Director’s Update

Rita Davison will be retiring from the Mid-Atlantic MIRECC and Department of Veterans Affairs at the end of June, after more than 15 years of dedicated service to the MIRECC and the Veterans whom we serve. An essential member of the MIRECC research team almost since its inception, Rita has been integral to ensuring that our signature Post-Deployment Mental Health (PDMH) and PDMH-Longitudinal (PDMH-L) studies have been implemented to the highest standards.

Well respected by her MIRECC peers and research investigators, Rita provided scrupulously ethical and competent operation of our studies. In addition, her warmth, kindness, and patience have been frequently noted by the Veterans she has worked with as well as her colleagues. Rita has had a huge positive impact on MIRECC research to improve the mental health of our Nation’s Veterans, and we wish her all the best in her future endeavors.

I’d also like to take this opportunity to recognize all our MIRECC staff who have contributed to data collection efforts of the PDMH and PDMH-L studies. Our clinical coordinators work diligently to recruit and maintain strong rapport with research participants and to date have spent more than 25,000 hours working directly with study participants to amass our extraordinarily rich datasets. These datasets have contributed substantially or the success of the MIRECC and in improving Veteran care. We recognize the immeasurable value that our coordinators have made and continue to make to the MIRECC on a daily basis and want to say we see you, we value you, we thank you.

John A. Fairbank, PhD
Director, Mid-Atlantic (VISN 6) MIRECC
FOCUS ON THE VISN

BREAKING NEWS

Wilfredo López-Ojeda, MS, PhD was invited to attend to the 2022 Annual TolTech Users Meeting at the University of Colorado, Medical Sciences Campus (June 1st - 3rd). Toltech’s Annual Users Meeting gathered an elite group of medical educators, instructional designers, leaders and other medical scholars from US, International Universities and Medical Schools to discuss innovating use cases for leveraging and integrating imaging technologies, such as 3D Imaging Anatomy, Extended Reality (XR) and Virtual Reality (VR) in medical education (MedEd), clinical training and MedEd research.

Dr. Nieuwsma’s et al., Integrative Mental Health Publication entitled: “Patterns of potential moral injury in post-9/11 combat veterans and COVID-19 healthcare workers.” captures national media attention (CBS, NBC, Telemundo, US News and others).

Invited Lectures & Presentations


Wells SY. (March 11, 2022). Guest lecture for UNC social work class. PTSD Treatment Research: Science and Practice.


Wells SY. (April 18, 2022). Guest lecture for University of San Diego for a counseling course: Evidence-based Treatment for PTSD.

Conference Participation/Research Presentations


Shura RD. (April 2022). Symptom and performance validity: Recent updates and research with Veterans. CE workshop for the West Virginia Psychological Association Spring Conference.

Poster Presentations


Magnante AT, Shura RD. (June 2022). Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder, Substance Use, and Impulsivity in Veterans. Poster presented at the American Academy of Clinical Neuropsychology 20th Annual Conference, Minneapolis, MN.
Scientific Articles:


Bjork JM, Shull ER, Perrin PB, Shura RD. (2022). Suicidal ideation and clinician-rated suicide risk in veterans referred for ADHD evaluation at a VA medical center. Psychosocial Services. Advance online publication. Learn more


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.”

There are several free and anonymous on-line education and life coaching programs that use interactive exercises and video demonstrations to teach skills for overcoming life challenges. For more information, click here.

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.

View or Download by clicking here.

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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 Dementia—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.
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CLICK THE BANNER TO VISIT OUR WEBSITE

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: FALL 2022