



**Department of  
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# **News Release**

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## **VA Secretary Helps Launch The Red Sox Foundation-Massachusetts General Hospital Home Base Program**

WASHINGTON – Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki joined The Red Sox Foundation and Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH) to launch a new initiative to help returning OEF/OIF Veterans suffering from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and traumatic brain injuries and their families.

“The coordination of the Department of Veterans Affairs’ programs with those of other departments and agencies, philanthropic and volunteer organizations, and with world class foundations and volunteer groups, is critically important,” Secretary Shinseki said. “When those efforts include distinguished institutions such as The Red Sox Foundation and Massachusetts General Hospital, Veterans win.”

PTSD is a recognized anxiety disorder that can follow seeing or experiencing an event that involves actual or threatened death or serious injury to which a person responds with intense fear, helplessness or horror, and is not uncommon in war. Feelings of fear, confusion or anger often subside, but if the feelings don't go away or get worse, a Veteran may have PTSD.

“It takes tremendous courage for a Veteran to step forward and ask for help,” says Dr. John A. Parrish, director of Home Base, who served as a medical officer in the Marines Corps during the Vietnam War. “In New England alone, thousands of Veterans of the Iraq and Afghanistan wars who may be in rough shape psychologically avoid treatment because of this stigma.”

VA is a world leader in the research, diagnosis and treatment of PTSD, providing specialized PTSD programs at its medical centers and clinics. In 1989, the Department created the National Center for PTSD, which promotes research, trains health care professionals and serves as an information resource for researchers and clinicians around the world.

“The hidden wounds of war are being addressed vigorously and comprehensively by VA,” Shinseki said “Our ability to increase mental health capacity to serve combat Veterans continues to be a top priority.”

VA Boston Healthcare System will work in coordination with MGH and Spaulding Rehabilitation Hospital to provide high quality patient-centered care and implement a fully integrated system to enhance a comprehensive communication system between program components. They will work with MGH to establish an outreach clinic on the campus of MGH to assist in the coordination of care of OEF/OIF Veterans seen at the MGH.

The program will work to:

- Provide diagnosis and clinical care for OEF/OIF Veterans with PTSD and TBI;
- Offer outreach and support services to families of affected Veterans;
- Conduct innovative research to deepen the understanding of these problems and develop better treatments for them
- Educate community health care providers about the diagnosis and treatment of these complex disorders.

### **VA Boston Healthcare System**

VA Boston Healthcare System (VABHS) provides comprehensive healthcare to more than 65,000 veterans and is the principal medical, surgical, and mental health referral center for veterans from throughout New England. Care is provided at three major campuses in Jamaica Plain, West Roxbury, and Brockton and six community outpatient clinics. The VABHS's comprehensive mental health services for veterans include highly specialized care for PTSD and TBI. The VABHS is home to two divisions of the National Center on Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and a VA Center of Excellence on Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) and PTSD; VABHS investigators have developed two of the most widely used evidence-based treatments for PTSD. The VABHS is strongly affiliated with Harvard Medical School and the Boston University School of Medicine and provides training and research opportunities to over 2500 medical and nursing students, residents, fellows, and allied health professionals. VABHS is home to one of the largest research programs in the national VA system. For more information please go to [www.boston.va.gov](http://www.boston.va.gov)

### **About the Red Sox Foundation**

The philanthropic arm of the Boston Red Sox team, the Red Sox Foundation is committed to using the power of Red Sox Nation to create new and strengthened community partnerships that will improve the lives of children, adults and families across New England. The Foundation's efforts are primarily focused on improving health, educational and recreational opportunities, as well as social service programs in urban neighborhoods. A

501(c)3 nonprofit, the Red Sox Foundation raises most of its funds through special events, donations from supporters and other fundraising activities. Founded and initially funded by the Red Sox and their partners, the Red Sox Foundation has won numerous awards for its innovative programs and impact in the community. For more information please go to [www.redsoxfoundation.org](http://www.redsoxfoundation.org)

### **About Massachusetts General Hospital**

Founded in 1811, Massachusetts General Hospital is the third oldest general hospital in the United States and the oldest and largest teaching hospital of Harvard Medical School. Each year, the 907-bed academic medical center admits nearly 50,000 patients, performs more than 37,000 surgical procedures, delivers more than 3,600 babies and takes care of nearly 1.5 million patients in its extensive outpatient programs and Emergency Department on its main campus as well as in suburban ambulatory care centers and neighborhood health centers. The MGH conducts the largest hospital-based research program in the United States, with an annual research budget of more than \$550 million. In 1994, the MGH, along with Brigham and Women's Hospital, founded Partners HealthCare, an integrated health care delivery system that includes the two founding academic medical centers, community hospitals, primary care and specialty physicians, specialty hospitals, community health centers, nonacute services and other health-related entities. Mass General consistently ranks among the top few hospitals in the nation in the *U.S. News & World Report* best hospital survey, and the MGH was the first hospital in Massachusetts to be designated a Magnet hospital, the highest honor for nursing excellence. For more information please go to [www.mgh.org](http://www.mgh.org)