

# SAMHS INFO BULLETIN



Compiled by Corporate Communication

## MILITARY VETERANS HELP DESKS AT SAMHS FACILITIES

In May 2012, Minister Sisulu on the occasion of the Department of Defence Budget Vote made an important pronouncement about the value to be placed on our military veterans. It was pointed out that the nation owes a debt that can never be repaid, for their having contributed to the creation of a democratic dispensation for all our people. Consequently, the whole of this year has been dedicated to our military veterans. The minister also undertook that the Department of Defence would strive to reflect the nation's gratitude in what it does this year.

Whilst honouring our military veterans, the minister singled out former President Nelson Mandela as the first Commander in Chief of uMkhonto we Sizwe and the first Commander in Chief of the South African National Defence Force. Thus, it is fitting that as the nation celebrates former President Mandela's 94<sup>th</sup> birthday, SAMHS is rolling out a service that will ensure a high degree of frontline service to our military veterans.

The Surgeon General has instructed that all SAMHS facilities providing care to patients shall have clearly designated help desks for military veterans. These desks are intended to provide a first contact point for veterans and must ensure a high standard courtesy and assistance, in keeping with the degree of honour and dignity due to these patients. Patient administration managers must ensure at all times that these desks are occupied by patient administration officials throughout the day.

Personnel at the help desks are required to wear name tags and proficiency emblems and to refrain from private telephone calls whilst at the desk. Veterans must be received without undue delay and must be greeted in a friendly and helpful manner. The SAMHS personnel manning these desks must ensure that military veterans are recognized as approved SAMHS patients, and must be able to quickly obtain authority for treatment for those veterans who are not yet ratified on the Health Informatics System. They are also required to assist the veterans with finding the service points which they require and to introduce them to the staff who will serve them.

The SAMHS is working closely with the Department of Military Veterans in order to improve the health care services offered to our military veterans. Special attention is being paid to the streamlining of medical authorization procedures and other administrative issues.

Info: By D PSYC (SAMHS)