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VA Opening 31 New Outpatient Clinics World-Class Health Care Brought Closer to More Veterans

WASHINGTON (Dec. 4, 2008) - Veterans will have easier access to world-class health care under a Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) plan to open 31 new outpatient clinics in 16 states.

Secretary of Veterans Affairs Dr. James B. Peake today announced VA will establish new clinics in Alabama, Arkansas, California, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Illinois, Iowa, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, North Carolina, Pennsylvania and Vermont.

"VA is committed to providing world-class health care to the men and women who have served this nation," Peake said. "These new clinics will bring VA's top-notch care closer to the veterans who have earned it."

With 153 hospitals and about 745 community-based clinics, VA operates the largest integrated health care system in the country. VA's medical care budget of more than \$41 billion this year will provide health care to about 5.8 million people during nearly 600,000 hospitalizations and more than 62 million outpatient visits.

"Community-based medicine is better medicine," said Dr. Michael Kussman, VA's Under Secretary for Health. "It makes preventative care easier for patients, helps health care professionals have closer relationships with their patients and permits easier follow-ups for patients with chronic health problems."

The community-based outpatient clinics, or CBOCs, will become operational by late 2010, with some opening in 2009. Local VA officials will keep communities and their veterans informed of milestones in the creation of the new CBOCs.

VA's Proposed Sites for New Outpatient Clinics Alabama - Monroe County (2010)

Arkansas - Faulkner County (2010), Pope County (2010)

California - Lake County (2010), Oakhurst (2010), Susanville (2010), **Yuba County (2010)**

Florida - Brandon (2010), Clermont (2010)

Georgia -- Blairsville (2010)

Hawaii - Leeward (Honolulu, 2010)

Illinois - Carbondale (2009), Harrisburg (2010), Sterling (2010)

Iowa -- Decorah (2010)

Maryland - Fort Meade (2010), Montgomery County (2010)

Michigan - Bad Axe (2010), Cadillac (2010), Cheboygan (2010), Grayling (2010)

Minnesota - Southern central border (2010), Southwest metro area (exact locations to be determined, 2010)

Mississippi - Pike County (2010)

Missouri - Excelsior Springs (2009), Sikeston (2009), Sedalia (2010)

North Carolina - Edenton-Elizabeth City (2010), Goldsboro (2010)

Pennsylvania - Cranberry Township (2009)

Vermont - Brattleboro (2010)