



VISN 6 Mid-Atlantic MIRECC Post Deployment Mental Health



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Clinical Education Grants Awarded

Clinical Educational Projects / Materials for Post-Deployment Mental Health and Rehabilitation

Primary goals of our MIRECC include the development of enduring educational materials, support for a public health approach to clinical care, and translation of empirical research into effective interventions. This year, our emphasis was on proposals designed to enhance the assessment and management of mental health and rehabilitation issues related to post-deployment, such as:

- ★ Evaluation/modification of existing programs
- ★ Development and testing of a new educational program
- ★ Development of enduring educational materials

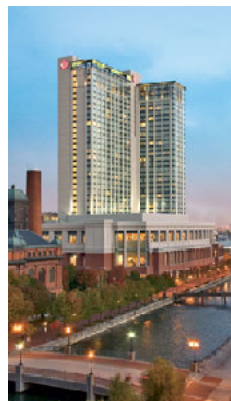
The following studies were awarded funding:

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5th Annual VA Mental Health Conference

Improving Veterans Mental Health Care for the 21st Century

Baltimore MD, August 23 -25, 2011



Workshops

Harold Kudler, Kristy Straits-Troster,
Jaimie Marinkovich & Erin Howard

*Group Supervision for VA Clinicians Listening to
Trauma Histories: Conceptual Basis, Data, and
Experiential Learning Session*

Mehul Mankad & Perry Whitted

*Perspectives in System Redesign from the
Durham VAMC Improvement Capability Grant*

S Sayers, T Hess, Perry Whitted, John Fairbank, M Casselli, A
Armelle, D Weit, D Perlick, Kristy Straits-Troster, A Cristian, R
Rotondi, F Sautter, S M Cutcheon, S Glynn

*Family Members' Roles in the Engagement and Treatment of
Combat Veterans.*

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Recently Approved Grants

Scott McDonald (PI) *Resilience and Adjustment after VA Inpatient
Rehabilitation for Traumatic Injury.* VA RR&D Career Development
Award

Brian L. Meyer (PI) *The Effects of Mindfulness Meditation on PTSD in
Veterans,* VHA Office of Mental Health Services

Treven Pickett (Site PI) *Stress-induced drinking in OEF/OIF veterans:
the role of combat history and PTSD,* NIAAA (Ananda Amstader, PI)

Elizabeth Van Voorhees (PI) *Sensitivity to smoking reinforcement in
women: menstrual cycle effects,* NIDA

Approved Research Sites & Contacts:

Durham VA

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Clinical Education Grants Awarded

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Stacy Belkonen & Katherine Luci (co-PIs); Brian Shenal, Laurel Riddle, Anita Kablinger (co-applicants) - Salem VAMC A Self-Help Lending Library for Veterans with Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI), Their Families, and Providers.

The creation of a resource lending library for Veterans with TBI, their families and their treatment providers is the goal of this proposal. Military-related TBI affects many aspects of the lives of Veterans and their family members. Associated problems can include cognitive impairments, emotional lability, behavioral issues, personality changes, limited function of arms or legs, and abnormal speech or language. This lending library will provide additional resources to help Veterans and their families learn more about TBI and how to cope with the effects that it can have in their lives.

John Lynch (PI); Brian Meyer, Scott McDonald (co-applicants) - Richmond VAMC Impulse Control in PTSD Treatment

The goal of this proposal is dissemination of a PTSD treatment model that emphasizes functional and adaptive coping skills. Service members and their families face significant challenges in readjusting from the high-intensity of combat settings to life back at home in terms of day-to-day living. Early interventions in the treatment of PTSD help resolve initial problems and avoid development of more serious mental health conditions and psychosocial impairment. This PTSD treatment model addresses the need to improve day-to-day functioning quickly and effectively before treating trauma specific disorders. The emphasis is on impulse control as the key first step. Veterans get relief on an immediate basis and stabilize their current function. This approach builds self efficacy and helps Veterans learn that they have the skills, competency, and mastery to handle the problems and difficulties that daily life may bring.

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Caring for Veterans Conference:



*Moving Forward in
Providing Quality Care
for Veterans*

Washington, DC
August 9-10, 2011

Plenary Session: War Related Illnesses and Injuries

Robin Hurley

*Windows to the Brain: The Neuropsychiatry of
Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)*

Journal Articles

Acheson SK, Straits-Tröster K, Calhoun PS, Beckham JC, Hamlett-Berry K. *Characteristics and correlates of cigarette use among recent U.S. Veterans.* Military Psychology, 2011; 23(3): 297-313.

Straits-Troster K, Strauss J, Tupler L, Dyck D, Norell D, Misal M, Holman C, Perlick D. *An Adaptation of Multi-Family Group Treatment to Support U.S. Veteran TBI Survivors and their Families.* Brain Impairment, 2011; 12: S15-16 [abstract].

5th Annual VA Mental Health Conference

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Oral Presentations

John Lynch, Brian Meyer & Scott McDonald

PTSD Recovery Groups: Combining in vivo exposure, mindfulness, and CBT to treat PTSD

Keith Meador & Jason Nieuwsma

Bridging Chaplaincy and Mental Health Care: Training Clinical Chaplains in Evidence-based Approaches to Caring for Persons with Mental Illness

Ranak Trivedi, Jason Nieuwsma, Jennifer McDuffie, Dinesh Benjamin, Ian Kronish & John W. Williams, Jr.

Very Brief Psychotherapy for Depression: A Systematic Review of the Evidence and Meta-Analysis

Larry A. Tupler

Epidemiology, Severity, and Neurocognition of Self-Reported TBI in Active-Duty and Veteran Personnel Serving Since 9/11.

Posters

Patrick Calhoun, Michael R. Hill, Leslie Roher, Jennifer Gierisch, Valerie Smith, Steven Grambow, Kim Hamlett-Berry, Jean C. Beckham & Lori Bastian *Operation iQuit: Internet based smoking cessation and tele-medicine to reduce smoking among U.S. OEF/OIF Veterans*

Jennifer Runnals, Rebecca Allen, Harold Kudler, Kristy Straits-Troster & Patrick Calhoun

Posttraumatic Stress Disorder and Pain in Female Veterans with Military Service in Iraq or Afghanistan

Cortney McCormick, Ruth Yoash-Gantz, Scott McDonald, Tom Campbell, Treven Pickett & Larry Tupler *Symptom-Validity Failure on the Green Word Memory Test Observed in OEF/OIF Postdeployed Neurocognitive Evaluations: Relationship to TBI, PTSD, and Evaluation Context.*

Cortney McCormick, Jared Rowland & Ruth Yoash-Gantz *Self-Perception of change in executive functioning as a predictor of performance on Symptom Validity Tests among OEF/OIF service members*

Jared Rowland, Cortney McCormick & Ruth Yoash-Gantz *Posttraumatic stress disorder, but not mild traumatic brain injury, impairs learning and attention in OEF/OIF Veterans.*



MIRECC personnel Drs. Ruth Yoash-Gantz (on right) and Jared Rowland and Cortney McCormick in front of their posters at the American Academy of Clinical Neuropsychology Annual Meeting in June.

Clinical Education Grants Awarded

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Christi Ulmer (PI); Leah Farrell-Carnahan, Rachel Manber, Melanie Means (co-applicants) - Durham VAMC *Self-Management Materials for Sleep Disturbance in Recently Deployed Veterans*

The goal of this proposal is translation of an evidence-based cognitive-behavioral treatment for insomnia (CBTI) into a self-management workbook format. Sleep disturbance is one of the most common complaints among recently deployed Veterans. An astounding 64% report difficulty falling and staying asleep upon their return from deployment. CBTI, now recommended as a first line treatment for sleep disturbance, has several components: sleep restriction, stimulus control, cognitive restructuring, and relapse prevention. In combination, these components lead to improvements in sleep quality, time to fall asleep, and wake time after sleep onset. Present barriers to addressing Veterans' sleep complaints include availability of qualified providers and difficulty engaging this population in weekly clinic-based treatment due to conflicts with work, academic, and family obligations. This self-management workbook will allow Veterans to participate in treatment at a time and place of their own choosing. It is envisioned as the entry-level for a stepped care model of treatment for sleep disturbance in recently returned Veterans.

Debra Volkmer (PI); Amanda Vaughn (co-applicant) - Salisbury VAMC *Resiliency Training for OEF/OIF/OND Service Members, Veterans, and Families*

The goal of this proposal is to encourage resiliency and community reintegration in OEF/OIF/OND Veterans receiving case management. Resiliency training will be offered to both the Veteran and their spouse/significant other. The training will utilize existing educational materials and will be delivered via workbook and virtual group meetings (Webinar and/or conference call). This will allow the program hours to be structured to meet the individual needs of this unique population. The training will reinforce recovery through education, enhancing the Veteran's ability to acclimate back to civilian life by focusing on concepts and skills related to balance and resilience.

Outreach to Clergy

Engaging Chaplains in Mental Health Care

This project is funded by Central Office and housed within our MIRECC. **Dr. Keith Meador** directs the initiative, and **Dr. Jason Nieuwsma** serves as associate director. They recently held two meetings in New York City. The purpose was to consider innovative opportunities for integrated mental health and spiritual care.

Bridging Chaplaincy and Mental Health Care

Manhattan Campus VA Medical Center

June 27-28 2011

Down Range to Home: How can soldiers transition from combat to community?

City College of New York

June 29 2011

4th Pacific Rim Conference



International Neuropsychological Society Meeting

Sky City, New Zealand, July 6-9 2011

Kristy Straits-Troster

An adaptation of multi-family group treatment to support US veteran TBI survivors and their families

Noon V-tel Lecture Schedule:

September 9

Joseph LaMotte, PharmD (Salisbury VAMC)

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).

Durham MIRECC Research Lecture Series

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|---|--|
| September 29 | <i>Treatment of Teen Depression and Its Impact on the Mental Health of Veteran Parents</i> - John Curry, PhD, Dir Clinical Psychology Psychiatry & Behavioral Sciences, School of Medicine Duke U, Durham. NC |
| October 20
available for audio conferencing | <i>iRest Yoga Nidra Meditation for Combat Stress Conditions</i> - Robin Carnes, E-RYT 500, MBA Certified iRest® Meditation and Yoga Instructor, DOD & Karen Soltes, LCSW, E-RYT, Washington DC VAMC |
| November 10 | <i>Compassion Fatigue & Caregiver Burden -Literature Review, What's Missing, How Does it Apply to OEF/OIF Veterans & Family Members</i> - Mira Brancu, PhD, Psychologist, VISN 6 MIRECC, Durham NC |
| December 15 | <i>Meta Analysis of Neuropsychological Functioning in Euthymic Bipolar Disorder: An Update & Investigation of Moderator Variables</i> - Monica Mann-Wrobel, PhD, VISN 6 MIRECC, Durham, NC |

This series is presented live at our Durham site. Occasionally, a lecture is opened up for live participation by audio-conferencing. Lectures are also archived as webcasts at: <http://mireccweb.biac.duke.edu/Mediasite/Viewer/> Contact Jaimie Marinkovich (jaimie.marinkovich@va.gov; 919-286-0411 ext 5554) with any questions.

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

Upcoming sessions: September 28, October 12, November 9, December 28

Participation available in person (Durham VA) or by audio-teleconferencing.

Register to participate or present a case at an upcoming session by contacting Jaimie Marinkovich (jaimie.marinkovich@va.gov; 919-286-0411 ext 5554).

Resources for Providers

VA Evidence-based Synthesis Program



Principal Investigator:
Jennifer L. Strauss, PhD

Co-Investigators:
Remy Coeytaux, MD, PhD
Jennifer McDuffie, PhD
John W. Williams Jr., MD, MHSc

To download the paper go to:

<http://www.hsr.d.research.va.gov/publications/esp/cam-ptsd.cfm>

Visit our web site for more resources
<http://www.mirecc.va.gov/visn6.asp>

★ Free ★ Web Courses for Providers

Treating the Invisible Wounds of War

www.aheconnect.com/citizensoldier

Click on **New Users** to register. You will then see the available web courses listed:

1 - *Post Traumatic Stress Disorder*

2 - *Traumatic Brain Injury*

3 - *Issues of Women Returning from Combat*

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.