Dr. Geri Adler Retiring from VA

Dr. Geri Adler, the SC MIRECC Assistant Director for Education, retires from the VA this month. Dr. Adler received a BS in rural sociology from the University of Wisconsin, and an MSW and PhD in social work from the University of Minnesota. Dr. Adler began her VA career in 1986 at the Minneapolis VA Medical Center. She worked as a surgical social worker for two years before joining the Geriatric Research, Education and Clinical Center (GRECC).

During her tenure at GRECC, she supervised almost 20 MSW and gerontology interns and began her career-long interest in dementia care, especially as it relates to driving decision-making.

See RETIREMENT on page 2

Clinical Education Product Highlight: Self-Help Resources for Veterans

SC MIRECC has several free self-help resources for Veterans and families on topics such as reintegration, anxiety, medication, and wellness. To access these products, visit http://www.mirecc.va.gov/visn16/new_and_featured_products.asp. Featured products include:

Delirium: What Families Need to Know. This brochure is intended to help families and caregivers of Veterans understand and manage sudden changes in thinking or behavior in loved ones. This brochure
After completing her PhD, Dr. Adler left the VA for the University of South Carolina (USC) where she was the Director of the Center for Gerontology. From there, she joined the social work faculty at the University of Houston. In 2010, Dr. Adler began working at the SC MIRECC in the Education Core as a research health scientist. In this role, she developed training for providers in the SC MIRECC coverage area, directed the national CBOC Mental Health Rounds, and co-coordinated the Clinical Educator Grant program. She was named the Assistant Director for Education in 2015.

Dr. Adler has served on numerous VHA national committees, including the VA Office of Geriatrics and Extended Care (GEC) Dementia Education and Training Committee (Member [2013-present] and Co-Chair), the GEC Dementia Driving Safety Workgroup (2015-present), the GEC Dementia Warning Signs Workgroup (2009-2011), and the Office of the Medical Inspector Dementia Safety Workgroup (2001-2004).

Dr. Adler also has faculty appointments at the Baylor
College of Medicine in the Menninger Department of Psychiatry & Behavioral Sciences (Associate Professor) and the Huffington Center on Aging (Faculty Associate). Dr. Adler’s work has garnered many honors and recognition. Over the years, she has received the Baylor COM Fulbright & Jaworski LLP Faculty Excellence Award for Educational Leadership (2016), was a John A. Hartford Foundation Faculty Scholar (2004-2007), won a Karolinska Institute New Researcher Award (2000), and has received several VA Special Contribution Awards.

The SC MIRECC thanks Dr. Adler for her service to the center and the VA. We wish her well in the next phase of her life.

VISN 16 and 17 Health Care Providers Have Until August 4 to Submit a Clinical Educator Grant Application

VISN 16 and 17 providers are invited to submit an application for the fiscal year 2018 SC MIRECC Clinical Educator Grants program. Applications are due August 4 and projects will be selected in early September.

These grants (up to $10,000 for multi-site projects) help providers in the SC MIRECC service area (VISNs 16 and 17) develop innovative clinical education tools that benefit the mental healthcare of rural and other underserved Veterans. We are especially interested in funding projects that involve collaborations between medical centers and community-based outpatient clinics (CBOCs).

Past projects include a video on provider communication, a chronic pain pocket guide, and a manual on suicide safety planning for older Veterans. Products made through this program are available to all providers and the public for free on our website.

Contact Dr. Geri Adler at Geri.Adler@va.gov with questions about the Clinical Educator Grants program until July 20. Submit your application (or questions after July 20) to VISN16SCMIRECCEducation@va.gov. Download the application, instructions and examples, and view our inventory for inspiration at https://www.mirecc.va.gov/visn16/education.asp.

Attribution: Acknowledgement of SC MIRECC Research Support/Employment

SC MIRECC researchers and educators have a responsibility to ensure SC MIRECC receives proper credit for SC MIRECC-supported studies or projects in articles, presentations, interviews, and other professional activities in which the results of those projects are publicized or recognized. All investigators should credit SC MIRECC if they receive either direct or indirect SC MIRECC support. For example, "This work was supported in part by the VA South Central Mental Illness Research, Education and Clinical Center." If you receive salary support from SC MIRECC, you should list SC MIRECC as an affiliation.
SELF-HELP (continued from page 1)

explores the definition of delirium, risk factors for developing delirium, symptoms, how clinicians manage delirium when it develops, and tips for helping loved ones who are experiencing delirium.

**Discontinuing Your Medication for Depression Patient Brochure.** This brief take-home guide is for patients who are discontinuing their antidepressants. Content covers withdrawal symptoms and warnings of signs of returning depression.

**LifeGuard—Operation: Coming Home.** This website gives returning Veterans and their family members an opportunity to experience five skills that help them respond to the thoughts, feelings, and memories that occur on a daily basis after deployment. This resource helps Veterans reintegrate into their communities and families.

**Self-Help STOP WORRY: A Tool for Older Veterans Clinician’s Guide and Workbook.** This clinician guide and self-help patient workbook provide a user-friendly, guided cognitive behavioral treatment of generalized anxiety disorder for Veterans 60 years of age or older who experience high levels of worry and anxiety. The program is designed to be delivered in an individualized setting and includes eight different treatment components, each covered in a 45-minute session. The self-help workbook contains practice exercises and forms to monitor progress. The workbook may be used independently or as a component of formal treatment.

**Walking to Wellness: Exercise for Physical and Emotional Health.** This manual is designed for adults experiencing mild to moderate stress, anxiety or depression symptoms and emphasizes using activity for emotional wellness. It includes a participant workbook and a facilitator manual for health care providers. The workbook can be used alone as a self-help guide. It includes tip sheets that outline basic information about exercise and its benefits, worksheets to plan activity, and personal logs to record experiences.
Announcements

New Orleans Anchor Site Welcomed SC MIRECC Director for Visit in June

The SC MIRECC Director, Dr. Mark Kunik, visited the New Orleans anchor site in June to meet with local research and affiliate university leadership and anchor site leadership and investigators. Dr. Laurel Franklin, the Anchor Site Leader, hosted a small celebration for the SC MIRECC and provided the following photos from the event.
Recent SC MIRECC Publications

Training Substance Use Disorder Counselors in Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Depression: Development and Initial Exploration of an Online Training Program


Journal of Substance Abuse Treatment, 2015, 58, 33-42

Problem Addressed by Study

Evidence based psychotherapies (EBPs) remain underutilized. Models for EBP training and implementation that are cost-effective, minimally disruptive, and sufficiently flexible are needed. Internet-based technology is a promising platform, but questions remain about how this technology can address the barriers to implementation. We developed and examined the implementation of an online training for the Building Recovery by Improving Goals, Habits, and Thoughts (BRIGHT) intervention—a manualized, 16-session group depression treatment for individuals with substance use disorders (SUDs). We explored the feasibility of replacing in-person BRIGHT training with a self-paced, online training. We performed semi-structured qualitative interviews with 8 counselors across 7 VA SUD programs who volunteered to do the training and subsequently implement the group therapy.

Results of the Study

The most important barrier to completing training was a lack of protected time. Most counselors were not afforded protected time and reported a sometimes frustrating and fragmented training experience. Many used personal time at work and at home to complete the work. Facilitators to completing the training included positive reactions/attitudes towards the training modules, supervisor support, counselor dedication, and strong beliefs supporting providing services for depression. Many counselors were also concerned about the feasibility of fitting 16 group sessions (2 hours each) into their program's clinical schedule, but many had devised potential solutions or "work-arounds" to accommodate or approximate the recommended treatment course (e.g., using lunch times, reducing some content/exercises).

Implications and Impact of the Study

The goals of this manuscript were twofold — to describe our iterative process as a potential model for developing online trainings and supervision plans for evidence based practices (EBPs), and to present results from the training phase of our pilot project. Our iterative developmental process was based on instructional design principles. While complex and time consuming, the process appears to have resulted in a training experience that is responsive to end-user needs and satisfactory to most users in our study. Our results further support previous work showing that online training can address convenience and time constraints of EBP training and can increase the number of trainees without significant increases in training resources.
Mental Health Resources

Guide Helps Veterans and Families Understand Mental Health Care Services Provided by VA

The "Guide to VA Mental Health Services for Veterans & Families" was created in 2011 by the SC MIRECC as an accessible translation of the VA Uniform Mental Health Services Handbook. The Guide has been extremely popular. This version was updated in 2012 by VA Central Office as an expansion of the original.

Visit https://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/ and select the "Most Downloaded" tab at the bottom of the page to download the Guide.

NCPTSD Offers Short Videos About PTSD Treatment

The VA National Center for PTSD (NCPTSD) has a selection of short animated videos to teach Veterans, their families, and the general public about PTSD and effective treatments. The videos can be accessed at https://www.ptsd.va.gov/public/materials/videos/whiteboards.asp.

Additionally, videos on prescribing for PTSD are available for clinicians at https://www.ptsd.va.gov/professional/materials/videos/index.asp.
CBOC Mental Health Rounds

Staying Safe Part 2: Managing Disruptive Behavior

Edward Dubois and Danny J. McCamley
VA Office of Security & Law Enforcement

Wednesday, July 12 at 8:00-9:00 am CT or Thursday, July 13 at 11:00-12:00 pm CT

Registration: Click below to register for this training in TMS. Be sure to click "Register Now" and NOT "Assign to Me" in TMS. Selecting "Assign to Me" will only add this training to your learning plan and not register you for CEU.

Click here to register in VA TMS

About the Topic: At the conclusion of this program, learners will be able to list at least two activities VA Police do to improve CBOC safety; discuss at least two ways to assess your surroundings for unsafe situations; describe at least two critical-thinking elements to plan your reactions to incidents; list at least three personal security best practices in a CBOC or outpatient clinic setting; and discuss two ways CBOC staff can work cooperatively to improve CBOC or outpatient clinic security.

Audio: Call 1-800-767-1750 and use access code 37009#

Visual: Join Adobe Connect through VA TMS

Contact: Ashley.McDaniel@va.gov

Learn more about SC MIRECC by visiting https://www.mirecc.va.gov/visn16/index.asp