Emory University Department of Medicine Ambassador Program Guide
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Atlanta Veterans Affairs Medical Center (VAMC)

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This guide contains information and skill lists identified by VAMC physicians and scientists as useful to supplement all-employee orientation. The goal of the ambassador program is to match recently hired physicians and scientists with the appropriate Atlanta VAMC staff to help master items in this guide as well as to provide direction to online and printed resources. In addition to receipt of this guide, an individual meeting will be arranged between each newly hired Emory Department of Medicine/Atlanta VAMC staff member and a VAMC Ambassador.

Special thanks to Roy Sutliff and Mike Hart for contributing to the research section, Charles Demosthenes for helping develop the section on CPRS skills, numerous fellow VAMC physicians for making suggestions on what this guide should include, and the VAMC Ambassadors for volunteering to provide ongoing support.

This guide is posted on the Emory Department of Medicine Ambassador Program Website:

http://medicine.emory.edu/faculty-staff-resources/faculty-development/faculty-programs/ambassador-program.html

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The Physician Ambassadors at the Atlanta VAMC (and the topics they are the primary contact for) are:

Rina Eisenstein, MD (CPRS)  
Geriatrics (primarily outpatient)  
Rina.Eisenstein@va.gov  
Cell: 404-324-7870

Dustin Smith, MD (Inpatient issues/ CPRS for inpatients)  
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Phyllis Watson-Williams, MD (Outpatient Issues)  
Primary Care  
Office: Ext 5232  
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Outline

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VAMC Physician Contacts for CPRS:

Rina Eisenstein, MD
Geriatrics (primarily outpatient)
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Cell Phone: 404-324-7870

Dustin Smith, MD (CPRS for inpatients)
Hospitalist Medicine
Dustin.Smith2@va.gov
dustintsmitmd@gmail.com
Cell (Preferred): 404-432-9421
Pager: (404) 225-0560

A. Accessing Computerized Training

The following website contains CPRS training modules:
http://www.vehu.va.gov/vehu/Resources.cfm

The following website is a listing of CPRS tips and tricks from users nationwide:

B. Obtaining CPRS at Home

Contact the program specialist for information technology. For medical specialty, the position is currently filled by Terry Mitchell Ext 2781 and his email is Terry.Mitchell@va.gov. For geriatrics/palliative care, contact Jeffrey Brown at Ext 2567 or Jeffrey.Brown@va.gov, and for primary care, contact Odell McClain at Ext 4633 or Odell.Mcclain@va.gov.

C. CPRS Skills List

The list below serves as a guide to the skill set that will expedite efficient patient care with CPRS. There are many options to generate time saving automated lists and templates and it is possible to spend years working with CPRS while being unaware of these powerful tools. The goal is to identify items on the list that are unfamiliar, then seek training from available computerized and internet resources or contact VAMC Ambassadors to arrange a personal tutorial session. Charles Demosthenes, an outpatient clinic VA physician, contributed most of the items on the CPRS list. CPRS technical support issues should be routed through the helpdesk by dialing extension 4357, or the service line ADPAC, Terry Mitchell (Terry.Mitchell@va.gov).

Basic tasks
- Sign in, change password
- Navigate tabs
- Add problems from problem list and encounter form
- Order and Document Medications
  - Order VA medicines
  - Document non-VA medicines
  - Refill medicines
  - Renew medicines
  - Order medications using MUE
Order medications using non-formulary requests
Order labs
Order consults
Order imaging
Order blood products
Access general inpatient and outpatient orders using Clinician Orders (Full Menu) on orders tab
Use order sets
Record allergy, remove allergy
Create new note
   Add addendum to note
   Record attending
   Identify cosigner (for residents)
   Select note title (see options for default setup)
Fill out Encounter
Answer a consult
Process a consult (add comments for schedulers, PCP)
View Labs
   Cumulative
   Lab Status
   Graphs
   Worksheets
View Reports
   Radiology/Imaging
   Pharmacy
View Alerts (tricks and pitfalls)
Process Notifications
   Right click to remove
   Right clicking on next tab to renew (so it won’t disappear)

Advanced Tasks
Quick Orders
   Save Quick orders for meds (done from order tab)
   Save Quick orders for imaging (done from order tab)
Templates
   Create a new template
   Create Interactive and dialog template components
   Find and request template fields
   Manage and organize templates
   Use shared templates
   Copy and edit shared templates
   Use data objects
   Use template fields
Options
   List/team selection and setup
   Surrogate settings
   Configure Note title preferences

Points of discussion
Copying and pasting
What to put and not to put in progress notes.
Appropriate use of addenda (when to start a new note vs. adding to an existing note).
Key Annotation of problems
Progress note templates do’s and don’ts
Using notes tab, custom views
Navigating menus
D. Clinical Application Coordinator Activities and Contact Information

The current clinical application coordinators are: Purvi Patel (Purvi.Patel4@va.gov) for medical specialty, Florence Longchamp (email: Florence.Longchamp@va.gov) for primary care, Verna Funderburk (email Verna.Funderburk@va.gov) for Geriatrics and Extended Care, and Denise Francis for Research(Denise.Francis@va.gov). Kenneth Murphy (Kenneth.Murphy@va.gov) is the lead clinical application coordinator, and Dr. Charles Demosthenes is the informatics chief.

They can be contacted for:
- Creating and managing menus
- Creating and managing clinical reminders
- Creating and managing data objects and template objects
- Creating standard notes and templates

E. Changing your Electronic Signature Code:

1. Go into Vista and at the main menu, type in “tb” (for toolbox).
2. Choose the option “Electronic Signature code Edit.”
   You won’t see the typing come across
   8-20 characters (although 6 characters have been accepted.
   Requires mix of characters: alpha, numeric, and symbol can be used)

F. Encrypted Email (PKI=Public Key Infrastructure)

Encrypted email is needed to email any patient information. An ID badge must be inserted in the computer used to send encrypted email. Contact the program specialist for information technology for additional information. For medical specialty, the position is currently filled by Terry Mitchell Ext 2781 and his email is Terry.Mitchell@va.gov. For geriatrics/palliative care, contact Jeffrey Brown at Ext 2567 or Jeffrey.Brown@va.gov, and for primary care, contact Odell McClain at Ext 4633 or Odell.Mcclain@va.gov.

G. Atlanta Clinical Resources

A wealth of information, including access to UptoDate, the New England Journal of Medicine, and OVID, is available under the Tools menu of CPRS by selecting “Atlanta Clinical Resources,” then in the left hand column “Library Services.”

II. Atlanta VAMC Physician Information

For information on navigating the VA system from the viewpoint of a clinician, contact
The following Department of Medicine ambassadors:

Outpatient issues:

Phyllis Watson-Williams, MD
Primary Care
Office: Ext 5232
Phyllis.Watson-Williams7@va.gov
Inpatient issues:

Dustin Smith, MD  
Hospitalist Medicine  
Dustin.Smith2@va.gov  
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Pager: (404) 225-0560

Amy Miller, MD  
Hospitalist Medicine  
absmit3@gmail.com  
Cell: 678-485-3685

A. Who to Call for Emergent Issues

4911 is the phone number to use for all emergencies, including fire emergencies, codes, disruptive emergencies, or any emergent issues requiring the police. Police can be also be contacted for non-emergencies at 7641.

The VAMC has an option for calling a rapid response team for patients that require immediate evaluation and management but who do not require a code. The rapid response team can also be contacted at 4911.

A silent alarm can be sent to the police by one of two methods: on your computer keyboard press F9 and F11 simultaneously, or press both ctrl keys simultaneously. I recommend calling the police at 7641 to test this once from your assigned office, since when I initially called the police to test, my keyboard was linked to the wrong office.

For emergent issues dealing with inpatients other than those above, assistance can be obtained by paging the in-house hospitalist at 404-225-0970. For contacting on call physicians, see sections D. and E. below. Other options for seeking assistance for an emergent problem are the nursing supervisor or the administrator on duty (AOD). A nursing supervisor is available after 4 PM by cell phone 404-915-2494 or Ext 6247. The AOD can be contacted through the operator. For emergent issues which cannot be resolved by other channels, including assistance of the section chief, the chief of staff or an acting chief of staff is on call 24/7 and can be contacted through the operator.

B. Chain of Command

The Medical Specialty Care Service Line includes sections for cardiology, dermatology, emergency medicine, endocrinology, gastroenterology, hematology/oncology, infectious diseases, nephrology, podiatry, pulmonary, rheumatology, resident education, quality medicine, compensation and pension/special exams, and the hospitalist program. Each section has a section chief who reports to the chief of the Medical Specialty Care Service Line, Mark Nanes, MD, PhD.

Geriatrics, neurology, and palliative care fall within Geriatrics and Extended Care Service Line directed by Sharon Polensek, MD. Primary Care also has a separate service line, with chief Raman Damineni, MD.

Service line chiefs report to the chief of staff, David Bower, MD, who reports to the director of the Atlanta VAMC Leslie Wiggins.

C. Contacting other Staff Members
The VISN7 Telephone Directory is on the desktop of VAMC computers and allows searches by staff member name or department. If searches are made by department, the listing of staff members under the department is often incomplete. Double clicking on a staff member’s name in the search results list will reveal all contact information on file for the staff member.

For physicians who have pager numbers (PIC numbers) in the Emory system, contact information can be obtained and the staff member can be paged (including text messages to the pager) by calling the Emory Midtown Operator at 404-686-1000. If the PIC number is known, dial 404-686-5500. The Emory pager system can also be accessed online at https://simonweb.eushc.org/ and requires an Emory online ID: contact the Emory help desk at 404-727-7777 if you do not have an Emory online ID. If there is a problem with using Internet Explorer to access, try an alternate browser such as Firefox.

For physicians with VA pagers, text messages can be sent by emailing to the (pager number without dashes)@usamobility.net. For example, for a pager number of 404-123-4567, sending an email to 4041234567@usamobility.net will result in a text message being sent to that pager. With the VA pager, you are not notified if the pager is off or the staff member is not on service. The message will not show up on the pager when it is turned on if the message was sent when the pager is off.

D. Blackboard (includes call and conference schedules for medicine)

Sign on to blackboard for Emory faculty can be performed at the website www.classes.emory.edu or perform a google search on Blackboard Emory. If you are unable to logon to Blackboard, contact the Emory help desk at 404-727-7777.

E. Finding out who is on Call for Other Specialties

Call schedules can be found on the website: http://vaww.visn7.med.va.gov/intranet/facilities/182247/

This website can also be accessed through the tools menu in CPRS. Select “Atlanta Clinical Resources,” and select “On Call Schedules” in the left column.

F. Obtaining Codes and Keys

For keys, a form is generated after approval from the section chief or supervisor and the form is taken to the locksmith office, located in BC-104, Ext 6361. Current hours are Monday and Friday 7:30 -4:00, Tuesday-Thursday closed for Medical center re-keying project and work orders.

In the Medical Specialty Care Service Line, an email needs to be sent to a program specialist from the section chief or supervisor with your name, the room number for which access is required, key number, and permission for access. Harriet Powell (Harriet.Powell@va.gov) Ext 2436 is the current Medical Specialty Service Line program specialist. In the Geriatrics and Extended Care Service Line, contact Leeatta Collier Ext 6746 Leeatta.Collier@va.gov. In the Primary Care Service Line, call Ext 5394 and ask for Ted Harris (Theodore.Harris2@va.gov).

Computer codes are obtained during general employee orientation, but if there are any difficulties with computer codes call the help desk at Ext 4357 (Ext “HELP”) from a VAMC phone. The direct number if a cell phone is used: call the main hospital number 404-321-6111 and enter Ext 4357 (often need to enter 1 prior to entering an extension).

Local codes to doors or other devices must be obtained from your section leader or other physicians.

G. Memorandum of Understanding Completion
If you are an 8/8 VAMC employee but educational, research, or service activities require presence at another site during the day (during your “tour of duty”), a memorandum of understanding is completed for approval of offsite activities.

VAMC staff members who work less than 8/8 complete a similar form called the Memorandum of Service Level Expectations to specify time to be spent at the VAMC. The term “memorandum of understanding” is also freely used to refer to this form for part time staff.

Discuss with your section chief whether you need a memorandum of understanding and who to call to initiate. Some departments start the process through an Emory representative.

H. Information on Conditions Related to General Exposures such as Agent Orange.

Comprehensive information on Agent Orange can be obtained online at www.VA.gov/AgentOrange
There is an Agent Orange office which can be contacted at Ext 6908, and newsletters with information on Agent Orange can be obtained from the office in Room 6C151.

I. Residency Supervision

The associate residency program director Shahed Brown has supplementary information available for those who will be involved in resident education. She can be contacted by email at Shahed.Brown@va.gov, at her office Ext 2083, or by cell phone at 404-593-9923.

J. Graduate Medical Education (GME) and Continuing Medical Education (CME) including Travel Approval

The VA and Emory work closely to provide GME, and over 35 GME programs rotate through the Atlanta VA. CME opportunities exist at both Emory University and Atlanta VA sites.

Full time 8/8 physicians who are also board certified have a $1000 per year allocation to support conference and CME activities. The funds can be applied towards conference, travel, and lodging/living expenses.

Less than full time staff, or 8/8 staff who are not board certified, can also request funds to support CME activities but approval is not automatic, funds are limited, and the amount approved is usually less than $1000.

The process of requesting support for conference travel starts by going to the Employee Education System Website http://vaww.ees.lrn.va.gov/ and selecting “I need to register for an external conference.”

Contacts to request the appropriate forms and help guide you through the process are Ted Harris for the primary care service line Ext 2765, Theodore.Harris2@va.gov; and Ed Mills ext 3040 Edward.Mills@va.gov or Leeatta Collier Ext 6746, Leeatta.Collier@va.gov for the geriatric and extended care service line. For the Medical Specialty Care Service Line, Harriet Powell Ext 2436 Harriet.Powell@va.gov is the current specialist.

The contact in education for arranging the conference/CME registration (but not travel) is Ken Ratcliffe Ken.Ratcliffe@va.gov. Travel is approved by several levels at the Atlanta VA including Dr. Bower, then after Dr. Bower’s signature final approval is required in the Atlanta VAMC finance office. The finance office contact is Zeborah Thompson Ext 5863.

Travel requests are sent to the VISN 7 travel office. If there is a delay or other questions arise, the office can be contacted at (205) 554-2000 Ext. 2345 (Unice Nevins-Prewitt).
K. Medical Media Requests

Medical Media Requests Can be placed using the following website:
http://vaww.visn7.med.va.gov/apps/V7MM/index.cfm

L. Additional Atlanta VAMC Information (including maps, library services, policies, and much more)

A wealth of information about the Atlanta VA, including a facility map, can be found on the website
http://vaww.visn7.med.va.gov/intranet/facilities/11596 which is the same website that is accessed under Atlanta Clinical Resources in CPRS.

III. Atlanta VAMC less than 8/8 appointment issues

A. The Meaning of a Joint Appointment

The VAMC appointments are expressed in 8ths and indicate the fraction of time out of a standard 40 hour work week that must be spent on activities related to the VAMC. A physician can have less than half time appointment, but in order to be a principal investigator on a VA grant, a minimum of 5/8 at the VA is required. Although a Ph.D. at the VA can request salary support on a VA grant, an MD investigator cannot request salary support. The salary for research by an MD is paid from the physician’s VA appointment salary.

If activities related to the VA appointment must be performed at a location other than the VA, for example if there is laboratory research for which a laboratory is only available outside the VA, the details are included in the Memorandum of Service Level Expectations (also often called a memorandum of understanding, see part E. of the previous section on Atlanta VAMC Physician Information).

B. Benefits (Emory vs. VA)

Part time VA staff members that have joint appointments with Emory can choose benefit packages either with the VA or Emory. Some mix their benefits and might obtain, for example, health benefits from the VA and use the savings plan from Emory. The VAMC benefits office has a prorated table which specifies the cost for benefits by hours worked at the VA per week. Employees should meet with benefits representatives from both the Emory and the VA to compare and decide on benefits.

VAMC Benefits Staff expert on Physician Benefits: Ext 3638

Part-time employees earn 1 hour of annual paid leave per 10 hours worked in pay status, and the ceiling for accumulated time is 240 hours. 1 hour of sick leave is earned for every 20 hours of work in pay status.

C. Time Documentation

Time spent at the VA must be documented on VISTA. At this time, there is not an online training module. VA payroll can be contacted for assistance with instruction on entering time on VISTA. There is also a document that exists with instructions on documentation of time: The “Personal and Accounting Integrated Data (PAID) Part-time Physicians Training Module Handout (April 2005)”.

VA Payroll Staff: email to VHAATG PAYROLL within VA Outlook (Click the “to” box in a new email to access)
D. Flex Time

When a physician obtains a part-time appointment, hours are specified. For example, a 5/8 appointment may result in a requirement for a physician to be at the VA for a specified 5 hour period every day every day. Auditors periodically check on whether physicians are present at their assigned times. If a rigid schedule is not appropriate, flex time can be requested (contact VA payroll staff for more information). A key question to ask the payroll staff is the procedure for “opening a day.”

VA Payroll Staff: email to VHAATG PAYROLL within VA Outlook (Click the “to” box in a new email to access)

IV. Atlanta VAMC Research

There is a website with comprehensive information about research at the Atlanta VA: http://www.atlanta.va.gov/services/research/investigators.asp

The VA Research Office (404-728-7632) can be contacted with additional questions. The following physicians can also be contacted:

- C. Michael Hart, MD
  Michael.Hart3@va.gov
  Professor of Medicine, Emory University
  Associate Chief of Staff-Research

- Roy Sutliff, PhD (research)
  Roy.Sutliff@va.gov
  Office: Ext 7053
  Cell: 770-634-4016

- Kreton Mavromatis, MD (clinical research)
  Cardiology
  Kreton.Mavromatis@va.gov
  Office: Ext 2207
  Pager: PIC 16526 (To page call 404-686-5500 or 404-686-1000)

V. Emory Resource Access

A. Faculty Development

A tremendous amount of information on faculty development at Emory is available online at http://med.emory.edu/faculty_dev/

B. Emory Faculty ID

The EmoryCard is the official Identification Card of Emory University and can be obtained on the first floor of the Boisfeuillet Jones Building, Room 101. The office is open Monday thru Friday from 8:30am until 4:30pm and can be contacted at 404-727-6095. The EmoryCard also permits access to facilities
and events and can be used to purchase goods and services at the university and at community merchants. The card allows common university area access (such as access to the Woodruff Library).

C. Emory Software

Software is available at a discount or sometimes as a free download at the Emory Software Distribution Center. Information is available at: www.software.emory.edu or by performing a search on the Emory Software Distribution Center.

VI. Recreational Opportunities

A. Trail to Emory through Lullwater Park (walk to Emory main campus in 20 minutes)

The entrance is on the west side of the Atlanta VAMC campus north of the largest parking deck. Take the trail to the suspension bridge and cross the bridge. Both directions on the other side of the bridge (right or left) will lead to Clifton road. Turn left on Clifton road to reach the main Emory medical campus.

B. Arts and Concerts at Emory

Information about arts and concerts at Emory, including information about free concerts, is available at www.arts.emory.edu. The link to “events calendar” allows creation of a custom calendar based on areas of interest. The Schwartz Center for Performing Arts 1700 N. Decatur Road is one of the newer Emory concert venues, with parking available for evening performances (recently has been free parking in the evenings) in the adjacent Fishburne parking deck accessible off North Decatur Road less than one block west of Clifton Road and just west of the Schwartz Center. The Carlos Museum in on the main quad and includes permanent and temporary exhibits.

C. Discount Ticket Booth and Information Desk at Emory Dobbs University Center (DUC)

The tickets and information desk is located within the DUC on the Emory campus. General Emory information, information about on-campus programs, and discounted tickets for local movie theaters and some area attractions are available. The phone number is 404-727-INFO (4636) and additional information is at http://www.emory.edu/DUC/. Clicking on the link to “info desk” on the website gives access to the tickets available.

D. Membership in Emory Health and Fitness Centers

There are three health centers at Emory which faculty can join at a discounted rate. The largest is the George W. Woodruff Physical Educational Center on the main campus, which has an Olympic indoor pool. The smaller Biomeyer Health fitness center on the main campus is for faculty and staff only. The Student Activity and Academic Center on Clairmont Road is the closest to (just South of) the Atlanta VAMC and includes an Olympic size outdoor pool. Additional information, as well as information on other athletic activities, can be found at http://www.emory.edu/home/life/athletics/.

E. VA Fitness Center

There is a fitness center in the VA (GA235) on the Ground floor in the same tower as the police station, around the corner from the badge office, with shower facilities and lockers nearby. There are exercise bicycles, treadmills, stair machines, elliptical machines, and free weights. There is 24/7 access with your badge after it is activated. To activate your badge for fitness center access, contact Police Sgt. Eric Adams at Ext 1866, or by email Eric.Adams1@va.gov.