

## Who We Are

Progressive and flexible – you'll find your home here at the Grand Island VA. Our residents thrive in our tight-knit pharmacy family. The entire facility becomes invested in the success of our residents; from providers and nurses, to our clerks and pharmacy technicians.

We can't wait to hear from you and continue to introduce you to our programs at the Grand Island VA.

## Connect With Us

2201 N. Broadwell Avenue  
Grand Island, NE 68803

Phone: 308-385-2678

Email: [Lisa.Bilslend@va.gov](mailto:Lisa.Bilslend@va.gov) (RPD)

[Katelynd.Routledge@va.gov](mailto:Katelynd.Routledge@va.gov) (PGY1)

[Amelia.Koster@va.gov](mailto:Amelia.Koster@va.gov) (PGY1)

## Recruiting Events:

Virtual Open House – November 15<sup>th</sup> – 4-5pm CST  
(NWI – Grand Island, Lincoln and Omaha sites)

VA Residency Showcase: December, more information to come  
MidYear Booth 6218 (Tuesday afternoon session)

Please visit our website for more information:

[Pharmacy Residency Programs | VA Nebraska-Western Iowa Health Care](#)  
[| Veterans Affairs](#)

Informational video:

<https://www.facebook.com/NebraskaIowaVA/videos/4773574039341850/>  
[YouTube video](#)

# VA NEBRASKA-WESTERN IOWA HEALTH CARE SYSTEM – GRAND ISLAND

## Pharmacy Residency Programs

ASHP Accredited PGY1 and  
PGY2 – Ambulatory Care



Amelia Koster (PGY1), Katelynd Routledge (PGY1)

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Dear Colleague,



*You've reached another exciting milestone in your pharmacy journey – congratulations! Choosing where to apply for your residency will be one of the most important decisions of your career. It will accelerate your learning and shape the way you will practice for many years to come.*

At the Grand Island VA, we want you to have the information you need to make a confident decision. Though this document provides a general overview of our pharmacy residency program, we will always make ourselves available to answer your questions with greater detail. It's our goal for you to complete your evaluation process with a clear understanding of what it's like to be a pharmacy resident at the Grand Island VA.

We offer two positions in our accredited PGY1 program, as well as a single position in our accredited PGY2 Ambulatory Care residency. We continually refine our programs to provide you with a relevant environment to hone your clinical skills and discover leadership capabilities. We are proud of our pharmacy residency programs' long-standing history and experience and tenure of our leadership and preceptor teams, the thriving careers of residents we have mentored, and our ability to offer employment opportunities within the Nebraska-Western Iowa Health Care system to many of our residents. But our proudest achievement is helping you reach your goals, because **we believe when you succeed, we all succeed.**

As you research the many residency programs available to you, I encourage you to be curious and thoughtful in exploring our Grand Island VA pharmacy residency programs. If you believe Grand Island VA is the right home for you to take the next step in your professional development, we welcome your application. And if you would like to speak to someone who can offer you greater insight about our program, please contact us at [lisa.bilslend@va.gov](mailto:lisa.bilslend@va.gov).

Good luck in your pursuit and welcome to residency!

Best,

Lisa Bilslend, PharmD, BCACP (PGY1/PGY2 Residency Program Director)

# Residency Training at Grand Island VA

Training at Grand Island VA prepares you for any practice setting through opportunities in high volume primary care clinics, subacute care on our Community Living Center (CLC) floor (PGY1s), as well as experience in anticoagulation, leadership/management, project development and mental health.

*You will be guided by clinical experts with years of experience in hands-on instruction.*

## A HISTORY OF EXCELLENCE

- PGY1 program was established in 2005 – reaccredited in 2017 for an additional 8 years
- New PGY2 residency in Ambulatory Care established in 2019 and achieved 8 years of accreditation in 2020
- The RPD meets with residents monthly (as a group) and quarterly on an individual basis to assess resident progress, interests and goals. The well-rounded programs are comprehensive and flexible to match the career goals of each resident. Of the over 40 graduates of the GIVA programs, residents have entered almost every avenue that pharmacy offers – the majority working within the VA or non-VA clinical positions.

# Our Culture of Continuous Improvement



***Both of our residency programs are firmly rooted in ASHP accreditation standards with the goal of maintaining continual state of accreditation readiness***

We regularly evaluate and improve our alignment with ASHP through self-assessment, leadership team review, comments and guidance from ASHP accreditation surveyors and most importantly, the feedback of our residents and graduates

## HOW YOU BENEFIT

- You have a voice in enhancing our programs
- When new needs arise, we expand or refine the scope of our programs to support your growth
- You have the flexibility to design and execute rotations outside of the Grand Island VA (within the rest of the healthcare system) to round out the specific experience you desire
- Our leadership team and preceptors share a commitment to learning and constantly pursue development opportunities to serve you better

# About Us: VA Nebraska-Western Iowa Health Care System

NWI is an integrated health care system with multi-campus clinics available for veterans across the state of Nebraska and communities in western Iowa and northern Kansas. Our medical center in Omaha is an inpatient facility with multiple specialty clinics. Lincoln is exclusively outpatient clinics. At the Grand Island Medical Center, we have outpatient clinics, a few specialties, subacute inpatient care, as well as and residential 30-day substance abuse treatment program.

Across the healthcare system, we have satellite locations providing outpatient services in North Platte, Holdrege, Norfolk, Bellevue and Shenandoah, IA.

Connect with the Residency Directors:

- Michaela Hrdy, Omaha VA ([Michaela.hrdy@va.gov](mailto:Michaela.hrdy@va.gov))
- Veronica Kuhlmann, Lincoln VA ([veronica.kuhlman@va.gov](mailto:veronica.kuhlman@va.gov))
- Lisa Bilisend, Grand Island VA ([lisa.bilisend@va.gov](mailto:lisa.bilisend@va.gov))

VA Nebraska-Western Iowa Health Care System  
Service Area

The map shows the service area covering parts of Nebraska, Iowa, and Kansas. Locations marked include North Platte, Holdrege, Grand Island, Lincoln, Omaha, Norfolk, Bellevue, and Shenandoah.

Omaha VA Medical Center

Lincoln VA CBOC

Grand Island VA Medical Center

## VA NWI Residency Programs

During the residency year, not only will Grand Island residents work together, residents also have the opportunity to work with PGY1 residents from the other campuses within VA NWI. This collaboration and networking provides residents with more peers to lean on during this year of ongoing learning/training. Residents will have quarterly meetings with the leadership team, quarterly socials (as available) and team up on monthly presentations to the pharmacy department across all campuses.

Omaha VA: 4 PGY1 positions

Lincoln VA: 2 PGY1 positions

## ASHP Program Purpose Statements

### PGY1 PROGRAM PURPOSE

The PGY1 pharmacy residency program builds on Doctor of Pharmacy (PharmD) education and outcomes to contribute to the development of clinical pharmacists who are responsible for medication-related care, eligible for board certification, and eligible for postgraduate year two (PGY2) pharmacy residency training.

### PGY2 PROGRAM PURPOSE

PGY2 pharmacy residency programs build on Doctor of Pharmacy (PharmD) education and PGY1 pharmacy residency programs to contribute to the development of clinical pharmacists in specialized areas of practice. PGY2 residencies also provide residents with opportunities to function independently as practitioners in patient care and advanced practice settings. Residents who successfully complete an accredited PGY2 pharmacy residency are prepared for advanced patient care, academic, or other specialized positions, along with board certification, if available

## Clinical Pharmacy - Grand Island VA

### Ambulatory Care (primary care, mental health & anticoagulation)

Residents will gain experience working in a fast-paced clinic environment with close relationships with primary care providers. On average 8-14 patients per day are scheduled in each primary care and outpatient mental health pharmacy clinics. Despite Covid, we have maintained a large volume of face-to-face patients and typically see about 60% of our patients face-to-face, which provides a unique learning experience for our residents.

*Given our rural practice, our providers look to the clinical pharmacy team for the latest information from clinical trials and actively seek input from the pharmacy team in managing chronic diseases*

*Here in Grand Island, we stretch the limits of our general scope of practice and routinely manage diabetes, hypertension, hyperlipidemia, congestive heart failure, hypothyroidism, gout, COPD, mental health, polypharmacy and many other chronic diseases.*

### Community Living Center – Sub-Acute Care (PGY1s only)

PGY1 residents will complete at least two rotations on our 3rd floor Community Living Center (CLC). Veterans on the CLC admit for a variety of reasons, from post-op rehab to wound treatment and IV antibiotics, to longer-term rehab and end of life hospice care. This provides our residents with an abundance of experiences in chronic disease management, as well as taking care of some of the more acute care needs for this diverse population. Residents will round 1-2 times per day with the physician and are provided graduated levels of responsibility to provide pharmacy services to the floor. In addition, residents will help with the monthly Drug Regimen Reviews and participate in several interdisciplinary team meetings.

*Advanced clinical services are provided by pharmacists throughout the GIVA. Our VA is primarily an ambulatory care setting with a CLC/sub-acute care unit.*

## Our Residency Graduates

### PGY1 (44 graduates)

- 23 are working in the VA healthcare system (ambulatory care pharmacists in PACT, inpatient and outpatient pharmacy, pharmacy managers, RPDs, CLC pharmacists and home-based primary care)
- 1 is working for Indian Health Services
- 16 former residents have taken non-VA clinical positions ranging from ambulatory care, to 50:50 faculty members, RPDs, inpatient clinical coordinators, pharmacoeconomics (PBM), inpatient infectious disease, oncology specialist
- 4 former residents are working in a variety of other positions

### PGY2

Our PGY2 graduates are Clinical Pharmacist Specialists, practicing within the VA.

- Pain/Whole Health – Omaha VA (NWI)
- PACT – Battlecreek, MI VA CBOC
- PACT – Grand Island VA (NWI)



# GIVA PGY1 Residency

Required Rotations	Elective Opportunities x5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Orientation (2 weeks)</li> <li>• Pharmacy Operations</li> <li>• Anticoagulation</li> <li>• PACT 1,2</li> <li>• CLC 1,2</li> <li>• Pharmacy Management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Academia<sup>δ</sup> (non-VA)</li> <li>• Academic Detailing</li> <li>• Acute Care (non-VA)</li> <li>• Cardiology<sup>δ</sup></li> <li>• Home-Based Primary Care</li> <li>• Inpatient Mental Health<sup>δ</sup></li> <li>• Medication/Patient Safety</li> <li>• Outpatient Mental Health</li> <li>• Pain/Whole Health</li> <li>• Rural Amb Care (North Platte CBOC)</li> <li>• Additional Experiences in: Anticoagulation, CLC, PACT, Pharmacy Operations</li> </ul> <p>Teaching certificate (online) is available</p> <p><sup>δ</sup>Omaha (housing is not provided)</p>
<b>Longitudinal Experiences</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drug Information</li> <li>• Pharmacy Operations (longitudinal)               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Every other Friday: 8-4:30 + weekly assignments (~2-3 hours/week)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Residency Project (inverse research model)</li> <li>• Professional Growth and Development</li> <li>• Mentorship</li> </ul>	

The PGY1 year is designed to provide residents with a general experience throughout the entire landscape of pharmacy service. While the Grand Island VA is an ambulatory care setting with some sub-acute care/long-term care experiences, we pride our program on developing residents who can enter into any avenue of pharmacy practice, including early commitment to our PGY2 Ambulatory Care program if interested.

# NWI PGY2 Residency

Required Experiences	Elective Opportunities (x6)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Orientation (2 weeks)</li> <li>• Pain and Whole Health clinic</li> <li>• Specialty Rotation (cardio,<sup>δ</sup> mental health, endocrine/weight management<sup>δ</sup>)</li> <li>• Anticoagulation (if PGY1 completed outside of NWI)</li> </ul> <p>Longitudinally:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PACT (5 months)</li> <li>• Endocrine Hub</li> <li>• Residency Project</li> <li>• Leadership and Practice Advancement</li> </ul> <p><sup>δ</sup>Omaha – housing is not available  <sup>‡</sup>housing subject to availability</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Academia<sup>δ</sup></li> <li>• Academic Detailing</li> <li>• Anticoagulation</li> <li>• Cardiology/CHF Clinic<sup>δ</sup></li> <li>• Clinical Services Management</li> <li>• Endocrinology/ Weight Management Clinic<sup>δ</sup></li> <li>• Geriatrics and Home-Based Primary Care<sup>δ</sup></li> <li>• Mental Health</li> <li>• Pain/Whole Health Clinic</li> <li>• Pharmacy Administration</li> <li>• Residency Management</li> <li>• Rural Ambulatory Care<sup>‡</sup> (North Platte CBOC)</li> </ul>

Grand Island serves as the primary campus (home-site) for the PGY2 program, however many of the elective experiences are offered at our Omaha VA location or virtually.

The primary care clinics in Grand Island are robust and progressive. The volume of patients and the variety of disease states managed by the pharmacists are unmatched within our healthcare system. Residents will gain valuable experiences in longitudinal management of core disease states in the PACT clinics, as well as in anticoagulation and required specialty rotation. Residents will hone their precepting skills as they mentor PGY1s and coordinate the APPE Student Forum Series (monthly). In addition, PGY2 residents will precept APPE students in the PACT clinical setting.

## Admission Requirements

Grand Island VA residency programs are available to PharmD graduates of ACPE-accredited colleges of pharmacy. Interview consideration requires:

- U.S. Citizenship, fluent in English language
- Letter of Intent<sup>€</sup>
- Curriculum Vitae
- Three standard reference forms in PhORCAS
- Official College of Pharmacy transcripts
- Eligible for licensure in any of the 50 US states or the District of Columbia – licensure by October 15<sup>th</sup>

<sup>€</sup>LOI should include your short/long-term goals, strengths, interests, areas you plan to work on and why the GIVA is a good match

### Additional Requirements for PGY2 Applicants\*

- Enrolled in or graduate of ASHP-accredited or candidate-status PGY1 pharmacy residency
- Completion of at least one ambulatory care/primary care rotation during PGY1 (prior to application submission)
- PGY1 RPD must be one of the three reference writers
- Supplemental Material: PDF of PharmAcademic summative evaluation from ambulatory care/primary care rotation

\*NWI PGY1 residents are eligible for early commitment to the PGY2 program (application is completed outside of PhORCAS)

Application Deadline: January 10 - Interview Notification: February 1

## Benefits

- Stipend (\$41,742-PGY1 -- \$45,221-PGY2)
- Comprehensive health benefits package
- 11 Federal holidays
- 13 days annual leave, 13 days sick leave
- Travel assistance to regional conference and ASHP MidYear (as available)

## Grand Island VA a great place to start your career



- 1<sup>st</sup> floor: Primary Care Clinics (PACT) – 9 providers, 3 RPs
- 2<sup>nd</sup> floor: Specialty Clinics:
  - Ortho, dental, eye, urology, dermatology, foot/wound, spinal cord injury, respiratory, EKG, physical therapy
- 3<sup>rd</sup> floor: Community Living Center (CLC): census 20-40
  - Hospice, palliative care
  - Sub-acute care and rehab
- 4<sup>th</sup> floor: Mental Health (MH) & Residential Substance Abuse Treatment Program
- Home-Based Primary Care (HBPC)
- Pharmacy Team
  - 2 MH, 3 PACT, 1 CLC, 1 Anticoag, 1 CBOC RP
  - 4 staff RPs, 1 manager, 5 technicians

**We are a smaller community, with traditional Midwest values and a close-knit feel in our program. We get to know our residents as family and are truly invested in your future!**