



www.lebanon.va.gov

CONTACT:
Julie Cameron
Public Affairs Specialist
717-228-6079
Julia.Cameron@va.gov

**FOR
IMMEDIATE
RELEASE**

LEBANON VA MEDICAL CENTER PHARMACISTS HIGHLIGHT VITAL ROLE IN IMPROVING PATIENT SAFETY

LEBANON – October 25, 2012

Pharmacists at Lebanon VA Medical Center will use National Hospital & Health-System Pharmacy Week, October 21-27, 2012, to underscore the many new and vital roles they now play in patient care. The evolution has been especially dramatic in recent years as pharmacists have moved beyond compounding and dispensing medications to become vital members of multidisciplinary patient-care teams.

“Many patients are not aware that pharmacists play a critical role in preventing medication errors, advising prescribers on the best drug choices, and working directly with patients to ensure they understand how to use their medications safely and effectively,” said Paul Carnes, Chief of Pharmacy. “Pharmacy Week is a great way to educate the public about how pharmacists can help them get the most benefit from their medicine.”

Hospital and health-system pharmacists have been able to take on enhanced patient-care roles because of a number of factors, including the deployment of highly trained, certified technicians and new technologies like robotics that dispense medications. As technology evolves—such as the addition of machine-readable codes to medication labels—patients will have greater opportunities to have a pharmacist involved in their care.

Pharmacists are experts on the thousands of medications available today, how each one works in the body, and the ways to use each one safely and effectively. Pharmacists who graduate today receive six years of education focused on medication therapy, and many pharmacists practicing in hospitals and health systems also complete post-graduate residency programs. They advise doctors and nurses on the best medications and monitor every patient’s medication therapy and provide quality checks to detect and prevent harmful drug interactions, reactions, or mistakes.

###