Mountain High School.

Lisa Hosie, a science teacher at Kingsford High School, was also impressed with the career presentations. “One student went to a career booth because his first choice was already full, but when he was done he was rethinking his career options,” said Hosie.

Thirty eight VA staff participated in VA Career Day giving students a tour of the medical center or showing students just what they do and what type of education was needed to accomplish their goals. Check out the WLUC TV6 story at: [http://www.uppermichiganssource.com/news/story.aspx?id=900418#.UZz\\_E0rNkYI](http://www.uppermichiganssource.com/news/story.aspx?id=900418#.UZz_E0rNkYI)



*“I hope that the students who explored some of the career booths will consider taking the needed steps to make their future part of our future.”*

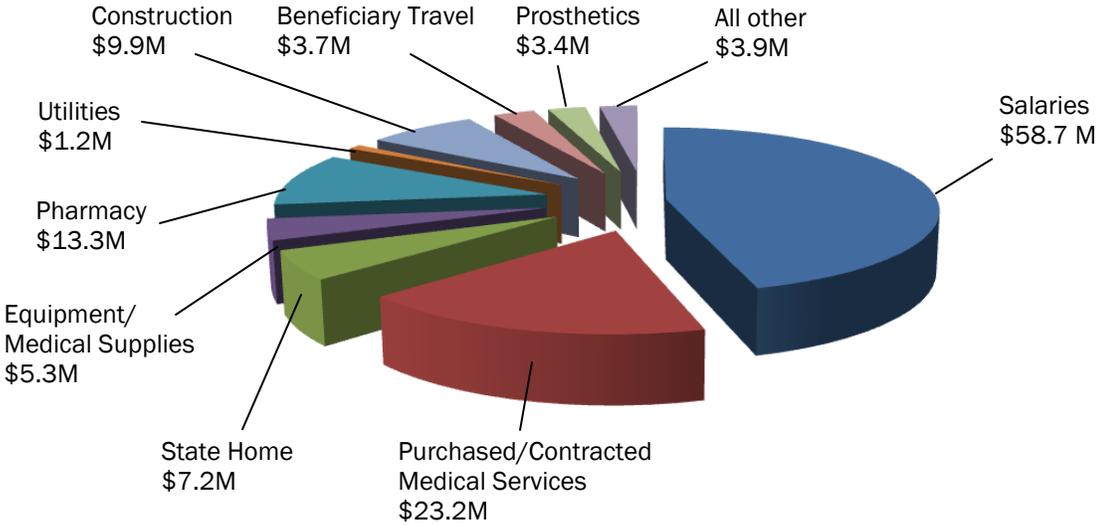
*~ MaryAnne Gibler, OJVAMC EEO Program Manager*

Partnerships

# Financial Summary

## Operating Expenditures

**\$129.8M** FY 2013 Operating Expenditures



## Construction Expenditures

**\$9,861,354** FY 2013 Construction Expenditures

- \$6,363,000** Renovate and expand Surgery.
- \$1,199,730** Upgrade and expand passenger elevator.
- \$2,204,778** Other construction projects to include new PT clinic in CLC, relocating Sleep Lab, and replacing Air Handling Units.
- \$ 93,846** Design drawings for nine FY13 and 14 projects to include renovating/expanding Surgery, Imaging, and 4th and 5th floors.

## Rural Health Expenditures

**\$1,784,467** FY 2013 Rural Health Initiatives

<b>\$134,037</b> Women's Rural Health Telehealth Pilot	<b>\$157,290</b> Clinic Pharmacy Specialist via Clinical Telehealth	<b>\$659,825</b> Mental Health E-RANGE Program	<b>\$304,400</b> Veterans Transportation Service	<b>\$129,457</b> Equipment for Rural CBOCs	<b>\$382,103</b> Coordinated Transitional Care (C-TraC) Program	<b>\$17,355</b> Training for Staff and Veterans
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# Home Grown Makeover<sup>2</sup>

## OGJVAMC holds 2nd annual Adopt-a-Garden Contest

OGJVAMC completed its 2nd annual Adopt-a-Garden contest, providing the facility with its very own home grown makeover. Garden areas around the facility were chosen in the spring by Services, departments and groups of employees, and they planted and faithfully tended the creative gardens throughout the summer. Gardens were judged by UW-Extension Master Gardener Volunteers from the local community. Awards were presented at the annual employee picnic. Regardless of the outcome of the contest, OGJVAMC experienced a very nice, colorful makeover that impressed Veterans, employees, the community, and the judges alike.



*“Our Adopt-a-Garden Contest allows our employees to showcase their ownership and pride in our medical center, and it is evidenced by how beautiful our grounds look.” ~ Jim Rice, Medical Center Director*

# 2013 Annual Report

## Oscar G. Johnson VA Medical Center

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Visit us online at [www.ironmountain.va.gov](http://www.ironmountain.va.gov) and follow us on:



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