

BALTIMORE VA MEDICAL CENTER

Guide to Veteran Inpatient Services

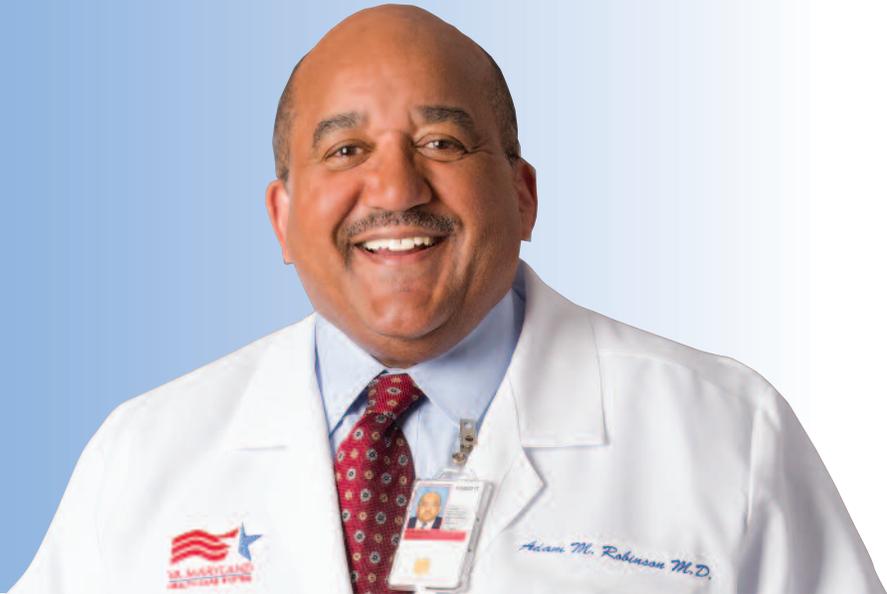




We are committed to providing safe, quality and compassionate health care to all Veteran patients.

Welcome

Thank you for allowing us to serve your health care needs.



A message from Adam M. Robinson, Jr., MD

It is my pleasure to welcome you to the Baltimore VA Medical Center, a division of the VA Maryland Health Care System.

Here at the Baltimore VA Medical Center and throughout the VA Maryland Health Care System, we are committed to providing safe, quality and compassionate health care to all Veteran patients. As a physician and a Veteran with more than 30 years of service in the U.S. Navy, I assure you that we will do everything within our power to make your stay as comfortable as possible while providing the highest quality health care.

As a patient, you play a vital role in making your hospital stay a safe one by becoming an active, involved and informed member of your health care team. I encourage you to speak up if you have any questions or concerns, pay

attention to the care you are receiving, educate yourself about your condition and the medications you are taking, and participate in all decisions about your treatment plan.

Again, I welcome you to the Baltimore VA Medical Center, and I thank you for allowing us to serve your health care needs. Best wishes for a comfortable hospital stay and a speedy recovery.

Sincerely,

Adam M. Robinson, Jr., MD
Director, VA Maryland Health Care System

Inpatient Accommodations & Information



Call Button

A button to call your nursing staff is located at your bedside. When you press the button, the nursing staff is alerted that you need assistance. There is also an emergency button in your bathroom. Throughout your hospital stay, our team will regularly check in on you to assist you with personal needs, to make you more comfortable, and to assess your pain levels.

Hospital Bed

Your hospital bed is electrically operated. Your nursing staff will show you how to operate the bed. Bedside rails are for your safety and may be raised and lowered.



Meals

We are pleased to provide your meals through our VA Gourmet Room Service. To order what you want when you want it, please follow these simple steps:

- ★ Meal orders may be placed from 6:30 a.m. to 7 p.m.
- ★ Select the meal items you would like from your VA Gourmet menu. If you need a menu, please have a nursing staff member call for an Ambassador or call **410-605-7000, ext. 2075** to request a menu.
- ★ Call **410-605-7000, ext. 2075** to place your meal order or to ask questions about the menu.
- ★ Once your order is placed, it will be made to order and delivered to your room.

If you have any questions about your diet, please ask a staff member to contact your dietitian.

For your safety, we will only be able to accept your food order after your provider has entered your diet plan. Not all menu items are allowed on all diets, but we will guide you in making other selections.



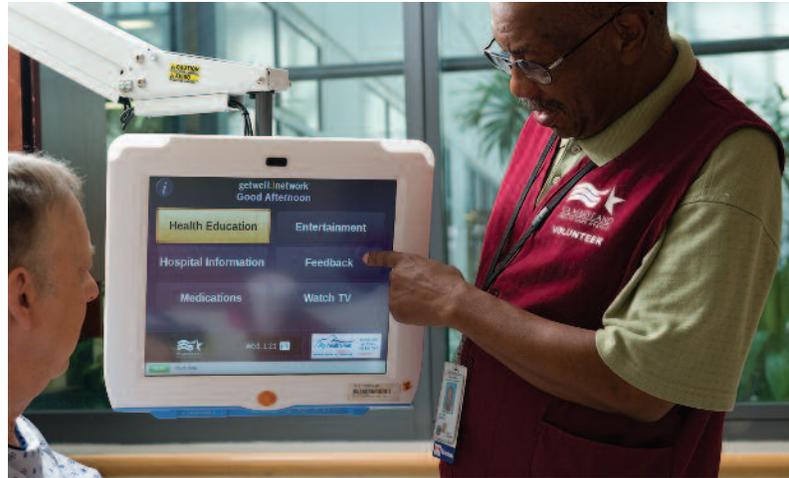
*VA Gourmet
Room Service –
what you
want, when
you want it.*

Patient Identification

Upon admission to the medical center, an identification band will be placed on your wrist. This wristband must be worn at all times, as treatment cannot be given to you without proper identification for safety purposes. If your wristband is lost or damaged, please contact a staff member immediately.

Telephones

Telephones are provided to each inpatient on the handrail of their bed or on their bedside table. Incoming calls cannot be received from 8 p.m. to 8 a.m. as the ringing mechanism is disabled during that timeframe to help reduce the noise level for all inpatients, but outgoing calls can be made at any time. Local calls can be made by dialing 9 and the telephone number, including the area code. Long distance calls can be made by dialing 9-1 and the telephone number, including the area code. To receive a call in your room, outside callers should dial **410-605-9**, then the last three digits of your telephone extension.



Televisions

There are bedside televisions available free-of-charge in patient rooms throughout the Baltimore VA Medical Center. Most bedside televisions are equipped with the GetWell Network, which is an interactive service that provides access to TV programming, movies, games, the Internet, e-mails and educational activities. Headphones will be distributed to all inpatients in a semi-private room shortly after their admission. You can also request headphones by contacting Voluntary Service at **410-605-7100**.

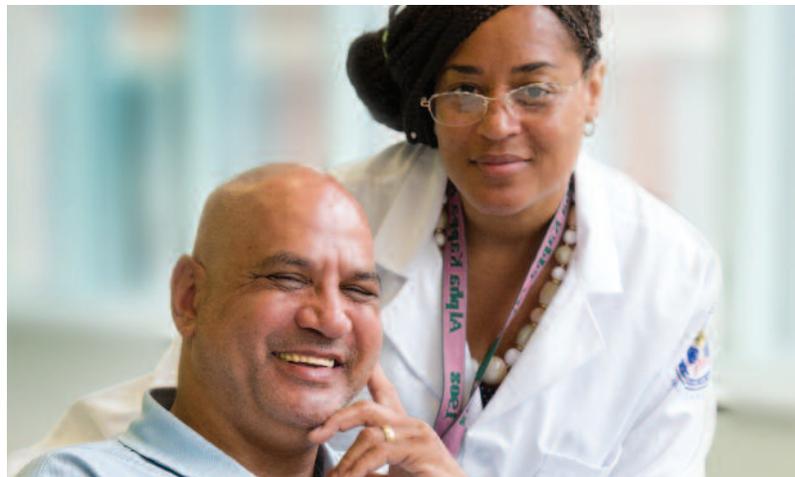
The All Faiths Chapel is located on the second floor of the medical center and is open from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. daily.





WiFi Internet Access

Free WiFi Internet access is available in all patient rooms throughout the Baltimore VA Medical Center. After selecting “VA Internet” from your personal smartphone or laptop computer, users will be redirected to an authorization page and prompted to enter an e-mail address to log in and begin surfing the Internet.



Additional Inpatient Services & Information

Chaplain Service

Chaplains visit inpatient units regularly and are available for private consultation. Patients can ask for written materials from Chaplain Service to assist them during their stay at the Baltimore VA Medical Center. The All Faiths Chapel is located on the second floor of the medical center and is open from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. daily. Religious services that are conducted in the All Faiths Chapel can also be viewed from your bedside television on Channel 5. To arrange a visit by a chaplain or to inquire about religious services, please call Chaplain Service at **410-605-7070**.

Discharge from the Medical Center

The treatment team on your unit will be planning your discharge from the medical center with you. Our goal is to make the transition to home or another facility as smooth as possible. As soon as you are given a possible discharge or transfer date, please keep your family members informed, especially if special arrangements need to be made or transportation provided. If you have any concerns about your discharge plans, please discuss them with a member of your treatment team.

Please note that some amenities may not be available on certain specialty care units due to patient safety issues.



At the Baltimore VA Medical Center and throughout the VA Maryland Health Care System, we strive to provide the best care possible in the most courteous and efficient manner.



Infection Control

Cleaning your hands still remains the number one way to prevent the spread of infections. Your caregivers should be cleaning their hands with alcohol hand rub or soap and water each time they provide your care. Speak up if you do not see your caregivers clean their hands. In addition, remember to clean your own hands frequently to protect yourself from infections, and ask your visitors to do the same.

If you are suspected or known to have certain infectious diseases, isolation precautions will be used. If you are on an isolation precaution, your caregivers will be wearing protective attire such as gloves, gowns and masks while in your room. Your visitors may also be asked to wear protective attire as well. If you have any questions about isolation precautions, please ask a member of your treatment team for more information.

Leaving Your Inpatient Unit

If you need to leave your inpatient unit, please notify a nursing staff member. If a nursing staff member is not immediately available, please check with your nurses station before leaving the unit to ensure that any required treatments or medications are given to you in a timely manner. Please note that some specialty care units may have different guidelines for leaving the unit due to patient safety issues, so please check with a member of your treatment team if you have any questions.



Patient Advocates

At the Baltimore VA Medical Center and throughout the VA Maryland Health Care System, we strive to provide the best care possible in the most courteous and efficient manner. If a problem does develop during your hospital stay, we encourage you to share your concern with a member of your treatment team or the Nurse Manager. Patient Advocates are also available to assist you and your family members with any problems or questions you may have during your hospital stay. To contact a Patient Advocate, please call **410-605-7099**. We want to hear from you so we can help resolve any concerns or prevent them from occurring again in the future.

Patient Safety

Patient safety is a top priority at the Baltimore VA Medical Center and throughout the VA Maryland Health Care System. Weakness caused by illness, medications and an unfamiliar environment can lead to falls. If you need assistance reaching something, getting out of bed or walking to and from the bathroom, please use your call button to ask a nursing staff member for assistance.

Educate yourself about your condition. Learn about your tests and treatment plans.



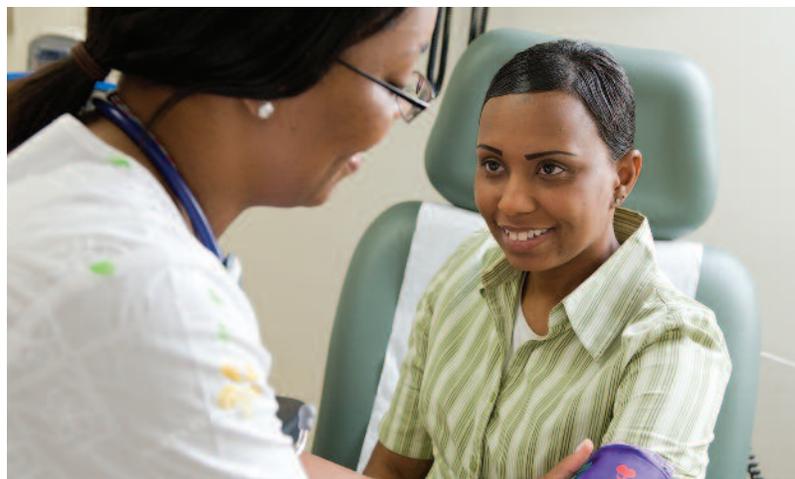


Prohibited Items

For the safety and protection of all patients, employees and visitors, please do not bring any prohibited items with you to the Baltimore VA Medical Center. Prohibited items include alcoholic beverages, narcotics, weapons and lighter fluid. If prohibited items are brought to the medical center, they will be confiscated and destroyed by VA Police. If you see anybody with a prohibited item in the medical center, please call the VA Police at **410-605-7300**.

Smoking Policy

The Baltimore VA Medical Center is a smoke-free facility. Patients and visitors may not smoke anywhere in the medical center or the parking garage. There is a designated smoking area outside the medical center on Baltimore Street under the walkway to the University of Maryland Medical Center.



Speak Up Program

As we strive to make your hospital stay a positive and safe experience, we also need you to be an active participant in your care. Please make sure to **SPEAK UP** if you have any questions during your hospital stay.

Speak up if you have questions or concerns. It's your body and you have the right to know.

Pay attention to the care you are receiving. Make sure you are getting the right treatments and medications from the right health care professionals. Don't assume anything.

Educate yourself about your condition. Learn about your tests and treatment plans.

Ask a trusted family member or friend to be your advocate.

Know your medications and why you take them. Medication errors are the most common health care mistake.

Use health care organizations like the VA Maryland Health Care System that have been carefully checked out.

Participate in all decisions about your treatment. You are the center of your health care team.

VA Police

VA Police are on duty 24 hours a day, seven days a week for your safety and protection. If you see something suspicious while you are an inpatient, please call the VA Police at **410-605-7300**.

To request a visit by a volunteer during your hospital stay, please call Voluntary Service at 410-605-7100.



Valuables

We recommend that you leave your personal valuables such as jewelry, credit cards, or cash at home during your hospitalization. If you have valuable items at the time of admission, please give them to your family members for safe keeping. If you are unable to send your valuables home, you can keep them in a locker in your patient room. We recommend that you keep no more than \$5.00 in cash with you during your hospital stay.

Voluntary Service

Thanks to the support of dedicated community members and local organizations, Voluntary Service is able to provide a number of activities and items for your enjoyment. Greeter volunteers visit all inpatient units on a daily basis to distribute reading materials, games and puzzle books. Additionally, a variety of volunteer groups visit inpatient units on a regular basis to play music, provide healthy treats, or offer friendly conversation. To request a visit by a volunteer during your hospital stay, please call Voluntary Service at **410-605-7100**.

Your Feedback

Providing safe, quality and compassionate health care to Veterans is our main priority. During your hospital stay, one of our staff members may ask for your feedback about your hospital stay by completing a short questionnaire. You may also be prompted to complete a short questionnaire on your TV screen. These local assessments are used to make improvements and to ensure you are receiving the best care possible. If we are not meeting your expectations or you have any concerns, please notify one of our staff members immediately.

After your visit, you may receive an official survey in the mail called the Survey of Healthcare Experiences of Patients. This confidential questionnaire is used to help us identify opportunities for improvement and to note positive trends. We hope that you will take the time to complete the survey so that we can continue to provide the best care possible.



Visitor Information & Support Services

All Faiths Chapel

The All Faiths Chapel is located on the second floor of the medical center and is open from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. daily. Religious services are conducted in the All Faiths Chapel on a daily basis. For a schedule of religious services, please call Chaplain Service at **410-605-7070**.

Automatic Teller Machine (ATM)

There is an ATM available on the 2nd floor of the Baltimore VA Medical Center in the Canteen Dining Room (Atrium Dining Area). The ATM is located on the far wall opposite the main entrance to the Canteen Dining Room.

Canteen Retail Store, Food Court, Coffee Shop and Vending Area

The Canteen areas are located on the 2nd floor of the Baltimore VA Medical Center and are open the followings days and times:

Retail Store

| | |
|-----------------|------------------|
| Monday – Friday | 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. |
| Saturday | 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. |
| Sunday | 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. |

Food Court

| | |
|-----------------|------------------|
| Monday – Friday | 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. |
|-----------------|------------------|

Coffee Shop

| | |
|-----------------|------------------|
| Monday – Friday | 6 a.m. to 5 p.m. |
|-----------------|------------------|

Vending Area

| | |
|-------|----------------|
| Daily | 24 Hours a Day |
|-------|----------------|



Library

The Library is located on the 2nd floor of the Baltimore VA Medical Center and is available for Veteran patients, visitors and employees. There are computers available in the Library to access the Internet and e-mail. The Library is open Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Mass Transportation

The Baltimore VA Medical Center is a few blocks away from the Light Rail and Metro Subway Stations at Lexington Market. In addition, there is a bus stop directly across the street from the medical center in front of the University of Maryland Medical Center, which is located at the intersection of Baltimore and Greene Streets. For additional information about Light Rail, Metro Subway and bus services to the Baltimore VA Medical Center, please visit the Maryland Transit Administration website at mta.maryland.gov/.

Newspapers

A variety of newspapers are available in kiosks on the first floor of the medical center in the lobby area and by the front bank of inpatient elevators. Some newspapers are available for purchase and some are free.

Parking Information

Inpatients – Parking is not permitted for inpatients in the garage at the Baltimore VA Medical Center. If an emergency situation requires temporary parking, space will be provided pending arrangements for removal of the vehicle.

Visitors – There is no visitor parking available in the parking garage at the Baltimore VA Medical Center during normal business hours (Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.). Visitor parking is available for a fee at nearby garages during normal business hours. Visitors are permitted to park in the garage at the Baltimore VA Medical Center free of charge after normal business hours.

Shuttles

For the convenience of our Veteran patients, shuttles run weekdays to and from the Baltimore VA Medical Center; the Baltimore VA Annex; the Perry Point VA Medical Center; the Washington, DC, VA Medical Center; the Martinsburg, West Virginia, VA Medical Center; and the Cambridge, Fort Howard, Glen Burnie and Loch Raven VA Outpatient Clinics. For a listing of shuttle schedules, please call **410-605-7318**, or visit maryland.va.gov/patients/shuttle.asp.

Taxicabs

There is a taxicab phone at the Information Desk in the lobby of the Baltimore VA Medical Center on the first floor. Just press the number for the corresponding taxicab service you would like to use to schedule a ride.

Visitor Guidelines

Family members, friends and other individuals are welcome to visit with patients for emotional support during the course of their stay, unless not medically or therapeutically advisable. For additional information, please contact a member of the treatment team.



“Working Together for a Healthier Veterans’ Community”

maryland.va.gov