Directors Update

The attack on Ukraine has impacted many of our Nation’s Veterans, including those who served in combat and experienced war-related stress and trauma in Iraq and Afghanistan. Providers throughout VA are working to support our Veterans and their families who are experiencing distress in this time of uncertainty. In the Mid-Atlantic MIRECC we are honored to support our Veterans’ mental health and resilience through research spanning the range of translational science.

Our basic research includes studies of animal models of traumatic brain injury and mental illness, as well as genetics and genomics research. We are conducting clinical trials of treatments for several mental health problems that affect Veterans, and we are evaluating the implementation of local, regional and national programs for Veterans.

Current projects include:

- Research and training on moral injury care and a new moral injury consultation program;
- Development of novel therapeutic interventions for chronic pain and commonly co-occurring mental health problems;
- Innovative application of new extended reality (XR) immersive technologies to train the next generation of VA providers and address Veterans’ mental health needs.

The Mid-Atlantic MIRECC exists to understand and address the mental health needs of Iraq- and Afghanistan-era Veterans and their families. We work to inform VA’s efforts to equip Veterans with the knowledge and skills to support optimal psychosocial functioning and wellbeing throughout their lives, especially in times such as these.

John A. Fairbank, PhD
Director, Mid-Atlantic (VISN 6) MIRECC
**IN THE NEWS**

**Martindale S. Rowland J.** (February 8, 2022). Teasing out the effects of blasts on mental health. Researchers probe blast effects independent of those tied to brain injuries, PTSD. Interview with Mike Richman, VA Research Communications. Learn more


**López-Ojeda W.** (February 1, 2022). Neuroscience concepts of hearing and balance. WFSM, Mi-Neuroscience Module, Winston-Salem Campus.

**López-Ojeda W.** (February 10, 2022). Extended reality in neurosciences: Insights on clinical care, medical education, and training. MIRECC’s Educations Director’s meeting. (Virtual)

**Martindale S., Rowland J.** (March 22, 2022). Mild TBI Diagnosis and Management Strategies for Posttraumatic Stress Disorder, blast TBI, and Changes to brain Functional Connectome. Learn more


**Confederate Participation/Research Presentations**


**Miskey, Holly M., Cysique Lucette** (February 2-4, 2022). Drs. Miskey and Cysique successfully planned and co-chaired the 50th Annual Meeting of the International Neuropsychological Society (INS). The theme of the meeting was “Cultivating a New Ethos.”

**WEBINARS**

Prazosin for posttraumatic headache randomized controlled trial in Veterans and active-duty service members. Webinar available on TMS. (March 16, 2022).

**EDUCATION AND DISSEMINATION**

**Invited Lectures & Presentations**

**Bhatt-Mackin, S.** (December, 2021). From replication through grief to adaptation: shifting group therapy to the online format during this pandemic. Presented to the Carolinas Group Psychotherapy Society. (Virtual)


**López-Ojeda W.** (February 1, 2022). Neuroscience concepts of hearing and balance. WFSM, Mi-Neuroscience Module, Winston-Salem Campus.

**López-Ojeda W.** (February 10, 2022). Extended reality in neurosciences: Insights on clinical care, medical education, and training. MIRECC’s Educations Director’s meeting. (Virtual)

**Martindale S., Rowland J.** (March 22, 2022). Mild TBI Diagnosis and Management Strategies for Posttraumatic Stress Disorder, blast TBI, and Changes to brain Functional Connectome. Learn more


**Poster Presentations**

Publications

Scientific Articles:


RESOURCES FOR VETERANS & FAMILIES

Visit [Self-help resources](#) to obtain education and support information for Veterans, friends and family members who may be facing mental health challenges. VA specialists have assembled a short list of reviewer’s recommended materials that may be helpful in finding the most appropriate information for you. We have a new education pamphlet on Moral Injury (MI), click [here](#). Please click on each resource topic for more information.

- [General Mental Health](#)
- [Depression & Anxiety](#)
- [PTSD](#)
- [Substance Use Disorder (SUD)](#)

For additional help, click “How to Use.”

DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY AND VETERANS AFFAIRS

The DMVA Resource Guide is produced and published by the North Carolina Department of Military and Veterans Affairs to assist and educate Veterans in learning about state and federal veteran benefits.

The 2020/2021 editions is now available. View or Download by clicking [here](#).

MARCH 2022 VOL. 18 ISSUE 1

PROVIDER EDUCATION

PACERS is an education program for health care staff who care for Veterans with cognitive disorders and their caregivers. While this program targets rural health care staff, providers working in any setting can benefit from this information.

- **VA Providers:** Take courses using TMS links
- **Non-VA Providers:** Use TRAIN links

**Course 1:** Driving and Demential—Hanging up the Keys.

**Course 2:** How to Deliver the Diagnosis of Alzheimer’s Disease.

**Course 3:** How to Have an End of Life Discussion.

**Course 4:** How to Identify Self-Neglect.

**Course 5:** Addressing Decision Making and Safety in Dementia.

[VISIT PACERS](#) for links to each course.

VA HSR&D Cyberseminars

**MIRECC PRESENTS WEBINAR:**

Addressing Mental Health Needs of Aging Veterans in Rural Communities

Presented by: Dr. Bret Hicken, PhD

**Date:** Wednesday, April 20th, 2022 at 12 p.m. PST (3 p.m. EST)

Register through [VA EES TMS](#) then attend LIVE at [http://va-erce-ees.adobeconnect.com/mireccpresents/](http://va-erce-ees.adobeconnect.com/mireccpresents/)

Access the MIRECC Presents webinar series calendar for upcoming events online at [https://www.mirecc.va.gov/visn20/Education/webinars-mirecc-presents.asp](https://www.mirecc.va.gov/visn20/Education/webinars-mirecc-presents.asp)

The PACERS online training curriculum includes six e-learning courses; each course is accredited for 1 hour of continuing education. There are also 5 videos that cover important topics related to cognitive impairment, including driving, self-neglect, challenging behaviors, Alzheimer’s disease, and end-of-life.
RESEARCH SITES AND CONTACT INFORMATION

DURHAM VAMC
RITA M. DAVISON
RITA.DAVISON@VA.GOV
919-384-8582 EXT 4022

RICHMOND VAMC
TORRAN CLAIBORNE
TORRAN.CLAIBORNE@VA.GOV
804-675-5000 EXT 4251

SALISBURY VAMC
MARY PEOPLES
MARY.PEOPLES1@VA.GOV
704-638-9000 EXT 12956

NANCY MARTINO
MEDICAL LIBRARIAN
NANCY.MARTINO@VA.GOV
704-638-9000 EXT 14064

BRIEFINGS
Stay Up to Date on Mid-Atlantic MIRECC
Contact (Nancy.martino@va.gov) to ensure you’re on the mailing list to receive copies of our newsletter.

Next Issue: June 2022