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VISN 6 Leadership

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2012 VISN 6 Mid-Atlantic MIRECC Post Deployment Mental Health

Vol 8 (5) October 2012

Education Component Update

Clinical Education Grant: Impulse Control in PTSD Treatment
Dr. John Lynch (PI), Richmond VAMC

The goal of this MIRECC-funded clinical education proposal was manualization and dissemination of a PTSD treatment model emphasizing functional and adaptive coping skills. Both the Therapist and Client manuals for group treatment of PTSD have been completed. These manuals are now available to other facilities to implement or adapt as needed. The PTSD recovery Group described in these manuals has been demonstrated to result in positive improvements in adaptive and symptomatic outcomes. Veterans who completed the 10 week PTSD Recovery Program had significantly reduced PTSD symptom severity (PCL-M, total score and scaled scores [re-experiencing, avoidance/numbing, hyper arousal], p < .001) and significantly improved psychosocial adjustment (self-efficacy, psychosocial adaptive behavior, p < .001). These results support the PTSD Recovery Program as an effective and efficient stand-alone PTSD treatment or as a preliminary step to trauma-focused treatment. Dissemination of both the program itself and the new psychosocial adaptive behavior assessment measure (McGuire Adaptive PTSD Scale-Revised, MAPS-R) that has been developed is underway. Aspects of this work were recently presented at the International Society for the Study of Trauma and Dissociation annual conference, and will be presented next month at the convention of the Association for Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies. These materials will also soon be posted on our MIRECC’s website. For more information or to request materials, contact Dr. Lynch: John.Lynch2@va.gov

Research Component Update

MIRECC Researcher Honored

Dr. F. Joseph McCernon received the 2012 Eugene A. Hargrove, M.D. award from the Psychiatric Foundation of North Carolina during the North Carolina Psychiatric Association Annual Meeting and Scientific Session, held September 27-30 in Wrightsville Beach NC. This award honors an individual who has been recognized by his colleagues for exceptional contributions to mental health research. Dr. McCernon is Director of the Tobacco Neuroscience Research Laboratory at Duke University.

Recently Approved Grants

Jennifer Naylor (PI) Neurosteroids as Novel Therapeutic Agents for Chronic Pain in OEF/OIF Veterans. VA Career Development Award-2

Patrick Calhoun (PI) Abstinence Reinforcement Therapy (ART) for Rural Veteran Smokers. VA Merit Review Award

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Editors: Katherine H. Taber, PhD
Robin A. Hurley, MD
Journal Articles


Invited Lectures


Dr. Robin A. Hurley (MIRECC Associate Director, Education) presented “Windows to the Brain: Neuropsychiatry of Brain Injury and Common Co-Morbidities” at the Conference on Veterans and the Criminal Justice System, Decatur IL, September 12-13, 2012. This conference was organized by the Illinois Supreme Court’s Special Committee on Criminal Justice and Mental Health Planning, and held in conjunction with the Illinois Drug Court Professionals and Mental Health Court Association of Illinois joint conference on Specialty Courts in Illinois.

New Leadership Roles

Drs. Robin Hurley (Associate MIRECC Director, Education Component) and Katherine Taber (Assistant MIRECC Director, Education Component) have recently agreed to serve as members of the Large Working Group tasked by the Traumatic Brain Injury Clinical Standards of Care Directorate of the Defense Centers of Excellence for Psychological Health and Traumatic Brain Injury with development of the Clinical Recommendation and support tools for Neuroimaging after mTBI.

Dr. Hurley also recently accepted the role of VISN 6 Academic Affiliations Officer. Her duties include managing and providing oversight to the VISN 6 Residency Training Program and representing the VISN with the VHA Office of Academic Affairs.

Dr. Christine Marx (Co-Director, Research Component & Director, Interventions Core) was recently named Division Director of Translational Neuroscience, Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, Duke University.

Meeting Presentations


Outreach to Providers

ISTSS Webinar - From the Battle Front to the Home Front: The Need for a Public Health Approach to Deployment Mental Health

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

Learning Objectives: Identify three significant challenges faced by service members and their families in accessing care in their home communities.

Articulate the need for a public health approach rather than a traditional medical approach to deployment mental health.

Propose three significant steps which could be taken as individuals and as members of ISTSS and its affiliate societies to promote a more effective continuum of deployment mental health care.

http://www.istss.org/source/ContinuingEd/webinar_details.cfm?mtg=WEB0912B
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

Outcome: By building on the experience of peers and senior clinicians, the attendee will increase his/her effectiveness in serving Veterans, strengthen his/her clinical skills and improve self-care.

Upcoming sessions:
2012
- November 21
- December 19
2013
- January 30
- February 13
- March 13
- April 10

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).

Noon V-tel Lecture Schedule:

Note that the November lecture is on a Wednesday

November 14
Jonathan Silver, MD
Clinical Professor of Psychiatry
New York University School of Medicine

Effort, Exaggeration, and Malingering after Concussion

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).

Visit our website for more resources

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.