

OI&T COMPUTER CORNER

IS YOUR KEYBOARD CLEAN?

Microorganisms are everywhere! Fortunately, only 1,500 of the millions of bacteria are dangerous to our health. However, the number of bacterial strains which develop resistance to disinfectants and antibiotics is increasing allowing them to survive for a longer time on surfaces you routinely touch – such as your keyboard. It is reported that no object is safe and a bacterial presence has been detected on computers, door knobs, gym equipment, elevator buttons, mobile phones, PCs, mice and keyboards and provide a potential source for cross infections and transmitting microorganisms. Help prevent the spread of microorganisms by routinely cleaning objects and

surfaces used daily.

Did you know that keyboards have been identified as a source of Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus (MRSA) in the hospital setting? When you use your PC while eating lunch, crumbs and spills may be deposited on and between the keys and food deposits encourage the growth of millions of bacteria.

CLEAN YOUR KEYBOARD

Step 1: Unplug the keyboard, turn it upside down and gently shake it.

Step 2: Wipe between the keys with a computer brush / paint brush (or vacuum).

Step 3: Wipe keyboard surface with cloth **slightly damp-**

ened with water followed by a wipe with a dry cloth.

Step 4: Remove bacteria and viruses by gently rubbing keyboard with an alcohol free (dettol wipe available from local pharmacy) wipe. Alcohol free wipes prevent fading of the letters and other markings on the keys.

CLEAN YOUR MOUSE

Step 1: Wipe mouse with an alcohol free (dettol) wipe.

Step 2: Use compressed air to remove internal dust.



NATIONAL SALUTE TO VETERAN PATIENTS

The National Salute to Veteran Patients program was held at Truman VA February 14-20. This national VA Program is held annually at each VA Medical Center to honor Veterans, increase community awareness of VA's role in providing comprehensive health care, and to encourage the community to visit hospitalized Veterans and consider volunteering.

National Salute began in 1978 when VA took over sponsorship of a program started in 1974 by the humanitarian organization No Greater Love, Inc. Voluntary Service, in cooperation with

Recreation Therapy, plan and coordinate local activities. The National Salute is observed each year during the week of Valentine's Day, a day of caring which underscores the Salute's expression of honor and appreciation to Veterans.

For the eighteenth consecutive year, the nationally syndicated column started by Ann Landers, now called Ask Annie, has devoted a column to the National Salute, asking readers to send Valentine cards and letters to hospitalized Veterans. More than a million cards and letters are sent to VA patients each year during the National Salute.

Truman VA's Voluntary Service office received approximately 8,400 Valentines to be distributed to Veterans by the more than 130 visitors throughout the week. Activities held at the Truman VA included a visit ... (continued on Page 4)



LETTER FROM THE UNDERSECRETARY



To All Staff of the Veterans Health Administration (VHA)

Today, I am writing to each VHA staff member for two reasons:

First, please join me in congratulating and welcoming Dr. Randy Petzel as our new Under Secretary for Health. Dr. Petzel is a highly accomplished member of the VA health care team. He understands VA and Veterans health care. Those of us who have worked closely with him know something even more important – he cares deeply about the care our Veterans receive. I call on each of you to give him your full support. Together we can successfully face the challenges ahead.

Second, I thank each of you for the care you provide to our patients – our Veterans. Your work, built on the work of generations of VA leaders and staff, has achieved phenomenal results. Indeed, judging VA health care by patient outcomes, we are – I believe – the best health care system in the United States. There is much to thank you

for. During the past year at VA, key mortality rates declined, rates of deadly infectious disease fell, and length of inpatient stay was shortened – all measures reflecting greater quality and efficiency. Satisfaction scores are solid. And on many of these measures we outperformed benchmarks found in the civilian sector. For example, our Health Effectiveness Data Information Set (HEDIS) scores not only surpassed the private sector, but the VA average score exceeded the private sector’s 90th percentile score on almost all applicable measures.

We expanded care, opening many dozens of new Community Based Outpatient Clinics. We reached out to Veterans in rural communities, dramatically expanded mental health services, added extra staff to focus on the health care of women Veterans, and put 50 mobile Vet Centers on the road. We removed the financial burden that some Veterans encountered when they traveled to VA medical centers, by paying them 41.5 cents per mile for service connected care. We approached this expansion creatively, developing a new model of care that is more Veteran Centric and less facility dependent.

Your accomplishments were recognized. During the past year our staff earned recognition from JD Powers for our pharmacy program, a Baldrige award for a compo-

nent of our research program, a “SAMMIE” award for our suicide prevention hotline, and the 2010 Institutional Leadership Quality Award from the American College of Medical Quality. And this month, the Wall Street Journal acknowledged the VA’s role in improving surgical quality nationwide.

And lastly, thank you for supporting me as I carefully followed the precepts of our disclosure policy, even when it was painful to do so. Doing the right thing by our patients, our stakeholders, Congress, and the public ultimately builds trust in us and our organization.

Our mission at VHA, providing the health care for our Nation’s Veterans, is to me a sacred trust. Thanks to you, each and every one, for the work you do to make that mission a success.

Gerald M. Cross MD
Acting Under Secretary for Health
Department of Veterans Affairs.

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VOLUNTARY LEAVE TRANSFER PROGRAM

Lisa Dodds, Patient Services and Wilma Jean Morrow, RN (PC) has been approved for the Voluntary Leave Transfer Program. Contact Lena Warren (HR) for information.



New Employees: February 15, 2010

WELCOME: Charles Foster, Housekeeping Aid (FM) ❖ Dale Bessolo, Housekeeping Aid (FM) Mitchell French, Housekeeping Aid (FM)

FAREWELL (not pictured): Timothy Rice, Carpenter (FM) ❖ Kevin Williams, Veterans Canteen Service (VCS) ❖ Figueroa Said Diabes, Research Health Scientist (RES)

NATIONAL SALUTE TO VETERAN PATIENTS

(...CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2)

by a re-enactor posing as Harry S. Truman, a barbeque for Community Living Center residents, concerts by two bluegrass bands, clogging, flag folding ceremony, numerous visits by Veteran service organizations, ROTC groups, University of Missouri student athletes, and many others.

and cooperation provided in connection with Salute activities.

Voluntary Service would like to thank Recreation Therapy, inpatient nursing units and VA Police for all the help



Enjoy Your Freedom?
Thank A Vet!