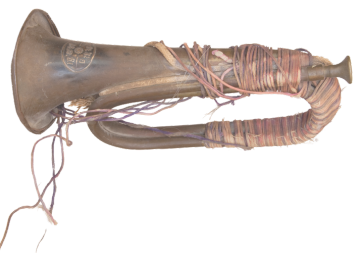
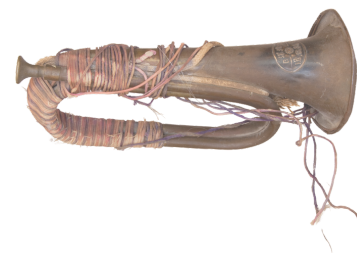


VA BEDFORD



BUGLE



FRANCES FRANKENBURG

PHYSICIAN

VA BEDFORD HELPS VETERANS KEEP THEIR COOL...AND THEIR FEET

"Diabetic lower limb amputation means death will not be far behind," cautioned Dr. Robert Riccitelli, Chief of Podiatry at the VA Bedford Healthcare System. He was referring to the alarming mortality rates after amputations, which can be over 50% five years later. To combat this threat, Dr. Riccitelli and his team launched an innovative remote temperature monitoring (RTM) clinic in summer 2022. The program provides Veterans with diabetes a smart mat to monitor their feet daily for potential infections.



By detecting subtle temperature changes signaling infection weeks earlier than normal, the easy-to-use mats produced by Podometrics allow podiatrists to intervene quickly. "The mat allows us to be there always!" said Dr. Riccitelli.

Early results from fiscal year 2023 show the clinic is saving lives and limbs. Hospital admissions for diabetic foot infections dropped 50% and total costs fell 76.9% compared to the previous year, resulting in over \$1.1 million in savings. So far 136 Veterans are enrolled in the Bedford VA's clinic, with goals to expand enrollment. Prolonging Veterans' mobility and lifespan motivates Dr. Riccitelli: "We can be there and we can help prolong life. That works for me!"

Nationwide, the VA has realized over \$60 million in savings through RTM clinics like the one established by Dr. Riccitelli. Preventing lower limb amputations is crucial for Veterans with diabetes, as they can dramatically decrease life expectancy.

Bedford Bugle | Issue 2 | Mar '24

LOCAL KIDS SEND HEARTFELT CHEER TO VETERANS THROUGH VALENTINE'S CARDS



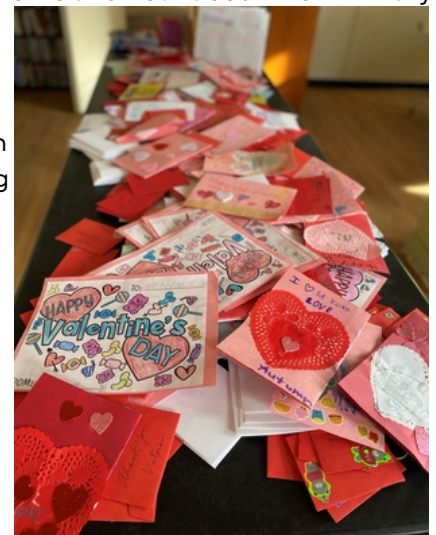
Local Kids Send Heartfelt Cheer to Veterans Through Valentine's Cards Yesterday, February 14th, VA Bedford HCS hosted its annual National Salute to Veteran Patients event. This national event is held every year during Valentine's week to pay tribute to Veterans cared for at VA medical facilities across the country.

At VA Bedford, the highlight of the National Salute was when the hospital's executive leadership team and CDCE staff hand-delivered Valentine's Day cards made by students from local schools to Veteran patients. Thousands of cards were brought in to be distributed.

The cards were delivered throughout the hospital to Veterans in different wings and floors. Hospital staff guided the delivery as they went room to room, taking time to have thoughtful conversations with patients and hear about their military service.

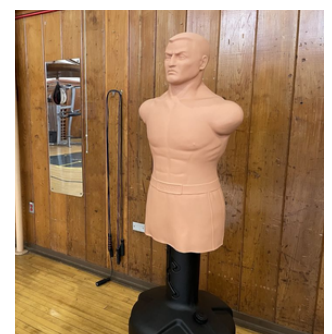
Many Veterans were deeply moved by the handmade cards and expressed sincere gratitude for the students' efforts. One veteran said, "It means the world to us that these young kids took the time to make these cards just for us."

Though the students were not able to visit in person, their cards and messages still illustrated the importance of community members taking small actions to show Veterans that their service and sacrifices are valued. Both the students and the Veterans were enriched by the intergenerational connections made through this simple act of appreciation.



Attention Veterans - our gym at VA Bedford Healthcare System just got a bit better! We've added a brand new training tool for you to utilize during your workouts.

Thanks to the generous donation from VFW Witch City Post 1524, we now have a BOB XL mannequin in our gym. This life-like training tool provides a great opportunity to practice your boxing and martial arts skills.



NEWS

BEDFORD VA IMPROVES WHEELCHAIR SAFETY WITH NEW LABELING SYSTEM

BEDFORD, MA - A potentially dangerous situation uncovered in October 2022 sparked a major patient safety initiative at the VA Bedford Healthcare System. Staff discovered a veteran improperly leaving the facility in a wheelchair without secure tie-down brackets, putting him at risk during transportation. This alarming incident led occupational therapy supervisor Kathleen Ross and her team to rapidly inspect every wheelchair on campus. "It was identified that a veteran was leaving for an appointment in a wheelchair unsafe for travel," Ross said. "Upon observation staff determined the veteran could not use their wheelchair, as it did not have the appropriate transit system feature." Over the next two weeks, Ross and staff placed colored duct tape labels on all wheelchairs - red meant not transit safe, while green indicated the chair had the proper secure brackets for transport. They also immediately purchased new compliant chairs for the campus' community living center, for use if a Veteran's personal chair is not safe for travel.



"The duct tape labels were an acceptable interim safety approach, but a long-term plan was needed," Ross said. She partnered with facility sign shop team member Scott McLaughlan to create permanent wheelchair labels. As of February 2024, every wheelchair on campus now has a laminated label clearly showing if it is approved for patient transit.

This improvement came just in time. In 2021, a report found over 100 patient transport accidents nationwide involving poorly secured wheelchairs. The innovative labeling system is now being shared as a best practice with VA facilities across New England. "Our goal is for other VA's to learn about Bedford's



initiative to identify this important wheelchair safety feature and hopefully consider implementing it," Ross said.

"We are proud of the fast action our team took to ensure a safety gap was addressed," said Ellen O'Neil, Chief, Sensory and Physical Rehabilitation Service. "Thanks to their commitment to Veteran care, and excellent collaboration with other services, we have a robust system in place that will prevent accidents and give our veterans freedom to access outside care safely."



Anna Barker, a Senior Project Manager at CHOIR, led a team for Winter Walk Boston 2024, a two-mile walking fundraiser held on February 11 to end homelessness in Boston. Barker's team raised \$1,185—more than double its \$500-goal! All funds will go to support the organizations and programs that address the problems of our neighbors, many of them Veterans, experiencing homelessness. Post-doctoral fellow Lauren Kearney, inspired by Barker's team, led a Boston Medical Center team of her own.

Karen LaFrazia, CEO of St. Francis House, mentioned in this Boston Herald event recap, "You couldn't tell who was homeless, who is homeless, who once was homeless. And I think it just really speaks to once we invest in people, and people can get out of the circumstance that they're in, homelessness is just an experience. It's not your identity and people just move on and just become neighbors." "That's why we walk," said Barker, referring to the quote.

[Photo caption] Walkers left to right: Kailyn Sitter, Shawn Dunlap (extra points for riding his bike to the event!), Justeen Hyde, Anna Barker and husband, Eileen Dryden and children, Gemmae Fix (in front of Eileen), Renda Wiener, Keith McInnes, and Rani Elwy – whose husband kindly took the photo and whose bernedoodle, Flo, became a favorite Dog of the Winter Walk.

Not pictured are the additional generous donors: Adena Cohen-Bearak, Jackie Pendergast, Beth Ann Petrakis, Elle Pope, Sonia Rucic, and an anonymous donor.

UPCOMING EVENTS

The VA Bedford Outreach Team will be present at the following upcoming community events.

3/8
FRI

RED, WHITE, AND BLUE BRUNCH FOR WOMEN VETERANS

To kick off women's history month, Veterans Northeast Outreach Center is hosting a brunch for local women Veterans at their Haverhill location 8:30am-10am

4/6
SAT

STRONGWATER FARMS SALUTES

A Veteran resource fair hosted on at the Strongwater Farm Therapeutic Equestrian Center, Perley Arena from 10am-2pm

4/6
SAT

U.S. COAST GUARD ALL HANDS

The VBA Boston Regional Office and VA Bedford Outreach Teams join forces to educated the Servicemen and women of the Coast Guard Reserve about VA healthcare and benefits they may be entitled to.

4/27
SAT*

WOMEN VETERANS EGNAGE CONFERENCE

A Women Veterans Alliance event **Hosted by VA Bedford***. A Professional conference and networking event for women Veterans, Service Members and supporters.

4/27
SAT

VNEOC 3RD ANNUAL CAR SHOW

The Outdoor Expo is a new event expecting to draw outdoor enthusiast from all over New England. Outreach Teams from across the VISN come together to support what is expected to be an epic outreach event

4/27
&
4/28

THE BOSTON OUTDOOR EXPO

The Outdoor Expo is a new event expecting to draw outdoor enthusiast from all over New England. Outreach Teams from across the VISN come together to support what is expected to be an epic outreach event

5/4
SAT

16TH ANNUAL WOMEN VETERANS NETWORK CONFERENCE

In keeping with tradition, Massachusetts Women Veterans Network will hold their 16th Annual Conference at the Double Tree by Hilton in Leominster. Vendors galore, amazing speakers, and most of all networking and comradery.

5/18
&
5/19

BEVERLY WARRIOR WEEKEND

VA Bedford Toxic Exposure Team will be onsite to provide **Toxic Exposure Screenings** as part of the **PACT Act**. Several members of our Outreach Team will be present to highlight the programs and services as well.

VETERANS CAN BEGIN THE HEALTHCARE ENROLLMENT PROCESS WITH A MEMBER OF OUR TEAM!

Have questions? Email our Outreach Program Manager for more details.

VABedOutreach@va.gov

VA Healthcare Enrollment & ID Cards



If you served in any branch of the military, during any era, you may be entitled to VA healthcare.

Receive no to low-cost healthcare which includes immunizations, eye glasses, hearing aids, imaging, annual exams and more!



Bring you DD214 (proof of military service), photo ID, and financial earnings / deductions for the previous tax year.

This is a walk-in clinic and services are offered to Veterans on a first come first serve basis.

***Days and times are subject to change**



2nd Tuesday, 9:30 a.m.-2 p.m.*
Lynn VA Clinic
225 Boston St, Suite 107



2nd Wednesday, 9:30 a.m.-2 p.m.*
Haverhill VA Clinic
215 Summer St.



2nd Thursday, 9:30 a.m.-2 p.m.*
Gloucester VA Clinic
199 Main St.



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Veterans Health Administration
Bedford Healthcare System

For information call 781-687-3348 or email VABedOutreach@va.gov

VA Bedford Community Recovery Connections Team creates and supports Veteran social networks in Bedford, on the North Shore, Merrimack Valley, and surrounding areas. We are Veterans in recovery; we offer guidance and bridging developed through our own lived experience.

Veteran's Crisis Line

- Veterans Crisis Line has a new number—Dial 988 then Press 1
- If you are experiencing anxiety or other symptoms, the Veterans Crisis Line is always available. Options are available to talk, text, or chat.
- Call 988 then press 1
- Send a text message to 838255
- Confidential online chat session Veterans Crisis Line The 10-digit number is still available: 1-800-273-8255, press 1



Upcoming Events

Saturday May 18th: National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) greater Boston walk

come Walk with us in May:

<https://namimass.org/nami-walks-massachusetts/>



Connect with us

Jason, Peer Specialist, (C) 781.506.3118
Jeremy, Peer Specialist, (C) 339.234.3990



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Veterans Health Administration
Bedford Healthcare System

WEEKLY VETERAN COFFEE SOCIALS

Tewksbury <i>Tuesdays</i> 10 – 11 AM Tewksbury Senior Center 175 Chandler St	Devens <i>Tuesdays</i> 8 – 9:30 AM Clear Path for Veterans NE 84 Antietam St.
Auburn <i>Tuesdays</i> 7 – 8 PM Dunkin Donuts 386 Southbridge St.	N. Chelmsford <i>Tuesdays</i> 9:30 – 11 AM American Legion 90 Groton Rd.
Bedford <i>Thursdays</i> 7:30 – 9 AM VA Bedford Patriot Canteen, 200 Springs Rd.	Haverhill <i>Thursdays</i> 8 – 10 AM Veteran's NE Outreach Ctr 10 Reed St.
Danvers <i>Thursdays</i> 9 – 10:30 AM Senior Center 25 Stone St.	Devens <i>Thursdays</i> 11 AM – 2 PM Clear Path for Veterans NE 84 Antietam St. (Lunch Social)
Billerica <i>Fridays</i> 9:30 – 11 AM High Octane Harley 1 Chelmsford Rd.	Gloucester <i>Fridays</i> 8:30 – 10 AM Gloucester Veteran Services 12 Emerson Ave.
Rockport <i>Saturdays</i> 8 – 10 AM American Legion Post 98 32 Beach St	Manchester-by-the-Sea <i>Saturdays</i> , 8:30 – 10 AM American Legion Post 113 14 Church St.

Emergency Care Notification Hotline

In the event you visit an Emergency Room outside of the VA, you must contact this number within 72 hours in order for the VA to assume financial responsibility. Check your eligibility below.



Phone: 844-724-7842

Connect with a Bedford Peer

Peer support specialists are Veterans that are actively in recovery from a mental health or substance use diagnosis. We promote recovery by sharing our own story, providing encouragement, instilling hope, and teaching skills to veterans. We are trained to use our own experiences as well as other recovery tools to help other veterans Identify and achieve their own goals in recovery.
please call Jessica at 781 687 2864.



Find your VSO

Every city and town in Massachusetts has a Veterans' Service Officer. VSOs deliver essential services to eligible veterans and their dependents. Some roles of VSOs include:
Outreach services
Offering referrals to programs and services
Taking applications for state veterans' benefits
Helping veterans access employment assistance



Veteran's North East Outreach Center (VNEOC)

Veterans Northeast Outreach Center, a registered 501 (c)(3) non-profit based in Haverhill, MA; serving Essex, Middlesex and Barnstable Counties (MA) and Rockingham and Hillsborough Counties (NH). We assist Veterans with basic food and shelter needs, housing, advocacy, social engagement, community activities, case management, and VA benefits & claims assistance.

Scan the QR code to be brought to VNEOC's homepage



Clear Path for Veterans New England (CP4VNE)

We provide support through a wellness-based Veterans community center to bolster those who served, with a particular emphasis on reconnecting Veterans to their communities upon their return home. By reducing barriers, Clear Path New England will connect Veterans and their families to both existing and new programs offered within our facility
Scan the QR code to be brought to



Outpatient Recreation Therapy & Fitness Center Calendar-March 2024

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Fitness Center Hours:	26	27	28	29	01 11AM Fitness Class 12PM Half Court B-Ball 2PM Darts 4PM Bocchia	02 10AM Weight Lifting 1PM Bocchia 2PM Pickleball
Sunday Closed	04 11AM Indoor Rowing 2PM Ping Pong 4PM Cornhole	05 11AM Fitness Class 12PM Half Court B-Ball 2PM Pickleball	06 11AM F/M Fitness Class 12:15PM Horse Farm 2PM Pickleball Clinic 4PM Bocchia	07 10:45AM Horse Farm 11AM Fitness Class 2PM Seated Tai Chi 2PM Cornhole 4PM Pickleball	08 11AM Fitness Class 12PM Half Court B-Ball 2PM Badminton 4PM Ping Pong	09 10AM Weight Lifting 1PM Bocchia 2PM Pickleball
Monday-Friday 8AM- 6PM	11 11AM Indoor Rowing 2PM Ping Pong 4PM Cornhole	12 11AM Fitness Class 12PM Half Court B-Ball 2PM Pickleball	13 11AM F/M Fitness Class 12:15PM Horse Farm 2PM Pickleball Clinic 4PM Ping Pong	14 10:45AM Horse Farm 11AM Fitness Class 2PM Seated Tai Chi 2PM Cornhole 4PM Pickleball	15 11AM Fitness Class 12PM Half Court B-Ball 2PM Darts 4PM Bocchia	16 10AM Weight Lifting 1PM Bocchia 2PM Pickleball
Saturday 7:30AM-4PM	18 11AM Indoor Rowing 2PM Ping Pong 4PM Cornhole	19 11AM Fitness Class 12PM Half Court B-Ball 2PM Pickleball	20 11AM F/M Fitness Class 2PM Pickleball Clinic 4PM Bocchia	21 11AM Fitness Class 2PM Seated Tai Chi 2PM Cornhole 4PM Pickleball	22 11AM Fitness Class 12PM Half Court B-Ball 2PM Badminton 4PM Ping Pong	23 10AM Weight Lifting 1PM Bocchia 2PM Pickleball
Fitness Center: 781-687-2118	25 11AM Indoor Rowing 2PM Ping Pong 4PM Cornhole	26 11AM Fitness Class 12PM Half Court B-Ball 2PM Pickleball	27 11AM F/M Fitness Class 2PM Pickleball Clinic 4PM Ping Pong	28 11AM Fitness Class 2PM Seated Tai Chi 2PM Cornhole 4PM Pickleball	29 11AM Fitness Class 12PM Half Court B-Ball 2PM Darts 4PM Bocchia	30 10AM Weight Lifting 1PM Bocchia 2PM Pickleball

To participate in programs, you will require a "Recreation Therapy and Fitness Center Outpt." consult from your VA primary care provider.

**SEATED
TAI CHI**

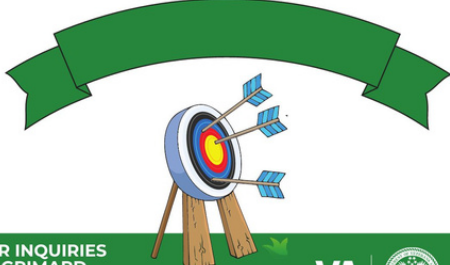


Registration or Inquiries
Contact: Ben Cayes
Phone: 781-687-4221
Email: Benjamin.Cayes@va.gov




U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Veterans Health Administration
Bedford Healthcare System

ARCHERY PROGRAM



REGISTRATION OR INQUIRIES
CONTACT: JOE GRIMARD
P: 781-687-3043
Email: Joseph.Grimard@VA.gov

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Veterans Health Administration
Bedford Healthcare System

**Beginner Fitness
CLASSES**

FITNESS CLASS
TUESDAY'S, THURSDAY'S &
FRIDAY'S - 11AM

FLEXIBILITY & MOBILITY CLASS
WEDNESDAY'S - 11AM

JOIN TODAY!!

Fitness Center, Bldg. 82
200 Springs Road
Bedford, MA 01908

Registration or Inquiries
contact: Ben Cayes:
781-687-4221




PICKUP

BASKETBALL
HALF COURT



VA

**TUESDAY'S & FRIDAY'S
12PM**

LOCATED IN THE FITNESS CENTER
BUILDING 82, 200 SPRINGS ROAD,
BEDFORD, MA



For more information contact the
Fitness Center-781-687-2118

For more information contact the Fitness Center
781-687-2118

<https://www.va.gov/bedford-health-care/health-services/#other-services>

VA



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Veterans Health Administration
Bedford Healthcare System

WALK IN WEDNESDAY!

JOIN OUR TEAM

CALLING ALL NURSES!



RN: \$20,000 | LPN: \$13,500 | NA: \$7,000

Two-year commitment to working inpatient at VA Bedford



Mar 13 & Mar 27



11:00am - 2:00pm



Building 1 lobby
200 Springs Rd.
Bedford, Ma

FOR INFO



781-687-3948



Jennifer.lewis3@va.gov



Seeking: RN's LPN's NA's On the spot interviews!



MONTHLY VETERAN EMPLOYMENT NEWSLETTER

From the Desk of...

Steve Wentzell, LICSW/USAF/USA

The VA Bedford Health Care System Email: stephen.wentzell@va.gov

Community Employment Coordinator

781-885-8538



March 2024 Job Fairs

Job Fair - MassHire MVCC & NECC
Monday, March 4, 2024
10:00 AM - 1:00 PM
Lawrence Career Center
978-722-7000

Recruitment - Lowell Com Health
Tuesday, March 5, 2024
10:00 AM - 12:00 PM
Lowell Career Center
978-458-2503

Recruitment - TJX
Tuesday, March 5, 2024
12:00 PM
Boston Career Center
617-541-1421

Recruitment - MBTA
Wednesday, March 6, 2024
10:00 AM - 11:30 AM
Boston Career Center
617-541-1421

Recruitment - Boston Scientific
Wednesday, March 6, 2024
1:00 PM - 3:00 PM
Quincy Career Center
617-745-4000

DYS Recruitment Event
Thursday, March 7, 2024
10:00 AM - 3:00 PM
Salem Career Center
978-825-7231

Recruitment - USPS
Tuesday, March 12, 2024
9:00 AM - 11:00 AM
Haverhill Career Center
978-519-3762

Recruitment - EOVS
Tuesday, March 12, 2024
10:00 AM - 12:00 PM
Boston Career Center
617-541-1421

Info Session - IRS
Wednesday, March 13, 2024
10:00 AM
Lawrence Career Center
978-722-7000
Virtual Meeting

March 2024 Woburn Job Fair
Wednesday, March 13, 2024
10:00 AM - 12:00 PM
Woburn Career Center
781-932-5500

TSA Recruitment
Thursday, March 14, 2024
10:00 AM - 2:00 PM
Cambridge Career Center
617-661-7867

CORI-Friendly Job Fair
Thursday, March 14, 2024
1:00 PM - 3:00 PM
Taunton Career Center
508-730-5001

Job Fair - Multi-Industry
Friday, March 15, 2024
10:00 AM - 12:00 PM
Worcester Career Center
508-799-1600

Recruitment - TSA
Tuesday, March 19, 2024
11:00 AM - 1:00 PM
Lawrence Career Center
978-722-7000

Job Fair - Nashoba Valley
Tuesday, March 26, 2024
10:00 AM
Leominster Career Center
978-534-1481

Recruitment - Van Pool
Tuesday, March 26, 2024
1:00 PM
Framingham Career Center
508-861-7993

Recruitment - LRTA Road Runner
Thursday, March 28, 2024
10:00 AM - 12:00 PM
Lowell Career Center
978-458-2503

Recruitment - MBTA
Wednesday, April 3, 2024
10:00 AM - 11:30 AM
Boston Career Center
617-541-1421

**Please see job fair
flyers below on some
of the Job Fairs.**

NOTE:
**All Job Fairs are
In-Person unless
specified**

IN THE NEWS

Interested in working for the Federal Government?
The Bedford VA Hospital has immediate openings in the following Career fields:

- Licensed Practical Nurse
- Certified Nursing Assistant
- Housekeeping Aid
- Registered Nurse
- Food Service Worker
- Medical Records Tech
- Secretary

To view more job openings, please go to [USAJOBS.gov](https://www.usajobs.gov)

Spotlighted Community Partner

THE NORTHEAST EMPLOYMENT COLABORATIVE

**Know somebody with a disability
having difficulty finding
employment? Perhaps the
NorthEast Employment
Collaborative can help!**

The NorthEast Employment Collaborative – an initiative of Riverside Community Care, funded by the Department of Developmental Services and the Department of Mental Health – is a vibrant partnership between service providers, government agencies, workforce development organizations and employers. We are all focused on one common goal – increasing employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities, by connecting this largely untapped market of qualified job candidates with employers across northeastern Massachusetts.

We connect our service providers with over 250 Employer Partners in Massachusetts that are committed to diversifying their workforce and building equity and inclusion into their hiring practices. These employers have a proven record of developing training programs and work opportunities – and in 2023, we collaborated to place over 1,000 individuals with disabilities into jobs!

Contact Us To Learn More
Christine Marshall-Bradley (she/her/hers)
Project Coordinator/Employer Liaison
NorthEast Employment Collaborative
Riverside Community Care
cmarshallbradley@riversideecc.org
Cell: (781)915-7583

**Collaborating for Disability Inclusion in the Workforce;
Employers & Provider Agencies & Community Partners**