



APIC NYC CHAPTER: Fulfilling the 4th Mission VA NY Harbor Health Care System

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CHIEF, INFECTION
CONTROL/WOUND CARE/VISN 2
IC LEAD

VA Mission

- ▶ To fulfill President Lincoln's promise “To care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow, and his orphan” by serving and honoring the men and women who are America’s veterans.
- ▶ VA carries out four specific missions to make good on that commitment.
- ▶ **Veterans Health Care:** VA’s Veterans Health Administration is the largest integrated health care network in the United States, with 1,255 health care facilities serving 9 million enrolled Veterans each year.

VISN 2

- ▶ Veterans Integrated Service Networks (VISN) Rural Consultants. Veteran care is provided through Veterans Integrated Service Networks (VISN).
- ▶ 4 Health CARE SYSTEMS
- ▶ 14 MEDICAL CENTERS
- ▶ 57 Community Based Outpatient Clinics(CBOC)
- ▶ 20 Vet Centers
- ▶ 1 Behavioral outpatient clinic

WHO WE ARE- VA NY HARBOR

- ▶ VANYHHS a is a Level 1a major interdisciplinary teaching facility (3 separate campuses including a CLC):
 - ▶ NY Campus
 - ▶ Bk Campus
 - ▶ St Albans Campus (CLC)
- ▶ With service-lines serving medical inpatient and outpatients, surgical (Open Heart and Neurosurgery referral center) and inpatient and outpatient, 2 Emergency Departments, and multiple in hospital and community-based outpatient clinics (CBOC).
- ▶ There is a large outpatient psychiatric population, with admissions for medical co-morbidities as well as PRTTP. Home-Based Primary Care nursing care is also provided.

Our COVID Journey

- ▶ Began January as Palo Alto VA got the first Set of COVID-19 patients from cruise ship
- ▶ ED triage training began January 30
- ▶ Efforts made to convert in person URI symptoms to Telehealth
- ▶ In February, decision made at the VISN level to make NY Harbor the Covid Hospital for the VISN.
- ▶ Facility Incident command initiated

Fourth Mission Proclamation

- ▶ VA's "Fourth Mission" is to improve the Nation's preparedness for response to war, terrorism, national emergencies, and natural disasters by developing plans and taking actions to ensure continued service to Veterans, as well as to support national, state, and local emergency management, public health, safety and homeland security efforts.
- ▶ Also, included in the deployment of the Mercy and Comfort ships to NY and CA
- ▶ Building temporary hospitals in NY and other states

The 4th Mission- A VISN Assignment

- ▶ Communication within VA
 - ▶ Daily Facility incident command meetings
 - ▶ Daily VISN Command meetings
- ▶ Communication Outside VA
 - ▶ Collaboration with FEMA on assets/resources allocation
 - ▶ Collaboration with HHC hospitals and other Private Hospitals

The 4th Mission- A VISN Assignment

- ▶ Staffing and Training
- ▶ VA mandated all staff to be trained for Covid (PPE)
- ▶ Staff detailed from NY campus to BK
- ▶ Deployment of staff from other VA/ Agency
- ▶ Retraining of staff for other areas
- ▶ Deployment to State Veterans home in NY and NJ

Resources

- ▶ Human:

 - Appointment of Transfer Tzar to coordinate transfer of non-veteran

- ▶ Engineering:

 - ▶ Conversion of regular rooms to Negative pressure rooms

 - ▶ Creating more Critical care beds

- ▶ Supplies:

 - ▶ PPE

 - ▶ Dialysis

Challenges

Logistics

Identification of patients and hospital of origin

Staffing-finding the right mix

Fit testing

Lessons Learned

Start Early

Communicate, Communicate,
Communicate

Ongoing training

Collaborate with other IPs –
You are not alone

Thank You

- ▶ Thank you to IC staff at NY Harbor and leadership at NY Harbor and the VISN

