Dear Boise VA Staff -

My name is Barbara Cusick. For the last nine years I have walked every day with my dog, Tulle, on the V.A. campus. I'm an artist, both in clay and watercolor painting. I started making small hearts out of clay for Veterans years ago. Every day I would put a few in my pocket and hand them out to veterans as well as anyone who I thought would be cheered by my little gift. As a result, with Tulle's help, I ended up being gifted myself with all of the touching conversations that ensued from my little heart gifts.

When the Corona virus came to our city, I decided to make one little “thank you” heart for each and every employee who helps keep the V.A. working. That includes everyone....from Chief of staff to all
the health care, maintenance, security, contract workers, grounds keepers; everyone!

I started making the hearts in March, cutting them out, sculpting and pressing the letters “thank you” all individually by hand. I ended up using all of my 25 pounds of red clay at 1,200 and could not go to Seattle for more of that clay because we could not take the chance of traveling. You see, my husband who is a veteran, has Gullain Barré which puts him on the extreme category for contracting COVID19. So, the last 300 were made with a white clay. No matter the color, they were all made with love and gratitude.

It took me about 3 months to complete this project, working on my little coffee table with tools and clay scattered everywhere. I thank Joe, my husband, for being patient. I’m grateful for the chance to show my gratitude and also thankful for staying busy while Joe and I were basically being self quarantined the last five full months (and counting) now. It gave me a loving purpose.

I’m hoping they will be received with the same amount of love that went into making them. They are made small so that they can reside in a pocket for good luck. I put a hole in each one in case they want to put it on a chain.

If you have ever noticed the lady with the big white dog walking every day, no matter the weather, that’s me and Tullee of course.

Thank you for what you do!

- Barbara

The hearts from Mrs. Cusick will be delivered to staff this week. Please receive and care for these mementos with the same respect that went into making them. And be sure to thank Barbara and Tullee if you see them walking on campus!
Hello's

The Boise VAMC would like to welcome our new employees who came aboard:

CANDIS DURRANT
ELIZABETH BALLEWEG
JULIA PARKER
JONATHAN SHECTMAN
TANYA WATFORD
OLGA LUTZ
JEAN KUTY
COREY ROARK
ABBY FENTON
VINCENT SAMARES
MICHAELLE SWENSEN
MELANIE DRAKE

DEREK MCGINNIS
HAILEY SMITH
MARK SCHAFFELD
TIFFANY HOPE
KATHERINE BOCHU
JENNIFER ANDERSON
CHARLES LEEDS
JOSEPH ROUT
JESSIE BROWN
KELLY FRANZ
RYANIFFAND
KATHERINE HOWARD

Goodbye's
The Boise VAMC would like to say goodbye to the employees who left us:

JOY VANDER LINDEN
MEGAN SIMENC
KRISTY MEYER
BRIAN GRIFFITHS
SANDRA FROELICH
EMILY WHALEN
KATHLEEN REED
SAVANNAH PROHL
JOHN CHAPMAN
MICHAEL HAMMES
SARAH GREEN
FRED REEVES
MARIHA GAGE
MAYRA BLANKENSHPH

JERM IMANI
PAMELA GARNER
JAY RADKE
WILLIAM MRAZ
WYNDI STEVENS-HILL
JARED BYBEE
DORIANNE EAVES
CARRIE ALBERS
ANTHONY RIECHE
CARRIE ALBERS
STEVEN HAHN
JULIA SUITTER
JOSIAH CHRISTENSEN
CELIA BAKER
EMPLOYEES OF THE MONTH  AUGUST

I would like to request some kind of nomination or recognition for Ashley Taylor, our Monday through Friday Day shift MSA on 2M. Ashley has put in CRAZY long overtime hours on a daily basis in the last several months. She often works 7am to midnight to cover, in addition to the extra days she works on the weekends outside her regular tour of duty, to say nothing of the time away from her family. She has been such a help to me personally as I've constantly been left with the hospital to myself on Mondays and Fridays when others call in. She has been a savior! She never complains, always has a good attitude and helps immensely when she is here. I think based on the sheer amount of hours she's put in, she ought to be rewarded with the benefits of Employee of the month. But the fact that she does her job well, and with smile are bonus reasons for deserving some recognition and reward. I know that her family struggles financially and that she is supporting them with these extra hours. I don't think a shout out is enough! I would LOVE to see her rewarded with some form of recognition or reward for all the help she's selflessly offered, and certainly the service it is to our Veterans.

Ashley Taylor

The recent transition for the MOVE program to broadcast using VA VIDEO CONNECT has taken a lot of time and management. James was instrumental in creating the BOI VVC MOVE! support group. The direct scheduling of this clinic and be performed by every clerk and he help make this scheduling easy and efficient. I appreciate all his hard work during this transition.

James Mahoney
CNA Shelly Vasser is an absolute asset to the Boise VAMC ICU! She provides exceptional patient care and goes above and beyond to support the nurses she works with. What impresses me most about Shelly is her strong work ethic, a willingness to get the job done, and her attention to detail. Shelly is never idle, she is always stocking, cleaning, organizing, and keeping the unit prepared for whatever may roll through the door. Shelly is also committed to serving our veteran population, often acting as an advocate for patient safety and always ensuring that our patients are clean, comfortable, and cared for. A specific example of this is how Shelly was able to shampoo, wash, plus style the hair of a patient who was sedated and on a ventilator, which is an incredible challenge given the number of tubes, wires, and monitoring equipment involved with a critically ill patient. I think this is a task that is often forgotten about due to the challenge and complexity involved with completing it. I’m proud to work with Shelly and believe she upholds our core values of Integrity, Commitment, Advocacy, Respect, and Excellence.

Born/raised Miami, Florida then HS in Sarasota, Florida. Free time spent restoring/maintaining vintage cars, minimal exercise and fishing on Snake River. Post Navy career spent time at jobs in Oak Ridge TN, Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Generation Plant then Daytona State College for 10 years as Adult Education Instructor (4 DSC campuses including Florida State prison).

Proudly serving our fellow Military Veteran’s @ BVAMC for 5 years. Worked Escort, CLC then MRI department past 3+ years. Because I have received my medical care past 24 years exclusively from the VA Healthcare System, I consider volunteerism a small effort on my part as payback for the FINEST healthcare available. The MRI Team, like all BVAMC departments, provides service to the patients with the fundamental practice that patient Privacy, Safety & Care are the priority, therefore the patient service model is consistent & understood by all and keeps me motivated to continue volunteering.
BOISE is HIGHEST RELIABLE

HRO PRINCIPLES & VALUES

August | National Safety Poster

Nurse Prevents Harm to Veteran by Speaking Up

Context: A Veteran was admitted to the Baltimore VA Medical Center for acute care. While preparing medications for the Veteran, Tinita Harvey, Intermittent Registered Nurse, noticed a pending prescription order on the inpatient’s medication profile. The order was not compatible with the admitting diagnosis and clinical report.

Action: Tinita shared her concerns with the attending physician who acknowledged an error was made when prescribing the medicine and thanked her for the good catch. By speaking up, Tinita saved her patient from receiving the wrong medication.

Results: High reliability organizations, like VHA, foster a culture that encourages and empowers staff to speak up without fear. If something does not seem right, it should be questioned. Tinita’s belief that upholding safety and her Commitment to Zero Harm was paramount in caring for her patient. Tinita believes it is a privilege to provide the best care to Veterans.

Theme of the Month: Commit to Zero Harm

An RN demonstrated her Commitment to Zero Harm by speaking up when she noticed an incorrect prescription.

“ It is a privilege to provide the best care for our Veterans. ”

Tinita Harvey, RN
Intermittent Registered Nurse
Baltimore VA Medical Center

VA U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

For more information, visit: $ http://bit.ly/HighReliability_sp
The following is a snapshot from the all staff virtual Town Hall meeting on August 7, 2020 where the staff members were invited to provide feedback on how we are Living Our ICARE Values during the Pandemic with focus on COMMITMENT.

The below word cloud is a summary of the staff responses to “What helps you embody COMMITMENT during the COVID Pandemic?” Note: the larger font indicates greater frequency of responses.

Big thanks to everyone who responded!
PLEASE WELCOME OUR NEW NURSE PRACTITIONER RESIDENTS

Elizabeth Balleweg, FNP-C
Julia Parker, AGNP-C
Jonathan Shectman, AGNP-C

2020 - 2021 NURSE PRACTITIONER RESIDENTS
Because of COVID-19 the Boise VA pharmacy is only filling urgent prescriptions at this time. All other prescriptions must be mailed.

To refill an urgent prescription in person, go to one of the four parking stalls designated for 'parking pick-up' in parking lot 21, across from the main entrance at Bldg. 85A between 9AM to 4PM.

While you are in the parking pick-up spot call the phone number (208) 422-1180 to speak with pharmacy staff, who will provide you with information & instructions.

Once your order is complete, a technician will bring your prescription to your car. Please have your ID ready to show pharmacy staff.

If all the pharmacy parking stalls are taken please come into the pharmacy to talk with pharmacy personnel as usual.

Please do not wait until stalls are empty as this will cause congestion and increased wait time.
Records Management is knowing what you have, where you have it, and how long you have to keep it.
Boise VA COVID-19 Response Highlight:  
Thank you to our Laboratory Team  
*
By Jeanette McMillan, Employee Engagement Committee

Our Boise VA lab team has been working around the clock to help answer everyone’s question, “When will I have my COVID-19 test results back?”

As of August 10, 2020, it has been 150 days since the first COVID-19 cases hit Idaho on March 13. Since March, our laboratory has been diligently working in response to COVID-19 with the State lab, FEMA, equipment improvements, and building community partnerships to increase the availability and speed of testing.

Between March 13 to April 1st, all testing was sent out of the hospital to the State Lab. FEMA has been proactive in granting extra resources to promote further testing, which has allowed the Boise VA to accelerate obtaining new equipment to keep up with the increasing testing demands.

By April 1st, the first testing inside the Boise VAMC with the Cepheid machine testing went live, which has test results back in approximately 50 minutes. The great part of this testing is you can start different samples at different times and run up to 48 tests at once. This testing was prioritized for patients being admitted in the hospital who were showing symptoms that could be related to COVID-19. Cepheid testing by Micro Lab can also run tests for COVID-19, MRSA, and flu.

By April 20th Thermo Fisher test went live at the Boise VAMC Research Lab, thanks to the great efforts of Dr. Ammons-Anderson. The Thermo Fisher test can run up to 94 samples at the same time, and results are generally available within 48 hours. Our logistics team has worked closely with lab to ensure we have enough supplies.

For COVID-19 testing, these tests have a 200 copies/mL limit of detection. There are different swabs utilized by the Boise VA, including nasopharyngeal swab (from inside nose to the back of the throat), a nasal swab (inside front of nose), and a throat swab.

This has significantly contributed to the VA’s Fourth Mission, helping our community. The Boise VA has established partnerships with the State Veterans Homes in Boise, Lewiston, Pocatello, Corrections Facilities and other Long-Term care facilities. Dr. Longnion also helped significantly with these community partnerships to establish the technology and scripting to print off a one-page report summary for each of the tests run out in the community. This is significant because not everyone tested is in CPRS, the Boise VA documentation system.

To date of July 28, our lab has run 3,457 COVID-19 samples: 1,443 on Cepheid and 2,014 on Thermo Fisher.

Thank you to our Lab Team for everything you are doing for the COVID-19 response! You have all done a phenomenal job of being proactive while facing the pandemic.
When we use the word "Snooping" it appears clear that this would be a Privacy Breach; as the word itself implies that we are getting into something that we shouldn’t. But what about if we use the word “looking”? Is looking into a medical record a Privacy Breach?

For example, if someone sees a neighbor come into the medical center and, out of curiosity, checks the patient’s record to see why they are seeing a doctor.

Or what about if something happens in the community, such as a car accident or shooting, and you look at patient records after watching the news to find out what happened?

Are those Privacy Breaches? - Yes.

Although such incidents may seem harmless, they still constitute privacy breaches, as you are not involved in the treatment or care of the individual. Even if you don’t do anything with the information, once it has been accessed, it is a breach.

Always remember that you should only be accessing information in the performance of your official job duties and assigned tasks, and that you should only be accessing the minimum necessary information.

If the above occurs a national privacy ticket is submitted, an investigation is completed and if National determines it to be an official privacy breach a report is sent up to the Director, Human Resources and the Employee’s Supervisor for possible disciplinary action.
## 2020 Boise VA Medical Center Drive-Thru Flu Clinics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Boise VA Medical Center</td>
<td>Sep. 21 to Oct. 16 (Mon - Fri)</td>
<td>9:00am - 3:00pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twin Falls CBOC</td>
<td>October 6, 7, 13, 14, 20, 21, 27, 28</td>
<td>9:00am - 3:00pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mtn. Home CBOC</td>
<td>October 14, 15, 16</td>
<td>9:00am - 3:00pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salmon CBOC</td>
<td>October 13, 16, 20</td>
<td>1:00pm - 3:30pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caldwell CBOC</td>
<td>October 5, 6, 8, 12, 13, 16, 19, 22, 26, 27, 30</td>
<td>9:00am - 3:30pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern Oregon CBOC</td>
<td>October 5, 9, 16</td>
<td>9:00am - 3:30pm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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**NEW THIS YEAR:** There will be no ‘walk-in flu clinics’ this year due to COVID. Get a flu vaccine during your scheduled VA appointment, or attend one of the drive-thru flu clinics being offered above. Please remember your VA ID card and clothes that help make your shoulder accessible.

*Clinic times are subject to change. Visit www.boise.va.gov for updated information.*
CHECK-IN BY TEXT

You are now able to check-in for your VA appointment by texting the VA that you have arrived with your smart phone.

To check-in for your VA appointment please text the word ‘HERE’ to 53079 and wait for a reply before entering.

If you don’t receive a text reply or if you have been waiting more than 5 minutes past your appointment time please call (208) 422-1499.