

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

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VISN5 MIRECC Peer Specialist Webinar, March 29, 2018

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.**