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**VA Puget Sound Health Care System
American Lake and Seattle Divisions**

FACT SHEET

**Location Change to Domiciliary and
Inpatient Mental Health Services at American Lake**

VA Puget Sound Health Care System provides both inpatient mental health services and longer-stay residential Domiciliary care with an emphasis on rehabilitation. Temporary changes are being made to the locations of these inpatient and Domiciliary mental health programs. This is being done to accommodate the remodeling of the Domiciliary at American Lake. Every effort is being made to ensure that our patients will continue to have access to the full range of care and services during the time of construction. The following information is being provided to answer questions that may arise.

Question #1:

Why is the Domiciliary at American Lake moving from Building 4 to Building 7?

An extensive renovation project of Building 4, which houses the Domiciliary, requires that the building be closed to occupancy in early 2011. Because of this, Domiciliary patients and staff will move to Building 7. Moving to Building 7 is the best option to avoid significantly downsizing or temporarily closing the Domiciliary during this important renovation. All Domiciliary residents will be accommodated in Building 7 during this renovation project. The Domiciliary will move back to Building 4 when the construction project is completed. This will occur during the summer 2011.

Question #2:

How will this move impact the inpatient mental health unit at American Lake?

In order to make Building 7 available for temporary Domiciliary use, the inpatient mental health program will move to the Seattle Division and will become part of the inpatient mental health unit located on 7East and 7West. During this period, all VA Puget Sound inpatient mental health care and services will be provided at the Seattle Division with an increased number of beds and staffing.

Question #3:

What are the reasons for these moves?

The Domiciliary move to Building 7 allows us to continue to provide full Domiciliary services to Veterans during the temporary closure of Building 4 for renovation. Moving inpatient mental health services to Seattle will maintain full access to all inpatient mental health services. The 7East and 7West units in Seattle have recently been remodeled to improve patient safety features and provide the safest environment for patients who present with acute psychiatric problems requiring hospitalization.

Question#4:

How will this move benefit Veterans seeking mental health inpatient care?

By locating inpatient mental health care at the Seattle Division, patients will have full access to 24-hour emergency medical and surgical care, as well as urgent specialty consultation and support services during hospitalization for mental health treatment. These services are not available at the American Lake Division.

Question #4:

How will Veterans get from American Lake to Seattle if they require mental health hospitalization?

So that Veterans will not have barriers to accessing these services, VA Puget Sound will manage the safe and efficient transportation of Veterans from American Lake to Seattle when inpatient mental health services are needed.

Question #5:

What is the ultimate goal?

Our ultimate goals are to provide Veterans with the best environment of care and build on a tradition of access to the best quality mental health care in the region. By relocating all of the inpatient mental health services to Seattle, those who are hospitalized with mental health conditions will have greater access to the complete range of medical services within a highly specialized clinical setting. Patients will also benefit from recently remodeled inpatient mental health space, which enhances patient and staff safety. These changes will allow for the overall improvement of both our residential and inpatient mental health programs.

Question#6:

When will the inpatient mental health program move back?

The progress and renovation time frame for the Domiciliary will determine the timing of decisions and plans regarding other future moves. The continuity of care at both Divisions will be maintained during this time of major construction and building closures. We recognize that our staff will also be making adjustments and we are actively working to mitigate the personal impact that may arise as a result of these changes. Our ultimate goal is to continue to build on a tradition of providing the best quality mental health care to Veterans throughout the Puget Sound region and beyond.

Question #7:

How will this impact outpatient mental health services at American Lake?

These changes will in no way impact the availability or quality of outpatient mental health care and services at American Lake, or primary care and services located at American Lake or at VA Puget Sound Community Based Outpatient Clinics. Veterans with specific questions regarding care and services, particularly questions about mental health care, are encouraged to contact their provider.

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