

Washington, DC Veterans Affairs Medical Center
 "The Flagship of VA Healthcare"

Developments

DCVAMC Construction Update

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Developments

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The DCVAMC Radiology Department will expand to accommodate new state-of-the-art equipment.

Keeping You Informed

DCVAMC: Growing, Changing, Improving

This first issue of *Developments*, the Washington DC VA Medical Center (DCVAMC) construction update newsletter, is our way of communicating to you the numerous improvements underway or planned for this facility. By keeping you informed, you will be better prepared for visits to the Medical Center. We regret any temporary inconvenience you may experience by our construction.

We hope you find all of these "positive developments" improve your time spent as a patient, visitor or employee. If you have any questions or concerns, as always, we welcome your letters. Send them to: *Developments* c/o the Office of Public Affairs at the address indicated on this page.

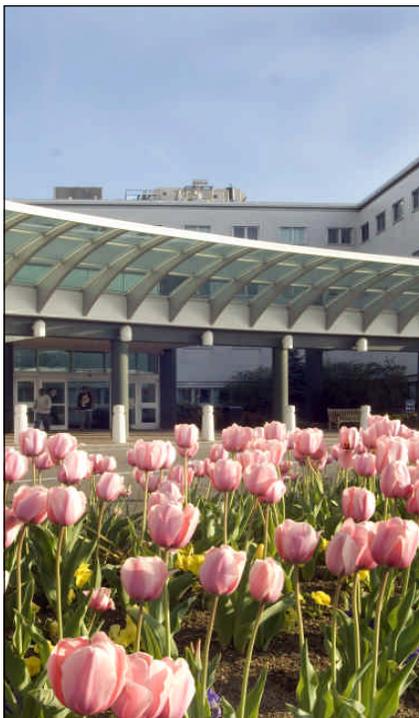
Upgrades, Improvements, Renovations

Numerous Projects Will Improve Patient Experience at DCVAMC

Exciting changes are in store for veterans, employees and visitors to the Medical Center. The improvements will not only make the hospital environment brighter and more inviting, they will also enhance patient safety and environment of care including privacy and convenience.

Major Construction

Large construction projects are planned or underway including: a future Fisher House, a planned Domiciliary, a four-story administrative building, larger Poly-trauma and Radiology suites and a three-level parking garage.



Springtime at DCVAMC

The Medical Center will soon have a revolving door added to its entry as part of the many on-going facility improvements.

Facility Improvements

Several areas will receive dramatic improvements with extensive renovations including: the research space and much of the 3rd floor. The canteen will get a long-awaited facelift, as will the retail store. The chapel be completely updated.

Improved Infrastructure

Improvements that are vital to the operation of the hospital are being made including: building a new boiler plant, installing new roofing, and replacing the hot water heaters. Our electrical systems, cable and emergency power applications are all being upgraded. All elevators are scheduled for complete overhauls.

A Parking Garage In Our Future

New construction and facility expansion will bring with it a series of changes in parking availability and accessibility at the Medical Center.

When completed, we will have a new three level parking garage that will provide over 250 parking spots to veterans and visitors. In the interim, steps are being taken to ensure adequate parking for patients, visitors, and employees during the lengthy construction process.

The Medical Center is making plans to pave or gravel new parking areas wherever possible. We will dedicate Gate 1, the main entrance/exit gate, specifically for visitors (First Street).

Gate 3, the gate near La Petite Academy, will be the employee entrance/exit gate. Gate 2, located near the site of the future Fisher House and domiciliary will be opened for all to use (N. Capital Street).

Contracts are being submitted for satellite parking lots for employee use - with shuttle service provided.

The valet parking lot will be reconfigured to maximize space and acquire more spaces.

Employees are always encouraged to use metro and carpool to work to save space and help protect the environment.

Revamping the Canteen

The canteen and the retail store are both getting makeovers. On May 23, the Veterans Canteen will undergo an extensive renovation which will include new seating, walls, lighting, flooring and best of all, new menu items.

The canteen will remain open during renovation, although seating may be limited at times. Once completed, in late June or early July, the cafeteria will offer a better dining experience with greater menu choices for patients, visitors and employees.

After the canteen renovations are complete, work will begin on the Retail Store. Temporary partitions will be installed so the store will be able to remain open during construction.

Photo Right Top:
DCVAMC's canteen will look similar to this recently-renovated VA canteen in Loma Linda California and will offer a better traffic flow between food stations.

Photo Right Bottom:
The Loma Linda canteen dining room boasts wood flooring similar to what will be installed in the DCVAMC canteen dining room. The project also calls for new walls, lighting, flooring and seating.



Internal Facility Improvements

Cable TV Improvements

Work has already begun to improve television reception throughout the Medical Center by upgrading the entire facilities cable capacity. It will soon include: 24 additional satellite channels and the signal reception will be dramatically superior. Mounting all televisions on mechanical arms in the patient rooms is another enhancement underway.

Polytrauma Unit Expansion

The Polytrauma unit will be significantly expanded to meet growth in the numbers of patients with multiple injuries. Most significantly, veterans returning from combat in Operation Enduring Freedom/Operation Iraqi Freedom need these services. The project includes: enlarging the Polytrauma Clinic and improving its accessibility, purchase of state-of-the-art rehabilitation equipment, a dedicated computer lab for cognitive rehabilitation, and a customized "Easy Street" for real life rehabilitation applications.

Chapel Improvements

The Chapel is currently being renovated with a new ceiling, upgraded lighting and new furnishings. Until renovations are completed in late June, Sunday services are being held in the 4th floor auditorium and the Daily Mass is being held in room 3A126.

Radiology Upgrade

The DCVAMC's Radiology department will expand with new state-of-the-art diagnostic and therapy equipment including a new: CT scanner and simulator, R & F system, and Linac system in the radiation therapy suite.

Halls and Walls

The multi-phase Halls and Walls project calls for new energy-efficient lighting and improved corridor cosmetics. The second phase of the project (units 2A & 3A) has just begun.



In March, extensive renovations began to modernize the Radiology department. When completed, the MRI suites will have the latest diagnostic and therapeutic equipment.

Veteran Ron Brimmer wheels down one of the renovated hallways at the medical center. The "Halls and Walls" project is one of the most extensive projects Facilities Management Service is undertaking. Every hallway in the hospital will be updated. Some will receive new wall coverings, lighting and handrails.



Domiciliary

The DCVAMC has received funding for the construction of a 77-bed domiciliary. The site is currently being surveyed prior to the site design.

When the construction is complete, the domiciliary program currently located in Martinsburg West Virginia will be relocated to DCVAMC in an effort to bring mental health residential treatment to veterans residing in the DC metro area.

The Domiciliary will provide bed-based care in a safe, semi-structured and homelike environment.

Residential rehabilitation treatment differs from a traditional hospital or home care program in that patients do not require bedside nursing care and are capable of daily self-care or activities of daily living.

Elevators

The elevator upgrade project started last year and includes overhauling the three elevators in the main lobby and the two elevators located near Pentagon Federal Credit Union.

To minimize your inconvenience, contractors have scheduled the work so that only one elevator will be out of commission at a time.

Two elevators in the lobby have been upgraded and passed final inspections. We hope you are enjoying them! Work is continuing on the third elevator in the lobby.

The project is expected to be completed by the end of 2008.

Fisher House:

DCVAMC to Provide a Home Away From Home for Patients' Families



This 21-suite Fisher House in Palo Alto, California is similar to the one to be built on the grounds of the DC VA Medical Center. The official ground breaking ceremony is scheduled for May 21.

The Washington DC Medical Center (DCVAMC) has been chosen as a site for a new 21-suite Fisher House. The facility will provide free lodging for families of hospitalized veterans while they are under treatment at the hospital. The house, one of the Fisher House Foundation's largest designs, will have a community kitchen, dining room, living room, library and laundry room. Each suite will have its own bathroom. And, the house has an elevator.

The ground breaking will take place on May 21. "Our

partnership with Fisher House Foundation will prove to enhance services to veterans and their families," commented DCVAMC Director Fernando Rivera, "in particular, recently returned Combat veterans. We're proud to have been selected as a site for a Fisher House."

The house will accommodate up to 42 family members and will be furnished with everything the family needs while their loved one is hospitalized—including DVD players, video games for children, etc.

"The Fisher House is going to be a home-away-from-

home for our veterans and their families who have served us so well," said Mr. Rivera.

No-cost lodging, right on the Medical Center's grounds, and a place to prepare home-cooked meals will help alleviate part of the stress and financial burden families endure when a loved one is hospitalized.

In 2007, the Foundation estimated it saved military and veterans' families approximately \$10 million in lodging, food and transportation costs through the program. Once built, operation

and maintenance of the home will be the responsibility of DCVAMC.

Many guests find comfort in meeting other families who are going through similar situations.

The Fisher House Foundation, established in 1990 by real estate developer, Zachary Fisher, currently has 50 houses on military installations and VA Medical Centers across the United States and one in Landstuhl Germany.

Approximately 120,000 families have been provided 2.5 million days of free or low-cost lodging.

The latest DCVAMC construction news is available any time of the day or night!

Veterans and the public can log on to: <http://www.washingtondc.va.gov/> for the latest construction news.

Employees may visit the Medical Center Intranet website.

If you have any questions or concerns about our renovations, please phone 202-745-8000 ext. 8221.



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