

South Texas Veterans Health Care System



Patient Information Handbook

Learn practical tips for navigating South Texas Veteran Health Care System through **New Patient Orientation** every Tuesday from 10:00 am to 11:00 am.

To attend this online meeting, or for more information, please visit www.southtexas.va.gov and click on "Events".

Revised 8/26/24

South Texas Leadership Team



Julianne Flynn, M.D.
Executive Director



John Mendoza
Deputy Medical
Center Director



**Heather Yun, MD, FACP,
FIDSA**
Chief of Staff



**Eleanor Milo, DNP,
RN, CENP, NEA-BC**
Associate Director for
Patient Care Services
(Nurse Executive)



Shane Soto
Associate Director for
Resources



Adam Bernal
Associate Director
for Operations

Mission

South Texas Veterans Health Care System's (STVHCS) mission is to fulfill President Lincoln's promise to care for those who have served in our nation's military and for their families, caregivers, and survivors.

Vision

STVHCS will be a Veteran-centered organization that provides excellence in health care, research, education; to be an organization where people choose to work; an active community partner, and a resource for National emergencies.

Core Values and Characteristics

VA's Core Values define what is most important to us and what makes us different from other organizations. They define our culture and commitment to our Veterans. Our Core Values are:

Integrity, Commitment, Advocacy, Respect, and Excellence (I-CARE)

Our Characteristics define who we are. They guide the execution of our mission, shape our strategy, and influence resource allocations and other key decisions made within the VA. We are: Trustworthy, Accessible, Agile, Innovative, Integrated, and a Quality-of-Care orientated institution.

South Texas Veterans Health Care System



**Audie L. Murphy
Memorial Veterans Hospital**
7400 Merton Minter Blvd.
San Antonio, TX 78229
24-Hour Emergency Room
Phone: (210) 617-5300
Toll free: (877) 469-5300



Kerrville VA Medical Center
3600 Memorial Blvd.
Kerrville, TX 78028
Phone: (830) 896-2020
Toll Free: (866) 487-1653

Outpatient Clinics

www.va.gov/south-texas-health-care/locations

For scheduling, please call: **(210) 949-9702**

VA Health Connect: **(833) 284-7212**

Balcones Heights Outpatient Clinic (BHOPC)

4522 Fredericksburg Road
Suites A-10; A-88; & A-100
San Antonio, Tx 78201

Data Point VA Clinic

8410 Data Point Drive
San Antonio, Tx 78229

North East Bexar VA Clinic

2391 Northeast Loop 410, Suite 309
San Antonio, Tx 78217

New Braunfels VA Clinic

790 Generations Drive, Building 600 & 700
New Braunfels, Tx 78254

North Bexar Outpatient Clinic (NBOPC)

16019 Nacogdoches Road, Suite 101
San Antonio, Tx 78247

North Central Federal Clinic (NCFC)

17440 Henderson Pass
San Antonio, Tx 79232

San Antonio Northwest Health Care Center (SANWHCC)

9939 Hwy 151
San Antonio, Tx 78251

San Antonio VA Clinic

7909 Fredericksburg Rd. Suite 100
San Antonio, Tx 78229

San Antonio Pecan Valley VA Clinic

3418 E. Southcross
San Antonio, Tx 78222

Shavano Park Outpatient Clinic (SPOPC)

4350 Lockhill-Selma Road, Suite 200
San Antonio, Tx 78249

South Bexar Outpatient Clinic (SBOPC)

4610 East Southcross Blvd. Suite 100
San Antonio, Tx 78222

Southwest VA Clinic

2310 SW Military Dr., Suite 304
San Antonio, Tx 78224

Victoria Outpatient Clinic (VOPC)

1908 N Laurent Street, Suite 150
Victoria, Tx, 77901

Walzem VA Clinic

6938 Walzem Road
San Antonio, Tx 78239

Frequently Called Numbers

	San Antonio	Kerrville
Main Hospital Number	(210) 617-5300 (877) 469-5300	(830) 896-2020 (866) 487-1653
Telecare - Health Information 24 hours/day: (210) 949-3994 – M–F 8:00am – 4:30pm Toll Free (888) 686-6350 weekends, after hours, & holidays		
72-hour notification hotline (non-VA emergent care): (844) 724-7842		
Automated Medication Refill Program: (800) 209-7377		
Appointments/Scheduling: (210) 949-9702		
Care Coordination: (210) 616-8363		
Community Care: (210) 617-5300, Ext. 13850		
Decedent Affairs: (210) 949-3981, Press Option 3		
Fisher House - "Home Away From Home" for families and patients: (210) 617 – 5542		
Military Sexual Trauma Coordinator: (210) 617-5300, Ext. 13829		
Paralyzed Veterans of America: (210) 617-5300, Ext. 15275		
Recreation Therapy: (210) 617-5300, Ext. 15125		
Telehealth Service: (210) 617-5300, Ext. 68256		
Transition and Care Management: (210) 995-4126		
STVHCS Travel Office: (210) 617-5300, Ext. 15333 After 1630 and weekends: (210) 617-5162 or (210) 617-5300, Ext. 14892 & Ext. 14893		
Traveling Veteran Coordinator: (210) 392-9207		
Veterans Crisis Line: (800) 273-8255, Press 1 ~~ OR ~~ Dial 988 then Press 1		
Whole Health Program: (210) 617-5300, Ext. 15088		
Women Veterans Program: (210) 949-9449		

	San Antonio	Kerrville
Admissions/Eligibility	(210) 949-3981	(830) 792-2444
Agent Cashier	(210) 617-5300, Ext. 15995	(830) 896-2020, Ext. 12550
Barber Shop	N/A	(830) 896-2020, Ext. 12149
Billing/Insurance Information	(210) 616-8502	(210) 616-8502
Chaplain	(210) 617-5300 Ext. 15441	(830) 896-2020, Ext. 12354
Dental	(210) 949-9702	(830) 792-2461
Disabled American Veterans	(210) 706-8048	(830) 315-3100
Home Based Primary Care	(210) 616-8240	(210) 616-8240
GYN Clinic	(210) 617-5300, Ext. 17092	N/A
Health Administration	(210) 617-5300, Ext. 15137	(830) 896-2020, Ext. 12113
Palliative Care	(210) 314-9238	(210) 949-9702
Patient Advocate	(210) 949-3822	(830) 792-2494
Public Affairs	210-616-8528	N/A
Police	(210) 617-5300, Ext. 15168	(830) 792-2520, Ext. 12162 or 12210
Release of Information	(210) 830-896-2020, Ext. 12708	(830) 792-2503
Shuttle	(210) 617-5300, Ext. 17948	(830) 792-2418
Social Work	(210) 949-7902	(210) 949-7902
Spinal Cord Injury Center	(210) 617-5300, Ext. 16838	N/A
Texas Veterans Commission	(210) 617-5300 or Ext. 15175	(830) 792-2553
Center for Development and Civic Engagement (Voluntary Services)	(210) 617-5300, Ext. 15107	(830) 792-2580

Rights and Responsibilities of STVHCS Patients

Reference: STVHCS Policy Memorandum 11-18-67

Patient Rights	Patient Responsibilities
<p>You will be treated as an individual with respect and dignity. You will not be subject to discrimination for any reason, including age, race, ethnicity, religion, language, culture, physical or mental disability, socioeconomic status, sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity or expression.</p> <p>You will receive care in an environment free from excess noise and with sufficient light to ensure comfort and safety.</p> <p>STVHCS will seek to honor your cultural, religious, or spiritual beliefs, values, and preferences.</p> <p>You have the right to keep and spend your money and receive an accounting of any funds that VA is holding for you.</p> <p>You have the right to keep and use personal items so long as they are safe and legal.</p> <p>You have the right to have loved ones support you during your stay. However, medical staff may restrict visitors for inpatients if medical or safety concerns require it.</p> <p>Your privacy will be protected. Your health record will be confidential, and your information will not be released without your authorization unless as permitted by law. You have the right to have access or request a copy of your health records.</p> <p>You will be given information about the health benefits you can receive in a way you can understand, to include any costs of your care.</p> <p>You will be given the names and roles of your care team. You have the right to be involved in choosing your provider.</p> <p>You have the right to express your preferences concerning future medical care in an advanced directive, including designating a health care</p>	<p>You are expected to treat your clinic team hospital staff with courtesy and respect.</p> <p>You have the responsibility to follow the organization's rules and regulations, limit your visitors, follow smoking regulations, and use the telephone, television, and lights courteously so that you do not disturb others.</p> <p>Threats, violence, damage to property, disrespectful communication to include sexual harassment of other patients or of any medical center staff member, for any reason, whether in- person, by phone, by email, or any other method of communication will not be tolerated.</p> <p>You should support a safe treatment environment and avoid unsafe acts as well as report any unsafe conditions.</p> <p>Tell your providers about your medical condition, medications, and medical history. Ask questions when you do not understand something about your care. Let your treatment team know if you can't follow the treatment plan.</p> <p>You should respect the privacy of other patients, and not reveal their health information.</p>

agent who can make healthcare decisions on your behalf when you may no longer be able to do so.

You will be involved in all decisions about your care. You will be given information that you can understand about the benefits and risks of treatment in your preferred language. You can agree or refuse any treatment.

You have the right to choose whether or not you will participate in any research project. Any such research will be clearly identified as such. Potential risks of the research will be identified and there will not be pressure to participate.

You are encouraged to seek help from your treatment team or a patient advocate (210-949-3822) if you have problems or complaints. You will be given understandable information about the complaint process in your preferred language. You may complain verbally or in writing, without fear of retaliation.

If you believe our organization has failed to address or satisfy your concerns about healthcare quality or safety, you may contact the Joint Commission's office of Quality Monitoring at 1-800-994-6610. If you believe that our organization has failed to address concerns about suspected criminal activities, fraud, waste, abuse, or mismanagement, you may contact the VA Office of the Inspector General at 1-800-488-8244.

Welcome Center at Audie L. Murphy Memorial Veterans Hospital— Room Q113

Enrollment and Eligibility staff are available to assist you with:

- Lodging/Admissions/Patient Funds
- Eligibility Updates
- Transfer from another VA facility
- Traveling Veterans
- Veteran ID cards
- Change of Address
- Name changes
- Decedent Affairs
- POW Registry
- Update Next of Kin List
- Gulf War Registry
- Burn Pits Registry
- Agent Orange Registry
- Nuclear Testing Examination
- Eligibility Reform Act
- **Patient Travel**
Travel Reimbursement

Welcome Kit: www.va.gov/welcome-kit

Veteran ID Cards are made in the Welcome Center office:

Audie L. Murphy Memorial Veterans Hospital (ALMMVH) – first floor, Welcome Center, (210) 949-3981 option 2

Kerrville VA Medical Center (VAMC) - first floor, Room 112A, (830) 792-2444

You must be enrolled in the VA Health Care System to receive VA health care.

You can apply:

1. **In person** at ALMMVH, Welcome Center, near main elevators on 1st floor.
 - a. You will complete a 10-10EZ Application for Health Care Benefits. You will need:
 - i. a copy of your DD214 (service discharge document). This may be obtained at www.va.gov/records/get-military-service-records/.
 - ii. household income from previous year.
 - iii. Social Security numbers for yourself and qualified dependents.
 - iv. account numbers for any current health insurance you already have (like Medicare, private insurance, or insurance from your employer).
2. **By Phone:** Call 1-877-222-8737 Option 1. Monday through Friday between 8:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. ET. You will not be able to complete enrollment however until the documents mentioned above have been presented.
3. **By mail:** The application form can be downloaded from www.va.gov/health-care/how-to-apply/. Mail completed form to: **Health Eligibility Center, 2957 Clairmont Rd. Suite 200, Atlanta, GA, 30329**. Then call Enrollment and Eligibility at (210) 949-3981, Option 2 to complete enrollment and schedule your first Primary Care Provider (PCP) appointment.

As part of the enrollment process, you can choose where you want to be seen for your primary care, if that site is available; Specialty care must be referred by a VA physician.

Other-Than-Honorable (OTH) DISCHARGE: Veterans will be offered adjudication services for OTH and may be eligible for mental health services.

You must complete 1010EZR annually to report changes in income; you may be asked to report your income based on your “priority group” – see www.va.gov/healthbenefits/resources/epublications.asp.

MyHealtheVet

This Veteran specific program is for you and your family to partner with your healthcare team. Your personal information is secure and private, yet you can share your online information with anyone you designate. MyHealtheVet provides:

- Secure, web-based Personal Health Record (PHR) patient access to, view, and print your personal health information.
- Prescription refills
- Reliable health education resources.
- Secure message/e-mail between you and your VA health care providers and teams.

- View key portions of your DoD military service information and electronic record.
- Record and track your health information (i.e., allergies, immunizations, blood pressure, and weight), and keep track of your food intake, exercise routine, distance walked, weight, etc.
- Wellness and clinic appointment reminders (24/7).
- Lab and test results.

To register:

1. Go to www.myhealth.va.gov
2. Click the green “Register” button on the right side.
3. Complete the registration page and accept the “Terms and Conditions” and Privacy Policy. To enjoy **all the features** listed above and more, upgrade your account to Premium by doing an online or “in person authentication” at your next VA clinic visit. For help, contact MyHealthVet at (210) 949-3877.

VA Health Connect – One call! (833) 284-7212

Pharmacy (Press 1) – Refill, request medication renewals, and check the status of your medication.

Scheduling (Press 2) – Schedule, cancel, verify or reschedule Primary Care Appointments.

24/7 Nurse Line (Press 3) – Health concerns, tele-emergency care.

VA Health Chat

The VA Health Chat app enables you to send messages about your non-urgent health concerns to VA staff members. You can use VA Health Chat to schedule appointments and assist with general questions. Our traditional methods of communication will remain active (e.g., using our telephone lines and My HealthVet secure messaging). This is an additional modality to quickly connect with us.

We have three channels:

1. **Consolidated Outpatient Appointment Center (COPAC)** – to assist with scheduling follow-up appointments and route messages to your VA providers/specialist.
2. **Patient Administration Service (Community Care)** – to assist with scheduling your Community Care consults/referrals. For questions regarding VA’s *Community Care Programs*, please call Patient Administration Service at (210) 949-3850 from 0800-1600.
3. **Referral Coordination Team** – to assist with scheduling most internal VA consults/referrals.

VA Health Chat is available on the VA App Store: www.mobile.va.gov/app/va-health-chat. To chat with a VA Health Care Team member, you will need to use your VA credentials: My HealthVet premium account User ID and password; DS Logon, or ID.me. For more information on creating VA credentials go to: www.mobile.va.gov/login-information.

Decedent Affairs: Contact the Decedent Affairs Office for help with survivor next-of-kin burial benefits and transportation to funeral home.

ALMMVH: (210) 949-3981, Option 3

Kerrville VAMC: (830) 792-2444

Release Of Information (ROI); The Federal Privacy Act and Freedom of Information guidelines protect information contained in VA medical records. If you need information released from your VA, (for instance, an x-ray report), you will need to complete the Release of Information (ROI) form.

- Audie L. Murphy Memorial Veterans Hospital (ALMMVH) – ROI is on the 1st floor in the Welcome Center; Phone: (210) 617-5300 ext. 15610.
- Kerrville VAMC – ROI is in the main building, Rm. 415; Phone: (830) 896-2020 ext. 12078

Traveling Veteran: If you are traveling outside your VA, complete the following steps:

- Notify your Health Care Team of travel destinations and dates 4–6 weeks before you travel.
- Share your temporary address and phone number where you will be staying.
- Sign up for MyHealthVet at www.myhealth.va.gov.
- Refill your prescriptions 10 – 14 days in advance and bring enough medications for your trip.
- Look up the name of the VA you would like to use while you are away.
- Take a copy of your health summary/medication list (or most recent progress note from clinic).
- If you are permanently transferring, register at the local VA as soon as you arrive.
- For more information contact the Traveling Veterans Care Coordinator at (210) 392-9207.

Patient Travel: Veterans may be eligible for travel cost reimbursement. To determine if you are eligible, you may file a claim through Beneficiary Travel at the following locations:

ALMMVH first floor, Welcome Center, (210) 617-5300, Ext. 15333.

Kerrville VAMC first floor in Room 112, (830) 896-2020, Ext. 15333.

Billing

The VA Medical Care Cost Fund (MCCF) Program, as appropriate and as approved by current legislation, may recover funds for the delivery of health care services to Veterans, dependents, and others using the VA system. The Revenue Office may:

- Submit claims and recover payments from Veterans’ third-party health insurance carriers for treatment of non-service-connected conditions.
- Recover co-payments from certain Veterans for treatment of, or medication for, non-service-connected conditions. Amounts of co-payments are generally related to your income.
- For questions about VA billing or VA copayments, call (210) 616-8502, 0800 – 1630, M- F.

Community Care

VA provides care to Veterans through community providers when VA cannot provide the care needed. For more information, please visit <https://www.va.gov/communitycare/>

During a medical emergency, PLEASE seek immediate care at the nearest emergency room; then, **notify VA within 72 hours of the ER visit or admission to the community hospital by calling 844-724-7842**; the VA will coordinate care or transfer as needed and ensure administrative and clinical requirements for VA to pay for that care are met.

VA provides same day access for Primary Care and Mental Health services, but if you need urgent or emergency care, you may go to an in-network urgent care clinic. You can find a VA in-network urgent

care clinic at <https://www.va.gov/find-locations/>. You may have to pay a VA copayment after the visit, which is billed by VA separately. Please call VA Patient Administration Service at (210) 949-3850 Monday thru Friday between 0800-1600. After hours, please call (210) 617-5300, Ext. 15162 or 15940. VA has a 72-hour notification hotline: 844-724-7842.

Lodging

Lodging at VA expense is available under certain circumstances. Please present to Enrollment and Eligibility Office in the Welcome Center during regular business hours. After-hours, please present to the Administrator on Duty (AOD) station located in the Emergency Department. Admissions or the AOD will determine eligibility for lodging at VA expense. For questions call: (210) 949-3981, Option 3.

Criteria and other considerations for lodging include any Veteran who:

- has scheduled clinical appointments for two consecutive calendar days, *and*
- has traveled 50 miles or further to receive care within STVHCS catchment area.
- has multiple appointments.
- has appointments that require you leave the house before 0800 to arrive on time.
- is here for cancer treatment (to include radiation oncology).
- Is traveling for Compensation and Pension (C&P) Exam.
- is receiving Electroconvulsive Therapy (ECT).
- Arrives for Cardiac Cath.
- is here for Spinal Cord Injury treatment. If alone, the Veteran will be lodged on the unit. If with caregiver/family member, the Veteran may then be lodged at a contracted hotel.
- Surgery (excludes minor, non-invasive procedures): Includes 1 preop visit, 1 post op visit and surgical appointment and must be preapproved.

STVHCS Fisher House

The VA Fisher House is a “home away from home,” free of charge for patients (and their eligible families) receiving medical care within STVHCS. The Fisher House features a common and fully equipped kitchen (food and meals are not provided), a spacious dining room, an inviting living room, and laundry facilities. Whether inpatient or outpatient, ask to speak with a social worker for more information. Call the Fisher House at (210) 617- 5542 for more information.

Lost Items

If an inpatient, contact your nurse if you have lost something. If you are an outpatient or if you’re visiting, check with the Patient Transport desk in the front lobby of ALMMVH (0730 – 1630) or call (210) 617-5358. Kerrville VAMC: check with the operator.

Valuables: Please keep all valuables at home and keep no more than \$5 cash on hand. STVHCS is not responsible for money or other valuables you bring into your room. Monies should be deposited with the Agent Cashier, Monday - Friday (except holidays) 0800–1600. If you deposit *more* than \$400 to the Agent Cashier, you may not be able to receive more than \$400 upon departure as there may not be that much cash in the till; you will be issued a check for the remaining funds. Contact the Agent Cashier at: ALMMVH (210) 617-5300, Ext.15995; Kerrville VAMC (830) 896-2020, Ext. 12550.

Police Notification Procedures

Please notify VA Police as soon as possible when you become aware of suspected or actual criminal activity, suspicious activity, or an emergency (i.e., theft, assault, disturbance, threat, etc.). The police station is located in the ALMMVH main lobby, (210) 617-5300, Ext. 15911. At Kerrville VAMC the police station is adjacent to the main lobby, (830) 896-2020, Ext. 12911. **PROHIBITED ARTICLES** while on VA property include possessing alcoholic beverages, narcotics, firearms, cameras, ammunition, knives or other weapons, lighter fluid, non-safety matches, straight-edge razors, or medicine not prescribed by a health care provider. While you may bring your current medications so your providers can see what you are taking, they may not be kept in the hospital when admitted.

Photography All photography, video, and audio recording *in non-public areas* must be preapproved by the Office of Public Affairs. Please contact a member of your team for more information or the Office of Public Affairs at: (210) 616-8528.

VA Shuttle Service

A no charge VA shuttle runs between ALMMVH and Kerrville VAMC. One person providing assistance to the Veteran can ride with the Veteran on the shuttle at no cost.

Departure Times: Departs 0730 from Kerrville VAMC and again at 1100. Departure from ALMMVH back to Kerrville VAMC will depend on patient appointment(s).

San Antonio Northwest Health Care Center (SANWHCC) Shuttle Tour of Duty 0730 – 1600

Arrive	Unload/Load Time	Depart	Travel Time	Arrive	Unload/Load Time	Depart	Travel Time
ALMMVH		ALMMVH		SANWHCC		SANWHCC	
		0730	20 min	0750	25 min	0815	20 min
0835	25 min	0900	20 min	0920	25 min	0945	20 min
1005	25 min	1030	20 min	1050	25 min	1115	20 min
1150	LUNCH	1245	20 min	1305	25 min	1330	20 min
1350	25 min	1415	20 min	1435	25 min	1500	20 min

G.I. FORUM & HAVEN-4-HOPE SHUTTLE

Monday – Friday Departure Times: (Closed Federal Holidays)

From: G.I. Forum/Haven 4 Hope - 0815

From: ALMMVH – 1400

ALMMVH – VILLA SERENA (VS) – DATA POINT EYE (AUDIO/DENTAL) – PTRP				
ALMMVH: Pick up at outbound lane only (exception for inclement weather only)				
DATA POINT: Pick up/Dropoff at front of building.				
VILLA SERENA: Pick up/Drop off at circle driveway				
PTRP: Pick up/Drop off at front gate				
ALMMVH	DATA POINT	VILLA SERENA	DATA POINT	PTRP
0700	0705	0710	0720	0725
0800	0805	0810	0820	0825
0900	0905	0910	0920	0925
1000	1005	1010	1020	1025
1100	1105	1110	1120	1125
1200	1205	1210	1220	1225
1300	1305	1310	1320	1325
1400	1405	1410	1420	1425
1500	1505	1510	1520	1525
1615	1620	1625	1635	1625
1645	No Stop	1655	x	x

For more information about the Shuttle Services, please contact us: ALMMVH at (210) 617-5300, Ext.17948 or Kerrville VAMC at (830) 792-2418.

Patriot Store and Cafeteria

Canteen (PX/BX) & Food Court

ALMMVH Patriot Store (1st Floor Lobby Area) Phone: (210) 617-5300, Ext. 15017

Monday - Friday 0700 – 1600, Weekends: 0900 – 1300

- ❖ Patriot Café (Cafeteria) (1st Floor Lobby Area)
- ❖ Monday – Friday: 0600 – 1800
- ❖ Vending machines at entrance to food court are open 24 hours a day.
- ❖ Starbucks 1st Floor ALMMVH Polytrauma Entrance M–F: 0700–1500



Kerrville VAMC Patriot Store (Basement)

- ❖ Monday – Friday: 0730 - 1545 (Closed on weekends and holidays)
- ❖ Patriot Cafe (Basement)
- ❖ Vending machines are open 24 hours a day.

Chaplain Service

The role of the VA chaplain has long been recognized as an essential part of complete and holistic health care for Veterans and their families seeking medical treatment through VA facilities. Any Veteran or family member, regardless of religious affiliation, is welcome to speak with a chaplain at any point in the medical treatment process. The STX Chaplain staff is here to support a patient's emotional and spiritual well-being and only discuss religion if the patient asks or requests information about a specific faith.

VA chaplains provide pre-surgery, home-based and inpatient/outpatient clinic visits; facilitate various groups; meet with families; provide palliative care; offer Mass and Protestant worship services; administer the sacraments, such as the Anointing of the Sick and Holy Communion; and respond to Veteran requests.

ALM Chaplain Service: 2nd floor, room 229, 210-617-5300 x15441.

Catholic Mass:

- In person Sunday-Friday at 11:30am & broadcast at 1230pm, Ch. 2 for inpatients.
- In person on Saturdays at 4:00pm & broadcast at 1700pm on Ch. 2 for inpatients.

Protestant Service: In person Sundays at 0930am & broadcast at 1030am on Ch. 2 for inpatients.

Kerrville VAMC Chaplain Service: ground floor, room 1A-104, 830-896-2020 x12354.

Catholic Mass: offered in person once a month as arranged & subject to change at 0830.

Protestant Service: in person Sundays at 1000.

Patient Advocate Program

The Patient Advocate Program is here to uphold the Veterans patient experience, putting Veterans and their families at the center of every process. A fundamental value for this program is for all Veterans and their families have their priorities and needs addressed in a proactive, convenient, and timely manner. Please note that you may contact the Patient Advocates through MyHealthVet secure email (see page 10).

Patient Advocate Office Email: www.ask.va.gov

Audie L. Murphy Memorial Veterans Hospital: (210) 949-3822

Kerrville VA Medical Center: (830) 792-2494

San Antonio Northwest Health Care Center: (210) 706-7820

Veterans With Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) And Related Identities

Commitment to LGBTQ+ Veteran Care: VA is committed to addressing the health needs of LGBTQ+ Veterans and ensure you receive the high-quality health care available to all Veterans—including prevention (condoms/PrEP), testing, and treatment. Providers will ask about sexual orientation and gender identity as a part of routine care and you are encouraged to be open with providers to ensure that related health risks are addressed. All may use any restrooms (including communal restrooms) corresponding to their gender identity.

Veterans Affairs prohibits harassment and discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression of Veterans and their family members. VA defines “family” as anyone a Veteran identifies as family with equal visitation rights. Veterans may designate in “advance directives” any one whom they choose as their surrogate healthcare decision makers for times when they might become unable to make decisions for themselves, including same-sex partners regardless of marital status.

Transgender and Gender Diverse Veterans: Per VA policy staff will use the names and pronouns specified by Veteran regardless of legal or physical transition status. Veterans may designate their self-identified gender in their medical record without legal documentation of gender marker correction. Legal documents are required for all name changes in the medical record. Room assignments are based upon self-identified gender with sensitivity to all involved.

Transgender and gender diverse Veterans receive wellness care and health screenings based upon anatomy (e.g., pelvic, breast, and prostate exams). Cross-sex hormone therapy (including required health monitoring) is available following a mental health evaluation; evaluations done elsewhere may meet the screening requirement. Voice retraining therapy and gender-affirming prosthetic devices are available. VA is prohibited by law from providing surgeries for “gender identity revision”. VA does provide medical testing and physical exams required prior to gender-confirming surgeries as well as post-operative care. Learn more at <https://www.patientcare.va.gov/LGBT/>.

Staff Contacts: The following staff members are available to assist LGBTQ+ Veterans.

- LGBT Veteran Care Coordinator: Michele Mick, PhD, at (210) 617-5300, Ext. 16645
- Transgender Primary Care Service Navigator: (210) 617-5300, Ext. 65095
- Gender Diversity Mental Health Navigator: (210) 617-5300, Ext. 19340
- PrEP Coordinator: (210) 617-5300, Ext. 13070/17200
- Patient Advocates: (210) 949-3822

Lab Hours For Outpatients

Hours for lab specimens, blood, and urine tests, can be drawn Monday-Friday (closed on holidays) at:

Audie L. Murphy Memorial Veterans Hospital

0600 – 1700 Monday – Friday

0800 – 1200 Saturday and Sunday

Kerrville VA Medical Center

0700 – 1600

South Bexar VA Clinic

0800 – 1600

North Central Federal Clinic

0730 – 1600

San Antonio Northwest Health Care Center

0800 – 1600

Victoria Outpatient Clinic

0800 – 1600

Walzem VA Clinic

0800 – 1100; 1300 – 1500

San Antonio VA Clinic

0800 – 1100; 1300 – 1500

Southwest VA Clinic

0800 – 1200; 1300 – 1500

New Braunfels VA Clinic

0800 – 1100; 1300 – 1500

Pharmacy

Pharmacists are available in your primary care clinic to provide medication information and counseling, including information about doses and possible side effects. For questions about medications, call the TeleMed number at 1(800) 209-7377, Option 2, and a pharmacist will return your call within 24 hours.

Prescriptions written by your in-network urgent care provider can be filled at an in-network retail pharmacy. You can find an in-network pharmacy at <https://www.va.gov/find-locations>

Prescriptions must be submitted to VA for a 14-day supply or greater, or for routine non-urgent medications. Prescriptions can be sent thru e-prescribe to the Pharmacy or faxed to: (210) 949-3595.

When picking up medications, the pharmacist at the pick-up window can answer questions, like:

- What is the medicine for?
- How do I take it and for how long?
- What are common side effects and what do I do if they occur?
- Is this medicine safe to take with over the counter medicines or supplements?
- Are there any food, drink, or activities I should avoid while taking these medicines?
- Ask about any instructions on the medicine bottles you don't understand.
- Ask for medicine information sheets, pill cutters, pill boxes, or medicine cups you need.

Medication Safety Reminder

Make Sure

- 1** YOUR name is on EACH bottle before taking.
- 2** YOU know the medication names and WHY you are taking EACH medication.
- 3** YOU take the right DOSE as prescribed by your provider.
- 4** YOU take EACH medication per your providers instructions.
- 5** YOU follow all label warnings printed on the label.

VETERAN NAME (LAST, FIRST) **1** Avoid alcoholic beverages. May cause dizziness. Do not take other medicines without checking with your pharmacist. **3**

TAKE 1 TABLET BY MOUTH TWICE A DAY FOR BLOOD PRESSURE

2 **3**

METOPROLOL TAB 25MG TAB Refills Left: 1 (of 3)
 Rx# 6543210 Qty: 60 TAB

DR. KATHLEEN LANCASTER
 VAMC FACILITY NAME 0000XX (1029710001) PH: (800) 900-0000

54 733 Round White 328

Questions/Issues?

Call us at:
877-469-5300

Recordatorio de Seguridad de los Medicamentos

Asegurase

- 1** SU NOMBRE esta en cada botella antes de tomar.
- 2** USTED sabe los nombres de sus medicamentos y por que esta tomando cada medicamento.
- 3** TOMA la dosis correcta segun recetado por su proveedor.
- 4** USTED toma cada medicamento segun las instrucciones de su proveedor.
- 5** SIGA todas las instrucciones de advertencia indicadas en su receta.

VETERAN NAME (LAST, FIRST) **1** Evite alcoholic beverages. May cause dizziness. Do not take other medicines without checking with your pharmacist. **3**

TAKE 1 TABLET BY MOUTH TWICE A DAY FOR BLOOD PRESSURE

2 **3**

METOPROLOL TAB 25MG TAB Refills Left: 1 (of 3)
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54 733 Round White 328

Preguntas/Asuntos?

Llamanos :
877-469-5300

Audie L. Murphy Memorial Veterans Hospital Outpatient Pharmacy Hours: Monday – Thursday 0800 - 1830; Friday 0900 – 1830. Weekends: Saturday and Sunday 0800 – 1630. Closed on holidays – (210) 617-5300, Ext. 19400.

Kerrville VA Medical Center Pharmacy Hours: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday 0800 – 1730. Wednesday 0830– 1630.

North Central Federal Clinic Pharmacy Hours: Monday–Friday 0800–1630.

San Antonio Northwest Health Care Center Pharmacy Hours: Monday–Friday, 0800–1630. Check in closes at 1615.

For Prescription refills we suggest using **MyHealthVet** site (see page 9), or the Automated Refill Line:

1. (800) 209-7377 Option 1.
2. Wait for the automated attendant to answer.
3. Enter your entire Social Security Number, then press the # key. Wait for an answer.
4. Press 2, then wait for an answer.
5. Press 1, then wait for an answer.
6. Enter your Prescription number, then press the # key. Wait for an answer.
 - a. To refill additional prescriptions, press 1 and repeat the process.

Order your refills at least two weeks before it's due for prompt processing and delivery time. For regularly prescribed medications, it is wise to request the next refill on the day you receive one in the mail, as the system will remember where you are in line and mail the next refill to you on time!

Patient Safety

South Texas Veterans Health Care System is committed to providing a safe environment for our Veterans and their families. Here are active steps you can take that help you stay safe:

- Ask questions if you have any doubts or concerns or if you don't understand something.
- Write down your questions so you don't forget them.
- If you think something is wrong, speak up; you have the right to ask about your health care.
- Know what your treatment will include and how long it should last.
- Know all your medications and bring them with you to your next appointment, including prescribed medicines and vitamins, supplements, etc.
- When a new medicine is ordered you will be given an updated list of all your medicines.
- Bring your Veteran ID card with you when you pick up your medicines as proof of identification is needed to receive the right medicine.
- Each time you check in, check-in staff should confirm your current mailing address and phone number; make sure the VA has your correct mailing address for medications-by-mail.
- Make sure you understand all discharge instructions and any follow-up appointments.
- Get a written copy of the instructions to take home with you.
- Get reliable health information through the Veterans Health Library at www.myhealth.va.gov

Clinic Appointments

Don't Be a "No-Show": Please make every effort to keep your scheduled appointment. If you can't make it to your appointment, please call us to cancel or reschedule the appointment which will allow us to fill that slot with another Veteran. Check in at least 15-minutes prior to the scheduled appointment time. While we try to see all patients at their scheduled time, in some cases this is not always possible. If you feel that you need to be seen before your scheduled appointment, you can call your primary care nurse or the Telecare nurse for help.

Primary Care

The VA organizes primary care around the Patient Aligned Care Teams (PACT). Your primary care is delivered by teams including your Primary Care Provider (PCP), nursing, pharmacy, mental health, social work, nutrition, etc.

- Please complete labs one week prior to your appointment.
- Please remember, you must be seen by your PCP at least once a year to stay in your clinic or you may lose your preferred assignment to that particular clinic.

Telecare Services

You have access to telecare services 24 hours a day, 365 days a year (bilingual services also available). Call the Telecare Nurse if you have symptoms, questions, or need advice about any health issue; the Telecare Nurse may be able to provide guidance without a VA appointment. The Telecare Nurse can also help you change your PCP and provide referrals as needed. Call the VA Telecare Nurse at the first sign of a problem at (210) 949-9702 (San Antonio) or toll free at 888-686- 6350. Please be prepared to provide the following information:

- Your full name and current address.
- Your area code and phone number(s).
- Your social security number.
- Your reason for calling the Telecare Nurse.

Visual Impairment Service Team (VIST) Program

The Visual Impairment Service Team (VIST) Program provides comprehensive services to Veterans who are legally blind or have a visual impairment. The goal of the program is to use resources in the VA and the community to help in adjusting to vision loss through low-vision exams, local rehabilitation training, and comprehensive residential training. For more information call: (210) 949-8926.

Telecommunication Device for the Deaf (TDD)

Hearing loss and tinnitus (ringing in the ears) are common with our Veterans. If you are having difficulty with hearing, understanding others, or have tinnitus, please call (210) 949-9702 for an appointment with Audiology. You do not need a referral from your primary care physician for this evaluation. Yes, we can provide hearing aids! There are also devices that your audiologist can provide for home use when hearing aids are not enough or are inappropriate.

VA Video Connect

VA Video Connect makes VA healthcare more convenient and enables you to meet with you providers through secure and private videoconferencing sessions. You can visit with your providers in a virtual medical room, from anywhere, using the camera on your phone, computer, or tablet.

Real-time access to your VA Care Team Through VA Video Connect

1. **Visit the website.** Learn more about VA Video Connect at <https://mobile.va.gov/appstore>
2. **Get set up.** Open VA Video Connect by selecting your appointment link. VA Video Connect opens in a web browser Android, macOS, and Windows. (Apple iPhone and iPad users will need to download the mobile app from the Apple App Store).
3. **Test your device.** Select “Visit the VA Video Connect test site” to set up your microphone and speakers. You can ask your VA Care Team for a practice call.
4. **Troubleshoot technical problems.** Need help? Call the VA National Telehealth Technology Help Desk at 866-651-3180 or 703-234-4483, Monday through Saturday, 0700 to 2300 Eastern Time.

Dental Service

The STVHCS Dental Service provides a full range of dental treatment to eligible Veterans. Eligibility for outpatient dental care is not the same as for most other VA medical benefits. Dental benefits are provided by VA according to law. Or your assigned Primary Care Social Worker may be able to arrange dental care outside the VA (usually with a wait).

For scheduling at ALMMVH and Kerrville VAMC Dental Clinics, call: (210) 949-9702

Pain Management

Pain is a personal experience and is different for everyone. The health care team wants to work with you to manage your pain. Be prepared to describe features of your pain to your health care provider such as: when it started, where it is, what it’s like, and how severe.

Remember to Use the Pain Scale on the next page (0 = no pain; 10 = worst possible pain ever)



0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Pain Care Patient Rights

As a person who experiences significant pain, you can expect the following:

- Information about pain and different methods of pain relief with specialists who provide state of the art pain management.
- Access to health care providers committed to pain prevention and management who will respond quickly to your reports of pain and who believe your reports of pain.
- That pain management will be part of your treatment plan.

The overuse of prescription narcotics has been recognized as a dangerous and frustrating problem for patients in the U.S. Pain specialists and PCPs have learned that the chronic use of these medications (longer than 10–14 days) is often *no more helpful* than alternative medicine. Your physician may use alternative techniques to manage pain (like physical therapy, yoga, acupuncture, etc.).

Sleep Disorders

We provide full service diagnostic sleep testing and treatment for Veterans. Access is by referral from your primary care provider, who is your first stop for many sleep concerns.

The Sleep Lab is located on the 7th Floor of ALMMVH, Room B703. Hours: 0800–1600 (PCP referral needed). For scheduling, call: (210) 617-5320 or send a secure message through MyHealthVet.

Women Veterans Program

We recognize the importance of the contributions made by women Veterans in their service to the country and encourage these eligible Veterans to utilize VA health care benefits. The STVHCS Women Veterans Program provides information about enrollment & establishing Primary Care, available services, filing claims, and other resources.

In addition to a 24/7 Emergency Department (ER) and comprehensive gender-specific Primary Care, specialty care services include Mental Health (including, but are not limited to, care related to depression and anxiety, suicidality, homicidality, and Military Sexual Trauma (MST)), Obstetrics, and Gynecology. We are proud of our providers who have earned the designation as a Women's Health provider for comprehensive health care for women Veterans, including female gender-specific health care (breast examinations, pap tests, and pelvic examinations).

OB & GYN specialty care is also available with a consult/referral from your PCP. The GYN service has three fulltime physicians including a Urogynecologist who addresses chronic pelvic pain and bladder and/or vaginal prolapse concerns through pelvic floor therapy and minimally invasive surgeries. There is also a Pelvic Floor Therapist who is assigned to the GYN specialty service. Basic and advanced infertility services, to include in vitro fertilization (IVF), are available. Veterans must meet the non-negotiable criteria for VA's IVF program and have a GYN/medical indication.

For non-emergent assistance, please call the Women Veterans Program at (210) 949-9449, 0730 - 1630. Monday through Friday, excluding Federal holidays. The Maternity Care Coordinator assigned to the Women Veterans Program can be reached at (210) 517-5300, Ext. 16098.

Mental Health

VA offers a variety of treatment options that can help Veterans recover from mental health and substance use concerns. Services are available in a range of settings (Primary Care, outpatient clinics, in the community, or at the hospital) and can help with problems like depression, anxiety, relationship concerns, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), serious mental illness, and drugs/alcohol use. Most of our clinics consist of interdisciplinary teams working together with Veterans and their families to help Veterans have a better overall quality of life. To get connected to Mental Health Services, request a referral from your Primary Care Provider.

Military Sexual Trauma (MST): You may request to speak with the STVHCS MST Coordinator by calling the main number: (210) 617-5300.

Stand Up to Stop Harassment Now!

Resources for reporting harassment are available to everyone. Harassment, by a known entity or a

stranger, should be reported as soon as possible after an episode of harassment has occurred. Anyone may report any incident of harassment, whether criminal or non-criminal to VA Police at (210) 617-5168 and is located on the 1st floor main lobby at ALMMVH.

When You Are Admitted to the Hospital

If your admission is scheduled (between 0830 – 1630, Monday - Friday), go to **Enrollment and Eligibility** in the Welcome Center for processing. If you are scheduled for a “same day” procedure or surgery, your team will have given you directions as to where to present for processing as it will depend upon your procedure. For any questions or concerns during your stay, ask a member of your health care team.

Kerrville VA Medical Center Admissions: All Admissions report to the Admission/Outpatient Area (Room 112 on first floor).

Visiting Hours: South Texas Veterans Health Care System has a liberal visitation policy in most areas. The hospital allows for the presence of a support individual of the patient's choice, unless the individual's presence oversteps other patient's rights, safety, or interferes with a patient's recovery. The patient's physician can limit or extend the visitation practice. Any limits or extensions to visitation will be noted in the patient's medical record.

Children under the age of 18 may visit if providers determine that the visit is in the best interest of the patient and the child has no evidence of communicable diseases. A responsible adult over the age of 18 must accompany the minor at all times. The patient's physician may make exceptions based on age, the patient's best interest, impact on other patients, and the safety of the minor.

Overnight stays by a family member in the room is generally not allowed. Exceptions may be granted on a case-by-case basis if nursing and physician agree.

Community Living Centers: All VA Community Living Centers (CLC) have unrestricted visiting hours. Please be considerate of all residents, especially with regard to noise. Children cannot be left unattended. The CLC resident may not wish to have visitors or may wish to set other limits on visits. We will respect the Veteran's wishes for visits. Kerrville VAMC visitors please contact the unit or hospital operator at (830) 896-2020 to gain entrance after 2100.

Extended Care Services

The VA provides many services to help Veterans in the home or in the community. You may be referred to a program to help you recover from the current hospital stay or prevent re-hospitalization. **You can access these through the social workers in your clinic or ward.**

Palliative Care: Palliative care is a program provided to treat and lessen severe symptoms from chronic illness or those who have a terminal illness. This care is delivered by an interdisciplinary team that focuses on improving the quality of life of seriously ill Veterans. The team provides support to both you and your family. Palliative care may be provided any time during a Veteran's illness.

Geriatric Evaluation and Management (GEM) Clinic: The GEM Clinic provides comprehensive medical and psychosocial assessments including memory care and support. These interdisciplinary teams provide care both at the Audie L. Murphy Memorial Veterans Hospital and Kerrville VA Medical Center for Veterans at least 65 years of age diagnosed with memory difficulties or dementia.

Social Work: Social workers are assigned to each inpatient unit, to each medical team within the hospital, and to each outpatient clinic and primary care team. Social workers can help with:

- social, emotional, and family problems.
- obtaining community resources such as meals and shelter.
- obtaining home services such as a home health aide.
- planning your care after discharge.

Contact Social Work through a member of your treatment team or call the Social Work office at ALMMVH and Kerrville VA Medical Center: (210) 949-9702.

Patient Health Education

It is your right to get the information you need to understand your health, health problems and health care. Please take an active part in learning about your health.

- Tell us what you want to learn.
- Ask us to help you get the care you need.
- Tell us if you need special help with hearing, seeing, or understanding.
- Ask us for more information on all education classes and support groups available.

STVHCS offers a variety of ways for you to get health information for an active role in your health care:

- Patient Health Educator at (210) 617-5300, Ext. 17090 at ALMMVH.
- Special classes for Veterans and their families (Diabetes, Weight Management, Nutrition, and Smoking Cessation, etc.).
- Support groups for Veterans and their families; (e.g., Alzheimer's & Dementia Support Group; Cancer Support Group, Bereavement, Caregiver etc.).
- Health Education materials available in waiting areas and from your health care providers.

Diabetes Education: The diabetes education program will teach you how to balance food with activity, how to check your blood sugar, use a blood glucose meter, and help you with your medications. Patients are scheduled for individual or group appointments. For more information, call the (210)771-5098 or (210)986-0571. Veterans with diabetes are encouraged to schedule an annual retinal eye exam at 833-284-7212.

Veterans' Health Library: The Veterans Health Library is your online source for Veteran-focused information. It contains printable health and medication information in both English and Spanish; more than 150 videos and workbooks with text, audio and visual learning elements are available. Visit the library 24/7 at: <http://www.Veteranshealthlibrary.va.gov> or via MyHealththeVet at <http://www.myhealth.va.gov>



Carrying extra weight? Losing weight and keeping it off can be one of the best things you can do to protect your health as you reduce the risk for heart disease, diabetes, some cancers, sleep apnea, and back and joint pain. This program is a comprehensive nutrition, behavioral, and physical activity program designed for Veterans who want assistance with managing their weight.

Schedule to attend a class: call (210) 949-3995. For questions about the MOVE! program or if you don't receive a call back within 24 hours, please contact the STVHCS MOVE! Coordinator at (210) 956-4359.

Whole Health

The VA Whole Health approach is to help you accomplish the mission you create for yourself. Through your active participation and the *strengths and abilities that you identify*, we will support you improving your health and wellbeing. There are well-being programs available to you with no consult needed by calling (210) 949-9702, including: Battlefield Acupuncture, Mindfulness Meditation, Nutrition Clinic, Tai Chi, and Yoga.

Orientation: Audie L. Murphy Memorial Veterans Hospital at 7400 Merton Minter Blvd., San Antonio, TX 78229. Tuesday/Thursday at 1000 in the ALMMVH recreation room, B101. Wednesday evenings at 1730 in the Polytrauma building on the First Floor, Room 108. Reserve your seat by calling 1-877-537-7348. For questions contact your Whole Health Coaches at (210)617-5300, Ext. 15088.

Mobile Apps: There are free mobile apps available to help you on your wellness journey. You can download these and many more at: <https://mobile.va.gov/appstore/Veterans>

- Anger Management
- Ask a Pharmacist
- CBT-I Coach (Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Insomnia)
- Mindfulness Coach App
- Move! Coach App (Weight Mgmt)
- PTSD Coach App
- PTSD Family Coach App
- Stay Quit Coach (Smoking Cessation)
- VA Online Scheduling
- Vet Change (concerned about drinking?)



Please email Enelda.Romo@va.gov with your updates and corrections, or call Ext. 17090