

## 1/20/16 Patient Education Questions

### 1) **How do you live with an unhealable sore? Can I ever sit again and be active in the community?**

In order to maintain a quality of life one must restrict her sitting to a 2 hour time period. It is important to make an informed decision because ultimately sitting on your wound will not allow it to heal. You will also run the risk of the wound worsening and the possibility of getting a bone infection. Sepsis and/or bacteremia are serious results from getting an infection. One must ultimately balance their activities.

### 2) **I want to make my shower and bathing area more accessible? What should I consider before contacting a general contractor? Who can I talk to in order to get home modifications for my bathroom through the VA?**

One should consult an Occupational Therapist regarding accessibility issues in your home. A Social Worker can help you understand your eligibility and grants that are available. The process usually involves getting estimates on the work that is to be done.

### 3) **Who can help me gain access to a local restaurant that is not wheelchair accessible?**

It is important as a first step to learn how to negotiate with a business owner or manager. Often educating business owners for example simply putting casters on a restaurant table can improve accessibility. If a business is unwilling to make modifications an individual can work with organizations such as the Paralyzed Veterans of America which can help guide you in your approach to having a business establishment constructive comply. It is important when considering legal action against a potential business to understand many small businesses may not need to make modifications for example historic buildings are usually exempt.

### 4) **What is the difference between ALS and MS?**

MS is an autoimmune disease which essentially is attack on the mild myelin coating which is the insulation around nerves. The myelin is degraded and plaques form which ultimately decrease the transmission of the electrical signals through our nerves. The result of this process produces motor weakness and sensory changes. ALS is a motor neuron disease in which the motor neuron cells are attacked. The result of this process is motor weakness but no sensory changes. ALS also affects the brain which can lead to cognitive compromise.

**5) What are some VA resources for substance use treatment?**

The VA has been a both a leader and pioneer in the area of substance abuse treatment. The VA specifically has an Addiction Treatment Service. There are both a 28 day inpatient program and additionally an outpatient addiction treatment program. AA groups are another great resource and offer services for many different substance addictions. The VA will cover many new medications that have been developed to help individuals combat substance use disorders. Contact: (David Guldmann, LCSW. Program Director/Supervisory Social Worker, Foundations of Recovery (FOR),Addiction Treatment Services (ATS),3801 Miranda Avenue, Building 520, Unit A, Palo Alto, CA 94304,Office: 650-493-5000, 1-1-67956)

**6) I own a home and am wondering what will happen to it when I pass away. I am trying to relocate residences to a Veterans home, but want to keep my house. Who can I talk with to help me manage my home to make sure my family gets my home when I pass away and not the government?**

The VA cannot help you fill out a Will as this is a legal document. However, there are Low cost/ free legal advice options. In Alameda County: (Legal Assistance for Seniors:, 464 7th St, Oakland, CA 94607, (510) 832-3040, or Bay Area Legal Aid: Address: 1735 Telegraph Ave, Oakland, CA 94612, Telephone: (510) 663-4744) In Santa Clara County: Senior Adult Legal Assistance in Santa Clara County provides free legal assistance to county residents 60 years old and older. Contacts numbers are (650) 969-8656 for north county, (408) 295- 5991 for central county (San Jose), and (408) 847-7252 for south county. Also, Self-Help Center/family Law Facilitator's Office for S Clara Co @ 99 Notre Dame Ave, SJ. Also, Elder Law Attorneys are the best bet for estate planning/wills... California Advocates for Nursing Home Reform has a great website and a free legal referral service.

**7) The VA pulled my teeth, but won't provide me with any dentures/replacement teeth. How can I get financial support to rebuild my teeth?**

While the VA does not cover dentures one can use resources such as MediCal. Additionally dental medical schools offer programs at reduced fees. The AARP can be another possible resource as they do have plans that cover dentures.

**8) Can you use the therapy gym if you are not getting rehabilitation? When is the new exercise center going to be finished?**

The inpatient clinic gym has availability from 2 to 4 PM but one should check with their inpatient therapists first. The new VA Palo Alto exercise center is projected to open in 2017. In addition there is an outside exercise pad at building 7 and there is a bike trail which has an entrance at Arastradero and Miranda. Your Recreation therapist can help illuminate exercise opportunities for you.

**9) Will I get infected if I'm hanging out with guys who are in those isolation rooms?**

Understanding the different forms of isolation precautions can help keep you safe. It is also important to wash your hands and take care of even smaller wounds including scrapes which can be opportune environments for infections. Contact precautions require the use of gloves and gowns. Droplet precautions require the use of a face mask. Airborne (i.e. Tuberculosis) precautions require special isolation in controlled atmospheric pressure rooms.

**10) What is the treatment for MRSA (Methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus) and the other contact precaution infections?**

It is important to understand that all of us have normal Staph type of bacterial colonies that live in our skin. Wounds that create breaks in our skin create openings for these Staph bacteria. The treatment of MRSA requires stronger types of antibiotics.

**11) What are places I can wheel to get something to eat away from the hospital?**

One can easily wheel to TIBCO, which is a company just off the VA grounds that has a cafeteria that is open to the public. Additionally there are some smaller eateries over at Menlo Park which can be accessed by taking a shuttle over to Menlo Park. Food trucks are also available off campus including Monday nights at the Cabana Hotel which is located on the El Camino.

**12) Any tricks or tips on getting parking at the VA?**

Come early in the morning! Use the valet service at the main entrance of the VA. Utilize handicap spaces in front of building 7 for which you will need to obtain a placard inside the main entrance of building 7 at the outpatient window.

**13) What are some transportation options in my local community that I can use until I can drive again?**

Paratransit is 1 transportation option. You need to apply and call in advance to utilize paratransit. Cab companies also can offer accessible cabs.