



New imaging technology helps dental patients

Fisher Clinic, USS Osborne field new state-of-the-art cone beam imaging equipment that will save money

By Jayna Legg
Lovell FHCC Public Affairs

For two and a half years, nearly 2,500 oral surgery patients of Lovell FHCC's USS Osborne and Fisher dental clinics had to go to private providers for CT scans, at a cost exceeding \$780,000.

Fisher Clinic dental staff had to transport patients from Great Lakes Naval Station to the community to seek the service, called oral and maxillofacial cone beam computed tomography (CBCT). The daily trips meant recruits lost valuable training time, and staff members had to take time away from providing patient care in the clinics.

Those days are over. Today, 18 CBCT scan technicians scan 20 to 40 Navy recruits, students and active duty staff members a day, Monday through Friday, using two new CBCT machines.

The Carestream imaging units, purchased for \$361,000, are located in remodeled clinic spaces designed especially to accommodate the technology.

"It has now become the standard of care, even higher than civilian dentists, to diagnose and conduct treatment plan oral pathology and complicated tooth extractions," said USS Osborne Dental Department Head Cmdr. Jeffrey Zeller. "And patient safety is improved with zero poor patient outcomes since starting."

Zeller estimated there have been about 1,000 scans so far, saving the government more than \$300,000 since last December, when Carestream trained employees on how to use the equipment, and USS Osborne started using the machines.

The technology goes a step further, Zeller explained, because each scan is read by an FHCC credentialed Navy oral and maxillofacial radiologist (OMR) – using telemedicine – at Naval Medical Center (NMC) Portsmouth in Portsmouth, Va. The results are then placed in the patient's medical record and are available for future studies if needed. The radiologist, Cmdr. Marti Evers, is "a civilian-trained dentist-radiologist," Zeller said.



In the top photo, Dr. Susan Sikora (foreground) from Carestream Dental demonstrates the new equipment to USS Osborne staff. In the bottom photo, Sikora directs Hospitalman Melvin Panlilio on how to use the imaging technology. (Photos by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Darren M. Moore)

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Telehealth Education Delivered truck came to Lovell FHCC in May to demonstrate new telehealth technology. (Photo by Mass Communication Specialist Darren M. Moore)

TED truck team shows telehealth technology

By Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Darren M. Moore
Lovell FHCC Public Affairs

Telehealth Education Delivered (TED) visited Lovell Federal Health Care Center (FHCC) May 28, showcasing telehealth technology and equipment for staff, patients, volunteers and the public.

TED is a truck equipped with

telehealth equipment to provide education and training on telehealth technology and patient-care solutions.

Dozens of Lovell FHCC staff and patients visited the TED truck while it was on campus, including Reina Crawford and Alice Lemke, nurses in the Lovell FHCC Primary Care department, who said as new nurses, they have not used telehealth before.

"I didn't know that it was visual," Lemke said. "I knew it as audio, and all the other equipment that it comes with, I didn't know that it was that extensive. It's nice that (TED gives us) more of an idea of what telehealth really is and what it can offer."

Leslie Fernyhough, telehealth education specialist at Iron Bow Technologies, is spending much of 2015 on the road in the TED truck.

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From the Desk of the Director

‘Being a Lean organization is more than just a catch phrase’

Huddle Board excellent example of a Lean tool that leads to tangible results; compliments our mission



By Dr. Stephen Holt
Lovell FHCC Director

Being a Lean organization is more than just a catch phrase ... it describes the way we work, how we think, and how we function as an organization. It compliments and defines the focus to our mission, vision, and values. It takes us from being a facility that provides care to a health care organization

that strives to provide the most efficient and effective care to its patients while respecting its limited resources.

Lean thinking allows our front-line staff the opportunity to improve the work they do, and it gives our managers the ability to discuss all improvement ideas with staff. It empowers everyone to make a difference using the knowledge and experience they have.

A perfect example of this is the Huddle Board: a tool used to gather ideas and vet them through a series of questions that determines if the idea aligns with the organization’s strategic goals and if the effort is the best use of limited resources to obtain the identified outcome. It also provides a way for the staff to track the progress and results of the idea using a standardized whiteboard.

There are roughly 50 Huddle Boards being used across the FHCC. One has been so successful,

it is earning national recognition. Our Sterile Processing Services (SPS) Huddle Board has been recognized and will be shared as a best practice with VISN 12. See the story on page 7.

Being a Lean organization allows us the ability to use a systematic approach to improve our day-to-day processes by providing service that is valuable to our patients and customers, both internally and externally.

The recent Rapid Improvement Events (RIEs) in the lab – focusing on specimen collection and processing – are a good example.

One event focused on improving the proper labeling of specimens from various units, wards and operating rooms. The baseline for labeling defects was improved by 10 percent, and hemolyzed (poor quality) specimens were reduced from 10 percent to 1.2 percent. Additionally, the nursing and clinic staff were provided training

and Standard Work on collection techniques and the order of drawing blood work.

The other RIE in the lab focused on the internal processing and tracking of specimens. The cycle time was decreased more than 10 minutes, weekly defects were more than halved, and lab staff satisfaction improved as well.

Lean focuses on taking a defined process from the very beginning to the very end and identifying potential sources for problems. Then small multi-disciplinary teams are put together to validate the issue, identify the causes, develop and test solutions to implement. These improved processes are then tracked to ensure sustainment.

This systematic approach is used continuously day-in and day-out to improve our operations to provide more value to our patients and our stakeholders ... making us truly a Lean organization.

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Pride Month

LESBIAN GAY BISEXUAL TRANSGENDER
PRIDE MONTH



CELEBRATING
Victories
THAT HAVE
Affirmed
FREEDOM AND
Fairness
President Barack Obama



JUNE 2015

June is Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) Pride Month. During this time, we recognize the contributions and dedication of our LGBT Sailors, Veterans and staff to meeting our mission of Readyng Warriors and Caring for Heroes.

During Pride Month, we celebrate those in the LGBT community who continue to transform the lasting ideals of dignity and worth. Throughout the month of June, we proudly rededicate ourselves to equity, dignity and respect for all, and celebrate the diversity of FHCC’s workforce.

We Serve All Who Served



Excellent care has no boundaries. VHA is committed to serving Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Veterans.



Posters developed by the VHA Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual training workgroup, Patient Care Services

The Apollo

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From the Desk of the Commanding Officer

We must follow the ‘Five C’s’ to continue to be ‘Ready to Care’

Providing care that is compassionate, competent, coordinated, communicated clearly and cost-efficient is the goal



By Captain Robert G. Buckley
Lovell FHCC Deputy Director/
Commanding Officer

In my last article, I talked about the importance of Lovell FHCC staff arriving every day, “Ready to Care” to meet our mission of “Readying Warriors and Caring for Heroes.”

In this article, I wanted to share my thoughts on how we can best accomplish this at Lovell FHCC by providing care that consistently hits the Five C’s: care that is

Compassionate, highly Competent, clearly Communicated, smoothly Coordinated and always provided in a Cost-conscious manner.

Care that is Compassionate: Health care in America is wonderfully scientifically and evidence-based but fails miserably when it is not driven from the patient’s perspective.

We should strive to project a heartfelt sense of understanding and connection with the patient’s unspoken feelings – even at times when you, as the health care staff member, don’t feel so great yourself.

No matter how busy we are in our day, look for brief opportunities to let our patients know we truly care, through a softer voice, more direct eye contact, a gentler touch, or simply by sitting down for a few precious seconds.

Care that is Competent: Health care in America is highly technical and changing for the better. Regardless of your role as a staff member at the Lovell FHCC, we

all need to strive to constantly get better. Stay up on the latest standards and strive to meet or exceed them for the benefit of our patients. (As an aside, it is also important to project competence by keeping your work spaces and your work dress as professional as possible.)

Let’s simply strive to be the best at whatever service, support or specialized capability we offer at Lovell.

Care that is Coordinated Smoothly: Health care in America is disjointed and perplexing for patients and caregivers to navigate; therefore, we all need to be expert “navigators” to help them move through our system with the least amount of hassle and disruption in their care.

Care that is Communicated Clearly: As already stated, health care in America can be overwhelming.

Everyone on Lovell’s health care team needs to go out of their way to assure our patients and their

caregivers understand their plan to address their health care needs and what to do, and who to call, if they have questions about their plan of care.

“We should strive to project a heartfelt sense of understanding and connection with the patient’s unspoken feelings.”

Capt. Robert Buckley,
Lovell FHCC Deputy Director/
Commanding Officer

Care that is Cost-Conscious: Health care in America is too expensive. We must always be ready to provide whatever is truly needed to preserve or restore health to our patients, but we must be mindful of the harm and waste that can come from unnecessary testing, procedures, referrals, cancelled appointments or delays.

Third cone beam imaging machine planned for Fisher Clinic (cont.)

Continued from page 1

“They are dentists first and then are trained as radiologists,” Zeller said.

The first “official radiologist report” for Lovell FHCC was completed Nov. 24, 2014, as a test, and the full program was implemented Dec. 9, 2014.

“This is a big step forward for excellent and efficient patient-centered care for our Navy recruit, student and staff patients.”

Cmdr. Jeffrey Zeller
Department Head, USS Osborne

Today, a hospital corpsman supervises a crew running the two machines daily to support oral surgery, oral diagnosis, endodontic, prosthodontic and periodontic specialties.

Additionally, the machines are equipped with cephalometric arms that take 3-D maxillomandibular images for patients requiring jaw surgery in the Lovell FHCC operating room on West campus, as well images for patients with cysts and cancer.

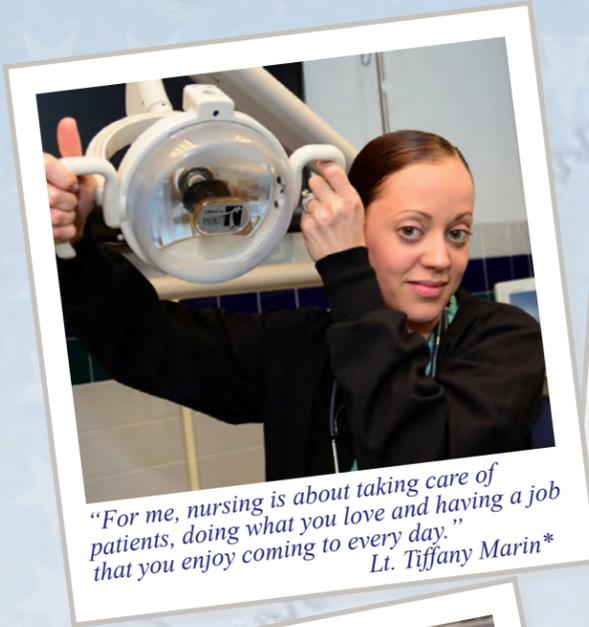


Robert Burcal (left), oral and maxillofacial surgeon, points to details in the X-ray for Lt. Cmdr. Masih M. Soltani and Lt. Cmdr. Andre Williams (right). (Photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Darren M. Moore)

A third cone beam imaging machine is on order for Fisher Clinic and will be installed as part of the final renovation there later this year.

The new machines, coupled with the expected arrival of a Navy OMR to Lovell FHCC this summer, will be “huge assets” to Lovell FHCC, Zeller said.

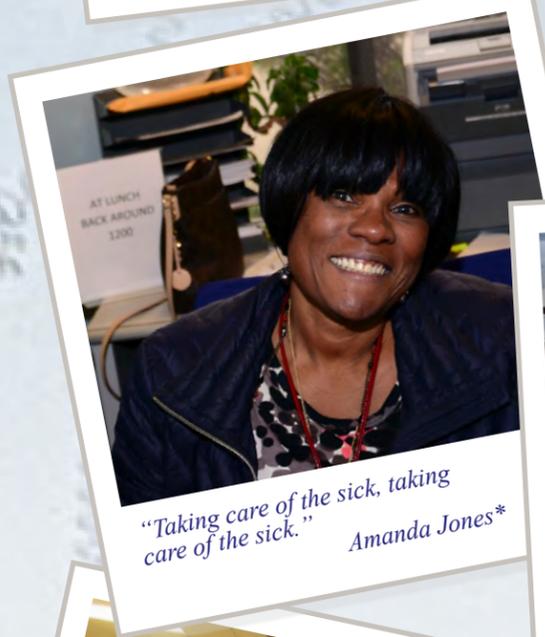
“This is a big step forward for excellent and efficient patient-centered care for our Navy recruit, student and staff patients. It’s very exciting to be a part of it.”



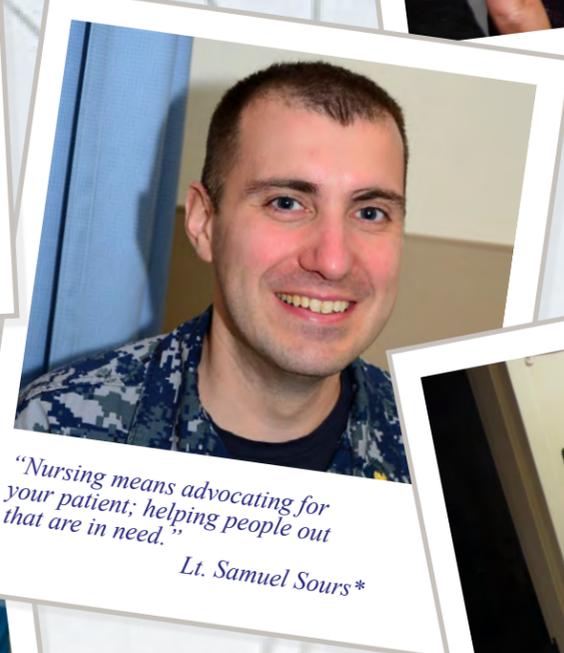
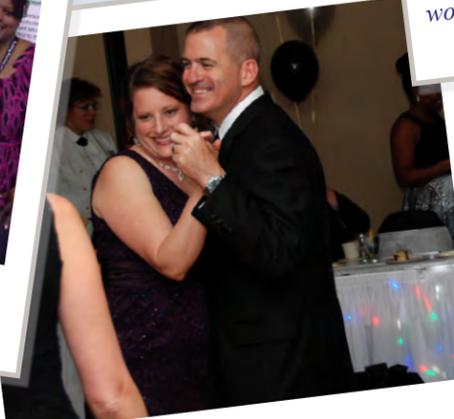
*"For me, nursing is about taking care of patients, doing what you love and having a job that you enjoy coming to every day."
Lt. Tiffany Marin**



*"It's about taking care of people ... but you combine caring and knowledge."
Lt. Eric Mellinger**



*"Taking care of the sick, taking care of the sick."
Amanda Jones**



*"Nursing means advocating for your patient; helping people out that are in need."
Lt. Samuel Sours**



Lovell FHCC celebrates Nurses Week 2015



Nominees in the category of Nurse in Expanded Role left to right, Christine Barassi-Jackson, Jim Miller and April Shaw, pose with their certificates. Miller won the honor.

Nurses danced the night away, cut cakes, held a food drive, attended classes, put on poster displays, went on outings and more to celebrate Nurses Week.

The highlight of the week was the annual nursing awards. Staff Nurse Role winner was RN Kathleen Masella, who was recognized for helping to start telehealth genetic counseling for patients of other VA medical centers.

Nurse in Expanded Role winner was RN James Miller, cited for his work to provide improved emergency response to patients in crisis outside the hospital.

Licensed Practical Nurse winner was Theresa Hnilicka, McHenry Community Based Outpatient Clinic, who was recognized as being instrumental in improving the lab results reporting process at her clinic. In the Nursing Assistant/Health Care Technician category, Annie Rogers won and was recognized for her work mentoring new employees in acute mental health and on an initiative to reduce the use of restraints.

Junior Nurse Corps Officer of the Year was Lt. Candice West, who was recognized for her leadership as the acting nurse manager on the medical-surgical floor. Susan Ruscheinsky was recognized as the RN Transition to Practice Program Graduate. Lt. Cardia Wilson received a Commander's Coin from FHCC Deputy Director/Commanding Officer Capt. Robert Buckley for heading up the Nurses Week committee.

**In the captions, read Lovell FHCC nurses' comments about their profession.*



"I love helping people, caring for them and I like seeing the outcomes from nurse to better."
Dana Murray*



"I became a nurse because I like taking care of people. I like to have people healthy."
Louise Loy*



"Hospice is the best job. I really get to know patients and their life goals and help them."
Maria Narikkattu*



"I enjoy helping others and making patients smile."
Mike Sepich*



"I am so proud I'm a nurse, and my family is happy, too."
Aleyamma Mani*



"I wanted to be a nurse since I was five years old... it's what I do, it's who I am."
Leslie Havrilak*

en Frey, former corpsman,
"Making patients your focus is rewarding, challenging and always something new."



"I get emotional and spiritual satisfaction out of caring for others."
Karen Brodlo*



"I genuinely love taking care of patients. I love helping others."
Lt. Lorelei Hughes*



"I want to help others as much as possible"
Tony Cologne*

McHenry community based outpatient clinic moves in

New space offers expanded exam rooms, more telehealth services, brighter waiting areas in a dedicated building

By Jayna Legg

Lovell FHCC Public Affairs

For months, Wonder Lake resident Pasquale Gebbia and other Veteran patients watched the progress of construction on a new McHenry Community Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC), down the street from the existing Captain James A. Lovell Federal Health Care Center (FHCC) McHenry CBOC.

The new space was much needed in addition to being long-awaited by FHCC employees, patients and their caregivers. The wait came to an end May 8, when the Village of McHenry and local Veterans organizations helped celebrate the ribbon-cutting on the 9,000-square-foot building on Municipal Drive.

“This is great,” said Gebbia, who attended the ceremony after finishing his regular weight-management class with his friends that morning in the new building.

Gebbia credits the Lovell FHCC MOVE! program, offered at the McHenry CBOC via telehealth technology, with helping him lose 30 pounds to date. He participates in an exercise class as well as the MOVE! class. Both classes are offered remotely at the McHenry CBOC by a dietitian based at the North Chicago, Ill. main hospital.

The new building was designed to improve patient flow, as well as expand clinic areas for services such as telehealth classes and consultations, teleaudiology, teleretinal imaging for diabetes patients and telecardiology. The clinic, which serves more than 3,500 Veterans a year, will continue to offer primary care, women’s health services, social work and mental health services and phlebotomy.

“This is awesome,” said MOVE! participant Howard Tweedle, a Crystal Lake Air Force Veteran. Tweedle has lost 28 pounds through MOVE! “There is so much more room, the ceilings are higher, it’s more welcoming.”

Against a backdrop of an oversized American flag draped from a McHenry Fire Protection District fire truck, municipal, political and Lovell FHCC leaders, and former astronaut Retired Navy Capt. James A. Lovell spoke and then cut the ribbon with the help of patients. McHenry Mayor Susan Low said the new clinic is “phenomenal ... I’m very proud to be here. You are taking the best care of our Veterans here.”

Lovell FHCC Director Dr. Stephen Holt likewise thanked Low and the City of McHenry for supporting the



Lovell Deputy Director/Commanding Officer Capt. Robert Buckley, U.S. Rep. Randy Hultgren and Ret. Navy Capt. James A. Lovell, former NASA astronaut and the facility’s namesake, can be seen standing on the left for the posting of the colors during the ceremony. (Photo by Hospitalman James Stewart)

clinic. “What a great community this is,” Holt said. “The citizens here have always been great supporters of Veterans.”

U.S. Representative Randy Hultgren (IL-14) also participated in the ceremony. “I’m so happy to be here to witness this opening,” Hultgren said. “What an important mission, to care for those who have given so much, what a privilege. Lovell FHCC is the first of its kind, and being the first requires continuous innovation and improvement, like what we see with this new clinic.” Lovell also referred to the

integration five years ago of Department of Veterans Affairs and Department of Defense medical services at Lovell FHCC, saying: “At Lovell, we combine the best of what the military and the VA have to offer ... I’m very proud of the progress we’ve made.”

Clinic Manager Ray Tierney, RN, said employees as well as Veterans were “wowed” when they first saw the new clinic.

“We are so blessed,” he said. “We love coming to work every day because of you, the Veterans.”

Telehealth services continuing to expand at Lovell FHCC (cont.)

Continued from page 1

“What we’ve done is we’ve brought all this technology together on this truck, and we’re doing a tour,” Fernyhough said. “I’m going to all the (Department of Veterans Affairs) VA medical facilities in the country this year and spending a day setting up and doing demos.”

TED is demonstrating technologies that enable telehealth in medical care areas such as mental health, audiology, surgery, wound care and many others.

Lovell FHCC offers dozens of telehealth services and continues to expand telehealth offerings at its three community based outpatient clinics and in patients’ homes. Telehealth services make going to the doctor, seeing a counselor, getting a consult and/or participating in a support group more convenient because the service is available closer to home, or in some cases, at home.

“Patient-centered care is what we’re promoting, and easy access to care,” said RN Bernice Arcibal, Lovell FHCC’s telehealth coordinator. “Rather than coming to a clinic here that probably has a long wait, patients are seen (in the CBOCs) a lot sooner than if they came into (the hospital).”

Arcibal said TED helped her reach out to staff, patients, volunteers and stakeholders to promote the telehealth capabilities already in use at Lovell FHCC.

Lovell FHCC offers many telehealth services, including new ones such as infectious disease, oncology and colonoscopy screening, which will be coming soon.

Fernyhough said there are several purposes for the TED tour, including giving new providers the opportunity to see telehealth equipment firsthand and to answer questions providers already using

the equipment may have.

“It’s really fun to see the interaction and see the wheels turning and people getting excited about it,” said Fernyhough, from Seattle. “I really feel like I’m helping to promote this program.”

TED had already been to more than 60 VA hospitals before arriving at Lovell FHCC.

Lovell FHCC patients so far seem to like the care they are receiving through telehealth, Arcibal said. Patients who participated in Lovell FHCC telehealth services

in 2014 and completed a patient satisfaction survey rated their overall satisfaction with telehealth as a five, the highest possible score.

For information about telehealth at the FHCC, contact Arcibal at 224-610-4508. For information about TED, visit www.TED2GO.com.

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FHCC wheelchair athletes go to Valor Games Southeast



FHCC pins new Senior Chiefs Breault and Thompson

- Deloitte volunteers at FHCC
- Fisher Clinic wins ASBP trophy
- Nursing Assistants Week
- ... and many more stories and photos!

Or Visit Our Website
@ lovell.fhcc.va.gov



Leslie Fernyhough (left), telehealth education specialist at Iron Bow Technologies, explains Telehealth Education Delivered truck features to nurses Alice Lemke and Reina Crawford. (Photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Darren M. Moore)

ONE TEAM

News Employees Can Use

Extra

Archila named Optometrist of Year

Many people may take for granted their ability to see the smiles on friends' faces every day or their own reflection in the mirror every morning.

But for one Captain James A. Lovell Federal Health Care Center employee, the gift of sight is something to be preserved every work hour of his day.

Earlier this year, Navy Cdr. Andrew Archila was named Armed Forces Optometric Society Optometrist of the Year for a slew of reasons stemming far beyond the ophthalmic chair.

Over a 15-year career, Archila, a Medical Service Corps officer, has earned multiple achievements. In addition to being named Junior Optometrist of the Year, he has conducted numerous lectures since 2006, instructed fitness programs for military members and at the local YMCA, and saw nearly 50,000 patients, ensuring each one received quality and timely care.

"Dr. Archila has been a great ambassador for Navy Optometry due to his involvement in public service, his leadership in providing quality health and vision care, his dedicated service to optometry and to the professional organizations he has been and is currently active in," wrote Navy Cdr. Margaret Read, who submitted Archila for the award when he was stationed at the Naval Branch Health Clinic, Yuma, where he was the officer in charge.

Read wrote: "He has been an advocate and a leader in the field of primary care and optometry. He strives to ensure the public health of the patients entrusted to him and is a model representative for Navy and Armed Forces optometry. Cmdr. Archila is one of the strongest leaders I've met in my Navy Career."

His efforts did not go unnoticed at Lovell FHCC when he started in June, 2014. He originally served as the acting chief of organizational performance improvement, where he instilled a culture of patient safety and quality, and raised Lean Six Sigma efforts to a higher level.

He was selected to serve as the associate director for resources at Lovell FHCC, beginning June 1. As the associate director, he is responsible for the departments of human resources, health care business, financial management and information resources management.

Archila is focused on the future and making progress. He instructs classes for younger Naval optometrists to make sure their knowledge and skills are top tier.

"A good mentor can be a great asset to a young doctor of any profession," Archila said. "I had many great mentors throughout my Navy career."



Cdr. Andrew Archila, in front of the formation, was named Armed Forces Optometrist of the Year.

Archila's coworkers said he's a pleasure to be around and is a true and genuine leader who is always looking to put the right foot forward no matter how much time and effort it may take to do so.

- Hospitalman James Stewart

GEMS honored

The Lovell FHCC Green Environmental Systems (GEMS) team has a lot to be proud of recently. May 18, EPA Region 5 representatives presented the GEMS team with a Federal Green Challenge Award in the category of employee Education and Outreach, for ongoing efforts to promote and educate staff about green practices and efforts. This is the third year Lovell FHCC has received a Green Challenge Award. FHCC was previously recognized for Overall Achievement, the Innovation Award, and the National Award for Transportation.

The Green Challenge was started to help federal facilities exceed their sustainability goals set in (presidential) executive orders by improving waste management, increasing energy efficiency, reducing water use and other environmental targets.

"There is little that compares to getting recognized for your hard work," said Joe Bozeman, GEMS program manager. "Our GEMS Committee has done some exceptional things for our facility and many others nationwide ... This is just an amazing time for our GEMS Program."

Also in May, the FHCC was awarded the Practice Greenhealth Partner for Change Award from Practice Greenhealth. The award is given to honor outstanding environmental achievements in the health care sector. The award recognizes health care facilities that continuously improve and expand upon their mercury elimination, waste reduction, recycling and source-reduction programs. At a minimum, facilities applying for this award must be recycling 15 percent of their total waste, have reduced regulated medical waste, are well along the way to mercury elimination, and have developed other successful pollution prevention programs in many different areas.

- Jayna Legg

Sterile Processing Services recognized nationally for its huddle board

The Lovell FHCC Sterile Processing Services (SPS) team has been getting national attention lately. Team members are getting noticed for a new process they do as a group for 10 minutes, three times a week, in front of a white board adorned with cards held by colored magnets, in labeled sections.

The SPS Huddle Board was implemented in October, 2014 and has met with great success, even making it into the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Office of Sterile Processing June newsletter.

FHCC leadership has been informed that the SPS team will be videotaped during one of its regular huddles, and the video will be used to highlight the SPS Huddle Board as a best practice for other VISN 12 medical centers to emulate.

"Way to go FHCC, excellent work, thanks for representing VISN 12," Rhonda Stark, health system specialist with VISN 12, wrote in an email.

Overall, SPS has had 24 improvement ideas that

have been implemented and therefore became "Celebrations" according to Lean guidelines for running huddle boards.

One big improvement reduced non-conforming products, which relates to the ISO 9001 program accreditation. There have been a variety of ideas resulting in improved patient safety, better quality service, reduced error rates, and increased productivity.

The SPS Huddle Board poster – titled "Improving Communication Utilizing a Huddle Approach" – reads: "The huddle board is one of many tools that can be utilized to improve communication and empower the SPS team."

Rebecca Strini, from OPI, helps Lovell FHCC work groups run their huddle boards. Strini said SPS staff members were "reluctant in the beginning, but today staff feel empowered, and team morale has increased. They have taken ownership of the huddle board because they see the results as they follow the progress. Overall, communication of the team has vastly improved." Kathleen Ladewig, chief of SPS, reported: "The



Left to right, JoAnn Sciacotta, Mark Morin, Donald Bartley and Keith McGland, brainstorm process improvements at the SPS Huddle Board. (Photo submitted)

team is dedicated to continuous improvement and providing quality products for Veterans, active duty military personnel and their dependents."

Capt. Robert Buckley, FHCC deputy director/commanding officer, said, "This is a wonderful testament to all the great work SPS is doing. You make us all very proud."

- Jayna Legg

Lovell FHCC cuts ribbon on new gastroenterology clinic

New clinic offers advanced services such as video-capsule endoscopy and advanced endoscopic ultrasound

By Jayna Legg
Lovell FHCC Public Affairs

Army Veteran Roberto Aponte felt it was the least he could do to help cut the ribbon on the renovated gastroenterology (GI) clinic at Lovell Federal Health Care Center May 29.

The day of the ceremony, the former Army Ranger and helicopter pilot was happy to be done with his last chemotherapy treatment. His previous cancer surgery and radiation treatments at Lovell FHCC were successful.

“I’ve received extremely good care here over the past year; they treat me very well,” said Aponte, now an aviation inspector. “I’m glad they are getting a new facility. It serves an important purpose ... there are a lot of sick Veterans, and they need this new advanced equipment and these services.”

Aponte and dozens of other Lovell FHCC employees, volunteers and patients attended the event in the main hall of the clinic to celebrate the much-needed new space.

“This is the culmination of the vision of Lovell FHCC to provide the highest quality health care to all our patients,” said Master of Ceremonies Jim Miller, associate chief nurse, Lovell FHCC department of medicine. “It demonstrates the commitment by this organization to provide a high-quality environment to deliver care to our Veteran, active duty and military dependents.”

The new clinic consolidates GI services in one place on the third floor of Building 133 on the main hospital campus in North Chicago. It combined the existing GI clinic and endoscopy, doubling the square-footage with three state-of-the-art procedure rooms and a six-bed holding/post-anesthesia care unit. New services include advanced endoscopic ultrasound (EUS) with



Glenn Duka, RN, prepares a recovery room in the newly remodeled GI section. (Photo by Mary Waterman)



Top left, Chief of Gastroenterology Dr. Axel Feller, Nursing Manager April Shaw; Deputy Director and Commanding Officer Captain Robert Buckley, Chief of Medicine Dr. Rohit Arora, patient Roberto Aponte, patient Dr. Bruce Douglas, Associate Chief Nurse of Medicine RN Jim Miller and Chief of Specialty Care Dr. Rom Stevens cut the ribbon. Below photo shows the new, six-bed holding/post-anesthesia care unit (Photos by Mary Waterman)

integrated 3-D imaging, and a dedicated hepatitis clinic that will provide more patients advanced therapies.

“What is more patient-centric than this,” asked Dr. Axel Feller, chief of GI services at Lovell FHCC, during his remarks. “The patient can come in and get all of his or her services in one place. They won’t have to be sent out for services, and our colleagues from cardiology and pulmonology will also do their procedures here, and our nurses and technicians will help them.”

Patients previously had to be referred to outside medical providers for EUS and procedures such as video capsule endoscopies, which are now available at Lovell FHCC, Feller said. “We really provide many services here.”

The idea for a Department of Defense and VA GI clinic was first proposed in 2005, when Lovell FHCC was known as the North Chicago Veterans Affairs Medical Center, and the Navy operated a separate hospital. When the two agencies integrated Great Lakes-area medical facilities in 2010 and created Lovell FHCC, the ball finally started rolling on the project, Feller said.

During his welcoming remarks, Lovell FHCC Deputy Director and Commanding Officer



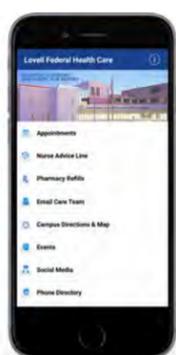
Navy Capt. Robert Buckley said, “There are thousands of patients who are going to benefit from this. Congratulations to you all. This is the kind of thing we all work for, and it will benefit staff, too, because of the improved patient flow and improved safety.”

Dr. Bruce Douglas, also a patient and World War I and Korean Veteran, helped cut the ribbon with Aponte, employees and leaders. “I’m happy to be here,” said Douglas, a university professor and volunteer at the FHCC. “This falls right in with my work helping Veterans age well and live better lives.”

For more information about the GI clinic, call 224-610-2030. To directly contact gastroenterology, call 224-610-5955; to contact endoscopy, call 224-610-2055.

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To Just Find It, scan QR code above or search “Lovell FHCC” on the Google Play or Apple App stores

PASTORAL CARE SERVICES

SUNDAY

Services are temporarily being held in Building 134, Room C108 until main chapel in Building 4 reopens

Protestant Worship: 9 a.m.
Roman Catholic Mass: 10:15 a.m.

WEEKDAYS

Building 134, Room C115 (Satellite Chapel)

-Roman Catholic Mass
Monday through Friday at 11:30 a.m.
-Protestant Communion Service
Wednesday at 10:30 a.m.

Bible Study
Wednesday at 11:45 a.m. in the Prayer/
Meditation Room, Building 133EF, Room
2E103