

## What is VISN 8?

The VA Sunshine Healthcare Network (VISN 8) is the nation's largest system of hospitals and clinics serving a population of more than 1.4 million Veterans in a vast 64,153 square mile area spread across 79 counties in Florida, South Georgia, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. VISN 8's seven healthcare systems include eight Joint Commission-accredited VA medical centers and more than 90 large and small outpatient clinics. More than 35,000 full-time VISN employees work at these facilities, providing a full range of high quality, cost-effective medical, psychiatric, and extended care services in an inpatient, outpatient, nursing home, and home care settings.

## How do I use the Clinical Contact Center?

Simply call 1-877-741-3400. The service is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and 365 days a year, even on holidays. Call us anytime you have a non-emergency medical condition, are unable to see your primary care provider, or when you simply prefer a convenient, cost effective alternative to the emergency room, urgent care center, or clinic. You can also contact the center using the VA Health Chat app available for both Android and IOS mobile devices. The app can also be launched from your PC. Learn more at: <https://mobile.va.gov/app/va-health-chat>.

Effective March 2024, we have expanded our capabilities and are now able to provide Tele Emergency Care, or Tele-EC, for Veterans who are determined to need an emergent or elevated level of urgent care. Tele-EC does NOT replace traditional emergency room care. If you are experiencing a life-threatening medical or psychiatric emergency, please call 9-1-1 or visit the emergency room closest to you. Tele Emergency Care can help treat many common conditions including, but not limited to: minor cuts, scrapes, rashes and skin irritations tick, insect and spider bites common cold, cough and flu symptoms headaches sprains, back pain and joint pain/stiffness pink eye urinary tract infections upset stomach and constipation

## Do I have to be a VISN 8 patient to use the Clinical Contact Center?

All Veterans are welcome to contact the Clinical Contact Center. If you are not a VISN 8 patient or not currently enrolled for VA health care benefits, we will work with you to determine your best options and how best to meet your needs. Learn more about how to enroll for VA Healthcare at: [www.va.gov/health-care/about-va-health-benefits](http://www.va.gov/health-care/about-va-health-benefits)

## What is VA Video Connect?

VA Video Connect is a secure video app available for Android, iOS, and Windows devices. The app connects Veterans with their health care team from anywhere, using encryption to ensure a secure and private session. It makes VA health care more convenient and reduces travel times for Veterans, especially those in very rural areas with limited access to VA health care facilities, and it allows quick and easy health care access from any mobile or web-based device. Veterans and their health care providers jointly decide whether to use VA Video Connect for a medical visit. You can learn more at: <https://mobile.va.gov/app/va-video-connect>.

### Android users

VA Video Connect works on Android devices that have an internet connection and a web camera. No application download is required. Ahead of a VA Video Connect appointment, you

will receive an email or calendar invite with a link to launch the session. The session will launch automatically in your web browser after the session link is selected.

### **iOS users**

If accessing VA Video Connect on your iOS device (e.g., iPhone, iPad), you will need to download the free VA Video Connect iOS app from the Apple App Store prior to your visit. Ahead of a VA Video Connect appointment, you will receive an email or calendar invite with a link to launch the session. If you have downloaded VA Video Connect onto your device, the session will launch automatically in the app after the session link is selected. If you have not downloaded the app, you will receive an error message after you select the link.

### **Windows users**

VA Video Connect works on Windows devices (desktop, laptop, tablets) that have an internet connection and a web camera. No application download is required. Ahead of a VA Video Connect appointment, you will receive an email or calendar invite with a link to launch the session. The session will launch automatically in your web browser after the session link is selected.

## **What is VA Health Chat?**

The VA Health Chat App provides easy, online access to chat with VA staff when Veterans have health concerns and more. The app accesses the VA Electronic Health Record and, for security purposes, requires Veterans to enter My HealthVet (premium), DS Logon (premium), ID.me, or account credentials. As of March 11, 2020, Veterans can connect to the center using VA Health Chat. Veterans who need to see a provider may also be offered the option to connect via telephone or secure video during their chat session if deemed appropriate by center staff. The app is available for Android and IOS. Learn more at: <https://mobile.va.gov/app/va-health-chat>.

NOTE: VA Health Chat meets or exceeds VA mobile security application standards. The underlying software of the VA Health Chat app is provided by a commercial vendor. For VA to use this software, VA Health Chat had to undergo a rigorous Authority to Operate (ATO) process -- VA's certification that all applicable security requirements have been met. The ATO process is specifically designed to ensure data security, at rest and in transit, as well as meet VA's high standards for Veteran security and privacy. Sensitive medical information within the app is accessed by the VA employees who staff the application and chat with Veterans. Any Protected Health Information (PHI) or Personally Identifiable Information (PII) that the VA staff members have access to is covered under HIPAA and the same guidance that applies to information received from Veterans in face-to-face visits, video visits, or telephone care.

## **Can a Clinical Contact Center provider serve as my primary care physician?**

VISN 8 Clinical Contact Center visits do not replace your need for a primary care physician. All interactions with the Clinical Contact Center become part of your medical record and are shared with your primary care provider if you have one. This promotes good continuity of care. If you

do not have a VA primary care provider, ask for assistance finding one during your call with the Clinical Contact Center.

## **Can a provider prescribe medication as part of a Clinical Contact Center visit?**

Yes, when needed, the Clinical Contact Center provider may prescribe you medications, and questions about medications, and more. Medications prescribed through the center will be mailed to you. If there is an urgent need for a medication, pickup may be arranged for you. The Clinical Contact Center provider may arrange for you to pick up a short-term supply at your local VA pharmacy or a contracted pharmacy in the community.

## **What number do I call to get help ordering my medication?**

Your Pharmacy telephone number has NOT changed. Please call the number on your prescription bottle to order your medication and have the bottle with you when you call. The automated pharmacy lines are always available 24 hours per day, 7 days per week. You can also refill, track, and view your medications 24/7 by logging on to your My HealtheVet Pharmacy account at <https://www.myhealth.va.gov>. If you are out your medication and do not have any refills remaining, you may contact the Clinical Contact Center or your VA Provider for assistance with renewing your medication.

## **Can I schedule an appointment using the Clinical Contact Center?**

The Clinical Contact Center can directly schedule primary care and mental health appointments. In the future, the center will also be able to schedule certain specialty care appointments. In the event the center cannot schedule an appointment for you, staff will make contact with the VA facility at which you receive your care and coordinate for follow up contact to ensure an appointment is made.

## **I have a question that isn't listed here. Can you help me?**

Don't see your question? Don't worry. Just call us at 1-877-741-3400 or email <mailto:VISN8CCCFeedback@va.gov>. We have highly trained staff standing by to take your calls and emails. If your question is related to the VA MISSION Act, please call 1-844-698-2311.