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**LEBANON VA RECEIVES NATIONAL AWARD FOR STERILIZATION SAFETY
VA Recognized as National Best Practice for Reducing Hospital Acquired Infections**

LEBANON – January 13, 2014 –

Lebanon VA Medical Center received a prestigious national award recently for its sterilization of surgical instruments and reusable medical equipment (RME). The 3M Corporation presented the award recognizing Lebanon VA as a “best practice” nationally for exceeding industry standards of cleansing surgical instruments and medical equipment in a way that significantly improves patient safety.

The current industry standard for assuring safety and thorough sterilization of RME is to biologically monitor one sterilization cycle per day. With their supervisor’s support and as part of a work flow reengineering effort, staff at Lebanon decided to practice at a higher level and biologically monitor every sterilization cycle. While this practice adds additional work for the staff, officials report this level of validation, precision and accountability adds value and reassurance. Biological monitoring of each cleaning cycle ensures an extra level of safety for patients undergoing surgical and medical procedures and builds upon the VA’s outstanding safety record.

Additionally, each piece or package of medical equipment which is sterilized is recorded, tracked and linked to not only the location of use, but also to specific patients. This minimizes any infection risk to Veteran patients.

Hospital acquired infections (HAI’s) are a main concern for healthcare facilities. Surgical site infections are the second most common form of HAI. According to AORN (Association of periOperative Registered Nurses), the surgical setting is one of the most potentially hazardous environments for patients.

Medical Center Director, Robert W. Callahan Jr. stated, “This practice showcases Lebanon VA’s commitment to the highest level of reliability and safety for Veterans, reduces hospital acquired infections, and goes well above and beyond the industry standard. This best practice award is one more way the public and Veterans can be assured they are receiving the best and safest care possible.” Molly E. DeOrsay, of the Boston 3M office, who presented the award to Lebanon VA staff said, “If your patients knew, they would thank you! These Veterans have served our country [well] and you are serving them well.”

Lebanon VA Medical Center is one of 152 medical centers across the United States which are dedicated to serving the unique needs of America’s Veterans. The VA is the largest health care system in the country, using state of the art technology to improve the health of Veterans from every generation. If you are Veteran, you may be eligible to receive care and benefits from the VA

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