



GEORGIA WAR VETERANS NURSING HOME

AUGUSTA, GEORGIA

**A Facility of the Veterans Service Board
State of Georgia Veterans Service
Atlanta, Georgia 30334**

**Patricia Ross, Commissioner
Joshua Kopsie, Chairman
Timothy Paslawski, Vice-Chairman
Steve Mendez, Secretary**

**Shawn Hanley, Member
John Kubinec, Member
Pete Peterson, Member
Takosha Swan, Member**



**Operated Under Contract with the
Board of Regents University System of Georgia**

**Harold Reynolds, Chair
Dr. Sonny Perdue, Chancellor**



**AUGUSTA
UNIVERSITY**

**by the Medical College of Georgia
Augusta, Georgia**

**Dr. Russell T. Keen, President
Dr. David C. Hess, Dean, EVP
Carlton Deese, Executive Director**

ANNUAL REPORT FY 2025

Georgia War Veterans Nursing Home Augusta, Georgia

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

Carlton Deese	Executive Director
Julia Eveker	Associate Director
Richard Sams, MD	Medical Director
Timothy Lark	Chaplain
Heather Nichols	Director of Activities
Jordan Fields-Thomas	Director of Business Services
Paul Vella III	Director of Food & Nutrition
Crystal Allen	Director of Health Information Management Services
Christopher Townsend	Director of Maintenance/Safety
Kay Roland	Director of Nursing
Stephanie Nichols	Assistant Director of Nursing
Karen Monaco	Director of Occupational Therapy
Amy Green	Director of Social Work
Erika Bowdre	Environmental Services Manager
Jody Rocker, PharmD	Pharmacist

TABLE OF CONTENTS

4	ADMINISTRATION
7	BUSINESS SERVICES
10	HEALTH INFORMATION
14	FOOD & NUTRITION
16	ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES
18	MAINTENANCE/SAFETY
20	NURSING SERVICES
25	OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY
28	PHYSICAL THERAPY
32	PHYSICIAN SERVICES
35	SOCIAL WORK
40	ACTIVITIES
43	PHARMACY SERVICES
46	CHAPLAINCY SERVICES



DEPARTMENT PROFILE

Georgia War Veterans Nursing Home provides long-term skilled nursing care to chronically ill veterans of Georgia who have served in the armed forces during war times. It is owned and funded by the Georgia Department of Veterans Service and operated through an interagency agreement with Augusta University through the Board of Regents.

In addition to the provision of quality resident care, Georgia War Veterans Nursing Home provides educational experience to the various students of the colleges comprising AUGUSTA UNIVERSITY. As a sponsored service of AUGUSTA UNIVERSITY, access is provided to the many resources throughout the enterprise. Through this association, the nursing home is allowed access to technology and expertise that promotes exceptional resident care. This relationship has made Georgia War a true teaching nursing home.

RESIDENT SAFETY & QUALITY

- ▶ Continued the Gold Seal of Approval by The Joint Commission with a continued focus on Person Centered Care: Continued focus on a Home-Like Environment including Seasonal Decorations, Music at Meal Time, and Artwork Displays. Additional focus on Antibiotic Stewardship, End-of-Life Care (Comfort Care), Dementia Care and the Pandemic Respiratory Illness Plan.
- ▶ Recipient of Pinnacle Quality Insight's Customer Experience Award (Best in Class) for FY25 by satisfying the rigorous demand of scoring in the Top 15% for nursing homes in the Nation. Qualifying for the award in 12 of 16 categories of Resident Satisfaction represents continued dedication to providing Best in Class Senior Healthcare Services.
- ▶ Continued certification by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs and the Georgia Department of Community Health.
- ▶ Daily medical coverage provided by Georgia War's Medical Director, Physician Assistant, Augusta University Family & Community Medicine Resident Physicians, and Eisenhower Army Medical Center's Internal Medicine Resident Physicians.
- ▶ Continued medical education and clinical training opportunities provided to Augusta University's Medical College of Georgia, Dental College of Georgia, College of Allied Health Sciences, Institute of Public and Preventive Health, and College of Nursing. Continued relationships with the University of Georgia, Fort Gordon's Dwight D. Eisenhower Army Medical Center, University of South Carolina-Columbia, Augusta Technical College, Augusta Tender Care Training Center and AR Johnson.
- ▶ Superior clinical services specifically outlined include: Nursing, Physical Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Speech Therapy, Rehabilitation Nursing, Therapeutic Recreation, Wound Care, Dental Services, Podiatric services, Pharmacy services, Psychosocial/Social Work Services, and Dietetic/Nutritional counseling.
- ▶ Completed implementation for Pharmacy Integration between Point Click Care and Wellstar MCG Pharmacy

ADMINISTRATION

ENGAGEMENT

- ▶ Attendance at annual and quarterly Georgia Healthcare Association (GHCA) conference meetings
- ▶ Monthly Customer Service Surveys provided by Activated Insights, formerly Pinnacle Quality Insight
- ▶ Quarterly Resident Care Plan in person and virtual meetings and surveys including resident families
- ▶ Quarterly Resident Bill of Rights virtual training for all staff
- ▶ Bimonthly Resident Council in-person meetings

CAPACITY MANAGEMENT

- ▶ Provided continued service to Georgia's veteran population while maintaining an average daily census of 128.
- ▶ Earned the Activated Insights (formerly Pinnacle) Customer Experience Award for Best in Class in the following areas: Overall Satisfaction, Overall Customer Experience, Admissions Process, Activities, Recommend to Others, Safety and Security, Cleanliness, Individual Needs, Laundry Service, Communication from Facility, Dignity and Respect, and Response to Problems.
- ▶ In FY25, the nursing home provided 44,338 days of care to Georgia's veterans with an average age of 81. Includes 180 Admissions, 171 Discharges, and an average LOS of 279 days.
- ▶ Services to residents included 2,735 Physical Therapy treatments and 8,327 individual Occupational Therapy procedures

FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

- ▶ Achieved budgeted reimbursement for FY25 from the State of Georgia, Department of Veterans Service and resident billing in excess of \$8.2 Million
- ▶ The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs provided financial assistance in excess of \$10.5 Million
- ▶ Continued certification in finance by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
- ▶ FY25 year end with minimal delinquent accounts receivables
- ▶ Achieved budget goals for Operation expenses and Capital investments
- ▶ Completed Architectural & Engineering for new Classroom on the first floor in preparation of project bid
- ▶ Veteran Service organizations, Civic and Fraternal organizations and Religious groups provided numerous donations, visits, and sponsorship of activities and programs
- ▶ Total FY25 in-kind donations exceed \$40K

STRATEGIC PLANNING

- ▶ Continued Marketing efforts focused on Georgia's veteran population. Educational materials provided to local and regional hospitals, long-term care facilities, and assisted living communities around the state of Georgia.
- ▶ Continued focus on Comfort Care and Dementia Care Programs.
- ▶ In FY25, hosted volunteer opportunities for regional businesses, churches, and local groups who have donated thousands of hours and dollars to our nation's heroes.
- ▶ Evaluate alternatives and develop specifications for new rooftop chiller systems and elevator upgrades with implementation anticipated during FY26.

BUSINESS SERVICES

DEPARTMENT

The Business Services Department (Business Office) provides information and services to residents, employees, and visitors. Primarily, the Business Office coordinates the purchasing of supplies and equipment for the operation of the facility, while ensuring compliance with applicable state purchasing laws, policies, and procedures. The Business Office maintains records and reports regarding purchases, receives and distributes supplies, and maintains current records of all inventoried equipment for reporting to state agencies. Resident Billing manages the room and board funds collected from the veteran residents each month, including all related records and reports. Resident Accounts is another function of the Business Office whereby individual accounts are set up for residents to deposit and withdraw funds for their personal needs. Through the Business Office, residents, staff, and visitors are able to obtain change, vending refunds, or purchase stamps. The Business Office is also responsible for the storage of resident valuables. The Business Office is a central source of information, upon which the facility depends for efficient operation.

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES

The Business Office assisted all departments in planning and purchasing of supplies for facility operations. In working with the Augusta University (AU) Supply Chain department, the Business Office purchased goods via Purchasing Cards (P-Cards), Health eShop, Interdepartmental Requisitions (IDR), Check Requests, and PeopleSoft requisitions. In FY25, the Business Office processed over 2,000 orders/invoices that totaled over \$7.0mm.

In FY25, several groups and individuals donated to the Resident Benefit Fund. The Resident Benefit Fund provides our veteran residents with welfare items, special equipment, and supplies. It also helps fund holiday celebrations, recreational activities and individualized therapies. However, the giving did not stop with financial donations!

The value of in-kind donations for veteran residents benefit for FY25 exceeded \$40K. Many individuals, families, and groups provided baked goods, letters, cards, and more to boost both veteran resident and staff morale over the past year.

FY25 saw a flurry of other activities as well:

ACTIVITIES

Assisted with decorating the facility and put together beautiful displays for everyone in the facility to enjoy. The decorations created a more homelike environment within the facility.

Accounting Assistant 3 (Faith Powell) continued assisting the Communication Team with resident FaceTime's on a weekly basis.

Development and implementation of the following performance improvement initiatives:

- ▶ In July 2024, the Office Specialist (DeMarcus Cooper) reorganized and performed inventory of resident storage.
- ▶ December 2024, Director of Business Services performed annual review of Georgia War policies and procedures.

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES

ACTIVITIES
In February 2025, the vending machine on the first floor was replaced
Successfully completed a facility-wide IT inventory reconciliation.
Provided assistance during the recent, successful Joint Commission survey, State surveys, and special events.
▶ Both the Office Specialist (DeMarcus Cooper) & Office Assistant (Daz Ferguson) provided extra assistance to the nursing units following hurricane Helene.

DEVELOPMENT PLANS

New opportunities await the Department of Business Services every year. The Business Office will meet all opportunities in an efficient and flexible manner. The Business Office will continue to work within and stay abreast of any changes regarding state purchasing laws, as well as state, institutional, and facility policies and procedures. Moreover, the Business Office seeks to continue their role as a central source of information to residents, staff, and visitors.

BY THE NUMBERS

BUSINESS SERVICES

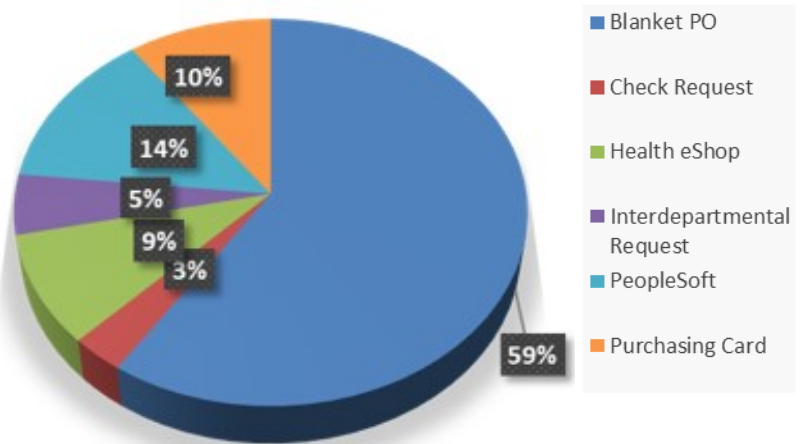
Financial Analysis of Department Activities

The Business Office managed 166 resident billing accounts and 165 resident trust funds in FY 2025. Georgia War spent around \$17.6mm on personnel, supplies, and equipment during the fiscal year.

DEPARTMENT COST ANALYSIS JULY 2024 THROUGH JUNE 2025				
Department	Personnel	Travel	Operating	Total
Administration	\$ 1,046,022.16	\$ 5,621.10	\$ 324,905.20	\$ 1,376,548.46
Dietary	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,279,071.42	\$ 1,279,071.42
Environmental Services	\$ 812,641.62	\$ -	\$ 485,230.90	\$ 1,297,872.52
Maintenance	\$ 361,024.04	\$ -	\$ 611,794.42	\$ 972,818.46
Nursing Services	\$ 6,579,065.30	\$ 2,109.51	\$ 4,257,264.04	\$ 10,838,438.85
Occupational Therapy	\$ 197,450.93	\$ -	\$ 2,554.00	\$ 200,004.93
Physical Therapy	\$ 599,189.03	\$ -	\$ 3,682.58	\$ 602,871.61
Physician Services	\$ 430,833.91	\$ -	\$ 124,635.96	\$ 555,469.87
Social Work	\$ 183,311.18	\$ -	\$ 3,175.65	\$ 186,486.83
Activities	\$ 365,535.29	\$ -	\$ 4,878.41	\$ 370,413.70
Total:	\$ 10,575,073.46	\$ 7,730.61	\$ 7,097,192.58	\$ 17,679,996.65

ORDERS PROCESSED JULY 2024 THROUGH JUNE 2025	
Interdepartmental Requests	105
Purchasing Card	208
Check Request	64
Health eShop	193
PeopleSoft	280
Blanket PO	1,239
Total Number of Orders	2,089

FY25 Orders Processed



DEPARTMENT PROFILE

The Health Information Management Services (HIMS) and Admissions department helps Georgia's Veterans and their families with questions regarding our home, assisting and processing applications, new resident admissions, and facility tours. In addition, our department maintains and manages resident health information, facility statistics, and resident transportation. The members of the department conduct themselves in a compassionate manner while enhancing the culture of person-centered care and embracing a home-like environment for our residents. The members of our team strive to create a superior service to all residents, their families, and other staff members with whom we work. The HIMS staff will remain dedicated to providing exceptional service to our Veterans and their loved ones.

MEET THE DEPARTMENT

Director of Health Information/Admissions: Registered Health Information Administrator (RHIA) Credentialed. This position has been filled by Crystal Allen since 2018. This position performs administrative and daily management responsibilities for the HIMS department including supervising HIMS staff members. The HIMS Director supervises and maintains all medical record functions and is the system administrator for the newly installed electronic health record, PointClickCare. The HIMS Director also ensures nursing home resident medical records are in compliance with all state, federal, and Joint Commission standards.

Assistant Director of Health Information/Admissions: Candace Schumann was promoted to Assistant Director in July 2023. She has been with Georgia War as the HIMS Record Analyst since 2018. In her new role, Candace will assist with planning, development, and implementation of department policies and procedures to ensure resident health information is complete, maintained, used, and disclosed in a secure, efficient, and accurate manner. The Assistant Director will also assist with preparation of death certificates and monthly utilization review audits and preparation of reports.

HIMS Record Analyst: The HIMS Record Analyst functions as the admission representative for the nursing home. This role admits residents, answers questions regarding nursing home placement, and maintains admission documents and correspondence. This position prepares and maintains daily and monthly census reports as required by the Department of Veterans Affairs. The HIMS Record Analyst is also responsible for assembling, processing, analyzing, coding, and indexing medical records of residents who have discharged from the nursing home. Lindsay Mouchet started as the HIMS Record Analyst in September 2024.

Transporter: The nursing home transporter role is filled by Sabrina Washington. She has been with Georgia War since 2021. This position provides support for scheduling resident transportation services and assists with transportation of residents of Georgia War to scheduled and unscheduled appointments at Charlie Norwood VA Medical Center and Wellstar MCG Health hospital and clinics. Additional responsibilities include delivery and pick up of resident supplies and equipment, office supplies, and administrative correspondence.

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES

- Participated in VA and State surveys and continued to remain deficiency free in medical records
- Continued marketing efforts to increase census using US mail and email directed to local and state veteran organizations and local hospitals
- Participated in 44 new resident admissions; mailed over 100 applications per families or social worker's request; received 87 applications; and reviewed 72 complete applications
- Verified credentials for physicians, resident physicians, medical students, nurse practitioner, physician assistant students, and observers
- Provided orientation to physicians, resident physicians, medical students, nurse practitioner students, physician assistant students, and observers in conjunction with the Medical Director to include review of documents, procedures, facility tour, and The Joint Commission requirements topics including Cultural Diversity, Pain Management, Falls Risks and Protocols, Infection Control including both handwashing and Antimicrobial Stewardship
- Maintained resident health records with outstanding documentation
- Attended quarterly meetings for the following committees: Performance Improvement Committee, Infection Control Committee, and Pharmacy Committee

SUMMARY OF PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVES

Throughout the fiscal year, HIMS staff attended a variety of in-service sessions presented to the department including Positivity in the Workplace, Being an Effective Team Player, Customer Service, Emotional Intelligence, Time Management, Stress Management, AU's Core Values, Saving Time by Setting Goals, and HIPAA. In addition, the department staff attended facility in-services and completed self-study modules.

The electronic health record, PointClickCare, components have all been integrated successfully. Clinical Skilled Nursing Facility Software went live on June 1, 2023. The lab integration was fully implemented on August 21, 2023. The Integrated Medication Management (IMM)/e-prescribing went live on July 18, 2024. The Staff have embraced using PointClickCare. Overall, PointClickCare has empowered Georgia War to deliver the highest quality of care as effectively and efficiently as possible to our residents.

DEVELOPMENT PLANS

The department remains excited about the upcoming year as the transition continues within the EHR for the pharmacy piece. The plans to have the integrated medication management solution implemented are underway. The go-live for this feature was scheduled for July 2024. The pharmacy integration has enhanced efficiency with real-time pharmacy collaboration while reducing errors and discrepancies.

DEVELOPMENT PLANS

Since the integration of our electronic health record, new procedures have been identified for auditing documentation. This procedure has been simplified as PointClickCare has built in capability to monitor schedules, generate alerts, and provide reports to share with the team.

The annual VA, state, and the Joint Commission surveys will be forthcoming, and it is the goal that the department will continue to remain deficiency free. Any opportunities for improvement identified during the survey process will become performance improvement objectives.

The department plans to continue increasing marketing efforts to veterans all over the state of Georgia and increase local community outreach to increase facility census. The Director of HIMS and HIMS Record Analyst attended a community fair that provided outreach services to thousands of Veterans. Currently, Georgia War does not have a waiting list and there are beds available!

Lastly, the HIMS department looks forward to improving services and continuing to serve our residents, families, and the community during FY26.

BY THE NUMBERS

HIMS

JULY 2024 THROUGH JUNE 2025

ADMISSIONS		DISCHARGES	
New (41 male/3 females)	44	To Home/Other Facility	5
Readmissions from hospital	115	To LOA	21
Readmissions from LOA	21	Deaths In-House	23
		To Hospital (7 subsequent deaths)	122
Total	180	Total	171

CENSUS

JULY 2024 THROUGH JUNE 2025

Resident Days	44,338
Average Daily Census	121.47
Average Length of Stay	279.32
Days Lost to Hospital Admission	952
Days Lost to Leave of Absence	57
Average Daily Loss	2.76
Beds Available	188
Average Beds Assigned	126.56
Average Patient Age	80.59

Ten Most Common Discharge Diagnoses

Disease of the Genitourinary System
 Cardiovascular Disease
 Diseases of the Nervous System and Sense Organs
 Dementia/Psychosis
 Digestive System Diseases
 Metabolic Diseases
 COPD/Disease of the Respiratory System
 Musculoskeletal and Connective Tissue Diseases/Arthritis & Arthropathies
 Cerebrovascular accidents/disease
 Hypertensive Diseases

DEPARTMENT PROFILE

The food service team is composed of 9 full-time positions and 9 part-time positions. Led by a Certified Dietary Manager/Director of Food & Nutrition, Registered and Licensed Dietitian, Kitchen Supervisor and a Safety Champion, the team focuses on five core values of Trust, Team, Customers, Learning, and Profit. The Director and Dietitian are SERV Safe certified. The team strives to provide quality food service to our residents' three meals a day, 365 days a year.

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES

Special holiday meals were served to residents and their families for the following: Fourth of July, Labor Day, Veterans Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, New Year's Day, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, Valentine's Day, St. Patrick's Day, Easter, Memorial Day, Father's Day and Mother's Day. We participated in the Be-A-Star employee recognition program and received the award for meeting the requirements for this program. Employees and accounts were recognized for achieving business goals that focused on recognition of outstanding associates, safety, diversity, food safety audit compliance report, resident satisfaction, involvement in the community, and managing our budgets.

The department continues to support the Augusta University Dietetic Internship program through planned clinical and culinary experiences for interns. These interns completed many performance improvement activities throughout the year and make valuable contributions to resident care. Last September, the department participated in the facility VA survey, with no deficiencies noted. In addition, we received a score of A on our most recent Health Department inspection.

SUMMARY OF PERFORMANCE

Performance improvement activities included enteral outcome measures, monthly weight loss monitoring, risk potential monitoring, adaptive equipment identification process monitoring, albumin trends for residents with wounds, web-based tray line program, allergy alert process, monitoring of the input & outputs (I & O's) of enterally fed residents, and input into the Point Click Care program for care plans and MDS reporting.

We strive to create a warm welcoming environment where dining among fellow residents is encouraged. We continually update menu cycles allowing us to offer fresh seasonal fruits, vegetables, and herbs.

The Certified Dietary Manager and Kitchen Supervisor managed the daily food service operations by monitoring sanitation, safety, equipment, food procurement, food temperatures, schedules, time and attendance records, monthly safety, and loss control evaluations, and enforcing a united and consistent management plan. Cutting food costs and maintaining quality was a primary focus of our team.

SUMMARY OF PERFORMANCE

The following performance benchmarks were used to help manage and maintain the bottom line:

OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE	Cost efficiency is the heart of our operating model. Through strict prime vendor compliance, purchasing power and proprietary optimization programs, we contain and control costs.
HUMAN RESOURCES SERVICES	Integrating full payroll and benefit administration reduces staffing, training, and administrative costs while maintaining employee morale.
CULINARY EXPERTISE	Morrison has developed an array of food and menu management solutions to cut costs, eliminate waste, and satisfy unique regional tastes. The Compass Group continued to provide daily support with company programs that focus on food recalls, market pricing updates, the elimination of trans-fats, the purchasing of sustainable seafood and cage-free shell eggs, RGHF-free milk, and Community coffee.

The company's values make it clear how best to work together to achieve our vision:

- Can-Do Attitude • Embrace Diversity • Share Success • Superior Quality

Win-Through-Teamwork specific plans are to make every effort to meet the expectations of our customers by:

- ▶ Continuing high quality service and management
- ▶ Maintaining high health inspection scores
- ▶ Continuing visibility in the dining room during meals
- ▶ Continuing to improve the dining room atmosphere
- ▶ Continuing to pursue the individual desires of resident patients
- ▶ Maintaining 90% or higher adherence to planned menus

EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Morrison's associate training includes 18 in-service training topics and 14 job-specific development plans.

Professional training meets the commission on Dietetic Registration Professional Development guidelines.

DEPARTMENT PROFILE

The mission of the Environmental Services department is to strive to provide top quality, professional service, and to maintain Georgia War Veterans Nursing Home for the Veterans, staff, and visitors, making it a clean, safe, and a desirable place to live, work, and visit.

The primary objectives of the Environmental Services department are:

- To maintain the nursing home environment at the highest sanitary level possible by forward thinking to improve the cleaning process.
- To keep the nursing home environment free of micro-organisms as well as daily dust and dirt accumulation.
- To ensure that these objectives are accomplished through the use of germicides, written procedures, and in-service education.

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES

- ▶ The Environmental Services department assisted the facility in preparing for the VA survey during the fiscal year.
- ▶ FY25 ended with one (1) vacant Environmental Services positions.
- ▶ In September, the department celebrated International Executive Housekeepers Week.
- ▶ The Assistant Environmental Services manager continued to assist with coaching, training, and the day-to-day operation of the department.
- ▶ The Environmental Services department participated in Environment of Care Rounds.

PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT SUMMARY

CONTINUED to educate staff and focus on facility emergency codes to ensure all staff are oriented and respond correctly in the event of an emergency.

CONTINUED to brainstorm ways of improving environmental services performance techniques.

CONTINUED to cross-train all employees to promote loyalty and enhanced teamwork, while reducing burnout, and risk of injury.

CONTINUED to improve the 7-step cleaning process and workload.

CONTINUED to use of an ultraviolet sanitation system to efficiently and rapidly disinfectant surfaces to reduce the spread of infections and other germs as needed.

CONTINUED to use flip top caps on all cleaning quart bottles to prevent chemical reactions in the respiratory system.

CONTINUED to do potable hot and cold water flushing in empty rooms.

CONTINUED to remove and replace filled USP 800 containers.

ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

DEVELOPMENT PLANS

The Performance Improvement program is the basis from which the Environmental Services Department maintains a clean, orderly, and safe environment and it ensures:

Ongoing monitoring of all functions that are essential to the department in fulfilling its purpose.

Follow-up monitoring of identified problems and their resolutions, which includes responding to comments and concerns of family members, staff, and visitors.

- The Joint Commission and VA Standards are maintained.
- The facility is kept as germ-free as possible.
- Effective communication and coordination between Environmental Services and other departments for the purpose of problem investigation and resolution to enhance the quality of service and care.
- Ongoing quality improvement inspections.
- Continued supervision and coaching of personnel.

EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Education continues to be one of the important factors for the department. We are always interested in improving the techniques involving the department. The Manager attends weekly, monthly, and yearly meetings. All employees attend monthly in-services, quarterly Resident Bill of Rights in-services, and staff meetings. The department participated in monthly fire drills and weekly Fall Risk committee meetings.

Staff attended the following monthly in-services:

MONTHLY IN-SERVICES	
Workplace Violence	Customer Service
Employee Uniforms	Confidentiality
Proper Use of Chemicals & Equipment	Bed Washing
Bomb Threat	Pain (Back, Knee, etc.)
Housekeeping Department Role	Fire Drill/Explosion
Tornado Watch / Warning	Resident Elopement
Cyber Security: DUO Training	Boosting Employee Morale
Cyber Security: Phishing	Fire Safety
CDC Education: Basic Principles of Infection Control	
Shipping Biological Substances & Support Materials & Blood Borne Pathogens	
USP 800 Hazardous Drugs	

The Environmental Services manager attends campus Green Team meetings. This group's mission is to protect and improve the campus environment and move toward more green initiatives. The Environmental Services manager attends professional association meetings.

DEPARTMENT PROFILE

The Maintenance Department's mission is to maintain, repair and upgrade the nursing home's 70,000 square feet of enclosed space, all outdoor buildings and 4.3 acres of grounds and parking facilities. The Department Director and staff of three focus on quick response to emergency repair needs and then plan routine preventive maintenance to maintain and improve facilities for our residents, staff and visitors.

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES

During FY25, the Maintenance Department worked closely with all contractors who worked in the facility.

MAJOR PROJECTS COMPLETED
Installed new HVAC in the 1st floor Hallway
Installed new Security Cameras
Installed new Variable Speed Drive for HVAC in the Kitchen
Repairs to walk in cooler kitchen
Repairs to the Penthouse Chiller
Repairs to the kitchen walk in freezer
Repairs to the 1 st floor Chiller

PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT SUMMARY

The Maintenance staff participated with other departments on the completion of performance improvement activities and continuing education efforts. In addition, departmental in-services were held throughout the year on various topics including boilers, communication failure, utility failure, tornado watch/warning, bomb threat, evacuation, severe weather, chillers, flood, resident elopement, fire/explosion and PASS Fire Extinguisher training. A water management program was designed and implemented for ongoing monitoring of water quality. Additionally, the list of projects as outlined above contributed to the improvement of facilities and services for the residents. During FY26, the department will focus on continued upgrades to existing equipment and facilities.

DEVELOPMENT PLANS

- Install new elevator
- Research replacement of a new rooftop chiller
- Build a new education classroom
- Continue to focus on planning Emergency Management drills

BY THE NUMBERS

MAINTENANCE

JULY 2024 THROUGH JUNE 2025	
Work Orders Completed	2,932
Major Projects Completed	7
Total Work Orders & Projects	2,939

DEPARTMENT PROFILE

The nursing management team and nursing staff continue to have longevity in their respective roles and years of experience and knowledge which make the goal of caring for our veterans an honor. Our commitment is to provide compassionate quality care in an environment which supports and enhances the health and well-being of our veterans.

The nursing team consists of registered and licensed practical nurses, restorative technicians, certified nursing assistants, and clerical support from the office assistants. The nursing staff provide 24-hour health care coverage to the veterans. The unit specific LPN Charge Nurses are an integral part of Georgia War's interdisciplinary and nursing management team as they continue to strengthen our facility by providing more oversight of unit activities, nursing care and documentation review. Our goal is to ensure care is provided with respect and dignity by listening to residents' concerns and advocating on their behalf. The staff nurses are responsible for executing the physician's orders as they relate to all aspects of care. The Director of Nursing, Assistant Director of Nursing, Nurse Managers, Charge Nurses, Nurse Educator, Infection Preventionist and Supervisors are always available for resident or family consultations and are the best resource for daily details of care. Our staff is dedicated to our veterans and committed to providing care in a home-like environment, while ensuring privacy and safety are maintained in a respectful manner.

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES

In alliance with health and safety regulations, the Nursing Management team conducted annual physical exams and Flu-fair for all employees of the Georgia War Veterans Nursing Home as well as provided health information and education. We are happy to announce that Georgia War Veterans Nursing Home was 100% compliant with their Influenza vaccinations for both the veterans and staff.

While COVID is no longer an imminent threat, our Infection Preventionist remains vigilant in keeping the staff engaged with good hand hygiene, cough etiquette and appropriate glove usage. In addition to maintenance of a healthy work environment, the CLIA waiver is used to perform in-house COVID testing in the event an employee or veteran becomes ill with symptoms of COVID. The CLIA is an efficient tool used during the respiratory season to detect COVID infection timely and allowed our Infection Preventionist, Nursing Administrative and Medical team to govern the restrictions and protocols per CDC and DPH recommendations. Another infection prevention initiative is the use of Enhanced Barrier Precautions for those veterans with colonized multi-drug-resistant organisms.

The electronic health record has become an integral tool for documenting care as it relates to capturing the needs and effects of the medical regimen for the residents. The modernization of the retail pharmacy at WellStar MCG Health has enhanced communication and connectivity for reordering routine and bulk medications in a timely manner.

The Nursing Team members continued to donate to Golden Harvest food bank, Ronald McDonald House, Children's Hospital of Georgia, and participated in Health and career events in the CSRA.

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES

The Nursing Administrative Team, along with donations from other sources, celebrated and acknowledged both the licensed nurses and nursing assistants during their respective recognition weeks.

Another tool that identifies the nursing staff who provide excellent customer experience for both our veterans and/or responsible party is from favorable acknowledgement in the Activated Insights survey.

The Nursing Management team remain active members of the following committees: Interdisciplinary Resident Care Team, Wound Care, Safety, Nutrition Alert, Fall Risk, Antimicrobial Stewardship Program, Infection Prevention, Performance Improvement, and Pharmacy. It is our philosophy that involvement in these committees fosters not only better resident care, but also a better working relationship with our interdisciplinary team.

PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT SUMMARY

The Nursing staff is always looking for opportunities to improve the safety and care provided to our veterans. Projects for FY25 are as follows:

STAND OUT PROJECT

Refresher for new hires and agency on assembling the suction machine and attachments in a timely manner.

The House Supervisor documents the functioning of both the oxygen flow meters and AED functioning weekly.

Adopted a tool to assess the likelihood of a resident's elopement risk from the facility.

EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

The nursing department utilized the Self-Study method and huddles to educate staff on current practices, safety exercises, and care related programs. Our presenters ranged from the Medical Director, Family and Internal Medicine Residents, staff from the Alzheimer Society, Pharmacy Candidate, or Interns as well as Department Heads from both Occupational and Physical Therapy Services.

All nursing personnel, in compliance with organizational requirements, are American Heart Association BLS/CPR certified. This course is available to all departments and is provided monthly. There are three (3) BLS instructors on-site.

EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Newly hired employees are evaluated in accordance with our compliance organizational standard. Our licensed and unlicensed nursing staff are evaluated annually on selected nursing tasks and the subject matter associated with those tasks. Proficiency requires a passing grade of 80% or better on the corresponding quiz associated with these skills. The agency staff are educated and evaluated on an abbreviated scale.

As part of our educational mission, Georgia War's Nursing Administration team are members of the Advisory Board of Augusta Technical College RN and LPN students and Augusta University BSN program. In addition, our facility resumed its community outreach as a clinical site for Tender Care Training Center and Augusta University Allied Health students. One of the Nursing Administrative team members is completing her Nurse Practitioner degree, another is completing their master's degree in nursing, one of our Licensed Practical Nurses is completing her Registered Nurse degree, and one of our Nursing Assistants is completing her Licensed Practical Nurse degree.

The licensed nursing staff are required to have Continuing Education Units as dictated by the state of Georgia to maintain active licensure.

During FY25, learning opportunities were available via in person presentations, webinars/online/off-campus continuing education, Infection Prevention Newsletter and Nursing Huddles (small informal group in-services on the nursing units).

In-house education from July 1, 2024, to June 30, 2025:

PHARMACY
Urinary Tract Infections
WellStar MCG Pharmacy Integration with Epic Electronic Health/Pharmacy
Hazardous Drug Safety & USP-800 Review: Packaging, Disposal, Glove Use, Safe Seal Medication Envelope
New Hire/Annual Competency Review: Anti-Psychotic Use in the Elderly and Quiz
Glaucoma and Cataract Treatment
Documentation of Behaviors and Side Effects of Residents on Anti-Psychotics
Treatment of Fatty Liver Disease in the Elderly
Understanding Anti-Psychotics Use in Long Term Care Settings
Enhancing COPD Management: Key Updates to the GOLD Guidelines
Managing Diabetes in the Elderly

EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

INFECTION PREVENTION

Aspiration Precautions, Bedside Swallow and Swallow Therapy Evaluation
Infection Control Newsletter
Infection Control Rounds
Enhanced Barrier Precautions
ESBL: Management and Transmission Prevention in Healthcare Settings
Facility Annual Employee Physicals
Facility Annual Employee Flu-Fair
Key Facts About Influenza and Flu Vaccines
Infection Prevention Georgia War Newsletter
Mealtime Clean-up
Handwashing and Dwell Times
Moisture Associated Skin Damage
New Hire/Annual Competency Reviews:
→ Infection Prevention and Quiz
→ Pressure Ulcers and Quiz
Piston Syringe Use Random Audits
Review and revised Wound Care Policy/Procedure

SAFETY

Boilers	Post-fall Protocol
Chillers	Resident Elopement
Fire and Explosion	Restraint: Free Movement
Floods	Hurricane Preparedness Tips
Heat Illness Prevention	Utility/Communication Failure
Annual Facility Driver Certification Training	Annual Fire Extinguisher Training (P-A-S-S)
Individual Fire Drills and Monthly Emergency Management Codes	
LifeVac and AED (Automated External Defibrillator) Review	
Management of Resident Safety Events	
De-escalating Aggressive Dementia Residents	
New Hire/Annual Competency Reviews:	
→ Fall Precautions Quiz	
→ Safe Movement and Transfer Practices in Long Term Care	
→ De-escalating Aggression in Dementia Residents	
Review of Fall Interventions –v– Strategies	
Review of Maintenance Log and Amended Safety Inspection Forms	
Review of Tornado Terminology and Wind Damage	
USP-800: Hazardous Drug Handling in Healthcare Settings	

NURSING

REVIEW OF RESIDENT CLASSIFICATION REPORT
JULY 2024 THROUGH JUNE 2025

DATE	CATEGORY I	CATEGORY II	CATEGORY III	CENSUS
7/31/2024	27	64	27	118
8/31/2024	29	67	26	122
9/30/2024	29	70	26	122
10/31/2024	26	70	26	124
11/30/2024	25	73	23	121
12/31/2024	25	76	22	123
1/31/2025	27	68	22	117
2/29/2025	26	68	22	116
3/31/2025	25	66	25	116
4/30/2025	28	76	22	126
5/31/2025	25	76	23	124
6/30/2025	25	80	23	128
Annual Average	26	66	24	122

REVIEW OF VAMC & WELLSTAR MCG CLINIC VISITS
JULY 2024 THROUGH JUNE 2025

DATE	WELLSTAR MCG CLINICS	VAMC CLINICS
July 2024	13	30
August 2024	20	32
September 2024	13	35
October 2024	13	34
November 2024	10	30
December 2024	8	29
January 2025	13	37
February 2025	21	34
March 2025	15	34
April 2025	8	37
May 2025	16	36
June 2025	11	24
TOTAL	161	392

DEPARTMENT PROFILE

Occupational Therapy promotes a person's well-being and independence in all aspects of one's life. The aging process may present unexpected challenges to participation in life roles. At Georgia War Veterans Nursing Home, the Occupational Therapy department encourages residents to engage in all aspects of regaining or maintaining self-management independence. Activities of Daily Living include but are not limited to self-care, leisure, and meaningful tasks of the resident's choosing. Upon admission, each resident is screened or evaluated by the Occupational Therapist in accordance with the physician's referral. Treatments are planned to increase sensorimotor, cognitive and psychosocial components of residents' functional abilities. The environment is adapted to maximize one's abilities and safety while preventing abnormal postures and contractures by using positioning or orthotic devices. The need for adaptive equipment is assessed and appropriate equipment is issued. The Occupational Therapist (OT) and Occupational Therapy Assistant (OTA) collaborate in resident care and provide periodic screenings to assess needs for occupational therapy to address each resident's current status throughout the resident's stay.

During the FY25, the department had one full-time licensed and certified Occupational Therapist and one full-time licensed and certified Occupational Therapy Assistant who worked closely with the resident care team and maintained standards consistent with the Joint Commission, the American Occupational Therapy Association, the Georgia State Board of Occupational Therapy and the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy, Inc.

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES

The Occupational Therapy staff participated in the annual VA survey along with the facility's other team members.

The Occupational Therapy staff provided the following services:

- ▶ Evaluation of residents upon referral from the physician with the development of treatment plans, if indicated
- ▶ Implementation of recommended treatments; custom fabrication of orthotics
- ▶ Routine screening of residents
- ▶ Consultation to the staff, family members and residents
- ▶ Provision of in-service education to facility staff
- ▶ Collaboration and training with nursing staff regarding functional maintenance programs and restorative nursing programs
- ▶ Orientation sessions provided for new nursing employees to Occupational Therapy services regarding adaptive equipment and functional maintenance programs, and use of Kalogon pressure relieving wheelchair cushions
- ▶ Falls Risk Committee weekly participation to discuss falls, determination of appropriate falls prevention techniques and recommendation of safety interventions
- ▶ Monthly Safety Committee meetings – secretary

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES

- ▶ Resident care conference weekly participation providing input in the resident care planning process on a quarterly and annual basis
- ▶ Weekly wound rounds team member; bed positioning programs as medically directed
- ▶ Nutrition Alert Committee member; monitor residents' weight loss/gain weekly
- ▶ Restorative CNA and Senior CNA training in collaboration with Physical Therapist

SUMMARY OF PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT ACTIVITIES

Efforts in improving the quality of care have occurred through our on-going Performance Improvement Program including use of Kalogon pressure relieving wheelchair cushions for at risk residents to enhance wound healing and/or prevent wound development.

DEVELOPMENT PLANS

- Continue high standards and improvement of quality of care
- Strengthen existing programs and expand programs as needed
- Strengthen teamwork among all services in the care of the resident
- Consult with and provide training for staff as needed
- Continue to provide fieldwork experience for Occupation Therapy graduate students and Occupational Therapy Assistant students
- Attend pertinent continuing education to maintain OTR/OTA state licensure

EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Occupational Therapy will continue with a monthly departmental in-service program, in collaboration with the Physical Therapy, Social Work and Activities Departments and will continue to participate with facility in-services, both in attendance and in presentations. Professional courses are attended to maintain staff's professional competence and license requirements. The Occupational Therapy Department supports the education of Occupational Therapy students and Occupational Therapy Assistant students by providing clinical experiences that introduce prospective students to the field of geriatric occupational therapy.

BY THE NUMBERS

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

MONTHLY AVERAGES JULY 2024 THROUGH JUNE 2025	
Number of residents seen for all services	51
Number of residents seen for individualized treatments	45
Number of residents seen for group activity	0
Number of residents seen for short term/consult	0
Number of new residents evaluated	5
Number of residents re-evaluated	0
Number of residents reassessed	4
Number of residents screened	9
Number of residents on inactive status	77

JULY 2024 THROUGH JUNE 2025	
Treatment Unit Summary (15 minute segments)	Annual Totals
Evaluations	158
Re-evaluations	0
Reassessments	98
Individualized Treatments	7,963
Group Activities	0
Short Term Interventions/Consultations	0
Screenings	108
Total:	8,327

DEPARTMENT PROFILE

The Physical Therapy Department is committed to providing individualized, evidence-based sensory-motor interventions to our resident veterans who have been referred by our physicians and would benefit from skilled physical therapy services. The primary goal is to assist each veteran achieve and maintain their highest possible level of functional independence.

On admission, each resident undergoes a physical therapy screening or comprehensive evaluation, guided by physician recommendations. An individualized plan of care is then developed in collaboration with interdisciplinary teams to maximize therapeutic outcomes. As part of the discharge process from skilled physical therapy services, residents are assessed for participation in restorative nursing or functional maintenance programs. These programs are coordinated with the nursing department to ensure each resident receives an individualized, tailored approach to long-term care.

In addition to admission and discharge assessments, annual screenings are conducted to monitor each veteran's functional status and determine the need for re-evaluation. Equipment needs are assessed at the time of admission and on an ongoing basis and addressed through collaboration with the Social Worker, family members, and/or the VA Medical Center (VAMC).

The Physical Therapy department also provides the following:

- ▶ In-service training for all facility departments on body mechanics, transfer techniques, and other physical care topics.
- ▶ Documentation compliant with Georgia War Veterans Nursing Home policies and procedures, and Joint Commission standards.
- ▶ Clinical training opportunities for physical therapy students from local colleges and technical schools.
- ▶ Volunteer opportunities for high school students, including those seeking observation hours for physical therapy program applications.

The department is currently staffed by a Physical Therapist, who is the Director of Physical Therapy, a Physical Therapist Assistant, and a Restorative Technician, who also serves the Occupational Therapy and Activities departments.

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES

The Physical Therapy Department employs a holistic approach using therapy services, restorative nursing, and functional maintenance programs to enhance veterans' mobility and independence. Functional changes are closely monitored, and personalized interventions are delivered by a team of skilled professionals.

Restorative Technicians, who are supervised by the nurse manager on each floor, provide comprehensive restorative nursing care designed by physical, occupational, or speech therapists. The department's Restorative Technician provides an additional resource to assure continuity of care in the restorative nursing programs.

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES

The Fall Risk Committee, meeting weekly, focuses on reducing fall occurrences, evaluating restraint alternatives, and determining appropriate preventive interventions. Comprising staff from Physical Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Activities, Nursing, and Environmental Services, this interdisciplinary team ensures safety remains a top priority.

Monthly interdisciplinary meetings with Physical Therapy, Occupational Therapy, and Activities departments serve as platforms for sharing ideas, enhancing performance improvement initiatives, and presenting new techniques from continuing education experiences.

The Physical Therapy team also actively participates in:

- ▶ Weekly wound rounds
- ▶ Quarterly and annual care conferences
- ▶ New admission care meetings
- ▶ Safety and Performance Improvement Committees

New employee training includes body mechanics in-services provided by the Physical Therapist or Physical Therapy Assistant. Family members are also educated in safe transfers and equipment use as needed. They also work with facility staff following an injury to ensure competency in body mechanics. Veteran family members are also in-serviced regarding safe transfers, assisted movement, and equipment usage as needed.

The department continually enhances equipment procurement processes by coordinating with VAMC Prosthetics and Rehabilitation Services. The Director often accompanies veterans to seating clinics to secure custom seating solutions, ensuring better comfort and functionality.

PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT

The department remains committed to continuous improvement for the veterans we serve and the department. Notable accomplishments this past year include:

- Replacement of damaged rehab equipment to ensure safety.
- Introduction of music options during therapy for a more engaging experience
- Stocking of commonly used equipment parts to reduce repair wait times
- Weekly monitoring and proactive replacement of worn resident equipment
- Transition from outdated Broda wheelchairs to user-friendly Juditta wheelchairs
- Ongoing implementation of infection prevention protocols, including COVID-19 safeguards

PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT

PROPOSED FUTURE CHANGES:

- ▶ Enhancing the rehab environment with homelike decorations
- ▶ Acquiring new therapeutic exercise equipment to improve veterans' strength and mobility

DEVELOPMENT PLANS

- ▶ Continued interdisciplinary training for restorative technicians and senior certified nursing assistants
- ▶ Ongoing monitoring and evaluation of Functions Maintenance Programs across disciplines

BY THE NUMBERS

PHYSICAL THERAPY

JULY 2024 THROUGH JUNE 2025	
Treatments (15 minute Unit)	Annual Totals
Therapeutic Exercise	2,735
Therapeutic Activity	653
Balance/Coordination	85
Gait Training	1,661
Equipment Modification	0
Neuromuscular Re-Education	101
Modalities	118
Evaluation/Re-evaluation	205
Annual Screening/Admission Screening	85
Total:	5,643

JULY 2024 THROUGH JUNE 2025	
	Monthly Average
Number of residents at the beginning of month	38
Number of residents in the hospital at the beginning of the month	1
Number of residents at the end of the month	39
Number of residents in the hospital at the end of the month	1
Number of new residents admitted	4
Number of current residents re-admitted to PT	1
Number of residents discharged	3
Number of residents on Restorative Nursing at the end of the	38
Number of residents on Functional Maintenance at end of month	10

JULY 2024 THROUGH JUNE 2025	
Reasons for Discharge	Total
Expired	1
Discharge to home/another facility	0
Discharged - goals met	1
Discharged to Restorative Nursing	0
Discharged to Functional Maintenance	0
Other	2

DEPARTMENT PROFILE

The Georgia War Veterans Nursing Home is a skilled nursing facility owned and operated by the Georgia Department of Veterans Services under Augusta University (AU) in an interagency agreement with the Board of Regents, University System of Georgia. The overall mission of this long-term care facility is to provide optimal medical care to aging and disabled veterans. Comprehensive ongoing care is provided to our veterans under the direction of the Medical Director, Dr. Richard W. Sams, II, MD, MA who has served as the Medical Director since April, 2021. Dr. Sams also holds a faculty position of Professor in the AU Department of Family and Community Medicine. A full-time certified Physician Assistant (PA-C) augments clinical services. Through its association with AU Department of Family and Community Medicine, Georgia War Veterans Nursing Home is considered a leader in the area of geriatric educational training for Medical and Allied Health Students, and House-staff.

AU Family Medicine PGY-2 and PGY-3 resident physicians participate in the care of Georgia War residents for both monthly visits and longitudinal care. Also, each PGY-1 physician is assigned a one-month block of time during which they participate in the day-to-day operations of the nursing home. Dr. Sams also supervises in-depth Geriatric training for Fort Eisenhower's Dwight D. Eisenhower Army Medical Center (DDEAMC) PGY-3 Internal Medicine resident physicians under a memorandum of understanding between the two organizations. Resident physicians are taught a comprehensive multidisciplinary approach to caring for elderly chronically ill residents. Dr. Sams participates in teaching Medical, Pharmacy, Allied Health Nurse Practitioner, and Physician Assistant Students. Topics include but are not limited to: the comprehensive geriatric assessment, including functional assessment; frailty; dementia diagnosis and management; falls assessment and reduction; palliative and end of life care; pain assessment/management; neuropsychiatric manifestations of medical illness; the behavioral management of agitated demented residents and various other issues that are unique to the nursing home population. As such, the practical experience provided allows the learners to gain expertise in caring for older individuals in a skilled nursing facility.

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES

Medical staff continued to provide quality services to meet the needs of the resident population. During the past year, the department of Physician Services was assessed by the Department of Veterans Affairs and found to be in compliance. The facility is accredited by The Joint Commission

ACTIVITIES INCLUDED:

- ▶ Supervision of one-month block rotations for twelve AU Family Medicine PGY-1 resident physicians
- ▶ Provision of monthly facility in-services for nursing and medical staff
- ▶ Oversight of longitudinal long-term care for 22 AU Family Medicine PGY-2 and PGY-3 resident physicians
- ▶ Administration of one month Geriatrics rotation for seven DDEAMC Internal Medicine resident physicians

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES

ACTIVITIES INCLUDED:

- ▶ Medical direction of Wound Care and Resident Care Teams, with each team having weekly rounds throughout the year
- ▶ Participation in facility committees (including Department Head, Utilization Review, Infection Control, Performance Improvement, Pharmacy and Safety)
- ▶ Participation in Joint Commission Risk Assessment Group, Proactive Risk Assessments of Advance Directives and Code Status policies
- ▶ Collaboration with facility consultant pharmacists to optimize Pharmacologic Therapy in a team approach
- ▶ Medical direction of comprehensive geriatric intakes for new admissions
- ▶ Communication with family members of veterans on a regular basis
- ▶ 3rd year medical student geriatric experience for students rotating at AU Family Medicine
- ▶ Supervises a fourth-year medical student geriatrics-palliative care elective rotation. Three students participated in the elective in the past year.
- ▶ Small group case-based learning each Thursday afternoon at the Harrison Commons/MCG for 1st and 2nd year medical students
- ▶ Oversees the Morning Report Educational Conference that occurs each Wednesday and Thursday morning in the Department of Family and Community Medicine

SUMMARY OF PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT ACTIVITIES

The Medical Director participates in the nursing home's Performance Improvement and Utilization Review programs with the focus to improve resident outcomes. Standards for physician services are addressed by the Medical Director who addresses any identified needs and works toward improvement. Special orientation conferences were held with new incoming Resident physicians and rising PGY-2 residents. Through the Performance Improvement Committee, the Medical Director remains involved with projects throughout the facility.

As a teaching skilled nursing facility, continual focus is on improving opportunities for graduate and undergraduate medical education in Geriatric Medicine.

In the longitudinal training, continuity care of long-term residents under supervision of the Medical Director is emphasized. Beginning in the second year of Residency (PGY-2), all 2nd and 3rd year family medicine residents at AU are assigned a panel of veteran residents which they follow through completion of their Residency. The one-month block rotation generally occurs during the PGY-1 year for Augusta University family medicine intern physicians and PGY-3 year for DDEAMC Internal Medicine PGY-3 resident physicians.

SUMMARY OF PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT ACTIVITIES

Ongoing efforts include multidisciplinary Resident Care Team involvement in periodic chart review, medication monitoring, end-of-life issues, falls, unintentional weight loss, and oral hygiene issues.

DEVELOPMENT PLANS

DEVELOPMENT PLANS
Continue to provide an ideal setting for academic interests such as teaching and research, while allowing excellent care for our most frail elderly veterans
One-month Geriatrics rotation for seven DDEAMC Internal Medicine resident physicians
Medical Direction of Wound Care and Resident Care Teams, with each team having weekly rounds throughout the year
Participation in facility Committee: Department Head, Infection Control, Performance Improvement, Pharmacy, and Safety
Participation in Joint Commission Risk Assessment Group, Proactive Risk Assessments of Advance Directives and Code Status policies
Provision of facility in-services
Collaboration with facility consultant pharmacists to optimize pharmacologic therapy in a team approach
Medical direction of comprehensive geriatric intakes for new admissions

DEPARTMENT PROFILE

The Department of Social Work provides comprehensive services to residents and their families and serves as liaison and advocate in the unique setting of long-term care. We emphasize the resident's quality of life, self-determination, strength, autonomy, reaching and maintaining their highest level of functioning. We emphasize early involvement with each resident and family at time of admission to facilitate the adjustment process to the new environment and change in personal and family dynamics. Ongoing support is provided to address psycho-social issues, end of life care, and discharge planning needs as they arise throughout the resident's life in the facility.

Additionally, the department serves as a resource to all staff by providing information, education and assistance related to resident's rights, policy interpretation and implementation, assisting with possible abuse/neglect allegations, committee participation, and community resource identification and utilization.

SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK:

- Resident/family counseling and education
- Case management
- Discharge Planning and Coordination
- Comprehensive assessment and coordination of end-of-life care/services
- Community resource identification and utilization
- Coordination/assistance with financial and benefit entitlements
- Assistance with advance directives, guardianship, and other legal issues
- Management/oversight of Grievance Log in accordance with state regulations
- Management/oversight of Theft and Loss Log
- Coordination/presentation of quarterly Residents' Bill of Rights in-services
- Coordination of bi-monthly Residents' Council meetings
- Presentation of new employee orientation
- Participation in special events, organizational committees and related functions
- Professional presentations and community education

MEET THE DEPARTMENT

Director of Social Work: Masters prepared, Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW). This position provides direct clinical services to residents and families, serves as integral member of the interdisciplinary care team as well as, provides daily administrative oversight, and direction for the Social Work department. Additionally, this position serves as a member of the senior leadership team within the facility.

Social Worker III: A Masters level social work (MSW) position which provides direct clinical services to residents and families, serves as integral member of the interdisciplinary care team and frequently participates in department functions and committees. A temporary Licensed Clinical Social Worker held this position through July 31, 2024. A full-time Licensed Master Social Worker (LMSW) worked on a full-time basis until early March 2025. Currently, a temporary Licensed Clinical Social Worker is working in this position.

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES

- ▶ Daily provision of comprehensive social work services to residents and families; average daily caseload for the year was 121 residents and their families
- ▶ Coordination of 44 admissions, 20 Comfort Measures / End of Life Care and 5 discharges
- ▶ Coordination/presentation of quarterly Residents' Bill of Rights in-services for staff
- ▶ Coordination of bi-monthly Resident Council meetings
- ▶ Presentation to new employees in monthly orientation sessions
- ▶ Development and implementation of performance improvement initiatives
- ▶ Participation in professional continuing education seminars and training opportunities
- ▶ Participation in VA and State surveys; department was deficiency free in all surveys
- ▶ Coordination and participation in special events and ceremonies
- ▶ Weekly, monthly, quarterly participation in the following committees:
 - ▶ Interdisciplinary Resident Care Conference
 - ▶ New Admission Resident Conference
 - ▶ Fall Committee
 - ▶ Safety Committee
 - ▶ Nutrition Alert Committee
 - ▶ Performance Improvement Committee
 - ▶ Application Review Board
 - ▶ Resident and Family Centered Care Committee

The virtual video chats implemented in FY20 continued throughout FY25. These video chats help connect the resident with family members. The new residents and their family members are informed of the virtual chats at the time of admission. The video chats continued as an alternative if the family members preferred to visit virtually due to the distance or their own health concerns.

PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVES

COMFORT MEASURES:

Continuous collaboration with physicians, nursing staff, resident care team and families to identify appropriate residents for consideration of implementation of Comfort Measures initiatives to enhance the provision and support of end-of-life care, coordinate protocol for team notification, staff education and implementation of support services. Comfort Measures were implemented with 20 residents throughout the year.

PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVES

FAMILY SUPPORT GROUP:

The Social Work team along with the Chaplain, facilitated monthly Family Support Group meetings for family members of residents. Emphasis is placed on providing support for the family members addressing psychosocial issues related to long-term care, adjustment to new environment, lifestyle and relationship changes and end of life care. Another important function of the group is to foster relationships between the family members. The group sessions continue to include an educational component featuring discussions on select topics of interest as identified by group members

VA HEALTH CARE ID PROJECT

The VA has changed the information on the VA Health Care ID Card. The updated cards will now include an expiration date, VA Plan Number, Branch of Service Emblem, "VA" in braille, to help visually impaired veterans, along with VA phone numbers & emergency-care instructions. As many of the residents require new ID Cards, the VA was contacted and was able to complete the renewal process for many of the residents. This project will be on-going to ensure the residents have the needed updated ID Cards.

PRESENTATIONS CONDUCTED BY DEPARTMENT:

- Residents' Bill of Rights virtual training
- New Employee Orientation
- Quarterly Residents' Bill of Rights Group Huddles

STAFF DEVELOPMENT - EDUCATION COMPLETED

- ▶ Cyber Security
- ▶ Monthly Fire Safety and Monthly Emergency Management Codes
- ▶ AU Annual Compliance Training
- ▶ Monthly Infection Prevention at GWVNH Newsletter
- ▶ Staff Development Time Management—self study
- ▶ Staff Development Heat Exhaustion vs. Heat Stroke

Various Continuing Education Synchronous Webinars which focused on:

- ▶ Elder Care
- ▶ Coping with Caregiver Burnout & Compassion Fatigue: Strategies for Sustaining Well-Being
- ▶ Solution Focused Approaches in Healthcare Settings
- ▶ Verbal & Emotional De-escalation
- ▶ Living with Cognitive Impairment—Personal Perspectives
- ▶ DSM-5 Overview with Ethical Perspectives

STAFF DEVELOPMENT - EDUCATION COMPLETED

- ▶ 5th Annual Elder Care Symposium
- ▶ Staff Development: Best Hiring Practices
- ▶ Staff Development: Elder Abuse Self Study
- ▶ Staff Development: Prevention Works Self Study
- ▶ Staff Development: Self Care for Health Care Professionals
- ▶ Staff Development: Resident Centered Care

DEPARTMENT GOALS

CONTINUE to educate all staff regarding residents' rights as they pertain to our residents and long-term care environments.

MAINTAIN all VA, State, and The Joint Commission Standards with departmental deficiency free surveys.

DEVELOP expert knowledge and provide staff education and support regarding:

- Quality of life in long-term care (LTC)
- Ethical considerations in end-of-life care
- Dementia care and chronic illnesses in LTC population

PROVIDE excellent customer service in all encounters with residents, families, staff, and community contacts.

BY THE NUMBERS

SOCIAL WORK

JULY 2024 THROUGH JUNE 2025	
	Annual Totals
Admissions	44
Discharges	5
Comfort Measures	20
Resident Contacts	2,565
Family Contacts	2,399
Staff Contacts	10,808
Agency Contacts	858
Total Contacts:	16,699

DEPARTMENT PROFILE

The Activities Department consists of the Director and four Activity Therapists. Programs are planned and scheduled to meet the social, leisure, and physical needs of all our residents. These needs are met through programs that are designed to give residents entertainment, intercommunication, exercise, relaxation and opportunities to express creative talents. These programs fulfill basic psychological, social, and spiritual needs. The Activities team consists of Heather Nichols, Director of Activities, and our Activity Therapists Pam Parker, Lisa Hadden, Sharon Neely, and Miranda Crocker. The department ended FY25 fully staffed.

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES

The Activities Department worked with other departments throughout the year in several special activities. Internal events included National Skilled Nursing Care Week, modified community outings and annual holiday parties. Georgia War has had the pleasure of hosting many in-house as well as community cookouts with the support from local vendors. Residents were assisted in starting a garden with tomatoes, bell peppers, jalapenos, cucumbers, and okra. The vegetables grown in the container garden were used for resident snacks and to enhance veteran meals. In addition to internal events, the Activities Department was able to host product drives which included toiletries, and entertainment items.

The volunteer program continues to have strong support from the community. We are very thankful for the individuals and group volunteers that serve our veterans. Groups from various veterans' organizations including the sponsored activities such as our monthly birthday party, BINGO, pizza party, and banana split parties. Other sponsored events included ice cream socials, seasonal parties, product drives, letter writing campaigns, and live concerts. Many groups provided donations such as personal care items, lap blankets, refreshments and gifts for the residents. Donations were also made to the Resident Benefit Fund for comfort items, special events, equipment, and other projects that benefit our residents.

VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES FOR OUR RESIDENTS:

Garden Club - Residents received a variety of flowers for the nursing units

Arts and Crafts - Residents assembled various crafts kits from ***Help Hospitalized Veterans***

Project Lifting Spirits - Product drives, goodie bag donations, socials, ice cream party, home baked goods, word search puzzles, letters of encouragement, toiletry items, and monthly community outings including AR Workshop, Barnyard Buddies, Your Pie, Wedges & Woods, Nailed It, Hope for Hooves, Savannah River Keepers, and Fall Festival

American Legion Department of Georgia - Toiletry items, craft kits, snacks, BINGO prizes, and additional comfort items

American Legion Post 192 Auxiliary - Product drives, goodie bag donations, Pizza Parties, Banana Split Party, and toiletry items

ACTIVITIES

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES

VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES FOR OUR RESIDENTS:

American Legion Post 205 and Lanier's Meat Market - Hamburger's, sausage dogs, hot dogs and all the sides and fixings for the meal for residents and staff

American Legion Post 205 Auxiliary - Cookout for residents and staff, Goodie bag donations, Pizza Parties, and Banana Split Party.

Elks Lodge 205 - Monthly Sub Sandwich Party, four (4) New Outdoor wheelchair accessible Planters with soil and fall plants, Snow Cone supplies, and cotton candy supplies

Combat Veterans Motorcycle Association - Donated various food, candy bars, BINGO supplies and entertainment items for veteran activities throughout the facility

Evans VFW Auxiliary - Birthday cake/cupcakes, ice cream with toppings, Memorial Day cookout and personal care items

Jim & Judy Whelan - Snack Cakes, universal remotes, and a new BINGO ball cage.

Dave Gossen - Barbecue cookout for staff and residents

PenFed - BINGO with prizes

SUMMARY OF PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT ACTIVITIES

The activities for our veteran residents were part of the Performance Improvement plan this past year:

- Falls prevention and restraint reduction – Activities is involved in a plan with Nursing and other teams; no restraints are in use at the facility
- Members actively involved with improving the safety of the residents through participation with the Falls Prevention and Restraint Reduction Committee
- Small groups and 1:1 activity events are ongoing
- Diet Changes – updating staff when changes occur
- Use of sunscreen and hydration with water during outside activities
- Ensuring all wheelchairs and Broda or Juditta chairs have footrests
- Provide support with End-of-Life Care and the Comfort Cart
- Continuing monthly reminiscence group to increase participation of residents with dementia by stimulating memories through the five senses
- Increased socialization with peers and staff

DEVELOPMENT PLANS

- ▶ Provide a current dietary list to Activity Therapists.
- ▶ Provide performance activity programs that meet the social, physical, and leisure needs of the residents.
- ▶ Provide a wide variety of activity programs for both group and individual needs.
- ▶ Document residents' participation to include the activity, the degree of assistance required to attend the activity and the level of participation in each activity.
- ▶ Invite community groups (e.g., schools, church groups and civic groups) to assist the facility in providing entertainment and interaction with the residents.
- ▶ Seek additional community volunteers to support/provide individual and group activity programs for our residents.
- ▶ Document 1:1 activity visits and how residents react to each.

EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

The Activity staff coordinated community groups in product drives. The Activity department will continue monthly departmental in-service programs in conjunction with the Physical Therapy and Occupational Therapy departments. Activities staff will also continue to participate in facility in-services and will participate in community seminars that relate to our profession.

The Activities department participates in regular in-service programs on proper hand hygiene and use of PPE to best meet the guidelines set in place by the CDC and the Georgia Department of Public Health.

DEPARTMENT PROFILE

Pharmacy services are provided by the Wellstar MCG Health (WMCGH) Pharmacy Department. Medications are distributed from the Medical Office Building Clinic Pharmacy using a unit dose system; the unit dose packaging provides a double check for safety and also controls drug costs by minimizing waste. The dispensing activity is managed by Periyasamy Sudharsan, PharmD. Clinical services at the nursing home are provided by WMCGH consultant pharmacist, Jody C. Rocker, PharmD, BCPS.

The Pharmacy Department provides pharmacy resident care services with the goal of safe and cost effective drug therapy and optimal medication-related outcomes. Responsibilities include:

- **Direction** and oversight of all aspects of the acquisition, disposition, handling, storage and administration of medications in the facility
- **Medication** regimen review for each resident on admission, at least monthly thereafter, and upon readmission from hospitalizations, monitoring progress toward stated outcome goals and making recommendations when needed to optimize therapy
- **Participation** in interdisciplinary resident care planning team activities, including all new admission conferences and weekly MDS resident care plan conferences
- **Committee** involvement including Pharmacy Services, Antimicrobial Stewardship, Infection Control, and Performance Improvement
- **Oversight/Leadership** of the medication use evaluation (MUE) and improvement program

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES

- ▶ Written consult recommendations/interventions to optimize care continues to be a high focus and are reviewed weekly at interdisciplinary resident care conferences.
- ▶ During FY25, “live” presentations presented to the medical and nursing staff included: Review of Medication Administration, Review of USP 800 Medication Administration, Review of UTI Treatment, Review of Metabolic Dysfunction-Associated Steatotic Liver Disease, Review of Glaucoma and Cataracts Medications, Use of Antipsychotics in LTC, Review of Gold Guidelines, and Review of Diabetes in the Elderly. The pharmacy consultant also provides Anticoagulation and Antimicrobial stewardship education to all incoming employees during their initial facility orientation.
- ▶ An automatic therapeutic interchange program (in conjunction with WMCGH) has been in place for many years to help control medication costs while standardizing care and ensuring optimal therapy.
- ▶ A list of high risk, look alike-sound alike medications has been identified for interventions to reduce the opportunities for medication errors.

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES

- ▶ The medication management process is assessed annually as part of our annual Periodic Performance (Self) Evaluation against The Joint Commission standards and no issues or concerns have been identified.

SUMMARY OF PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT ACTIVITIES

The Medication Use Evaluation (MUE) and Improvement program at Georgia War Veterans Nursing Home is reviewed annually by the Pharmacy Department and interdisciplinary Pharmacy Committee to assess progress and set goals for the year. The MUE program consists of medication use guidelines, ongoing screening evaluation activities and focused MUE studies. Monthly MUE reports for six drug classes are distributed to Nurse Managers. Screening evaluation activities are routinely performed by a pharmacist each time medications are ordered, and during monthly medication regimen reviews – to identify and resolve potential medication-related problems. Focused evaluations are conducted for selected medications or processes that are high risk, high cost, high use, or problem-prone.

CURRENT ACTIVITIES

Pharmacist/Physician Clinical Intervention program

Drug Allergy screening

Renal Dose monitoring

Adverse Drug Reaction monitoring

Medication Error Reporting/Prevention

Anti-Psychotic Drug Therapy monitoring and Dose Reduction program

Immunization promotion

Additional performance improvement projects initiated: assessment of renal function, non-formulary medication evaluation, update of the Look Alike-Sound Alike, and Hazardous and do-not-crush medication lists

EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

The pharmacy teaching program provided five-week geriatric rotations for four (4) Doctor of Pharmacy candidates from the University of Georgia (UGA) College of Pharmacy. They were supervised by UGA preceptor, Jody C. Rocker PharmD. She also serves as a preceptor offering an elective Geriatric rotation to post-graduate year one Pharmacy Residents from Wellstar MCG Health which is accredited by the American Society of Health-System Pharmacists. Three (3) Wellstar MCG Health PGY1 residents completed a four-week geriatric rotation elective.

PHARMACY

PHARMACY SERVICES JULY 2024 THROUGH JUNE 2025	
	Annual Totals
Drug Regimen Reviews	1,506
New Admissions (development of initial Pharmacy Care Plan)	44
Pharmacist Recommendations	259
Live In-service Education Programs Provided	8

MEDICATION UTILIZATION JULY 2024 THROUGH JUNE 2025	
	Annual Totals
Anti-psychotic Drug Use	10.7%
Anti-depressant Drug Use	70%

DEPARTMENT PROFILE

Timothy E. Lark, Chaplain, provides services to the residents, staff and families of the Georgia War Veterans Nursing Home. As an ordained minister, he offers our residents and staff dynamic spiritual support.

Chaplaincy and spiritual care services are offered freely to all who desire them. The primary role of the Georgia War Veterans Nursing Home Chaplain is to provide emotional and spiritual support for residents, their families, and facility staff members. The Chaplain specializes in spiritual development and provides education and counseling to individuals facing grief, loss, aging, crisis, and terminal illness. In times of need, the Chaplain offers the gift of compassion and presence. It is not the Chaplain's role to influence, persuade or change an individual's religious belief but to explore their spirituality as a source of understanding, support, and comfort. The Chaplain serves those of all faiths and none. The Chaplain aims to model equality and inclusivity, hospitality and integrity, dignity, and respect.

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES

- Provided weekly pastoral care visits to residents, their families, and staff members.
- Provided end-of-life support and bereavement follow-up with family members.
- Participated with the comprehensive bereavement team of Wellstar MCG Health that follows up with residents' families after death.
- Available 24-hour on-call services for Georgia War Nursing Home during times of crisis or death.
- Submitted monthly pastoral care articles for the Georgia War Nursing Home's VET COM newsletter.
- Conducted veteran resident spiritual needs assessments and evaluations as requested by the Medical Director, Resident Physicians, Social Workers, and Clinical Staff Members.
- Collaborated with medical students to enhance their comprehension of how spirituality and the Chaplain can affect holistically residents' health.
- Communicate with local pastors/priests, and funeral directors, and family members in the event of a resident's death.
- Visited or called hospitalized residents at the VA, Wellstar MCG Health, and Piedmont Augusta hospitals weekly.
- Provided weekly Bible study and worship services.
- Conducted and documented weekly/routine pastoral care visits with residents placed on CMO/DNH status.
- Administered the Bereavement Card program.
- Conducted memorial services for staff and residents.

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES

- Provided Ash Wednesday, Blessing of the Hands for nursing and other staff, and Good Friday services upon residents' request.
- Provided counseling and crisis intervention for residents, families, and staff.
- Participated in monthly Family Support Group sessions.