Focus on the VISN

*Increasing Access to Smoking Cessation Treatment for Veterans with Mental Health and Substance Use Disorders: A Workshop on Systems-level Approaches*

Dr. Jean Beckahm (MIRECC Co-Associate Director, Research) serves on the Planning Committee and as faculty for this workshop, which is sponsored by VHA Tobacco & Health: Policy and Programs, Clinical Public Health, Office of Public Health.

Mental health populations smoke at a much higher rate than the general population and they are likely to die 25 years earlier as a result. Interventions are needed to increase their access to smoking cessation care and to increase mental health providers’ skill in providing effective smoking cessation treatment. This workshop will provide hands on behavioral skills training in evidence-based smoking cessation interventions targeted to the needs of Veterans with mental health (MH) disorders and in systems-level interventions needed to implement and sustain these interventions.

Teams of mental health and substance use providers interested in and committed to learning and incorporating smoking cessation interventions into their VA clinic practice applied to participate. The Virtual Training Event, *Evidence-Based Tobacco Use Treatment: An Introduction*, was held in February 26, 2014. The in-person workshop is scheduled for March 11 - 12, 2014. This will be followed by monthly conference calls. Site teams will develop plans to implement clinical practices improve access to smoking cessation care for Veterans in clinical settings where they receive mental health or substance use disorder care and develop and implement strategies to sustain smoking cessation interventions in these settings.

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Transitions & New Personnel

Allison Robbins has accepted a full-time position with Coaching Into Care. Replacing her as lab manager for the Registry is Unber Ahmad. John Mason is the new PI at our Hampton VA site. Keith Shaw has moved from the VA in Boston to join our MIRECC’s Clinical Core

Education Core Update

The re-design of our MIRECC’s website using the new VA website templates has been completed. Check out our new look at:

Focus on the VISN
continued from page 1

In the News!
The work of the VA Mental Health and Chaplaincy project, which is funded by Central Office and housed within our MIRECC, was recently featured.
http://www.research.va.gov/currents/winter2013-14/winter2013-14-6.cfm

VA RESEARCH CURRENTS
Research News from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Impacts on Care: VA/DoD lead the way in integrating chaplains into mental health care

Clinical Core Update
An accredited recording of Dr. Kudler’s CBOC Mental Health Rounds presentation on issues facing National Guard and Reserve Members is now available in TMS!

TMS catalog # 17674

Recognizing the Reserve Component: Needs, Access and Treatment Issues Facing National Guard and Reserve Members

At the conclusion of this educational program, learners will be able to:

- Identify three distinctions between the Reserve and Active Duty Components of the military;
- Articulate two unique concerns of Reserve Component Members when they present for VA care;
- Describe three specific steps that VA providers can take to ensure that there is “No Wrong Door” in their communities to recognize and respond to deployment-related health needs among Reserve Component Members and their families.

Journal Articles


Invited Lectures
Mental Health Research
Magneetoencephalography & Neuroimaging in Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder & mild Traumatic Brain Injury

TORONTO
14 February 2014

Two MIRECC faculty were invited participants at this symposium. Dr. Robin Hurley (MIRECC Associate Director, Education) presented Windows to the Brain: the Neuropsychiatry of Post Deployment Mental Health. Dr. Jared Rowland (MIRECC Research Psychologist) presented Alterations in Brain Function and Connectivity due to Deployment Related PTSD and mild TBI Identified using MEG. continued on page 3

Hurley RA, Taber KH. Teaching Materials to Translate Neuroanatomical Knowledge from Textbook to the War-Related Blast Injury Patient- Part III.

Rowland JA, Stapleton-Kotloski J, Alberto GE, Rawley JA, Kotloski RJ, Taber KH, Godwin DW. Graph Theoretical Analysis Reveals Reduced Integration of the Left Amygdala into the Whole Brain Resting State Network in Posttraumatic Stress Disorder: A Magnetoencephalography (MEG) Study.


**American Neuropsychiatric Association**

**Seattle Washington**

**February 15-18, 2014**

25th Annual Meeting

**Meeting Presentations**

**Invited Lectures continued from page 2**

Dr. Hurley also presented *Windows to the Brain: the Neuropsychiatry of TBI for Otolaryngology* at the Vestibular Related Traumatic Brain Injury symposium held during the 37th Annual Midwinter Meeting of the Association for Research in Otolaryngology, February 22-26 2014, San Diego, CA.

Dr. Rajendra Morey (MIRECC Neuroimaging Lab Director) *Neural Injury from Subconcussive Exposure: Advanced Imaging and Analytic Methods* at the Duke University Neuroscience Grand Rounds on January 8 2014 in Durham NC.

**Resources for Building Resiliency**

The VA and DoD partnered to develop *Moving Forward*, a free, on-line education and life coaching program that teaches problem solving skills to Veterans, Service Members and their families. This evidence-based program uses interactive exercises and video demonstrations to teach skills for overcoming life challenges such as relationship problems, financial hardship, and re-adjustment issues. Introduce your patients to this anonymous, always available, web-based resource and empower them to keep Moving Forward!

www.StartMovingForward.org

**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

**Invited Lectures**

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)

**Free Web Courses for Providers**

**Treating the Invisible Wounds of War**

www.ahecconnect.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*
5 - *Understanding Military Family Issues*

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.