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Improving access to specialty care with VA Video Connect

“I’m receiving the best possible care”

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Army and Navy Veteran Kenneth Turner recently lost his right leg to diabetes. As part of his recovery and rehabilitation, he was able to use VA Video Connect to see a physiatrist at the Dallas VA Medical Center.

Turner would have had to travel to Dallas if not for VA Video Connect. Katy Price, a physical therapist, assisted Turner during his appointment. In addition, she provided updates to the physiatrist on Turner’s physical therapy and overall progress. She also helped manage the technology that made the visit possible.

West Texas VA relies on community care for much of the prosthetics needs of its Veterans.

With a collaboration between the West Texas VA Health Care System, the VA North Texas Health Care System and VA Video Connect, Veterans enjoy greater access to care from VA providers without having to make the four-hour drive to Dallas.

“Changed my treatment experience”

Turner was the first West Texas Veteran to receive specialized care using VA Video Connect and benefit from North Texas’ array of specialists.

“This has changed my treatment experience. Having a provider available for me in the comfort of my local VA,” said Turner. “The video connection made it easy to see my provider. I was able to walk and demonstrate how well I have been doing working with my physical therapists.”

Turner has been receiving care from VA for more than a year. Originally a patient of North Texas VA, Turner moved to Big Spring, Texas, to be closer to his daughter, and now receives care there.

“When Veterans need repairs or a new prosthesis, we had to rely on community providers.” said Katherine Price, West Texas VA physical therapist. “Working with Dallas VA has given our Veterans better access to care.”

Video Connect lets Veterans connect from any device that has an internet connection via desktop, smartphone or tablet. Veterans can connect with their provider from home, work or wherever they may be.

“Since telehealth has been implemented, Veterans are getting a better overall experience. This is true when it comes to prosthesis. Also with the ability to be seen by VA providers who work with specifically with Veterans,” said Price.

“I’m grateful I didn’t have to travel to make this appointment. I like being able to discuss my rehab with all the professionals in one place. Having the doctor in the room with me makes me feel like I’m receiving the best possible care,” said Turner.

Kelli Kay Stolle is a communications specialist with the West Texas VA Health Care System.

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