



Carl Vinson VA Medical Center, 1826 Veterans Blvd., Dublin, GA 31021

# Media Release



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 7, 2024

## VA kicks off Healthy Heart Month with 'Wear Red Day' event

*Dublin, Ga.* — The Dublin VA inaugurated Healthy Heart Month with a “Wear Red Day” recognition and official kickoff event Feb. 2 at the flagpole on its front lawn. The event was designed to heighten awareness of heart health and prevent heart disease, the nation’s leading killer of American adults.

VA Cardiology nurse Vicki Sheppard welcomed attendees and provided some arresting facts about heart disease.

“Heart disease kills one in five American adults with 695,000 dying from heart disease each year and one death every 33 seconds. This is preventable. Educate yourself on the signs and symptoms of heart attack and stroke,” Sheppard said.

After an invocation by VA chaplain Constance Arthur, Women’s Health Clinic Outreach Coordinator Marla Roche introduced keynote speaker Dr. Pam Jackson, the Dublin VA’s Associate Director for Patient Care Services. A nurse with nearly 40 years of experience, Jackson noted that heart disease is a plague that crosses all demographic lines.

“Regardless of race, ethnicity, sex, or any other factor, heart disease and stroke now kill Americans more than any other disease. We’re in this together, and the good news is that with early detection and treatment, we can prevent heart attacks and strokes and not only extend lives but enhance the quality of those lives,” Jackson said.

Veteran and heart attack survivor Russell Thompson, who now works at the Dublin VA as a medical stenographer in Cardiology, told those gathered about his own experience with heart disease, encouraging them to get regular screenings and follow medical advice.

“You can live with heart disease, but you need to learn more about exercise and diet and take your medication. Take care of your heart and your health. I’m standing here today because I listened to the medical folks who cared for me. I have challenges, but I’m still here. Take care of your heart,” Thompson said.

More information on preventing and living with heart disease can be found at [www.heart.org](http://www.heart.org) The Dublin VA encourages those interested in similar events and the latest information about VA programs and services to follow it on Facebook at “Dublin VA Medical Center.”

###

Photos by Greg Swars:

- 1) VA shows heart during Healthy Heart Month
- 2) Veteran and heart attack survivor Thompson encourages everyone to get screened for heart disease
- 3) Swars rises high to get the shot for Wear Red Day

Media Contact:

Dr. Frank G. Jordan Jr., FACHE  
Director, Communications & Public Relations  
Carl Vinson VA Medical Center  
1826 Veterans Blvd., Dublin, Ga. 31021  
478-274-5440 or [Frank.Jordan2@va.gov](mailto:Frank.Jordan2@va.gov)  
Facebook: Dublin VA Medical Center  
[www.dublin.va.gov](http://www.dublin.va.gov)





