



Office of Quality, Safety and Value

# 2012 VHA Facility Quality and Safety Report

Department of Veterans Affairs  
Veterans Health Administration

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**Veterans Health Administration**  
Office of Informatics and Analytics

## Executive Summary

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is committed to providing high quality and safe health care for Veterans. As such, the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) has established a wide array of innovative and comprehensive programs to measure, analyze, improve and report on many key aspects of health care quality and patient safety. To help measure VA's progress in achieving its health care goals, the VHA Facility Quality and Safety Report has been published annually since 2008. This report summarizes performance data for clinical quality and patient safety for all VA health care facilities.

As the largest integrated health care system in the United States, in Fiscal Year (FY) 2011 VHA served nearly 6.1 million patients in a wide range of facilities and programs. VHA employed 13,710 full-time and 3,060 part-time physicians as Full-Time Employee Equivalents (FTEE) in FY 2011. Patients at VA facilities reported comparable satisfaction with VA services to those in non-VA facilities and were even more likely to recommend treatment at a VA facility than those treated at non-VA facilities.

The expanded 2012 report of VHA's quality and safety data presents information related to the care provided in outpatient and inpatient settings, the staffing of each VA health care facility, the quality of inpatient and outpatient health care provided to all Veterans and to certain patient populations, the health care center accreditation status, patient satisfaction and selected patient outcomes for FY 2011.



The highlights of the 2012 report include information on the new measures being reported in the sections that each highlight different topics.

- **Available Hospital Services:** Eighty-nine percent of VHA facilities provide in-house acute medical and surgical services, and 79 percent provide acute inpatient psychiatric services. Eighty-four percent have intensive care units (ICU), 83 percent have emergency departments and 85 percent have CLCs, formerly designated as Nursing Home Care Units (NHCU). As a result of the law requiring VA to provide additional, specialized rehabilitation programs, VA has increased its staffing in that area, including the opening of five new regional centers that provide acute, comprehensive health and rehabilitation care for complex and severe polytraumatic injuries.
- **Outpatient Visits (Primary and Specialty Care):** VA had a total of 12,999,414 primary care outpatient visits and 37,368,512 specialty care outpatient visits in FY 2011.
- The rates of **Ventilator Associated Pneumonia (VAP)** in VA ranged from 0 to 14.8 per 1,000 days of mechanical ventilation. The national rate for VAP in VA medical/surgical intensive care units (ICU) is 1.5 episodes per 1000 ventilator-days, which is 25 percent lower than the rate reported by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) among medical/surgical major teaching ICUs.<sup>[2]</sup>
- The rates of **Central Line Associated Bacteremia (CLAB)** in VA facilities ranged from 0 to 5.3 per 1,000 days of line placement with an overall average rate of 1.1. By way of comparison, the National Healthcare Safety Network (NHSN) indicates that infection rates in 2009 averaged 1.7 per 1,000 line days.
- VA undertook large-scale implementation of a **methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA) Prevention Initiative** which includes active surveillance screening on hospital admission and transfer as well as other interventions to reduce the risk of spread of resistant bacteria. From the time of full implementation of the MRSA Initiative in October 2009 through September 2011, monthly rates of MRSA health care-associated infections have decreased 38 percent in the ICU setting and have decreased 44 percent in the non-ICU acute care setting.

[2] Edwards, J.R., Peterson, K.D., Mu, Y., et al. (2009). National Healthcare Safety Network (NHSN) report: Data summary for 2006 through 2008, issued December 2009. *Am J Infect Control* 37: 783-805.