Peer Support Pilot
VA Pittsburgh Healthcare System (VAPHS)
OEF/OIF/OND Post-deployment Clinic

Frederick G. Nardei Jr.
Certified Forensic Peer Specialist
MIRECC, VA Pittsburgh Healthcare System

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Learning Objectives

• Identify the role of the Pittsburgh Peer Specialist in the Post deployment PACT
• Identify the challenges experienced by the Peer Specialist
• Describe the role of Whole Health Coaching in Primary Care
• Identify the importance of self care when working with Veterans who have a high risk of suicide or overdose
Pittsburgh Post-deployment PACT

• What is a PACT?
• What does a PACT do?
• My role on the PACT
• Veteran population
• What were the integration challenges
  – Providers unfamiliar with CPS scope of Practice
  – I was an unknown
  – Had to prove myself
  – Concerns about possible boundary violations
  – No support for starting groups
My Role

• Supervision
• Team Meeting
• Referrals
• The challenges faced by the Veterans
• The Interventions
The Post-deployed Veteran’s Challenges

- Veterans Distrustful of the VA
- Unmanaged medical conditions.
- Substance use disorders/ co-occurring
  - Opioids led to three overdose deaths
  - Veteran Terminal due to alcoholic hepatitis
- TBI, SMI, SI/HI, PTSD
Whole Health Coaching (WHC)

- The role of WHC in primary care
- The importance of Mission Aspiration and Purpose
- Personal Health Inventory
- Personalized proactive patient centered care
Three Veterans and their Outcomes

- 38 YO Veteran referred with less than two months to live due to ETOH hepatitis and jaundice
- 34 YO Veteran with PTSD and addicted to heroin
- 32 YO Veteran with anoxic brain injury due to overdose
Managing My Challenges and Wellbeing

• 4 Veterans died due to their SUD
• Many veterans seen in the community or their home
• Veterans actively using or high when I arrive
• Catching warning signs of Burn out, secondary PTSD
• My own PTSD, triggers and management
• Regular engagement with my PTSD therapist, faith based groups, and good supervision to manage my own stress and wellbeing.