

The Southern Arizona VA Health Care System

# A Heroes

# Welcome



**SAVAHCS**

**VA**  
HEALTH  
CARE

Defining  
**EXCELLENCE**  
in the 21st Century

## DIRECTOR'S WELCOME

Welcome to the Southern Arizona VA Health Care System (SAVAHCS). We value your trust and confidence in us to provide you the highest quality Veteran Centered Care. We continually strive to improve our services by putting you, the Veteran, at the center of your care. This "Heroes Welcome" lists some of the services available to you and how to access them. It will also answer many commonly asked questions.

We encourage your comments and suggestions concerning your care. Your feedback helps us to continue meeting our mission of providing safe, effective, efficient and compassionate healthcare to Veterans. We wish you well and hope you have a complete and speedy recovery.



Jonathan H. Gardner, MPA, FACHE  
Director, Southern Arizona VA Health Care System

## INTRODUCTION

The Southern Arizona VA Health Care System (SAVAHCS) honors America's Veterans by providing exceptional health care that improves their health and well-being. We are committed to Veteran Centered Care by providing safe, effective, efficient and compassionate healthcare. Thank you for choosing the Southern Arizona VA Health Care System. We welcome the opportunity to serve and care for you.

SAVAHCS was dedicated in October of 1928, and is a teaching hospital that provides primary and subspecialty care in Medicine, Surgery, Geriatrics and Mental Health. SAVAHCS consists of facilities located in Tucson, Northwest Tucson, Southeast Tucson, Casa Grande, Green Valley, Sierra Vista, Safford and Yuma, Arizona. Comprehensive inpatient health care is provided in medicine, surgery, critical care, psychiatry, physical medicine, geriatrics, and substance abuse. Advanced rehabilitation is provided through the Community Living Center and the Southwestern Blind Rehabilitation Center. We offer many programs that are tailored to meet the unique needs of our Veterans. They include Spinal Cord Injury Program, returning combat Veterans program, Women Veterans Program, American Indian Health Coordination, amputee program, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder treatments, and an extensive array of mental health programs including services for homeless Veterans. In addition, we are the host site for various regional referral centers of excellence including the VISN 18 Polytrauma Network Site and the Southwestern Blind Rehabilitation Center.

SAVAHCS is the recipient of the 2012 Pioneer Award from the Arizona Quality Alliance, the 2012 VA Secretary Award for Nursing Excellence, Director's Category, the 2012 Office of Nursing Service Annual Innovation Award and the 2011 Robert W. Carey Performance Excellence Award. Other awards and recognitions include the 2012 VISN 18 Best Practice Award, 2010 VHA Office of Information and Technology Award, and the VHA Office of Nursing Service Innovation Award for 2008, 2009, and 2010. We are accredited by The Joint Commission (JC) and the Commission on the Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF).

SAVAHCS has a very active teaching mission and plays a vital role in Arizona health care education. We have principle affiliations with the University of Arizona, College of Medicine, Nursing and Pharmacy as well as affiliation agreements with over 85 academic institutions. Each year over 700 physicians, nurses and other health care professionals receive training at our medical center. Our physicians hold joint faculty appointments with the University of Arizona, College of Medicine. The University of Arizona College of Nursing students consistently rate the SAVAHCS as their best teaching experience during their training rotation at Tucson community hospitals.

We hope this information illustrates our commitment to providing exceptional care for Veterans, and that this Heroes Welcome packet will answer questions you may have to help you feel more comfortable during your stay.

## GUEST SERVICES

### ★ A Heroes Welcome

Being in the hospital can be stressful. We want to provide you with the personalized care you need to reduce stress and promote healing. Whether you are a Veteran, family member, or visitor, SAVAHCS wants to make your visit as easy and comfortable as possible. We are proud of the many programs and services we offer for your convenience, comfort and care.

### ★ Voluntary Service

Our dedicated volunteers assist us in honoring America's Veterans by providing services such as patient escort, visiting inpatients, offering reading materials, and other services. Volunteer Service Organization Officers are available on campus to assist in processing claims for benefits.

### ★ Concierge Service

Our Concierge Service volunteers provide guest services to ensure Veterans and visitors have a pleasant hospital experience. A Concierge can provide campus maps, as well as deliver personal hygiene items and other items to Veterans during their inpatient stay. They provide general information, directions, resource and referral information to Veterans, families and staff. Concierge desks are located throughout the facility.

### ★ Parking and Tram Service

Free covered parking is available across campus. Tram service is available to most parking lots during regular business hours. The tram will take you to a convenient building entrance.

### ★ VA Travel and Disabled American Veterans (DAV) Travel

Travel services may be available to you through VA Travel or DAV. For more information, please ask to speak to a social worker.

### ★ Canteen Services

Canteen Patriot Stores are located in Building 80 and Building 3. Both Patriot Stores are open Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. The Patriot Store in Building 3 is also open on Saturday, 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

The Canteen Cafeteria serves salads, pizzas, entrees, sandwiches, desserts and beverages. The cafeteria is located in Building 3 near the Rose Garden. Hours of operation are Monday through Friday, 7:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. The vending machine room is located next to the cafeteria, and is open 24 hours, 7 days a week.

**★ATM**

An ATM is located in the vending machine room next to the Canteen Cafeteria, Building 3.

**★U.S. Post Office Mailbox**

An outgoing mailbox is available in the Rose Garden courtyard.

**★Interpreter Services**

If you are in need of interpreter services, please notify a staff member.

**★Chaplain Services**

The VA Chaplain Service provides pastoral care and counseling, including spiritual support and sacramental ministry for all Veterans, family members and visitors.

**★Frequently Called SAVAHCS Telephone Numbers**

Main Phone Number

Local (520) 792- 1450

Toll-free (800) 470-8262

**★Community Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC):**

Northwest (520) 219-2418

Southeast (520) 664-1831

Sierra Vista (520) 459-1529

Casa Grande (520) 836-2536

Safford (928) 428-8010

Green Valley (520) 399-2291

Yuma (928) 317-9973

Admissions (520) 792-1450, ext. 6570

Emergency Department (520) 792-1450, ext. 6625

Outpatient Pharmacy (520) 629-1895

Eligibility and Enrollment (520) 792-1450, ext. 6572

Release of Information (520) 792-1450, ext. 6323

Community Living Center (520) 629-4887

Chaplain Service (520) 792-1450, ext. 1843

Women's Health (520) 629-4885

OEF/OIF/OND (520) 629-4889

American Indian Health Coordinator (520) 629-4960

National Crisis Line 1-800-273-8255

## YOUR INPATIENT STAY

At SAVAHCS, we are committed to providing you with the care you deserve. In order for us to deliver the best and safest care possible, we ask that you provide us with accurate and complete information about your health history. Feel free to ask questions.

### ★ Visiting Hours

We are committed to encouraging the involvement of family and friends in your care. Visitors help provide comfort and promote health and well-being. We ask that children under the age of 12 be accompanied by an adult. Visiting hours vary. Please ask your nurse for information regarding visiting hours. Family waiting areas and visiting lounges are located near each ward/unit. Please ask staff for the location of the visiting lounge.

Please use the Ajo entrance to enter the SAVAHCS campus after 6:00 p.m. on weekdays, or on weekends and holidays. During those times, please use the Emergency Department entrance to enter the main hospital. For after hour entry to the Community Living Center Building 60, use the North East entrance.

### ★ Smoking

The smoking policy at SAVAHCS is based on our commitment to promote good health by eliminating the hazards associated with smoking. For this reason, smoking is allowed in designated smoking areas. Please ask a staff member for the location of the nearest smoking area.

### ★ Meals

Inpatient meals are provided through Nutrition and Food Service. Please ask your nurse about your specific dietary needs and meal schedule. Meals are available to family members and guests through the Patient Dining Room for a small cost.

### ★ Personal Belongings

Please leave all valuables at home. If you do bring valuables such as jewelry, credit cards or cash, we recommend sending them home with a family member. If you bring a wheelchair, walker, cane, or home oxygen please ask your nurse whether you will need these items during your stay. Limited space is available to secure personal belongings if necessary. If you need assistance with securing personal valuables or cash, please talk with your nurse.

### ★ Nurse Call System and Telephone

Each room is supplied with a nurse call system and telephone. Your nurse will provide training on using these systems.

### ★ VA Police

VA Police and security services are available 24-hours a day. For your safety, areas of the campus are under video surveillance. If you have questions about long-term parking of your vehicle, thefts, or other concerns, please call the VA Police at ext. 1823.

## PATIENT CARE CONCERNS

It is our responsibility to ask for input and respect each Veteran's values, preferences and needs. If you have concerns regarding your care or safety, please notify a staff member and ask to speak to a manager.

If you still have concerns about your care or safety, please contact the Patient Advocate office at 520-792-1450, ext. 6960 or the Patient Safety Hotline at ext. 6500.

If your concerns have not been addressed by our staff, you may choose to report your issues to The Joint Commission at 800-994-6610 or by email at [complaint@jointcommission.org](mailto:complaint@jointcommission.org).

# PATIENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES AND ADVANCE DIRECTIVES

## ★ Patient and Nursing Home Resident Rights and Responsibilities

The Veterans Health Administration (VHA) is pleased you have selected us to provide your healthcare. We want to improve your health and well-being. We will make your visit or stay as pleasant for you as possible. As part of our service to you, to other Veterans and to the Nation, we are committed to improving healthcare quality. We also train future healthcare professionals, conduct research, and support our country in times of national emergency. In all of these activities, our employees will respect and support your rights as a patient. Your basic rights and responsibilities are outlined in this document. Please talk with VA treatment team members or a patient advocate if you have any questions or would like more information about your rights.

### ★I. Respect and Nondiscrimination

You will be treated with dignity, compassion, and respect as an individual. Your privacy will be protected. You will receive care in a safe environment. We will seek to honor your personal and religious values.

You or someone you choose has the right to keep and spend your money. You have the right to receive an accounting of any VA held funds.

Treatment will respect your personal freedoms. In rare cases, the use of medication and physical restraints may be used if all other efforts to keep you or others free from harm have not worked.

As an inpatient or nursing home resident, you may wear your own clothes. You may keep personal items. This will depend on your medical condition.

As an inpatient or nursing home resident, you have the right to social interaction and regular exercise. You will have the opportunity for religious worship and spiritual support. You may decide whether to participate in these activities. You may decide whether or not to perform tasks in the Medical Center.

As an inpatient or nursing home resident, you have the right to communicate freely and privately. You may have or refuse visitors. You will have access to public telephones. You may participate in civic rights, such as voting and free speech.

As a nursing home resident, you can organize and take part in resident groups in the facility. Your family also can meet with the families of other residents.

In order to provide a safe treatment environment for all patients or residents and staff, you are expected to respect other patients, residents and staff and to follow the facility's rules. Avoid unsafe acts that place others at risk for accidents or injuries. Please immediately report any condition you believe to be unsafe.

### ★II. Information Disclosure and Confidentiality

You will be given information about the health benefits you can receive. The information will be provided in a way you can understand.

You will receive information about the costs of your care, if any, before you are treated. You are responsible for paying your portion of any costs associated with your care.

Your medical record will be kept confidential. Information about you will not be released without your consent unless authorized by law (an example of this is State public health reporting). You have the right to information in your medical record and may request a copy of your medical records. This will be provided except in rare situations when your VA physician feels the information will be harmful to you. In that case, you have the right to have this discussed with you by your VA provider.

You will be informed of all outcomes of care, including any potential injuries. You will be informed about how to request compensation for any injuries.

### ★III. Participation in Treatment Decisions

You, and any persons you choose, will be involved in all decisions about your care. You will be given information you can understand about the benefits and risks of treatment. You will be given other options. You can agree to or refuse treatment. You will be told what is likely to happen to you if you refuse treatment. Your health care choices, including refusing treatment, will not effect your right to future care.

Tell your provider about your current condition, medicines (including over-the-counter and herbals), and medical history. Also, share any other information that affects your health. You should ask questions when you do not understand something about your care. Being involved is very important for you to get the best possible results.

You will be given, in writing, the name and title of the provider in charge of your care. As our partner in healthcare, you have the right to be involved in choosing your provider. You also have the right to know the names and titles of those who provide you care. This includes students, residents and trainees. Providers will properly introduce themselves when they take part in your care.

You will be educated about your role and responsibilities as a patient or resident. This includes your participation in decisionmaking and care at the end of life.

If you believe you cannot follow the treatment plan, you have a responsibility to notify your provider or treatment team.

You have the right to have your pain assessed and to receive treatment to manage your pain. You and your treatment team will develop a pain management plan together. You are expected to help the treatment team by telling them if you have pain and if the treatment is working.

As an inpatient or nursing home resident, you will be provided any transportation necessary for your treatment plan.

You have the right to choose whether you will participate in any research project. Any research will be clearly identified. Potential risks of the research will be identified and there will be no pressure on you to participate.

You will be included in resolving any ethical issues about your care. You may consult with the Medical Center's Ethics Consultation Service and/or other staff knowledgeable about healthcare ethics.

If you or the Medical Center believes that you have been neglected, abused or exploited, you will receive help.

#### ★IV. Complaints

You are encouraged and expected to seek help from your treatment team or a patient advocate if you have problems or complaints. You will be given understandable information about the complaint process. You may complain verbally or in writing, without fear of retaliation.

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#### ★Advance Directives

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

***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 are important. That is 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 providers and family members understand your wishes about health care. It can help your provider decide about treatments if you are too ill to decide for yourself. For example, if you are unconscious or too weak to talk. For more information about Advance Directives, ask to speak with the social worker on your unit.