



## New medical director brings military, geriatric care background to Georgia War Veterans Nursing Home

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**AUGUSTA, Ga.** (March 4, 2021) – Dr. Richard Sams will join Georgia War Veterans Nursing Home as the new medical director. He will replace Dr. Nidhi K. Gulati, who is [retiring at the end of March](#).

“As a veteran, I am thrilled Georgia War is giving me this opportunity. Many of our vets have gone through heck to secure the freedoms we as Americans enjoy,” said Sams. “It will be an honor to join the top-notch team at GWVNH to provide outstanding care to some of America’s war heroes in this challenging season of their lives.”

Sams enlisted in the Navy in 1984, spending three years as an enlisted sailor, then went to Boston University on an NROTC scholarship, receiving a degree in biology. He then attended Boston University School of Medicine on a Navy Armed Forces Health Professions scholarship.

He graduated medical school in 1995, completed a residency at Waukesha Family Practice in Waukesha, Wisconsin, then returned on active duty as a lieutenant in the Medical Corps in the Navy. He was an active duty Navy family physician for the next 19 years, stationed in several places practicing and teaching full spectrum family medicine, including Naval Hospital Guam, NH Camp Pendleton, NH Bremerton, Madigan Army Medical Center, NH Jacksonville, Kings Bay Navy Submarine Base and Mayport Naval Station.

Sams ran a family medicine residency program at NH Jacksonville. He deployed to Iraq in 2003 at the beginning of the war, and to Afghanistan in 2011. He provided care to thousands of military retirees and veterans through the years and has a special interest in geriatrics, bioethics and palliative care. He now teaches regularly on those topics at the Medical College of Georgia at Augusta University.

“We are thrilled to have Dr. Sams join the GWVNH team and looking forward to the positive impact he will make on our veterans, their families and our staff,” said Carlton Deese, executive director of Georgia War. “His geriatric and military background, coupled with his experience in medical training/education, will be essential as he moves into the medical director role. As medical director, Dr. Sams will join the GWVNH leadership team in promoting the tripartite mission of Augusta University. We are very excited about his appointment.”

DOWNLOAD: A photo of [Dr. Sams](#).

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The Georgia War Veterans Nursing Home in Augusta is a 192-bed skilled nursing care facility located adjacent to the campus of Augusta University and the Charlie Norwood Veterans Affairs Medical Center. Georgia War Veterans Nursing Home is operated under an interagency agreement between the Georgia Department of Veterans Service and Augusta University.

Primarily, the facility provides medical, rehabilitation, and skilled nursing services to Georgia's aged and infirm war veterans. Georgia War Veterans Nursing Home also serves as a teaching facility to acquaint medical, dental, pharmacy, and allied health students with the medical conditions and diseases of the aged. This provides students with practical experience and helps them gain expertise in treating the disabled and the elderly.

Also located at the facility is a GDVS Veterans Field Service Office that serves residents of the home and veterans of Richmond and Columbia counties.

Dedicated in 1969, the facility was the first of its kind in the nation to be built with financial grant assistance from the federal government. It is one of a select group of such institutions accredited by the Joint Commission.

In fiscal year 2020, the nursing home provided 51,731 days of care to Georgia's veterans with an average age of 83. During the year, there were 166 admissions and 190 discharges with an average length of stay of 308 days.

Services to patients included 4,470 physical therapy treatments and 6,686 individual occupational therapy procedures.

Veteran patients were treated by a medical director, physician assistant and family medicine residents providing daily physician coverage. Other services were provided by a certified activities therapist and staff, three facility social workers and a staff of registered, licensed practical nurses and certified nursing assistants.

To help provide care and treatment, the federal government, through the Department of Veterans Affairs, provided financial assistance totaling in excess of \$8.2 million during fiscal year 2020.

Throughout the year, veteran service organizations, civic and fraternal organizations and religious groups demonstrated their concern for the well-being of veteran patients through numerous donations, visits, and sponsorship of frequent activities for Georgia War Veterans Nursing Home residents.

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AU Health is Georgia's only public academic health center, where world-class clinicians are bringing the medicine of tomorrow to patient care today. As the primary teaching affiliate of the Medical College of Georgia, AU Health provides the most comprehensive routine-to-complex care at AU Medical Center, which houses the region's only Level 1 trauma center, as well as Children's Hospital of Georgia, historic Roosevelt warm Springs Rehabilitation and Specialty Hospitals, Georgia War Veterans Nursing Home, and more than 100 primary and specialty care clinics across the state.