



# Patient Education

For the VA Medical Centers located in  
Lake City and Gainesville, Florida

**BOOKLET**

UPDATED AUGUST 2001

NORTH FLORIDA

SOUTH GEORGIA

**Veterans Health System**



## Table of Contents

<b>Welcome .....</b>	<b>2</b>
Gainesville Division History .....	2
Lake City Division History .....	3
<b>General Information .....</b>	<b>3</b>
Finding your way at the Gainesville Division .....	3
Finding your way at the Lake City Division .....	4
Telephone numbers .....	4
Addresses .....	4
Appointments and Waiting Times .....	4
Emergencies .....	5
Holidays .....	5
Accommodations .....	5
Smoking .....	5
Visiting Hours .....	5
Inpatient Meal Hours .....	5
Canteen .....	5
Retail Store .....	5
Barber Shop .....	5
Newspaper Stands .....	6
<b>Our Vision .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Our Mission .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Our Values .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Patient Satisfaction .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Patient Rights .....</b>	<b>6</b>
The Ethics Committee .....	6
Pain Control .....	7
Use of Safety Restraints for Medical/Surgical Care .....	7
<b>Patient Responsibilities .....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Safety .....</b>	<b>8</b>
Personal Property and Valuables .....	8
Parking .....	8
Police and Security Service .....	9
<b>Patient Services .....</b>	<b>9</b>
Library .....	9
Pharmacy Service .....	9
Television .....	9
Recreation Therapy Section .....	10
Women Veterans Clinic .....	10
Social Work Service .....	10
Nutrition Service .....	10
Vocational Rehabilitation .....	10
Smoking Cessation .....	10
Substance Abuse .....	10
Chaplain Service .....	11
VA Voluntary Service (VAVS) .....	11
Florida Department of Veterans Affairs .....	11
Disabled American Veterans .....	11
<b>Money Matters .....</b>	<b>11</b>
Insurance and VA Billing .....	11
Veteran Copayments .....	15
<b>Advance Directives .....</b>	<b>16</b>

## Welcome

Welcome to the North Florida/South Georgia Veterans Health System. We are proud to serve those who served our country. It is our job to give you the best care we can, with kindness and respect. Our goal for you is good health. We need your help to treat your illness and keep you healthy. We want you to be satisfied so you will come back if you need our help again.

This guide will tell you things you should know as a patient at the Gainesville or Lake City Divisions of the North Florida/South Georgia Veterans Health System. We hope it will be helpful to you.

## Gainesville Division History

It was President Harry S. Truman who first approved the creation of the Veterans Administration Hospital in Gainesville on October, 1945. This plan to build the hospital, however, was cancelled that December. It was not until October, 1961, sixteen years later, that President



John F. Kennedy gave the go-ahead for building a hospital here in Gainesville.

In 1962, the VA OK'd the plan for a new hospital. The plan called for a five story, 480 bed general hospital to be located next to the University of Florida. The VA then purchased 31 acres of land. Construction began on January 16, 1964. Your VA medical center was dedicated on October 22, 1967. U.S. Representative Olin E. "Tiger" Teague, D-Texas, was the keynote speaker. He said, "the veterans of the Sunshine State can be assured they are never forgotten men."

In October, 1998, the Gainesville and Lake City VA Medical Centers joined together to form the North Florida/South Georgia Veterans Health System. The System also includes eight associated outpatient clinics.

In February 1999 the newly constructed Ambulatory Care wing was dedicated and the medical center renamed in honor of Director Emeritus Malcom Randall.

## Lake City Division History

What is now the Lake City VA Medical Center was the original site of the Florida Agricultural College (1883). In 1903, the College was renamed “The University of Florida”, and in 1906, the University was relocated to Gainesville. The 335-acre site became Columbia College and remained an active institution until 1917 when it was combined with Stetson University in DeLand. During World War I, troops of the Florida Militia occupied some of the buildings. In February, 1920, the property was transferred to the citizens of Lake City. Later that same year, the site was purchased by the Federal Government for the sum of \$75,000 and plans were formed to convert the facility into a Public Health Service Hospital. After extensive renovations, the first patient was admitted on December 6, 1920, to the U.S. Public Health Service Hospital No. 63.



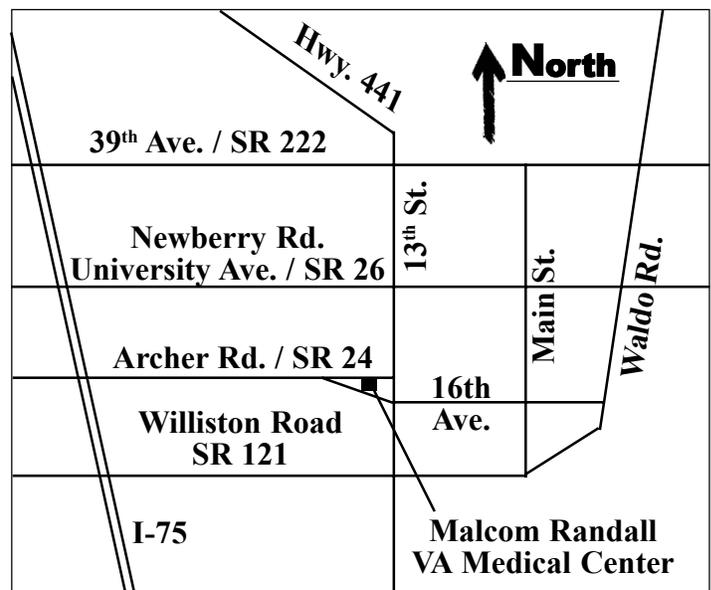
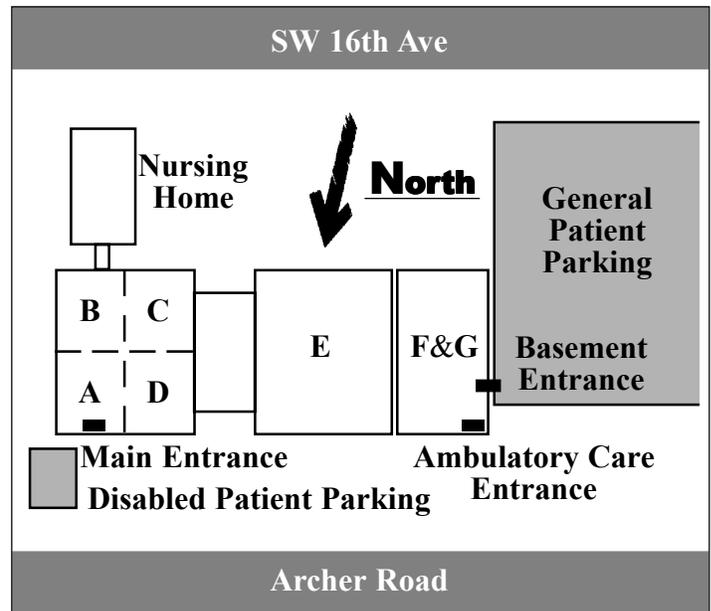
On August 9, 1921, the Veterans Bureau was created to care for returning World War I veterans, and the transition from Public Health to Veterans Bureau Hospital began. This transition was completed in 1924 when the Lake City Hospital began its proud tradition of caring for our nation’s veterans. On July 21, 1930, President Hoover signed an executive order creating the Veterans Administration, and at that time the name of the hospital officially became VA Hospital, Lake City. In 1950, approximately 299 acres of the original grounds were declared surplus to federal needs, leaving the remaining 39 acres for VA functions. On September 7, 1978, the VA Hospital was officially designated a VA Medical Center.

## General Information

### Finding your way at the Gainesville Division

The Gainesville VA is made up of 5 floors and 7 sections- A, B, C, D, E, F, and G. A map is shown below. Room numbers and patient wards all have one of these letters. For example, room E347 would be in the E section and on the third floor.

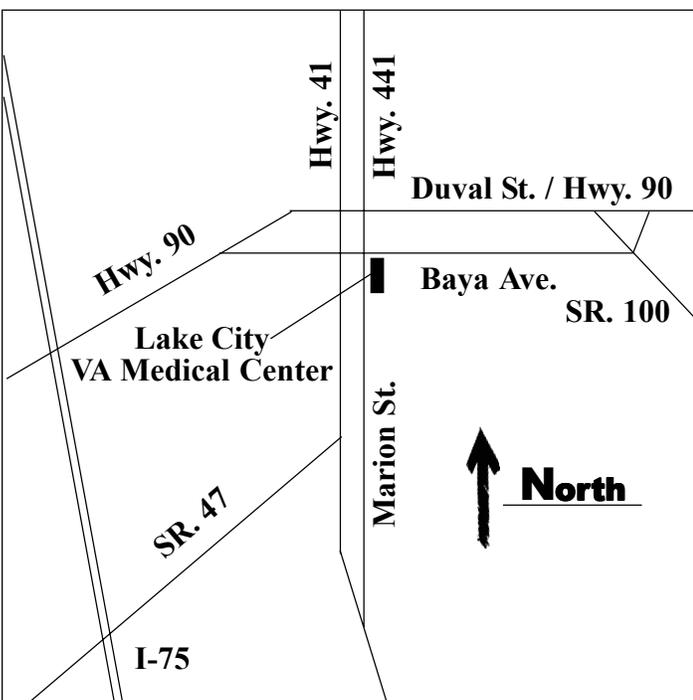
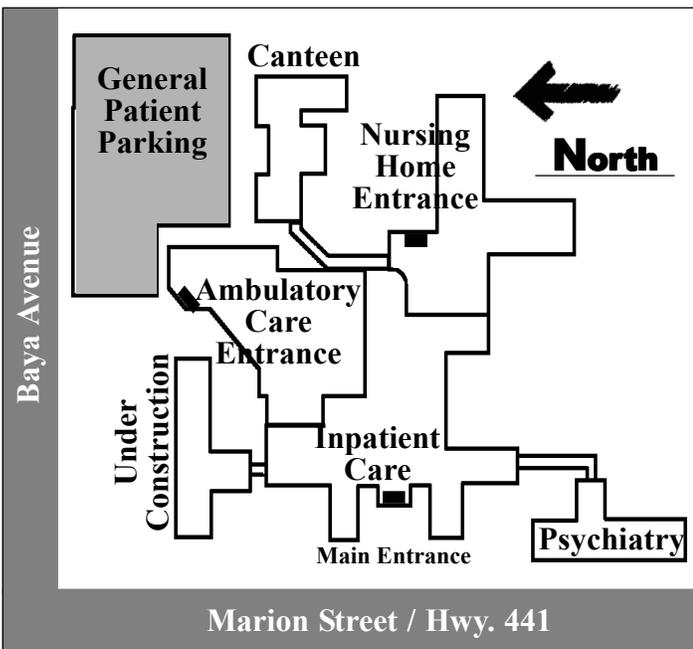
There are maps and signs on walls throughout the hospital that will point you in the right direction. If you have trouble finding your way, please ask any employee. We are here to help you and we put veterans first!



## Finding your way at the Lake City Division

The Lake City Division is made up of several buildings as labeled in the map below. Ample visitor parking is provided for each of the patient care areas, and shuttle service to and from parking areas is available.

Maps and signs are posted throughout the hospital to assist you in finding your way. If you have problems, please ask any employee for assistance or pick up a red courtesy phone for assistance.



## Telephone Numbers

### Main Numbers (also, see “Frequently called numbers” on page 15)

#### Gainesville Division

Local: (352) 376-1611  
 Long Distance: (800) 324-8387  
 Pharmacy: (800) 349-9457 *or* dial the local number or the long distance number listed above and press 3  
 Scheduling: dial the local number or the long distance number and press 2

#### Lake City Division

Local: (386) 755-3016  
 Long Distance: (800) 308-8387  
 Pharmacy: (386) 755-3016, ext. 2109 or 2551 *or* (800) 308-8387, ext. 2109 or 2551  
 Scheduling: dial the local number or the long distance number listed above and press 1

### TelCare

The telephone advice lines listed below are available to veterans and their families. Nurses and clerks are on duty to answer questions about your health care.

Monday-Friday - 8:00 am to 4:00 pm

#### Gainesville Division:

(352) 379-4142 or long distance: (800) 988-5641

#### Lake City Division:

(386) 755-3016, ext. 2805 or long distance: (800) 308-8387, ext. 2805

#### Evening Help:

Monday-Friday 4:00 pm to 8:00 am

Entire south Georgia, Florida and Puerto Rico area:

(877) 741-3400

## Addresses

#### Gainesville Division

Malcom Randall VA Medical Center  
 1601 SW Archer Road  
 Gainesville, FL 32608-1197

#### Lake City Division

Lake City VA Medical Center  
 801 S. Marion Street  
 Lake City, FL 32025

## Appointments and Waiting Times

We are working hard to see veterans as close to appointment

times as possible. If you have an appointment and arrive on time, our goal is for you to wait no longer than 30 minutes. You can help by:

- Being on time for appointments
- Calling us if you have to cancel or will be late for an appointment
- Coming early if you need to have blood tests, X-rays, EKGs or other tests done before you see the doctor
- Bringing in test results, especially if you had the tests done someplace else. Your doctor will want to see the actual X-ray, MRI, or CAT scan films.

## **Emergencies**

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If you have an emergency while you are here, please contact any staff member immediately.

## **Holidays**

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Appointments are not scheduled for the following federal holidays:

- New Year's Day (1/1)
- Martin Luther King Day (3rd Monday in January)
- President's Day (3rd Monday in February)
- Memorial Day (last Monday in May)
- Independence Day (7/4)
- Labor Day (first Monday in September)
- Columbus Day (2nd Monday in October)
- Veterans Day (11/11)
- Thanksgiving (4th Thursday in November)
- Christmas (12/25)

*Emergency services are available at any time.*

## **Accommodations**

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If you need information on local places to stay, ask to talk to a Social Worker. Social Work Service keeps a list of local hotels, motels, and homes where people can stay.

## **Smoking**

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Our medical centers are smoke free. If you or your visitors must smoke, please smoke in designated areas outside the building.

## **Visiting Hours**

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Visiting hours vary from unit to unit. Check with the telephone operator or nursing station to find out the visiting hours for the area you want to visit.

## **Inpatient Meal Hours**

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Gainesville Division

Breakfast - 6:45 am to 7:15 am  
Lunch - 11:45 am to 1:00 pm  
Supper - 4:45 pm to 5:45 pm

Lake City Division

Breakfast - 6:45 am to 8:00 am  
Lunch - 11:20 am to 1:00 pm  
Supper - 4:30 pm to 6:00 pm

## **Canteen**

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Serving meals and snacks

Gainesville Division

Hours: Mon. thru Fri. - 6:30 am to 3:00 pm  
Saturday - 8:30 am to 3:00 pm

Location: basement of Main Building (east side)

Phone: ext. 6040

Lake City Division

Hours: Mon. thru Fri. - 7:30 am to 3:00 pm

Location: first floor (near the Chapel)

Phone: ext. 2035

## **Retail Store**

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Merchandise can be charged to major credit cards.

Gainesville Division

Hours: Mon. thru Fri. - 8:00 am to 3:30 pm

Location: next to Canteen, basement, main bldg.

Lake City Division

Hours: Mon. thru Fri. - 8:00 am to 3:30 pm

Location: behind the cafeteria

## **Barber Shop**

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Gainesville Division

Barber Shop services were not available at the Gainesville Division at the time of publication of this patient guide.

Lake City Division

Hours Tuesday thru Friday:  
9:00 am to 10:00 am  
12:00 pm to 1:00 pm  
3:00 pm to 4:00 pm

Other times when on wards.

Location: Nursing Home Care Unit 2, Room 2517

Phone: ext. 3010

## Newspaper Stands

Gainesville Division

Location: Outside the Canteen

Lake City Division

Locations: Outside of the cafeteria  
Main Lobby  
Outside of Nursing Home Care Unit

## Our Vision

To provide the health care excellence that makes a difference in the lives of veterans and their families.

## Our Mission

To improve the health of our veteran population by providing the highest quality primary, specialty, and extended care in an integrated health care delivery system, enhanced by research and sustained through education.

## Our Values

The North Florida/South Georgia Veterans Health System is a caring health care community in which people are valued, trusted, and respected. The following values guide our actions and choices in achieving excellence:

**Trust♦Integrity♦Compassion♦Accountability  
Competence♦Teamwork♦Respect♦Commitment**

## Patient Satisfaction

We are always trying to improve and need your comments to help us. If you have suggestions, concerns or problems, please take time to let us know how you feel about your care.

## Patient Rights

As a patient, you have the right to get quality health care. We promise to do our best to give this care and help meet your health and illness needs. We are here for you. As you get care, we want you to know you have certain rights.

You have the right to:

- Be treated with dignity and respect
- Privacy
- Know the names, titles, and jobs of people who give care to you

- Get information about your health, illnesses, and care in a way that you can understand
- Make decisions about your care
- Refuse any care you do not want
- Have information about your health and care kept confidential
- Request another room (if available) if you are being disturbed
- Be cared for in a safe setting, free from abuse or harm
- Get information about a Living Will or Advance Directive, and make your wishes known
- Be kept as comfortable as possible

If at any time you feel any of these rights are being violated, you have the right to complain. You can make a complaint to any employee, such as a doctor, nurse, or social worker. You can make a complaint without fear that it will affect your health care or benefits.

If you cannot work out a problem with staff and their supervisors, you can ask to talk to your Patient Advocate.

## The Ethics Committee

Sometimes it is hard for a patient/family member to make a decision about medical care because of moral or ethical issues. Patients and/or family members may disagree with the medical team's plan of care for the patient. For example, a patient may want a certain drug but the health team does not feel that drug should be prescribed.

When these problems cannot be easily solved, the North Florida/South Georgia Veterans Health System Ethics Committee can be consulted.

The Ethics Committee's role is to look at ethical concerns by having the committee members talk things over with patients, family members, and the treatment team. The Ethics Committee **does not make treatment decisions**. The role of the committee is to offer assistance and guidance with ethical problems.

The Ethics Committee can be contacted through your patient representative's office:

Gainesville Division

Patient Advocate - (352) 374-6019  
or (800) 324-8387

Lake City Division

Patient Advocate - (386) 755-3016  
or (800) 308-8387

## Pain Control

When you come to the VA for an exam, your health care provider will check your five “vital signs”: blood pressure, pulse, temperature, respirations, and **pain**. You have the right to have your level of pain checked and to receive treatment for pain- both relief control and management. Treatment means relieving, controlling, and managing your pain. Your provider will ask you to rate your pain on a scale from 0 to 10:

“0” = no pain

“10” = worst pain imaginable

Your provider will also ask you the following questions about you pain:

- **Where** is it?
- **When** did it start?
- **How long** has it lasted or does it last?
- **What** makes it better or worse?
- **Which** medications have you tried? (bring your list)
- Have **treatments** worked well? Yes or no. Tell your story

There are different ways to control pain. They include:

- **Home remedies** - heat, ice, elevation, rest
- **Stretching and exercise** - physical and occupational therapies
- **Medications** - the kind prescribed depends on the type and degree of pain
- **Invasive therapies** - surgery, blocks, and injections
- **Non-invasive therapies** - massage, acupuncture, biofeedback, TENS (transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation - a device that uses electricity to block pain signals going to the brain)

Here are some safety tips to keep in mind when being treated for pain:

- Give an accurate report of your **health history** (high blood pressure, heart problems, ulcers, kidney, and liver problems, etc.)
- Report any **side effects** to drugs (allergies, reactions...)
- **Report medicines** you are now taking. This includes prescriptions, over-the-counter drugs, nutritional supplements, and herbal remedies
- Take medicines **as prescribed**
- **Do not drive** if you are too drowsy from your medicine
- **When taking pain medication, check with your provider *first* to see if it's OK to drink alcohol or use other drugs that can make you drowsy.**

## Use of Safety Restraints for Medical/Surgical Care

It is VA policy to use restraints only when they *have* to be used for medical purposes. Because we try all other possible solutions first, very few patients need restraints. In the event that restraints must be used for your protection, we want you and your family to be aware of information about their use.

### What are safety restraints?

Safety restraints are devices used to limit motion of a part of the body, such as an arm or a hand. They are used to keep patients from injuring themselves. For example, a restraint may be used to help keep a patient from falling. A restraint might also be used to remind the patient to not move too much when getting medical therapy. Patients need to be still, for example, when getting an I.V. infusion (slowly getting medicine directly in a vein) or having a tube put in. Restraints may also be used to keep patients from pulling on bandages.

### What kind of safety restraints are used?

There are many different kinds of restraints. The three types listed below are the restraints used most often in health care settings.

- **waist (or belt)** - Waist restraints are used for mildly confused patients. They are placed around the patient's waist to help keep them from falling. They also can be used when a patient is in a bed or chair.
- **jacket (or vest)** - These restraints are jackets with no sleeves. They have straps that can be tied to the bed frame under the mattress or to the legs of a chair. Jacket restraints are used for confused patients to keep them from falling out of bed or out of a chair.
- **soft wrist** - Soft wrist restraints are made of cloth and are usually used to keep an arm still. This is important, for example, when the patient slowly receives a flow of medicine in a vein (intravenous infusion), or has a feeding tube placed in the abdomen or through the nose.

### What if the patient or his or her loved ones do not want restraints to be used?

The medical staff will honor the wishes of the patient and family. This is part of the patient rights policy. In this case, the health care team records daily that the patient and family have been told there is a risk of injury without restraints, and the patient or loved ones have refused restraint use.

### Do safety restraints need to be used while loved ones visit?

Safety restraints can be taken off during a loved one's visit as long as the visitor can keep the patient safe from injury.

## Do safety restraints hurt?

Safety restraints should not hurt. They are usually made of soft cloth. They are snug during use, but do not slow down blood flow, cause pain, or damage skin. Even so, skin care will be given on a regular basis. To keep the restrained body parts limber, patients get range of motion exercises.

## What would happen during a fire or other emergency? How would you quickly get the patient to safety?

Safety restraints are tied to the bed frame or chair using a slip knot. This allows the staff member to remove the safety restraint easily and quickly.

As mentioned, your health care team only uses restraints when everything else has been tried first. In the unlikely event your loved one needs restraints, he or she will be reassured that their use is temporary and only used to prevent injury or disruption of medical therapy. This is why they are called *safety* restraints. Your health care provider can answer other questions you may have about the use of safety restraints.

## Patient Responsibilities

As a patient, we want you to get the best possible care. We need your help in taking care of your illnesses and keeping you healthy.

We need you to:

- Give us complete and accurate information about your health and well being. This includes how you feel now, any illnesses or operations you have had, medicines you are taking, and other health matters
- Listen to suggestions from your doctor, nurse, social worker, pharmacist, dietitian, or others and tell them how you feel about these suggestions
- Let us know when you agree or disagree with your suggested care and ask to have care changed if necessary
- Follow the plan you and your doctor have made about your health and well being
- If you decide not to follow the plan, accept and be responsible for the end results
- Ask questions about anything you don't understand
- Report changes in how you feel to your doctor or nurse
- Be on time for all appointments or let us know if you cannot keep them
- Be responsible for personal items you choose to keep with you. This includes money, clothing, and jewelry

Finally, when you leave our care, we need to be sure you understand what to do at home. This means you need to know about:

- Your medicines and diet
- Whom to call if you have trouble
- What you need to do to take care of yourself
- When and if you have a follow-up appointment

If you do not understand any of these things, please ask a health care person to explain them.

## Safety

For your safety and the safety of others, please observe all VA rules. The following items and activities are not allowed on VA grounds:

- Electrical appliances, except electric razors
- Cellular phones - where warning signs exist
- Guns, bullets, and any other kind of weapon
- Alcohol and illegal drugs
- Pets, unless approved
- Gambling, loans, or business matters with other patients and staff
- Lockers and bedside tables are considered VA property and can be subject to search.

## Personal Property and Valuables

Please send all valuables and cash over \$5.00 home. If you cannot send valuables home or do not wish to do so, the Agent Cashier can hold your money and small valuables.

### Agent Cashiers

Gainesville Division

Location: New ambulatory care wing, room F-138  
Phone: ext. 6784

Lake City Division

Location: Building 64, room C-134C  
Phone: ext. 2014 or 2440

You can *only* withdraw held money Monday to Friday, 8 am to 4 pm. Withdrawals are made from the Agent Cashier.

## Parking

The VA is not responsible for vehicles parked on VA property, even if stolen or damaged. If you need to park a

vehicle at the VA for longer than 2 days, please ask someone to take it home or let the VA police know.

## **Police and Security Service**

Gainesville Division

Phone: ext. 4091 or 6579 or (352) 379-4091

Lake City Division

Phone: ext. 2026 or 2027 or  
(386) 755-3016, ext. 2026 or 2027

## **Patient Services**

### **Library Services**

Here you can find books, magazines, pamphlets, and videos on a variety of health education subjects. You can look up health information on an easy-to-use health reference computer system. A small collection of newspapers, magazines, and books is available for recreational reading. Library staff are eager to help you find what you need. Hours are 8 am - 4:30 pm, Monday through Friday. If you are an inpatient but unable to visit the library, books and magazines can be brought to your bedside.

For outpatients visiting our new Ambulatory Care addition at the Gainesville Division, there is a health reference computer available for your use. This computer is located along the south wall of the Ambulatory Care waiting area near Pod 4. Call the Gainesville Library at extension 6313 or 6314 if you need assistance with this computer system.

Gainesville Division

Location: Library E-420 (near the Eye Clinic)

Phone: ext. 6313 or 6314

Hours: 8 am - 4:30 pm

Lake City Division

Location: Learning Resources Center (near Canteen)

Phone: ext. 2232 or 2234

Hours: 8 am - 4:30 pm

### **Pharmacy Services**

#### **If you are an inpatient:**

Please leave all your medicines at home or have a friend or family member take them home. Filled prescriptions are *not allowed* on inpatient wards. A list of your medicines will help your health care provider. Nurses will give you the medicines your doctor orders.

#### **If you are an outpatient:**

Please bring all your medicines, including over the counter medicines, with you. Your health care provider

will want to know what you are taking.

## **Television**

The Gainesville and Lake City Divisions of the North Florida/South Georgia System offer a variety of TV programs.

#### **Patient education programs:**

We hope you will tune to channel 21 at the Gainesville Division and channel 17 at the Lake City Division. These channels are here just for you. They offer programs you may find helpful as a veteran patient. A staff member may ask you to watch a program on one of these channels. The program may help you understand your illness and how to take care of yourself when you leave. We also hope you will watch programs on your own.

#### **Reducing stress through relaxation:**

Gainesville Division

Lie back and relax by watching programs showing pretty scenes with soothing music. Tune to channel 21 beginning at 10:00 pm at the Gainesville Division.

Lake City Division

Tune to channel 22 for movies selected especially for our veteran patients. If you have a special request for a movie, call extension 2695.

#### **Veterans' Help Line:**

At the Gainesville Division, channel 21 lists services you may want to use to get special help. The list includes people to call for help with veterans benefits, diabetes, women's health, and other areas. These lists show up when programs are not being shown.

#### **Recreation activities:**

It's no fun being ill. Our recreation staff can make things a little easier by keeping you busy and interested. Tune to channel 21 for an up-to-date list of things to do at the Gainesville Division such as bingo, movies, crafts you can do in your room, and other programs. Auditorium activities are broadcast on channel 20 at the Lake City Division.

#### **Chapel services:**

Many patients would like to go to church services but cannot because of health problems. So, we bring services to you on TV channel 21 at the Gainesville Division and on channel 19 at the Lake City Division!

Gainesville Division

Non-Denominational Prayer Service (M-F) 12:00 pm

Catholic Mass with Communion (Wed) 4:00 pm

Protestant Service with Communion (Sun) 10:00 am

## Lake City Division

Bible Study (Tues) 7:00 pm

Catholic Mass with Communion (Wed) 1:00 pm

Protestant Service with Communion (Sun) 9:00 am  
(Sun) 9:30 am

## Entertainment channels:

### Gainesville Division

In addition to Channel 21, there are other TV channels to enjoy:

2 ..... TBS	17 ..... Discovery
3 ..... ABC (Gainesville)	18 ..... AMC
4 ..... Lifetime	21 ..... VET
6 ..... CBS (Orlando)	23 ..... Family Channel
7 ..... ESPN	24 ..... Weather
8 ..... WGN (Chicago)	25 ..... Sci-Fi
9 ..... TLC	26 ..... TCM
10 ..... CNN	27 ..... Travel
11 ..... PBS (Gainesville)	28 ..... ESPN2
12 ..... NBC (Jacksonville)	29 ..... TNN
13 ..... FOX (Ocala)	30 ..... BET
14 ..... TNT	31 ..... WB 53
15 ..... A&E	32 ..... History
16 ..... USA	

### Lake City Division

In addition to the two education channels there are other TV channels to enjoy:

2 ..... Sneak Preview	22 ..... Patient in-room Movies
3 ..... ABC (Gainesville)	23 ..... HSN
4 ..... CBS (Jacksonville)	24 ..... CNN
5 ..... PBS (Gainesville)	25 ..... TNT
6 ..... Community Bulletin Board	26 ..... Nickelodeon
7 ..... UPN (Jacksonville)	27 ..... MTV
8 ..... LCCC (Lake City)	28 ..... TNN
9 ..... Warner Bros. (Jax)	29 ..... A&E
10 ..... FOX (Jacksonville)	30 ..... FOX
11 ..... Weather Channel	31 ..... Disney
12 ..... NBC (Jacksonville)	32 ..... Lifetime
13 ..... QVC	33 ..... USA Network
14 ..... C-Span	34 ..... BET
15 ..... TV Guide Channel	35 ..... Discovery
16 ..... WGN	36 ..... AMC
17 ..... Patient Education	37 ..... Sunshine
19 ..... Chapel Services	38 ..... ESPN
20 ..... Auditorium Activities	39 ..... TBS
	40 ..... Headline News

## Recreation Therapy Section

Fun and creative things to do can help you heal faster and let you meet other veterans. Recreation Therapy programs include bingo, crafts, socials, and movies.

A schedule of daily activities is on the bulletin board on each ward. If you want more information, either call or visit Recreation Therapy Services.

### Gainesville Division

Location: Bldg. 1, basement (across from Canteen)  
Phone: ext. 6535

### Lake City Division

Location: First floor next to the auditorium  
Phone: ext. 2695

## Women Veterans' Clinic

The Women Veterans' Clinic is available to assist female veterans to get special care.

### Gainesville Division

Clinic ext. 7474  
Appointments ext. 6173

### Lake City Division

Clinic and Appointments ext. 2417  
Clinic Coordinator ext. 2892

## Social Work Service

Social workers are here to help you with:

- Counseling
- Money problems
- Getting services outside the hospital for health and social needs
- Talking to your doctor or nurse about your health or treatment

## Nutrition Service

If you have any questions about your diet, ask to speak to a dietitian.

## Vocational Rehabilitation

If you need help getting a job, ask your health care provider to refer you to Psychology Service for vocational rehabilitation counseling.

## Smoking Cessation

If you use tobacco and would like to quit, ask your health care provider to refer you to the Stop Smoking Program. The program will help you break the habit.

## Substance Abuse

We have a program to help you if you use alcohol and/or other addictive drugs and would like to stop using them.

For more information, call the Substance Abuse Treatment Teams at their local numbers:

#### Gainesville Division

Phone: (352) 374-6089 or  
(800) 324-8387, ext. 6089

#### Lake City Division

Phone: (386) 755-3016 ext. 2618 or  
(800) 308-8387, ext. 2618

#### Tallahassee Outpatient Clinic

Phone: (850) 878-0191, ext. 2152 or  
(900) 541-8387, ext. 2152

#### Jacksonville Outpatient Clinic

Phone: (904) 232-2751, ext. 1000

#### Daytona Beach Outpatient Clinic

Phone: (386) 274-2400

## Chaplain Service

At both Divisions, a Protestant chaplain and Catholic priest are available 24 hours a day. A staff member can call them to come and see you. Your own minister or rabbi can visit you any time. Chapels are located on the first floor and are always open.

Services are held as follows:

#### Gainesville Division

Protestant - Sundays at 10:00 am in the Chapel

Catholic - Wednesdays at 4:00 pm in the Chapel

Daily Devotion - Monday thru Friday at noon

#### Lake City Division

Protestant - Sundays 9:30 am in the Chapel  
Mondays at 11:00 am in the Nsg. Home

Catholic - Wednesdays at 1:00 pm in the Chapel

All services are broadcast on the Veterans Educational TV, channel 21 in Gainesville and channel 19 in Lake City.

## VA Voluntary Service (VAVS)

Volunteers help patients and staff in many ways. You can volunteer at this hospital, at one of the outpatient clinics, or even in a veteran's home. If you want to become a volunteer, call ext. 6068 at the Gainesville Division or ext. 2135 at our Lake City Division.

## Florida Department of Veterans Affairs

The representatives of the Florida Department of Veterans Affairs assist in filing for VA benefits. Office hours are 8:00 am - 4:30 pm, Monday-Friday.

#### Gainesville Division

Location: Room D-162, 1st floor (near the main lobby)

Phone: ext. 6029

#### Lake City Division

Location: Room A-163, 1st floor

Phone: ext. 2070

## Disabled American Veterans

The D.A.V. service officer is available weekdays from 8:00 am - 4:30 pm

#### Gainesville Division

Location: Room D-161A, 1st floor

Phone: ext. 6436

#### Lake City Division

Location: Room A-276, 2nd floor

Phone: ext. 2649

## Money Matters

### Insurance and VA Billing

As a veteran served by the North Florida/South Georgia Veterans Health System, you may wonder why you are asked for private insurance information. This section provides answers to questions often asked about insurance and the VA.

#### Why does the VA want my insurance information?

Congress has passed a law telling us we have to bill for non-service connected treatment. If we don't bill your insurance carrier, we are actually breaking the law. There is never a charge for treating service-connected conditions.

#### What if I am covered by my wife's insurance?

We have to file whether the insurance is under your name, your wife's, or your guardian's.

#### It makes me a bit uneasy giving you my insurance information. If you file a claim, how will it affect my insurance?

It won't affect your insurance *at all*. What you pay for insurance won't change. Your coverage won't change. Your insurance company expects to be charged for health care that you receive.

*Insurance and VA Billing continued on page 15*

**DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS**

**VA ADVANCE DIRECTIVE:  
 Living Will and Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care**

This form is a tool to document or capture a patient's wishes regarding a designated health care agent and their future treatment preferences. This form is a tool, not an end in itself. The form does not substitute for comprehensive dialogue with the patient. It is expected that the health care professional assisting the patient will bring up for discussion other possible end stage scenarios, as appropriate. Supplemental pages may be appended as necessary.

I, \_\_\_\_\_ write this document as a directive  
*(print or type patient's name and social security number)*  
 regarding my health care. I have put my initials by the choices I want.

**Part I. – Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care (DPAHC)**

*initials*

I appoint this person to make decisions about my health care if there ever comes a time when I cannot make those decisions myself.

<i>Name</i>	
<i>Street Address</i>	
<i>City, State and ZIP Code</i>	
<i>Work Telephone Number with Area Code</i>	<i>Home Telephone Number with Area Code</i>

If the person above cannot or will not make decisions for me, I appoint this person:

<i>Name</i>	
<i>Street Address</i>	
<i>City, State and ZIP Code</i>	
<i>Work Telephone Number with Area Code</i>	<i>Home Telephone Number with Area Code</i>

*initials*

I have notified the individuals listed above of my decision.

*initials*

I have not appointed anyone to make health care decisions for me in this or any other documents.



## PART III. - Signatures

**A. Your signature -** By my signature below I show that I understand the purpose and the effect of this document.

<i>Signature</i>	<i>Social Security Number</i>	<i>Date</i>
<i>Name (Printed or Typed)</i>		
<i>Street Address</i>		
<i>City, State and ZIP Code</i>		

**B. Your Witnesses' Signatures**

I am not, to the best of my knowledge, named in the person's will.

I am not the person appointed as Health Care Agent (HCA) in this advance directive.

I am not a health care provider (or an employee of the health care provider), or financially responsible, now or in the past, for the care of the person making this advance directive. *(Exception: where other witnesses are not reasonably available, employees of the Chaplain Service, Psychology Service, Social Work Service, or nonclinical employees such as Voluntary Service or Environmental Management Service may serve as witnesses.)*

**Witness #1:** I personally witnessed the signing of this advance directive.

<i>Signature</i>	<i>Date</i>
<i>Name (Printed or Typed)</i>	
<i>Street Address</i>	
<i>City, State and ZIP Code</i>	

**Witness #2:** I personally witnessed the signing of this advance directive.

<i>Signature</i>	<i>Date</i>
<i>Name (Printed or Typed)</i>	
<i>Street Address</i>	
<i>City, State and ZIP Code</i>	

*Insurance and VA Billing continued from page 11*

### **Will I somehow be charged for this billing?**

No. This will *not* cost you anything.

### **How will filing a claim affect my eligibility?**

Your eligibility for VA medical care *will not* be affected at all.

### **When will I be asked for this information?**

When you come for treatment. We may also give you a call at home.

### **What information do I need to bring with me?**

Most of the information we need is right on your insurance card. We will make a copy of your card each time you receive care at the VA. Also, please let us know if you have a new address or phone number.

### **You file a claim for me and my insurance company pays the VA. Where does that money go?**

*This is important.* All money collected goes right to your local health care system. It is a vital part of the entire operation. For example, the money is used to help set up more clinics, buy new equipment, and hire more staff to take care of your needs. Last year your North Florida/South Georgia Veterans Health System began caring for more than 10,000 new patients, so this money is certainly needed.

### **Doesn't Congress give the VA all the money it needs to operate?**

Yes, this is true for service-connected veterans. Congress expects VA to also get money from health insurance and co-payments. That's one reason they passed the law that requires the VA to collect insurance money for non-service related conditions. This money is part of the VA budget. We thank you for your help with filing these claims. You deserve the best care available, and this money is vital to providing that care.

### **If I have more questions, what should I do?**

You may ask any VA clerk, or call the Business Office at (800) 324-8387, ext. 4046. If you have Internet access, you may visit the VHA Revenue Office site at <http://www.va.gov/mccr>

## **Veteran Copayments**

As you receive care at the VA, you may have to pay a small fee for some of the services you receive. This is called a copayment. The VA has no choice but to charge you this

fee as it is federal law. There are three basic kinds of copayment fees:

- **The Means Test (Treatment) Copayment** - this copayment is for inpatient and outpatient treatment. The amount of the copayment changes each year.
- **The Per Diem (Facility) Copayment** - this copayment is a daily charge for inpatient care.
- **The Medication Copayment** - For non service connected outpatients, VA has to charge a copayment for each 30-day-or-less supply of medication provided on an outpatient basis for the treatment of a nonservice-connected condition.

*Veteran Copayments continued on next page*

## **Helpful Phone Reference**

Gainesville Division	Lake City Division
Telcare ..... 4142	Telcare ..... 3400
Pharmacy ..... 6105	Scheduling ..... 2465
Scheduling ..... 6173	Means Test ..... 3270
Enrollment ..... 7332	Women's Clinic ..... 2417
Billing ..... 4046	Release of Information ... 2504
Women's Clinic ..... 7474	Patient Travel ..... 2061
Release of Information ... 6046	Patient Advocate ..... 2952
Patient Travel ..... 4078	Eye Clinic ..... 2248
Patient Advocate ..... 6019	Eligibility ..... 2059
Optical Dispensary ..... 2020	Billing/Co-Pay ..... 2500
Elegibility ..... 6816/6726	Phone Advice (Telecare) 2805
Eye Clinic ..... 6214/5215	Credit Union ..... 2596
ENT/Plastic Clinic ..... 4072	
Derm/Rheum Office ..... 7494	

### **CBOC's - Community Based Outpatient Clinics**

Daytona Beach OPC ..... 800-953-6838 / 386-274-4600
Invernes CBOC ..... 352-637-3500
Jacksonville OPC ..... 877-870-5048 / 904-232-2751
Leesburg CBOC ..... 352-728-4462
Ocala CBOC ..... 352-369-3320
St. Augustine CBOC ..... 904-829-0814
Tallahassee OPC ..... 800-541-8387 / 850-878-0191
Valdosta CBOC ..... 229-293-0132

## Is payment expected before getting medications or after visits?

Payment is encouraged before you pick up medication or at the end of your visit. If you are unable to make payment at the that time, an account is created for you along with a payment plan. Monthly statements will be mailed listing current charges (including any interest and administrative charges), payments and outstanding balances. You can avoid interest and administrative charges if you make payment before the the fifth day of each month.

## Where does the money go?

Your copayments are returned to your medical center's network to pay for programs for veterans. Every copayment you make is used to improve the service we provide to you, our customer.

<b>NOTICE TO HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS</b>	
<p>I, _____, have executed a ( ) Living Will ( ) Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care and have given a copy of such document(s) to:</p> <p>Name: _____ Phone: ( ) _____ Address: _____ Name: _____ Phone: ( ) _____ Address: _____</p>	<p>YOUR NAME: _____ ADDRESS: _____ PHONE ( ) _____ Signed: _____ Dated: _____</p>

BEFORE CUTTING - Please note Frequently Called Extensions on the back

## Advance Directives

### What is an Advance Directive?

An Advance Directive is a legal form you fill out and sign that lets us know your health care wishes when you cannot speak for yourself. These forms are attached for your convenience (pages 12, 13 & 14). It's your right to accept or refuse medical care when you are very ill. When you are very ill we need to know what you have decided about such things as:

- Being brought back to life if your heart or breathing stops
- Having a machine breathe for you
- Being fed through a tube if you can't eat
- Getting blood transfusions, antibiotics, fluids through your veins, or getting other medicines

### What are examples of Advance Directives?

There are two types of Advance Directives:

The **Living Will** spells out in writing your wishes for your health care should you become very ill and unable to speak for yourself.

The **Designation of Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care** lets you name a person to make decisions for you, if you become unable to do so yourself.

Consider an Advance Directive in your health care planning.

- Know your rights
- Plan ahead
- Fill out and go over your Advance Directive carefully
- Talk about your wishes with your family and doctor
- Express your wishes clearly

If you need help in making out an Advance Directive or would like to know more, ask one of the health care team members for their help. He or she can talk about Advance Directives with you and help you fill out the forms.

It's also good to carry a notice with you at all times letting people know you have filed an Advance Directive. Fill out the small form below and keep this form in your wallet or purse.



**Department of  
Veterans Affairs**

UPDATED OCTOBER 2001