



# VETERANS' UPDATES

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## MRI MACHINE BOOSTS VMMC CAPABILITY



Guests view the MRI Machine at the VMMC.

The Veterans Memorial Medical Center (VMMC) recently received a Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) machine from the United States Department of Veterans Affairs (USDVA) during a dedication ceremony held last June 29, 2011.

His Excellency Harry K. Thomas Jr., Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of the Philippines, led the turnover of the MRI machine with Director Jon Skelly of the US Department of Veterans Affairs (USDVA) Manila Regional Office and USDVA Manila Clinic Manager Dennis Brink. USec. Eduardo G. Batac, Undersecretary for Civil, Veterans, and Reserve Affairs, represented Hon. Voltaire T. Gazmin, Secretary of National Defense. Joining him was PVAO Administrator, Lt. Gen. Ernesto G. Carolina AFP (Ret.).

Dr. Nona Legaspi, VMMC Director, received the MRI grant on behalf of the veterans community together with Dr. Franklin V. Gali, VMMC Assistant Director; Dr. Dominador Chiong Jr., VMMC Chief of Professional Staff; and members of the professional and medical staff of VMMC.

The said MRI Machine costs approximately \$1.3 million or Php55.9 million. Since 2003, the USDVA has donated over \$5.7 million worth of medical equipment such as CT scan, radiography, fluoroscopy & portable X-ray machine, and dialysis machines in line with an equipment grant program to VMMC, which the USDVA Secretary Eric Shinseki committed to continue.

MRI is an advance diagnostic technology that can provide detailed images of organs and tissues within the body. It is an imaging instrument that uses powerful magnets and radio waves to create pictures of the body. The image and resolution produced by MRI is detailed and accurate that it can detect tiny changes of structures within the body that CT scans, ultrasound, and X-rays cannot. This preventive health screening can provide an early detection and diagnosis of cancer and other abnormalities such as brain trauma caused by bleeding or swelling, brain aneurysms, stroke, brain tumors, as well as inflammation of the spine. It can also provide valuable information on glands, organs, soft tissues, joints, and bones of the body. Surgeries are also often more accurately directed after knowing the results of an MRI scan.

As of present, VMMC is currently undergoing training and establishing medical protocol or special operating procedures in the proper operation and administration of the MRI Machine.

Veterans and their dependents may avail of the MRI scanning at no cost. Meanwhile, PVAO and VMMC employees and their dependents are entitled to a 20% discount. ■



The MRI Machine at the VMMC.

*"It is incumbent upon us to care for our noble patriots who, at the risk of life and limb, braved the perils of combat to defend our nation." - Pres. Corazon Aquino*

**"SERBISYO SA BETERANO, SERBISYO SA BAYAN."**



## VMMC: A Tradition of Service to the Filipino Veterans

The Veterans Memorial Medical Center (VMMC) is the primary medical facility that provides hospitalization, medical care and treatment to veterans and their families. Formerly known as the Veterans Memorial Hospital, VMMC was officially inaugurated on November 1955 through the joint efforts of the Philippine Government and the United States Government for the benefit of the thousands of Filipino soldiers who fought alongside the US Armed Forces during World War II.

Congresswoman Edith Nourse Rogers of Massachusetts authored a bill – aptly called **Rogers Act** – which gave the President of the United States the authority “to provide aid to the Republic of the Philippines in the form of grants not to exceed \$22,500,000 for the construction and equipping of necessary hospital facilities for exclusive use of disabled Filipino World War II veterans.” This was eventually realized when then US President Truman signed Public Law 865 in 1948, which appropriated funds for the construction of a veteran’s hospital in the Philippines. As counterpart to the appropriated amount, then Philippine President Elpidio Quirino issued Proclamation 169 which reserved 54.9 hectares of land in Quezon City for the hospital site.

Today, the VMMC is a leading tertiary medical institution that boasts of up-to-date diagnostic, therapeutic, and rehabilitation equipments. Patients seeking medical attention can avail of general and specialty services from its Clinical & Ancillary Departments: Department of Medicine, Department of Surgery, Department of Pulmonary Diseases, Department of Ophthalmology, Department of Otorhinolaryngology-HNS, Department of Psychiatry, Department of Obstetrics & Gynecology, Department of Pediatrics, Department of Anesthesiology, Out-Patient Department (Family Medicine), Department of Rehabilitation Medicine, Department of Pathology, Department of Nuclear Medicine & Research, Department of Radiology & Radiotherapy, and Department of Dental Medicine.

But more than its facilities and services, VMMC stands out from other medical institutions because of its special clientele and the purpose for whom it was founded—our living heroes, the Filipino veterans. ■



With notes from Quezon Newsletter. Quezon City Public Library website: [http://www.qcpubliclibrary.org/qcmanuscript.php#qc\\_hospitals](http://www.qcpubliclibrary.org/qcmanuscript.php#qc_hospitals)



A doctor attends to a veteran during a PVAO Medical Mission.

## Giving Our Veterans the Extra Care They Deserve

In caring for over 250,000 veterans and their dependents, PVAO has expanded its hospitalization and medical services to include particularly those who are residing in the provinces.

Aside from the free health services at the Veterans Memorial Medical Center (VMMC), veterans and their qualified dependents are entitled to a subsidy of P800/day of confinement for a maximum of 45 days per year at any of the 250 PVAO-accredited government hospitals nationwide. The veteran or his/her dependents simply has to present a PVAO Pensioner’s ID or, if in the province, a PVAO-issued Certification as Pensioner to the billing section of the hospital prior to the day of discharge, after which

the billing personnel shall deduct the said medical allowance on top of other discounts such as PhilHealth and Senior Citizen’s discounts.

In addition to this, PVAO and VMMC have also recently added cataract surgery, dentures, orthopedic implants, and hernia mesh in its list of subsidized hospitalization benefits. These can be utilized regardless if the veteran is a confined or outpatient of VMMC or a PVAO-VMMC accredited government hospital.

PVAO has also entered into a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with PhilHealth in 2009 to assist over 10,760 eligible living WWII veterans in their PhilHealth application and benefits. PVAO will cover the veteran’s one year premium. To date, 1,027 have been processed and been given their PhilHealth membership ID.

For the road ahead, PVAO is working for the legislation and appropriation of funds for the establishment of Veterans Hospital in Visayas and Mindanao. Meanwhile, PVAO continues to work in partnership with FILVETS in subsidizing outreach operations of FILVETS in its regular conduct of medical and dental missions in areas covered by their 11 medical outreach clinics nationwide. All these to give our veterans the extra care they deserve. ■



PVAO employees take the time off from their offices to be part of the VMMC Volunteer Service Program.