



First telecardiology patient seen in McHenry



Army Veteran Herbert Lang (right) is examined by his Lovell FHCC cardiologist Dr. Eric Yeung (left, who also is a Navy Lt. Cmdr.), during a follow-up appointment at the McHenry Community Based Outpatient Clinic. Lang was the very first Lovell FHCC telecardiology patient. The exam was conducted by telehealth clinical technician Paula Mantas, LPN, (center), using a telehealth cart equipped with a digital stethoscope. (Photo by Jayna Legg)

Lovell FHCC expanding telehealth services at its community clinics

By Jayna Legg
Lovell FHCC Public Affairs

Army Veteran Herbert Lang was happy and relieved his cardiology follow-up appointment at Lovell FHCC's McHenry, Ill., Community Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC) was uneventful. His cardiologist assured him he was in good shape.

"He's absolutely the best," Lang said about his doctor. "I fully trust him."

The fact that the Huntley, Ill., resident made local history was an added bonus. Lang's early August appointment in McHenry, with Dr. Eric Yeung in North Chicago, was the FHCC's very first telecardiology appointment.

Telehealth Clinical Technician Paula Mantas, LPN, rolled in a telehealth cart equipped with a digital stethoscope as well as video-conferencing equipment.

Continued on page 3

Lovell Federal Health Care Center holds Mental Health Summit

Summit an opportunity for community agencies, FHCC to improve mental health services for Veterans and military

By Jayna Legg
Lovell FHCC Public Affairs

Hospital Corpsman 2nd Class Shane Sexton carried the authority of his Navy uniform and spoke from experience when he presented on the topic of military stress to a crowd of about 160 people at Lovell FHCC's 2nd annual mental health summit.

"Mental health and the stigma associated with reaching out is still very prevalent within military units," Sexton said. "More and more members are coming forward after functioning for years with a mental health problem, and were too scared to seek psychological services ... Early diagnosis and treatment can make a huge difference in rehabilitation and recovery."

"The patient's determination to succeed depends on access to care and the willingness to use the tools of recovery," he continued. "Our job is to provide those tools and encourage the motivation to succeed."



Hospital Corpsman 2nd Class Shane Sexton, behavioral health technician, presents on the topic of Military Stress at the Lovell Federal Health Care Center annual mental health summit. About 160 people attended the event, the facility's second mental health summit. The summit linked community mental health agencies with Lovell FHCC and the Department of Veterans Affairs to improve mental health services for area Veterans, military and their families. (Photo by Jayna Legg)

Sexton, a behavioral health technician and lead petty officer in outpatient mental health, was one of three Lovell FHCC presenters to explain facets of military culture to the audience of community mental health professionals, Lovell FHCC staff and volunteers, and Veterans and their family members.

Military cultural competency was one of the subjects attendees of last year's summit said they wanted to hear about this year, said Bill Flood, Lovell FHCC division head, mental health special programs.

"Competence has long been considered central to clinical practice but only recently has the need for military and Veteran cultural competence been recognized," Flood said in his opening remarks in Bourke Hall on the FHCC's North Chicago campus. "This is unfortunate, since approximately one in 10 Americans is a service member, a Veteran or a family member."

Continued on page 3

September is Suicide Prevention Month

Confidential chat at VeteransCrisisLine.net or text to 83825



1 CALL
can make a difference
1-800-273-8255 PRESS 1

Leadership Commentary

‘We stood by each other through some demanding times’

Team at Lovell has the will and the desire to pave the path to the future of federal health care



By Captain José Acosta
Acting Lovell FHCC Director

A change of command means many things more than a goodbye for one leader and welcome for another. It is a chance for new beginnings.

I know that every one of you who works at Lovell FHCC – active duty, civilian and volunteers –

will welcome with open arms Captain Robert Buckley, our new commanding officer and deputy director. It goes without saying.

I’m confident under his leadership, the nation’s first and only integrated federal health care facility will continue to lead from the front in advancements and achievements in many areas, from the electronic health record to exemplary patient-centered care in clinics where Sailors and civilian and contracted employees work side by side.

I’m extremely proud and humbled to say I had the opportunity to serve here, and wherever I go in the future, I will continue to convey my firm belief that what you’ve accomplished here is a beacon for the future of federal health care.

I extend my sincere gratitude to each and every one of you. When

I arrived in 2012, I had no way of knowing how personally connected I would become to such a dedicated, hardworking team made up of civilian staff, Sailors, volunteers and patients.

We stood by each other through some demanding times as well as shared the sweet successes. Vince Lombardi said, “the difference between a successful person and others is not a lack of strength, not a lack of knowledge, but rather a lack in will.”

That is why our team at Lovell is successful. We have the will and the desire to show others the future of federal health care.

A list of the accomplishments you have achieved at Lovell Federal Health Care Center since the 2010 integration would fill this newsletter and more. The one thing I can say is

there is no one giant step that does it - it is a lot of little steps.

With each step we have taken as a team, we have built and refined and polished the rough edges of the model for future federal health care centers.

I would like to close with a quote from baseball great Tommy “The Clutch” Henrich: “Catching a fly ball is a pleasure, but knowing what to do with it after you catch it is a business.”

I know Captain Buckley, as well as our director when he comes on board, and each one of you will continue to “catch the ball” and make the plays, consistently providing excellent patient-centered care and carrying out our promise of *Readying Warriors and Caring for Heroes*.

Healing: Recovery in their own words ...

(Editor’s Note: “Healing” is a series written in the first person by Veterans and service members who have experienced significant medical recovery in their lives and are willing to share their stories.)

Name: Dick Davis
Branch of Service: U.S. Army
Dates of Service: 1966-1969

I was drafted into the Army Signal Corps in 1966 and served until 1969.

In 1996, I was brought into the VA (Department of Veterans Affairs) because I was going through a divorce and had just lost my career job of 21 years. I didn’t want to live anymore so I was admitted to the acute mental health unit and kept safe. I was diagnosed with bipolar disorder for the first time. Anything I could use to harm myself was taken from me, and I was prescribed meds.

“Don’t be afraid (or ashamed) to get help. There are people here who are more than willing to help.”

Dick Davis
Army Veteran
Lovell FHCC patient

After talking with my psychiatrist, the nurses, the psych techs, the workers and being there two months thinking about me, my psychiatrist and I decided together I could leave the VA and begin “Life” again. After I got out, I started with baby steps. I did very little until I felt I could handle

working part time at a non-stressful job. I worked for six months and improved until I felt I wanted to work full time. Then I got a full time job that was non-stressful.

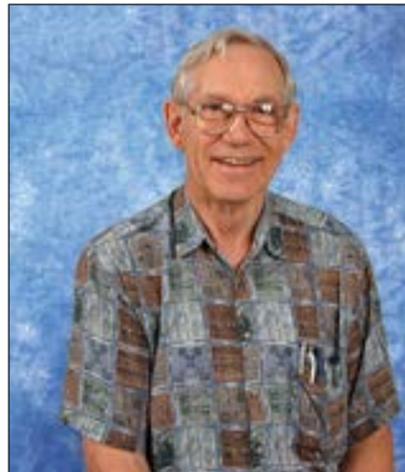
From 1996 to 2003, I saw my psychiatrist monthly, then two to three months, then every six months. When things started to be a problem, I would call him. I had no psychotherapy then.

My last suicide attempt was in 2003 when stress and alcohol played a part after I lost a job. It defeated my medication, and suddenly I was in deep depression, and instantly I swallowed a load of pills. Being taken to the VA again saved me. I was encouraged by my psychiatrist to see the psychologist, who I talked with at length and was encouraged to attend cognitive therapy classes, other classes and PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder) groups. I was attending groups and classes five days a week. I discovered I had PTSD. I identified strongly with those in the groups.

I was also encouraged to continue psychotherapy, and I also found a Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance (DBSA) Support Group, and have been attending it and doing psychotherapy ever since.

I accepted that too much stress would land me back in the hospital, so instead of getting a job, I went to the senior center in town and got involved in activities.

In the DBSA support group, I



became an officer and have been an active member for the past 12 years. A year ago I started a DBSA group in my own town, and I also am a member of the Lovell FHCC Mental Health Council. It is my way of giving back to others what has been given to me.

Today, I am a very happy and fairly healthy individual who works my program, seeing my psychiatrist, seeing my psychotherapist and attending a DBSA group. The groups are good for me because there are others like me that have come to know me, and when I seem depressed or manic, they sense it and let me know, and I accept this evaluation from them. Then I get help from my psychiatrist, and my psychotherapist as well.

My advice:
Don’t be afraid (or ashamed) to get help. There are people here who are more than willing to help you. Life can truly be worth living! I’m proof of that, and I am **very grateful**.

The Apollo

The *Apollo* is the official newsletter of the Captain James A. Lovell Federal Health Care Center, published monthly for staff, Veterans, military families and volunteers. The *Apollo* newsletter is designed by the FHCC Communication Department
3001 Green Bay Rd.
North Chicago, IL 60064
224-610-3714
www.lovell.fhcc.va.gov



www.facebook.com/lovellfhcc



www.youtube.com/lovellfhcc

**Acting Director,
Commanding Officer**
Capt. José A. Acosta, MC, USN

Acting Deputy Director
Michelle Y. Blakely, FACHE

Communication Chief
Mary Schindler

Public Affairs Specialist
Jayna M. Legg

Public Affairs Specialist
Stephanie C. McCrobie

Visual Information Specialist
Mary Waterman

Mass Communication Spec. 2nd Class
Darren M. Moore

Factual Accuracy and Disclaimer:

Accuracy is important to us. We want to correct mistakes promptly. If you believe an error has been published, please alert us via email at lovellfhcc.media@va.gov. Use of any social media product does not imply endorsement on the part of the Department of Defense or the Department of Veterans Affairs, and may not be available from all government servers. Content on these sites is not edited for accuracy and may not necessarily reflect the views of the federal government.

Mental health services for family members discussed (cont.)

Continued from page 1

Attendees of Lovell FHCC's first mental health summit in 2013 also reported in their evaluations that they wanted to better understand the mental health needs of family members of Veteran and active duty patients, so that topic also was addressed at this year's summit in one of four breakout sessions.

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) directs VA medical centers to hold annual mental health summits. One of the stated goals of the Aug. 19 summit at Lovell FHCC was to identify gaps in mental health services for Veterans, active duty military and military dependents, in the Lovell FHCC catchment area, which includes Southeast Wisconsin and Northeast Illinois.

The summit also provided Lovell FHCC employees and community providers of services the opportunity to collaborate to improve the quality of mental health services for Veterans, military members and their families.

"We at Lovell FHCC are focusing more externally," said Shirley Hoffman, Lovell FHCC social worker and local recovery coordinator, who led the summit planning committee. "We're not the 'end-all' and the 'be-all.' We

are looking more outward. It's all about community inclusion."

More than 70 agencies participated. For Veteran participants, the summit was similar to a job fair. Community providers and agencies manned information tables in two hallways outside Bourke Hall before and after the summit presentations. One product of the summit will be a community resource guide of mental health services that will compliment Lovell FHCC's existing Behavioral Sciences Guide.



Lovell FHCC Certified Peer Support Specialist Sonya Ebhotemen, left, and Lovell FHCC Caregiver Support Center Coordinator Pam Rosentreter present breakout group conclusions during the annual mental health summit Aug. 19. The group discussed the topic "Veteran Caregiver and Peer Support Program." (Photo by Jayna Legg)

"The bridge back to civilian life is a long one," said Theodore Tesla, Lake County Health Department director of behavioral health services, speaking in his opening remarks about Veterans returning from combat zones.

"Regardless of their experiences (in the military), they are not the same - ever ... and the place has changed while they were gone ... They have difficulty getting jobs; employment is a very, very important piece of this puzzle."

It usually takes 18 to 24 months before returning Veterans get a job and/or the help they need, Tesla said. And after that time, "usually, it's the family that says something, like 'go get help.'"

The best scenario is, "you have to get them into treatment within six months," he said. "Treatment is best when it comes early in the process of re-integration."

Marine Corps Veteran Sonya Ebhotemen, certified peer support specialist in the Lovell FHCC Psychosocial Rehabilitation and Recovery Center (PRRC), co-facilitated a breakout session on Veteran caregiver and peer support programs.

Ebhotemen said, "I think the summit is going to open communication between

community providers, Lovell FHCC and the VA, and that will mean a better support system for Veterans.

"I can see some more Veterans getting services, and more people speaking up and advocating," said Ebhotemen, who herself was homeless with four young children when she had to have brain surgery years ago. "I went to the VA as a last-ditch effort. I called the crisis line."

"Regardless of their experiences (in the military), they are not the same - ever ... and the place has changed while they were gone."

Theodore Tesla
Lake County Health Department
Director of Behavioral Health
Services

Ebhotemen received medical care from the Edward Hines, Jr. VA Hospital, found housing through the Department of Housing and Urban Development-Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH) program, and started mentoring Veterans. She eventually linked up with NAMI, where she led a support group for women Veterans.

"I saw the value of peer support," she said. "It's 'no man left behind,' like in the military. It's saying, 'I've been there, you can do this.'"

Telehealth goal is to make services more convenient (cont.)

Continued from page 1

Both patient and doctor could see each other and converse, and Yeung not only viewed Lang's electrocardiogram, but also listened to his patient's heart and lung sounds in real time.

"It's good for the patient, and it's good for me," said Yeung, who also is a Navy lieutenant commander. "It's a very quick follow-up for both the patient and myself."

Lang said the service was "fantastic ... This is great. It's certainly easier on the patient. I don't have to travel as far. It's a win-win situation."

Patients of the Kenosha, Evanston and McHenry CBOCs have long taken advantage of video-conferencing technology to participate in weight-management classes, diabetes education and smoking cessation programs. Additionally, teleaudiology services are available at McHenry and Evanston CBOCs by appointment.

When the McHenry CBOC started offering teleaudiology earlier this year, "It was a hit right off the bat," Mantas said. "We expanded the times it is offered ... People love it and accepted it very well."

What makes telecardiology a significant advancement in Lovell

FHCC's telehealth offerings is the fact that it's considered "telemedicine," said RN Bernice Arcibal, Lovell FHCC telehealth coordinator. "It really is exciting. We are moving beyond education-based services into real telemedicine services now."

Features such as the digital stethoscope mark the difference between using telehealth technology to educate patients, and using the technology for telemedicine. A telehealth nurse places the stethoscope on the patient's chest, and the heart sounds are transmitted to the doctor in real time, using web-based technology. The doctor uses a receiving unit on his or her end to listen.

Arcibal said the goal of telehealth is simple. "We want to provide as many Veterans as possible with easy, accessible care, particularly Veterans in outlying areas."

In addition to telecardiology, the latest telehealth options to be offered by Lovell FHCC at all three CBOCs are telepharmacy and teleretinal imaging services. CBOC patients with diabetes can now walk in and have their eyes examined using new teleretinal imaging cameras that store and forward the images to their North Chicago providers.

The new telepharmacy services at the CBOCs include patient education, therapeutic monitoring of medications, movement disorder assessment, laboratory monitoring of oncology patients, and symptom management for patients receiving chemotherapy.

A Lovell FHCC gynecologist based in North Chicago is accepting new telegynecology patients for fertility and prenatal counseling. Other telehealth services include: post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) sessions, coping skills classes,

nutrition counseling, Operation Enduring Freedom/Operation Iraqi Freedom/Operation New Dawn care management, and home-based services to include speech therapy and mental health/PTSD counseling.

To find out what telehealth services are available at each CBOC, patients may contact telehealth clinical technicians Paula Mantas or Terese Bush, 224-237-6444, in McHenry; Turina Evans, 224-237-6447, at the Kenosha CBOC; or Brandi Summers, 224-245-6980, at the Evanston CBOC.



Telehealth clinical technician Terese Bush, left, conducts a mock exam with a fellow employee at the Lovell FHCC McHenry Community Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC) using a new teleretinal imaging camera. Staff tested the equipment before offering the new telehealth service to patients. Diabetes patients now may walk in to the CBOCs to have their eyes checked, saving them a trip to the main hospital. The images are stored and forwarded to patients' doctors in North Chicago. (Photo by Jayna Legg)

Legends compete in 34th National Veterans Wheelchair Games

Team of six Lovell FHCC Veterans brings home total of 20 medals from August competition in Philadelphia

By Jayna Legg
Lovell FHCC Public Affairs

Every member of the Lovell Legends Veterans Wheelchair Games team returned home from the recent national competition with a medal, and most won several.

“Overall, it was a very successful trip this year,” said Lovell FHCC Recreation Therapist Susanne

Brunner, co-coach of the Lovell FHCC team. “I was really impressed with a lot of our athletes, who tried a new event and were very successful doing so. I was very proud of them.”

Brunner and Co-coach Karen Fleming, also a recreation therapist, accompanied the six-member team to Philadelphia Aug. 12-17 to compete in the annual games. It was the eighth consecutive time Lovell

FHCC competed, and the athletes’ efforts were richly rewarded. The team won 20 medals.

Two Lovell FHCC athletes – new team member Babette Peyton and returning member Karen Van Benschoten – went on to participate in the Valor Games in Chicago immediately after returning from Philadelphia. “They were motivated by the wheelchair games to go on to compete in the Valor Games, where they continued on in developing their skills,” Brunner said.

Benschoten entered the air gun competition this year in Philadelphia, something she hadn’t done for several years, and won a silver medal in addition to four other gold medals in table tennis, 9-ball, slalom and motor rally.

Peyton won gold in eight events: motor rally, slalom, bowling, archery and four swimming events.

In his second year as a Lovell Legend, Ed Tolliver medaled in a new event, also. He tried weightlifting and

won a silver medal. “I like the action and the challenges I have to go through to compete,” Tolliver said.

Before his military service, Lovell Legend Ramon Calderon competed in high school and college sports. “I’m happy that I’m continuing at this age to compete, and I wouldn’t have this opportunity otherwise without the wheelchair games.”

Calderon won silver medals in softball and weightlifting. Bill Watson won bronze in weightlifting.

Lovell Legend Steve Aoyagi, who competed in the games for the sixth time this year, won two gold medals in table tennis and motor rally, and a silver in 9-ball.

Aoyagi said before the games that his goal was to “gauge my strength. I hope to use my strength and preserve my abilities,” he said. This year, more than 600 athletes competed in the 34th National Veterans Wheelchair Games. The competition is the largest annual wheelchair sports event in the world.

The goal of the games is to improve the quality of life for Veterans with disabilities and to foster better health through sports competition. The games are sponsored by the Department of Veterans Affairs and Paralyzed Veterans of America, with financial assistance from outside civic and other donors.



Above, Bill Watson throws the javelin at the National Veterans Wheelchair Games. Below left, Steve Aoyagi, competing in the games for the sixth time, hits a softball. Below center, Babette Peyton won eight gold medals, and went on to compete in the Valor Games after Philadelphia. (Aoyagi’s and Peyton’s photos provided, courtesy of the Department of Veterans Affairs)



Above, Karen Benschoten competes in 9-ball. It was the seventh time Benschoten competed in the games. She won gold in 9-ball, table tennis, slalom and motor rally, and silver in air gun. Below left, Raymond Calderon throws the discus. He won silver medals in softball and weightlifting. Below right, Ed Tolliver throws the shot put. He won a silver in weightlifting. (Photos provided by coaches Susanne Brunner and Karen Fleming, Lovell FHCC recreation therapists)

Find More Online
@ [facebook.com/LovellFHCC](https://www.facebook.com/LovellFHCC)



McHenry clinic staff recognized by Mayor

Pulmonary Clinic Corpsmen recognized



- FHCC Fort2Base Run results
- Navy Dental Corps turns 102
- ... and more stories and photos!

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

