



### **VA OUTREACH**

The VA OUTREACH held on 23 July was greatly successful. 35 veterans and family members were assisted. Some got vaccinations, ouch and appointments were made. The highlight of the visit was the opportunity to welcome Ms Jessica Gathercole, the latest addition to the world class staff at VA Manila. Jessica has been assigned as the VA regional Service Center Manager. She initially served with the Social Security staff in the U.S. and landed a position with the VA in California. Now she's here much to the benefit of our Vets, and is quite the expert on Veterans Affairs. We are truly blessed to have her talents here in the P.I.

### **VA OUTREACH IS BACK ON!!!!!!**

Received word the 27 Aug VA Outreach will happen. We have 30 slots currently available for preregistration. Come in, call or email to lock in yours. We are unsure right now about a Sept VA outreach. More to come on that when available.

### **RAO CLOSURE 21/31 August 2015**

We will be closed on these dates in observance of Philippine holidays.

### **Q&A ON FMP**

Just wanted to pass on some Q&A released by the VA. Keep in mind these answers are as of today, we still don't know how the program will really work. Soon as we get a good picture we'll get the word out.

What information is sent to the Veteran after they enroll in the FMP? Does FMP provide a list of the Veteran's service connected conditions, names of recommended local providers and hospitals, etc.? **The Veteran will get a welcome packet that includes an enrollment letter with a list of their service-connected conditions, an FMP handbook, and some brochures. They do not get a list of recommended providers. The Veteran is free to go to the provider of their choice; the FMP does not endorse any provider.**

Veterans understand they can choose any physician and hospital, but what if they do not know which physician to choose? Is there a recommended list? **No, there is not a recommended list.**

Are there physicians that are banned from submitting claims to FMP? **Not at this time.**

If a hospital or provider agrees to bill FMP directly, how do they know what SC conditions can be billed to FMP and what NSC to bill the Veteran. For example, Veteran is hospitalized for a service connected condition, however, while hospitalized; he is also treated for conditions that are not SC. **The Veteran should have a copy of a list of their service-connected conditions to give or show the provider (The enrollment letter should do). The FMP relies on treatment notes and documentation to determine what services were or were not service-connected. The FMP also can have the documentation clinically reviewed to help determine whether or not the services were for a service-connected condition. The hospital or physician could also choose to not bill the FMP for non-service-connected treatment. If some of the services in a hospital stay are reviewed by the FMP and deemed to not be service-connected; those parts of the treatment will be denied.**

If a Veteran is treated by a VA Manila Outpatient physician for their service connection and the VA PCP recommends the Veteran receive a 2DEchocardiogram for their service connected heart condition. Does the VA Manila doctor write the order for the procedure or is it up to the Veteran to see another doctor in the community who agrees and writes the order for a hospital where they practice? **It doesn't matter to the FMP who writes the order as long as it is a physician. Either scenario listed in the question would be acceptable to the FMP.**

Veterans are asking if there will be local assistance in filing claims or resolving claims with the FMP? How are questions answered when there is 12 hour time difference? **There is no local assistance (meaning in the Philippines). They can call the customer service center here in Denver during the customer service center's hours of operation. The 12 hour time difference may be inconvenient, but that is how it currently works.**

NOTE: RAO will offer assistance with claims as needed.

How does a facility/provider set up an account with FMP if they choose to bill FMP directly? VA Manila has established relationships with hospitals throughout the Philippines. These hospitals have extended a line of credit to VA Manila which has allowed us to pay the hospital directly. We are happy to share our list of facilities and points of contact if interested. **The FMP does not have an account with any provider and does not set up accounts with providers. If a provider sends in a submission (and it is clear the provider sent the submission) the FMP will pay the provider.**

Does FMP reimburse by check or EFT? Many banks in the Philippines will not cash Treasury Checks. **The FMP currently only makes payment via treasury check. It is not possible at this time to pay via EFT.**

### **NAVY RECRUITER VISIT**

The visit was pretty successful. 4 applicants from Subic and 2 from Manila were found qualified and will be traveling to Guam for further processing.

We anticipate an Air force Recruiter visit in Aug, to be announced when info is available. Also the Army has asked us to provide them with info on anyone who is interested so they can make individual contact.

### **FROM VA ON CHASE CREDIT CARDS**

Effective July 31, 2015, Chase bank will no longer accept Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) payments on prepaid debit cards. Chase is exiting the prepaid card business. On or after July 31, 2015, deposits to the Direct Benefit Card account will stop. Chase sent letters to affected Veterans advising them to change the location where their benefits are deposited. Veterans may sign up for Direct Express, the Treasury Department's debit card program. Direct Express can only be used for Federal payments. See the [Direct Express Brochure](#) for more information.

### **RAO GOES VIRAL**

If you haven't had the chance yet, Like us on Facebook, at RAO SUBIC BAY.

### **WHAT THE STATE DEPARTMENT CAN AND CAN'T DO IN A CRISIS**

I know we have all seen the news reports when a disaster befalls Americans in foreign countries. The picture is of big brother swooping in to rescue and evacuate all the souls frantic to get to safety. Sometimes that does happen and the homeland rescues them. Please take the time to go to <http://travel.state.gov/content/passports/english/emergencies/crisis-support.html> For a dose of reality. The State Department will assist in emergencies as much as is feasible and allowable, but you will find they are limited by policy and procedures. All should heed the info in these documents and do some preparations before the event happens. Trying to find the numbers and points of contacts when a disaster occurs is at best difficult. You may find your finances are not available at that time due to political uprisings and natural disasters shutting down banking institutions. Please plan ahead as much as possible! You may find yourself very much alone at that time, without the resources to take care of yourself and your family.

### **NO MORE \$ PAYOUT AT WESTERN UNION????**

Received a call from a member saying he had used W.U. to transfer \$ from NFCU and W.U. would not pay it in dollars. He was told effective 18 June 2015 that has become the policy. I spoke with the nearby W.U. and was told dollar payout was based on availability. I guess its up to the

particular store you go to. Your choice, if paid out in dollars the exchange from W.U. is lower than what you get at a money exchange.

**UNPAID FPO MAIL BOXES CLOSURE**

On Wednesday 5 August 2015, all FPO boxes which have not been renewed for 2015 will be closed and any mail therein will be returned to sender. In fairness to other members we cannot continue to receive and deliver mail to those who have not renewed. We appreciate your patronage and would like to continue to serve you, but this action is required. Hopefully you'll give us the opportunity to provide services in the future.

**REPORTED TO HIS FINAL DUTY STATION**

Sadly we announce the passing of former W.O. Special Forces Mark Umphreys.

Have a great August, God bless and Semper Fi!