

# Veteran Affairs Hospital

By Kristen Culver

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# Veteran Affairs Hospital

- The United States has the most comprehensive system of assistance for veterans of any nation in the world.



# History of the VA

- This benefits system traces its roots back to 1636, when the Pilgrims of Plymouth Colony were at war with the Pequot Indians.
- The Pilgrims passed a law which stated that disabled soldiers would be supported by the colony.



# History of the VA

- In the 19th century, the Nation's veteran's assistance program was expanded to include benefits and pensions not only for veterans, but also their widows and dependents.
- Congress established a new system of veteran's benefits when the United States entered World War I in 1917.
  - Disability compensation
  - Insurance for servicepersons and veterans
  - Vocational rehabilitation for the disabled



# History of the VA

- By the 1920's, various benefits were administered by Federal agencies, providing many more services for veterans/soldiers.
- The VA health care system has grown from 54 hospitals in 1930, to include 171 medical centers; more than 350 outpatient, community, and outreach clinics; 126 nursing home care units; and 35 domiciliaries.
- VA health care facilities provide a broad spectrum of medical, surgical, and rehabilitative care.



# Clinical Dietitian at the VA

- VA dietitians work closely with physicians, nurses, and other allied health personnel to integrate the patient's nutritional care into the total treatment program.
- The dietitian's contribution as a team member includes the nutritional assessments of patients and the development of nutritional care plans, nutrition interventions, and individualized nutrition education.



# Clinical Dietitian at the VA

- In addition, VA dietitians must gather information regarding personal food preferences and tolerances from each patient.
- VA dietitians also have the authority to order lab values such as PAB and anemia screenings.



# Jill in Geriatrics

# Cris in Acute Care

Debbie Diet Technician

# Intern Duties and Tasks

- Patient Assessments
  - Gather subjective nutritional information
    - Diet PTA
    - Unintentional weight loss/gain
    - Food allergies
    - Bowel function
    - Chewing/swallowing difficulties
    - Nausea/vomiting
    - Diarrhea/constipation
    - Religious food beliefs
    - Personal preferences/tolerances
- Develop Nutrition Care Plans
- Diet Educations
  - Weight loss
  - Cardiac diets
  - Diabetes
  - Food/drug interactions
  - Many more.....

# Personal Objectives

- 1) Gain more experience assessing patients, prioritizing their nutritional needs while expanding my knowledge in various disease states along with appropriate nutritional treatments.
- 2) Increase my familiarity within a hospital setting as well as commonly used medical equipment, technology and terminology.
- 3) Practice performing the nutrition care process (assess, diagnose, plan, implement, monitor and evaluate) and determine the best nutritional needs for the patient along with my recommendations to other members of the health care team/staff.

# References

- U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs - 810 Vermont Avenue, NW - Washington, DC 20420  
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