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## Tuscaloosa VA gets five new mental health providers | News

### Title (Max 100 Charaters)

Tuscaloosa VA gets five new mental health providers

Submitted by [Kelvin Reynolds](#) ([profile/89716/kelvin-reynolds](#)), Fox 6 News Reporter, Tuscaloosa Bureau  
Monday, June 18th, 2012, 5:24pm

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A scene from the ribbon-cutting ceremony at the new Tuscaloosa VA women's spa. Source: WBRC video

TUSCALOOSA, AL (WBRC)- Eleanor Matthews helped cut the ribbon to a new women's spa for Tuscaloosa's VA Medical Center Monday.

She's been in West Alabama for more than a month, but it hasn't been for back rubs and foot massages.

"We have PTSD and well our PTSD is normally different from the male PTSD and this hospital, it has the programs and the tools and skills to address all these needs," Matthews said.

In time, it should have many more mental health workers too. The Department of Veterans Affairs wants to make mental health care more available to returning vets. It's pushing to hire more than 1,600 additional mental health providers. In Tuscaloosa, five more people will be hired to the mental health staff to treat veterans returning from Iraq and Afghanistan.

According to Rebecca Meyers, Associate Chief Nurse for Mental Health at Tuscaloosa VA Medical Center, two of five new personnel have already been hired.

"By adding these five people, they can work in an integrated team, in order to supply all the therapy, evidence based therapy that our veterans need," Meyers

said.

"When they return, we want to be proactive and make sure we have the resources and staff available to treat their needs," Damon Stevenson, a spokesman for Tuscaloosa's VA, said.

Meyers adds, the Department of Veterans Affairs wants all new 1,600 hires in place by September 30.

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