

VETERANS Health MATTERS

Award Winning Wellness Magazine for VISN 8 Veterans in Florida, South Georgia, Puerto Rico & the U.S. Virgin Islands

Components of Proactive Health and Well-Being



INSIDE:
The Whole Health System: What it Means for Veterans

HOW ARE WE DOING?

Complete the Reader Questionnaire on page 5

To Our Readers

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Veterans Health Matters is a quarterly health and wellness magazine for Veterans produced by the VISN 8 Office of Communication. VISN 8 is the country's largest network of VA hospitals and clinics serving Veterans in Florida, South Georgia, Puerto Rico and the Caribbean. Your feedback is welcome. If you'd like to comment on the content, please e-mail or write to:

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We are very excited about rolling out the new Whole Health model of care in our VA Sunshine Healthcare Network. This approach, described on page 3, looks at all aspects of your health, based on what matters most to you. It moves beyond "fixing" a health problem to "healing" the whole individual. Along with medical care, many other therapies, programs, and supports are available to help you achieve your best quality of life.

To learn about a Veteran's experience with Whole Health, read Sila's story on page 4. She wants fellow Veterans to know what she gained by embracing this approach, and how it helped her develop a new sense of purpose in her life.

Many of us enjoy outdoor grilling year-round, but perhaps more during summer holidays and family get-togethers. To keep you and your family safe, take a few minutes to review grilling safety guidelines on page 6. Also, check out a new summertime grill recipe on page 7.

Finally, please let us know what you think about this **Veterans Health Matters** magazine and the annual **Healthy Living Calendar** by completing the questionnaire on page 5. Your feedback is very important and helps us serve you better.

Be well!

Miguel H. LaPuz, M.D.
Network Director, VISN 8

Suicide Prevention

Be There – and Help Save A Life



If you are a Veteran or know a Veteran who is showing warning signs, please ask for help.

Calling a friend, meeting a colleague for coffee, having dinner with a relative — these everyday actions can seem small, but they have the power to make a huge difference for someone going through a difficult time. Many Veterans may not show signs they intend to harm themselves, but some actions can be a signal that a Veteran may need help – and it could be you!

The Veterans Crisis Line connects Veterans and their family/friends with qualified, caring VA responders through a toll-free confidential hotline, online chat, or text. Veterans and those who care about them can call 1-800-273-8255 and Press 1 to get started; chat online or send a text message to 838255. These services operate 24/7, 365 days a year. Visit www.veteranscrisisline.net.



Whole Health: Coming to a Facility Near You

What is Whole Health all about?

Whole Health is an approach to health care that empowers and equips Veterans to take charge of their health and well-being and to live their life to the fullest. The Whole Health System includes conventional treatment, but also focuses on self-empowerment, self-healing, and self-care.

It's a paradigm shift from "fixing" a Veteran's health problem and moving on to "healing" the whole individual for life. It addresses all aspects of your health and well-being, based on what matters most to YOU.

How does a Veteran get started with Whole Health?

The journey begins with the Introduction to Whole Health sessions at your local VA medical center where you are enrolled for care. These sessions are led by your peers who will guide you through filling out your personal health inventory and will help you create your personal health plan (PHP). Once completed, we encourage you to share your personal health plan with your Patient Aligned Care team (PACT).

What happens next?

You can further explore your PHP in the 'Taking Charge of My Life and Health' sessions and/or be assigned a Whole Health coach. You may also wish to practice self-care through programs and classes that relate to the Proactive Components of Health & Well-Being. They include mind (stress reduction, mental health & happiness, and mindfulness);

The journey begins with self-exploration and developing a personal health plan.



working the body (VA's MOVE! Weight management program); recharging (sleep and restoration); food and drink (nutrition class); personal development (financial health session); and family, friends and coworkers (healthy relationships class). Classes in yoga, tai chi, massage therapy, and acupuncture may be offered as well.

It's important to know that all of these conventional and complementary approaches are connected. Improving one area can benefit other areas in your life and influence your overall physical, emotional, and mental health & well-being.

Does a Veteran have to participate in every aspect of Whole Health?

Absolutely not. Because this is your life plan, you pick and choose what will work best for you. You are completely in the driver's seat.

At what stage is Whole Health at each facility in the VA Sunshine Healthcare Network?

In early 2018, the James A. Haley Veterans' Hospital in Tampa, Fla. was the only hospital system in the VISN 8 network with a fully engaged Whole Health program. It is one of 18 VA sites piloting the program. The West Palm Beach VA Medical Center is a Whole Health "design site" and is also beginning the model there.

All PACT teams throughout the network will be trained on how to integrate Whole Health into a patient's care plan, according to Jacquelyn Paykel, M.D., the Tampa VA's Whole Health director. As the model rolls out, each medical center will offer an Introduction to Whole Health class. Then, as programs grow, there will be more topics and classes available.

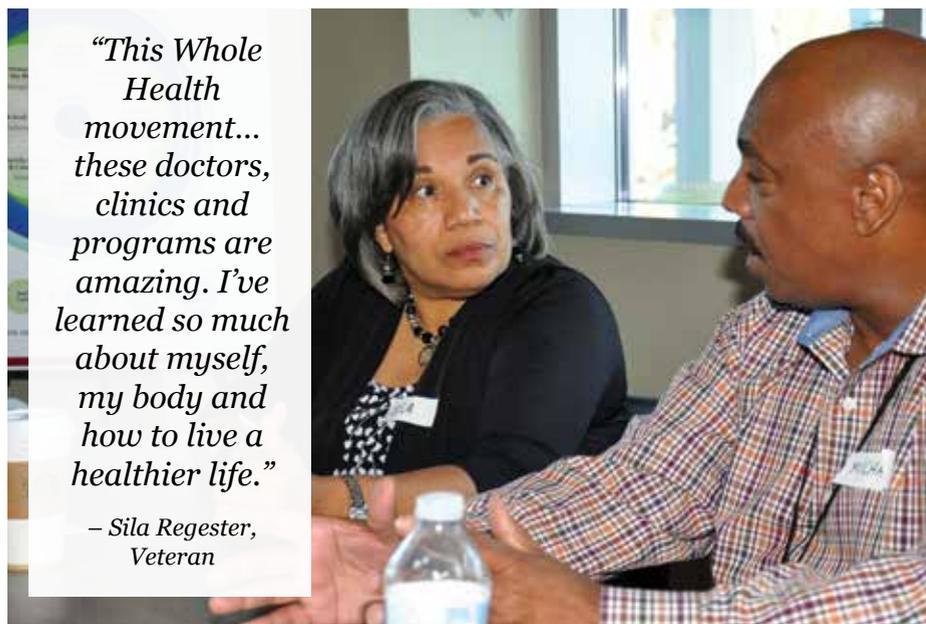


Whole Health: The Veteran Experience

Sila Regester retired from the military in 2001 after 22 years of service and found herself lost. Suffering from chronic pain and depression, she rarely left the house. After all, the former U.S. Army drill instructor had nowhere to go and no one to lead anymore. The uniform she had loved so much hung in her closet, a painful reminder of a past life and a bleak future.

“I had pain everywhere from injuries during my time in the military. I suffered from migraines, couldn’t sleep, I lost the desire for life. My world just flip-flopped. Many of the programs in place today in the VA for Veterans didn’t exist back then and I didn’t really know how to get the help I needed,” the Cuba-born native says in her thick New York accent.

Things got a little better when she found a banking job that gave her a sense of purpose, but after 11 years, she was abruptly laid off when her department closed. She describes this as her absolute lowest point. “By that time, I was really sick. In constant pain, with osteoarthritis, headaches, sleep deprivation—and to make matters worse, my husband and I hadn’t been intimate in five years. I needed help,” she recalls.



“This Whole Health movement... these doctors, clinics and programs are amazing. I’ve learned so much about myself, my body and how to live a healthier life.”

– Sila Regester,
Veteran

Pictured: U.S. Army Veteran Sila Regester, left, talks with fellow Veteran Michael Watson during a Whole Health orientation session at the VA Primary Care Annex in Tampa. VA photo by Alicia Burden.

The road back to Whole Health began with her visit to the Women’s Center at the James A. Haley Veterans’ Hospital in Tampa, Fla. There, Sila met Jacquelyn Paykel, M.D., a board-certified gynecologist, integrative women’s health specialist, and medical director of the hospital’s Sexual Health, Incontinence and Pelvic Pain Clinic. Dr. Paykel worked with Sila to help her better understand her sexual health issues in the context of all her other issues. Together, they developed a treatment plan that restored the missing intimacy in her marriage. “For us as a couple, it was life-changing,” Sila says.

It was also Dr. Paykel and other professionals on Sila’s Patient Aligned Care Team (PACT) who helped her think about the bigger picture when it came to her health—defining what was important in her life and setting goals on how to get there, taking advantage of the many services and programs VA has to offer—the Whole Health concept.

“These programs saved my life. I now have a sense of purpose and an amazing new life. I want this for other Veterans too, so they don’t have to waste as much time as I did sitting idle.”



Watch this short, entertaining video about Whole Health

Go to: www.youtube.com/user/VeteransHealthAdmin

Search: Whole Health Care Comes to Life Through Interactive Patient Care

Learn more about Whole Health. Visit www.va.gov/PATIENTCENTEREDCARE/veterans-teaching-veterans.asp.

★ Your Opinion Matters! ★

Please complete the questionnaire.

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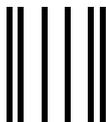
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Grilling Safety

Keep safety in mind to help prevent your grill from becoming a fire hazard. Also, practice food safety to help prevent serious foodborne illnesses. Here are some grilling tips to keep you and your family safe:

Fire Safety

- Place your grill well away from your home, deck, and any overhanging branches.
- Keep children and pets at least three feet away from the grill.
- Clean your grill and drip tray regularly by removing grease or fat build-up.
- Open your grill lid before lighting it. For more safety tips, visit www.nfpa.org and search "grilling safety."



Food Safety

- Keep meat, poultry, and seafood refrigerated until you are ready to grill.
- Wash your hands before and after handling raw meat, poultry, and seafood.
- Use clean utensils and plates to remove cooked meat from the grill.
- Use a food thermometer to check internal temperatures:
 - Poultry-165° F
 - Burgers (beef, pork, lamb, and veal)-155° F
 - Steaks, chops, fish, and seafood-145° F

FEATURED RECIPE!

Grilled Savory Salmon



INGREDIENTS

- 4, 4-ounce salmon filets
- 1 tsp. dried basil
- 1 tsp. dried oregano
- 1 tsp. black pepper
- 1/4 tsp. salt
- 2 Tbsp. canola oil
- 2 Tbsp. lemon juice

DIRECTIONS

1. In a glass jar, combine all ingredients except salmon. Seal and shake.
2. Place salmon in a baking dish and pour marinade to fully coat all sides. Marinate in fridge for 30 minutes.
3. Preheat grill to medium-high. Grill salmon 4 minutes on each side or until internal temperature reaches 145° F.
4. Serve with your favorite grilled veggies or salad.

NUTRITIONAL INFORMATION:

Serves 4. Per serving: 238 calories, 16 g total fat, 3 g saturated fat, 0 g carbohydrates, 0 g dietary fiber, 23 g protein, and 206 mg sodium.

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To receive a printed copy of Veterans Health Matters through the U.S. mail or sent directly to your email account, just let us know and we'll add you to the mailing list. Ways to reach us are as follows:

By Mail:

1. Complete this form with the Veteran's full name and current mailing address.
2. Cut out the form and insert in a stamped envelope.
3. Mail to:
American Institute for Preventive Medicine
c/o VISN 8 – VHM
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Farmington Hills, MI 48334

(Please print)

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Be sure to include the above information.

By Phone:

(800) 345-2476 – press 5 for English or press 6 for Spanish



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VEText

Got a cell phone? Veterans enrolled for care at VA hospitals and clinics in VISN 8 can confirm or cancel appointments via automated, interactive text messaging. Watch for more info from your VA health care facility!

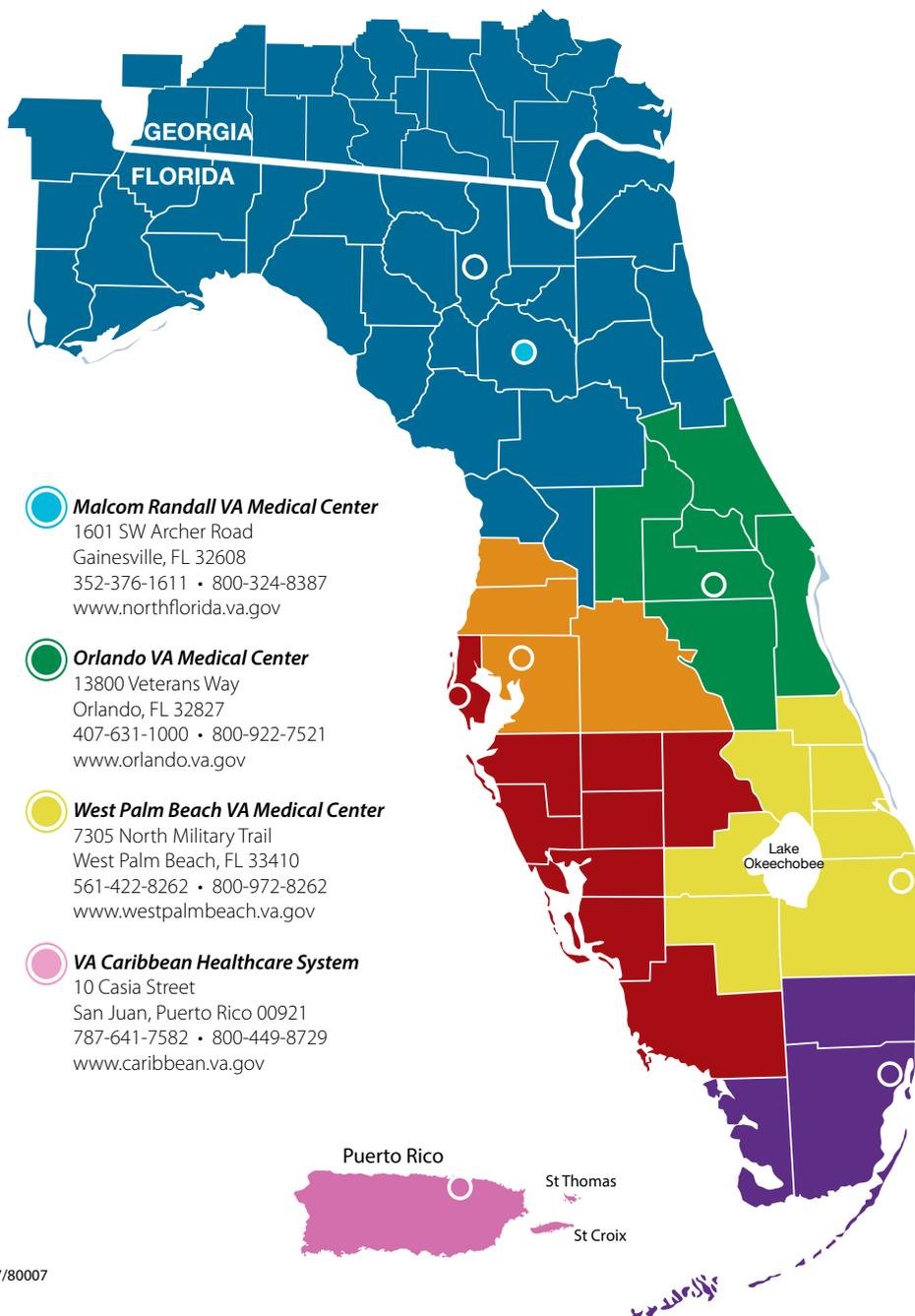
VA Sunshine Healthcare Network

www.visn8.va.gov



at all Medical Centers

Find a VA hospital or clinic near you:
www.va.gov/health/FindCare.asp



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