

HOSPITAL PROGRAM / VAVS PROGRAM COORDINATOR

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Now that our Program year has gotten off to a good start, we need to ensure we start fulfilling some of our financial obligations. All Auxiliaries should send to Department their \$1 dollar Hospital quota, and their \$2 Cancer quota. These are headcount-based quotas, based on your Auxiliary's headcount of 31 March. Our goal is to see that all Veterans (especially the Homeless) needs are met, whether Hospitalized or Homeless.

Have you wondered what the difference is between the Hospital Program and the VAVS Program? VAVS is a federal program that coordinates the volunteer activities of the VFW and Auxiliary, as well as MANY other civic groups like the Red Cross, the Elks, the American Legion, the DAV, the Blue Star Mothers, etc. VAVS Reps from all of those organizations have meetings at their respective VA facilities about four times year: this is when the hospital needs are communicated to the Reps. The Reps give them to the Auxiliary's Hospital Chairmen. The Auxiliary's Hospital Program chairmen take what the VAVS Reps have disseminated and they help coordinate the actions of individual Auxiliaries to meet the needs of the various Hospitals.

The Volunteer Specialists, Case Workers, Social Workers, Chiefs of CDCE (in other words, someone in charge) at the various hospital facilities are the folks who know what the needs of the local veterans are. They can advise our Auxiliary volunteers on what those needs are (such as warm clothing and/or non-perishable foods, etc., as we approach the colder winter months). All facilities do not have storage rooms however, the needs are still there and we should try to meet them.

Are your volunteer hours being reported in our online system? Please be sure to report all of the hours the members are expending (planning, shopping, transporting, etc.) and then make sure our volunteers get hospital pins to recognize their hours and thank them for all they do. The Hospital Program is actively recruiting new volunteers to spend a few hours a month at the local facilities – it's fun and easy! Ask me how (my contact info is listed above).

Did you know the VAVS Program offers a scholarship competition for youth volunteers? Annually, there are seven scholarships awarded -- it is open across the country for any high school student who volunteers in any VA facility. There's no entry form – the hospital staff makes recommendations internally.

Please call me if you have any questions – I'm here to help!