



# VISN 6 Mid-Atlantic MIRECC Post Deployment Mental Health

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## In the News!



## Mental Health Innovations

Updates from VA's Specialized Mental Health Centers

RESEARCH

Improving Quality

EDUCATION

Changing Practice

CLINICAL CARE

Smoking Cessation

### Transforming Care through the Implementation of Evidence-Based Practices

Several projects from our MIRECC were featured in the latest issue!

[www.mirecc.va.gov/newsletter/current.asp](http://www.mirecc.va.gov/newsletter/current.asp)

## Updates on the MIRECC Fellowship Program Welcome to our new Fellows!



**Lillian Flores Stevens, Ph.D.** is the new MIRECC Fellow at our Richmond VAMC site. She received a BS in Psychology from the College of Charleston in SC, a MA in Psychology from the University of Richmond and a PhD in Clinical Psychology from Virginia Commonwealth University. She completed her internship at the Richmond VAMC in 2010 and recently finished a NIDRR-funded Advanced Rehabilitation Research Training postdoctoral fellowship at Virginia Commonwealth University. Lillian's

research interests include examining racial and ethnic minority differences in rehabilitation, as well as family adjustment to traumatic brain injury. Her clinical focus has been on traumatic brain injury rehabilitation. Her first fellowship concentrated on a civilian population and she is excited about extending her research to returning Veterans. Lillian is originally from Honduras and speaks Spanish fluently. Outside of work, she enjoys spending time with family and friends, cheering for VCU RAMS basketball, traveling, and playing guitar.



**Cory Lamar, MD** is the new MIRECC Fellow at the Salisbury VAMC site. He received a BS in Microbiology from Florida Atlantic University and obtained his medical degree from Meharry Medical College in Nashville, TN. He completed his medical internship and neurology residency followed by a neurophysiology fellowship (EEG/Epilepsy pathway) at Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center. Cory's clinical focus is general neurology with special emphasis on veteran's with epilepsy. Cory's research interests include the role of biomarkers and inflammation in TBI

and post-traumatic epilepsy. In his spare time Cory enjoys watching NBA basketball and is a huge fan of the Miami Heat.

continued on page 2

## Approved Research Sites & Contacts:

**Durham VA**  
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## Updates on the MIRECC Fellowship Program

continued from page 1



**Jessica J. Fulton, PhD** is the incoming MIRECC Postdoctoral Fellow at our Durham VAMC site. She earned her BS in Psychology at Mississippi State University and her MA and PhD in Clinical Psychology at The University of Southern Mississippi. Jessica completed her pre-doctoral internship in Clinical Psychology at Durham VAMC. Her research interests focus on two main areas. One is the factors that

may influence mental health treatment outcomes, such as barriers to care, stigma, social support, personality traits, and chronic medical conditions. The other is the psychological and behavioral mechanisms that may underlie the links between PTSD and adverse physical health outcomes. Jessica looks forward to continuing her clinical work with Veterans while also conducting research that informs current treatment efforts and results in practical benefits for both Veterans and VA healthcare providers during her fellowship.

### Transitions

We wish the best of luck to MIRECC Fellows moving on to new positions. **Dr. Nagy Youssef** finished up his 3rd fellowship year at our Durham site and accepted a full-time faculty position at Duke University. He looks forward to continuing to collaborate with the MIRECC on ongoing and future projects. **Dr. Jeff Jaeger** completed his fellowship at our Durham site and will be starting his new full-time clinical faculty position at the University of Iowa. **Dr. Jared Rowland** completed his fellowship at our Salisbury site and will be starting his new full-time position as the Salisbury site's MIRECC research psychologist. In addition to his duties in that position, he intends to continue his on-going magnetoencephalography study and to submit for a VA career development award.

### South Central MIRECC CBOC Mental Health Rounds

**September 12 from 9-10 am ET**

**Engaging Families in Recovery: Practical Tips**

**Leigh Ann Johnson, LCSW**

**You must register in TMS for this session by September 11 to receive credit. Please use the link below to register for this program.**

[https://www.tms.va.gov/plateau/user/deeplink\\_redirect.jsp?linkId=REGISTRATION&scheduleID=2293686](https://www.tms.va.gov/plateau/user/deeplink_redirect.jsp?linkId=REGISTRATION&scheduleID=2293686)

**October 10 Providing MST Care in Rural Areas**

**November 14 Military Culture**

**December 12 Brief Intervention for Veterans with Alcohol-Use Problem**

Contact Dr. Geri Adler with any questions:  
geri.adler@va.gov or 713-794-8660

### Book Chapters

**Williams, JW, Jr, Nieuwsma, JA.** *Depressed mood.* In: Henderson MC, L.M. Tierney Jr LM, Smetana GE (eds). *The patient history: An evidence-based approach to differential diagnosis* 2nd Edition. New York: McGraw-Hill 2012: 663-671.

## New Resources for Providers



EES has collaborated with the DOD Military Health System's **health.mil** site to distribute hundreds of training courses by members of the Federal Healthcare Training Partnership.

**VHA employees** should access these trainings through TMS to ensure that credit is received.

### June Grand Rounds: *Windows to the Brain: Neuropsychiatry of TBI*

[vaww.sites.lrn.va.gov/vacatalog/cu\\_detail.asp?id=30626](http://vaww.sites.lrn.va.gov/vacatalog/cu_detail.asp?id=30626)

**Speaker: Dr. Robin Hurley**, Neuropsychiatrist & MIRECC Associate Director - Education

**Description:** This on-demand video presentation focuses on the neuroanatomical circuits of memory, mood, behavior and the physical factors of injury that can predict symptom presentation. The best strategies to assess and treat common post-deployment symptoms are reviewed from the neuropsychiatric viewpoint. The presenter also highlights the VHA's Polytrauma System of Care, Clinical Practice Guidelines and Consensus Conference findings for treating TBI and co-morbidities. In addition, the presenter discusses ongoing VISN 6 Mental Illness Research Education and Clinical Center research projects that are furthering the understanding of brain circuitry.

**Audience:** Physicians, nurses, physician assistants, psychologists, social workers, counselors, mental health clinicians and clinicians involved in the care of Wounded Warriors and/or Veterans

## Journal Articles

Elbogen EB, Johnson SC, Wagner HR, Newton VM, Beckham JC. *Financial well-being and postdeployment adjustment among Iraq and Afghanistan war veterans.* *Military Medicine.* 2012;177(6):669-75.

Elbogen EB, Johnson SC, Wagner HR, Newton VM, Timko C, Vasterling JJ, Beckham JC. *Protective factors and risk modification of violence in Iraq and Afghanistan war veterans.* *J Clinical Psychiatry.* 2012;73(6):e767-73.

Kays JL, Hurley RA, Taber KH. *The Dynamic Brain: Neuroplasticity and Mental Health.* *J Neuropsychiatry and Clinical Neuroscience* 2012; 24(2): iv, 119-124.

Nieuwsma JA, Trivedi RB, McDuffie J, Kronish I, Benjamin D, Williams, JW Jr. *Brief psychotherapy for depression: A systematic review and meta-analysis.* *International J Psychiatry in Medicine* 2012; 43:129-151.

## Program Update Engaging Chaplains in MH Care Bridging Chaplaincy and Mental Health Care Conference



July 12-13, Boston MA  
Approximately 40 chaplains, mental health providers and community clergy attended this conference.



### **Outreach to Providers: Group Supervision for Clinicians Listening to Trauma Histories**

Therapists treating PTSD often find themselves in parallel turmoil, as they react to the patient's inner and outer worlds. Good clinical supervision is essential. In addition to receiving guidance and support from an experienced colleague, having the opportunity to share one's often turbulent emotions and learning how these can be used to better understand the case are also important.

**Facilitator:** Dr. Harold Kudler, Psychiatrist & MIRECC Associate Director - Clinical

**Purpose:** Assist presenter in processing a case that is particularly disturbing and hard to let go of.

**Audience:** Trauma clinicians and staff who routinely hear disturbing trauma histories

**Objectives:** As a result of participating, the attendee will be able to:

- Develop new personal and professional strategies and new clinical understanding;
- Recognize the potential effects of trauma narratives on therapists and staff;
- Identify the importance of on-going clinical supervision in work with trauma

**Upcoming sessions:** September 12 October 10 November 21 December 19

Participation available in person (Durham VA) or by audio-teleconferencing. Register to participate or present a case at an upcoming session by contacting Harold Kudler (harold.kudler@va.gov; 919-286-0411 ext 7021).

### ★ Free ★ Web Courses for Providers *Treating the Invisible Wounds of War* [www.aheconnect.com/citizensoldier](http://www.aheconnect.com/citizensoldier)

Click on **New Users** to register. You will then see the available web courses listed:

- 1 - *Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (english & spanish editions)*
- 2 - *A Primary Care Approach*
- 3 - *Issues of Women Returning from Combat*
- 4 - *Recognizing the Signs of mTBI during Routine Eye Examinations*

These courses were developed by MIRECC faculty in collaboration with Citizen Soldier Support Program (CSSP) and North Carolina Area Health Education Center (NC AHEC). They are designed to help primary care physicians, case workers, mental health providers - who may see a veteran or family member on an unrelated issue - develop a better understanding of the culture in which veterans and their families live and work, and provide best practices for identifying, assessing and treating mental health problems that result from the trauma of war.

#### Noon V-tel Lecture Schedule:

##### September 14

Sean Barnes, PhD, VISN 19 MIRECC & Denver VAMC  
*Mental Health Safety Planning with Veterans and Military Personnel*

This series is presented by V-tel and audio conferences. We are having increasing participation from sites outside VISN 6, so our assigned numbers may change. The number that each VISN 6 site will use to dial in will be included in an email notification prior to each presentation. If you wish to attend from a site outside of VISN 6, please contact Mary Peoples (mary.peoples1@va.gov; 704-638-9000 ext 2956).

#### Educational Resources from the TBI Model Systems Carolinas Site

**Heads Up** - *An Ounce of Prevention*

**Heads Up** - *Fatigue*

**Heads Up** - *Irritability*

**Heads Up** - *Plans for the Future*

**Heads Up** - *Wake Up Call (Sleep Disturbances after TBI)*

<http://www.carolinashealthcare.org/carolinas-rehab-heads-up-educational-resources>

Visit our web site for more resources

<http://www.mirecc.va.gov/visn6.asp>