

VFW Commander-in-Chief Tours New Orleans VA Facility

The \$1 billion facility features round-the-clock visiting hours and specialized care sections

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VFW Commander-in-Chief Brian Duffy received a tour of the newly opened VA medical center in New Orleans on a recent trip. Damaged by Hurricane Katrina in 2005, the previous New Orleans VA hospital had to be rebuilt. Now located on Canal Street, the \$1 billion facility features round-the-clock visiting hours, and specialized care sections such as an eye clinic and a dental



center.

Fernando Rivera, director of the Southeast Louisiana Veterans Health Care System, showed Duffy around the hospital, which officially opened in November. Though not fully operational, it currently accepts outpatients. The medical center's other services will be rolled out over the course of the next couple of months, with the Patient Education Resource Center being the last accommodation to open on Feb. 20.

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Hospital officials will work closely with Tulane and Louisiana State universities on medical research. The 1.7 million square-foot facility is expected to employ 2,800 people, including more than 200 doctors.

For more information on the facility, visit www.neworleans.va.gov.

Story and photos by Kari Williams, editorial associate, *VFW* magazine