VA Mid-Atlantic Health Care Network

VISN 6 Mid-Atlantic MIRECC
Post Deployment Mental Health

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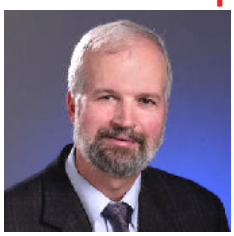
Director's Update: Welcome to Dr. Shaw



I am pleased to announce that R. Keith Shaw, PhD, has assumed the role of Associate Director of the MIRECC Clinical Core. Keith also serves as the Director of Psychology Training at the Durham VA. During this past year, he also has been Durham's acting Senior Psychologist. From the time of its inception in 2008 until late 2014, Keith served as a member of the executive committee of the VA Psychology Training Council (VAPTC, the national training council that represents all VA psychology training programs), including a 3-year leadership sequence as the Chair. During his ten years (2003 - 2013) at VA Boston Healthcare System, he had primary roles as Internship Director of the Boston Consortium in Clinical Psychology and Assistant Chief of Psychology. Dr. Shaw also served as the first director of VA Boston's Center for Returning Veterans (OEF/OIF), from its creation in 2005 until 2008. His clinical work and outreach activities within VA have been primarily focused upon returning combat veterans. Prior to 2003, he worked for 19 years in Missouri's public mental health system, as the clinical director of a psychiatric hospital and in various other hospital, interagency, and regional mental health leadership roles. His interests include barriers to care in mental health for returning combat veterans, community psychology, interventions with families, and systems of care in mental health services. We are excited that Dr. Shaw brings to the MIRECC's Clinical Core extensive experience as a leader, training director, and clinician.

John A. Fairbank, Ph.D. **Director, Mid-Atlantic (VISN 6) MIRECC**

Focus on the VISN
Community Outreach

Dr. Mira Brancu (MIRECC PDMH Study Managing Director) gave an invited presentation about the MIRECC's Post-Deployment Mental Health (PDMH) Study & Repository to the North Carolina National Guard Integrated Behavioral Health System at their monthly call in November. This opportunity for outreach to NC National Guard mental health providers and and to increase awareness of the research the VA is doing on post-deployment mental health arose from Dr. Brancu's outreach presentation last April at the North Carolina Women Veterans Summit and Expo, North Carolina National Guard Headquarters, Raleigh, NC. continued on page 2

Recently Approved Grants

Chris Marx (PI) *Neurosteroid Intervention in Gulf War Veterans Illnesses (GWVI).* VA Merit Review Award

Gerald Grant, Michael Hauser & Chris Marx (Co-PIs) *Genetic, Epigenetic, and Metabolomic Biomarker Predictors of PTSD and Resilience following TBI.* Department of Defense (ancillary project to INTRuST)

Approved Research Sites & Contacts:

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Focus on the VISN

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National Service

Dr. Mira Brancu (MIRECC PDMH Study Managing Director) has been elected Chair of the American Psychological Association (APA) Committee on Professional Practice and Standards (COPPS). COPPS was developed by the Board of Professional Affairs (BPA) to develop and review professional practice guidelines for psychologists. Dr. Brancu has served on this committee for the previous 2 years. During that time she has been part of the team developing new guidelines for community psychologists working with military service members, veterans, and families. The team has been actively reaching out to stakeholders and leaders within VA, DoD, and the community to review and provide input on these guidelines. Still a work in progress, this is an opportunity for VA stakeholders to be involved in helping community providers understand the mental health service needs of veterans. Dr. Brancu's other projects include updating the current record keeping guidelines and developing process improvement initiatives to facilitate dissemination.

Invited Lectures

Dr. Robin A. Hurley (MIRECC Associate Director, Education) presented *Windows to the Brain: Neuropsychiatry of Brain Injury and Common Co-morbidities* as part of the VA HSR&D Cyberseminars series December 3, 2014. Dr. Hurley presented *Windows to the Brain: Neuropsychiatry of War-Related TBI and its Co-morbidities* as part of the Wake Forest School of Medicine Department of Neurology Grand Rounds on December 9, 2014 and *Working with the VA for Research: An Update for 2014* at the Wake Forest School of Medicine Faculty Representative Council meeting on December 18, 2014, Winston-Salem, NC.

Dr. Christine Marx (MIRECC Co-Associate Director, Research) presented *"Biomarkers and the Neurobiology of PTSD: Implications for PTSD Risk and Individualized Therapeutics"* as part of Grand Rounds at University of Texas Health Science Center on May 6, 2014 in San Antonio, TX.

HSR&D cyberseminars

Mild TBI Diagnosis and Management Strategies

Windows to the Brain:The Neuropsychiatry of Brain Injury and Common Co-morbidities

Robin Hurley, MD, FANPA

http://www.hsrd.research.va.gov/for_researchers/cyber_seminars/archives/video_archive.cfm?SessionID=914

Updates - MIRECC Fellowship Program

Our **Richmond** site's Psychology Fellowship program, jointly directed by **Drs. Scott McDonald and Treven Pickett**, recently received contingent APA/CoA accreditation through 2019!

continued in column 2

Updates - MIRECC Fellowship Program

continued from column 1

Transitions

We bid a fond farewell to **Dr. Ruth Yoash-Gantz**, who has done a stellar job as Director of our **Salisbury** site's Psychology Fellowship program since its inception. Ruth is leaving VA employment in January, but will continue to mentor our Fellows and be an active research collaborator. **Dr. Kristin Humphrey** will be the new Director.

Welcome to our new Fellow

Amie Schry earned her BA in psychology at Mercer University, and her PhD in clinical psychology at Virginia Tech. Amie completed her pre-doctoral internship at the **Durham VAMC** and is now the new MIRECC Fellow at that site. Her research interests focus on the relationship between anxiety and health risk. In particular, her past research has focused on the relationships between social anxiety and both sexual victimization and alcohol-related variables in college students. Amie hopes to expand her research during her fellowship to examine sexual revictimization in Veterans, including how anxiety may play a role in revictimization. She also plans to examine the relationship between PTSD and health risk behaviors such as tobacco use, alcohol use, and drug use. In her spare time, Amie enjoys reading, music, and spending time with her partner and dog.

Updates - Engaging Chaplains in MH 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.

Mental Health and Chaplaincy Learning Collaborative

The goal of this Joint-Incentive Fund project is to develop and implement trainings that will address the knowledge gap of integration of chaplains with mental health care services in the VA and DOD. All 14 learning collaborative teams (chaplain, mental health provider, and systems redesign coach) attended the third session in St. Petersburg, FL, in October, 2014. Teams (7 VA, 7 DoD) are from all over the country and from all branches of the military.

Mental Health Integration for Chaplain Services (MHICS)

The second Face-to-Face training session for this year-long mental health certification training program was held in Tampa, FL, in December, 2014. This curriculum provides Chaplains the opportunity to learn about best practices identified within and across the VA and DOD. At present, 37 VA and DOD Chaplains are working towards certification as Mental Health Chaplains.

Community Outreach

Nieuwsma JA, Cantrell W. *Acceptance and commitment therapy (ACT): Building evidence-based skills to enhance professional chaplaincy.* Invited full-day workshop presented at the South Carolina Society of Chaplains Annual Meeting, October 2014, Columbia, SC.

Meeting Presentations

Marx C. *Randomized Controlled Proof-of-Concept Trial of Pregnenolone in Schizophrenia.*

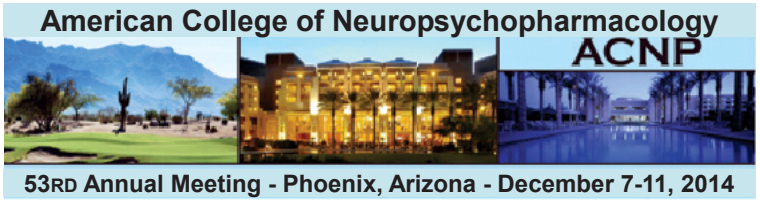
Meador KG, Nieuwsma JA. *Utilizing an Interprofessional Clergy-Mental Health Partnership Approach to Moral Injury.*

Sheerin CM, Amstadter A, Zhang J, Mandel H, Banducci A, Kevorkian S, Wang Z. *The relationship between polymorphisms of the glutamate genotype and the development of PTSD following combat exposure in a veteran sample.*

Association for Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies

Schry AR, Norberg MM, White SW, Maddox BB. *Sex matters: The effect of social anxiety on alcohol-related consequences.*

Schry AR, White SW. *Computer-based interventions: A possible new avenue for risk reduction programs for sexual victimization.*



Marx C. *Neurosteroids and Sex Differences: Relevance to Biomarkers and Therapeutics.*

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

Journal Articles

Diaz-Arrastia R, Kochanek PM, Bergold P, Kenney K, Marx CE, Grimes JB, Loh Y, Adam GE, Oskvig D, Curley KC, Salzer W. *Pharmacotherapy of Traumatic Brain Injury: State of the Science and the Road Forward - Report of the Department of Defense Neurotrauma Pharmacology Workgroup.* Journal of Neurotrauma 2014; 15;31(2):135-58.

Fitchett G, Nieuwsma JA, Bates MJ, Rhodes JE, Meador KG. *Evidence-based chaplaincy care: Attitudes and practices in diverse healthcare chaplain samples.* Journal of Health Care Chaplaincy. 2014; 20 (4):144-160.

Grosso JA, Kimbrel NA, Dolan S, Meyer EC, Kruse MI, Gulliver SB, Morissette SB. *A test of whether coping styles moderate the effect of PTSD symptoms on alcohol outcomes.* Journal of Traumatic Stress. 2014;27(4):478-82.

Kimbrel NA, Evans LD, Patel AB, Wilson LC, Meyer EC, Gulliver SB, Morissette SB. *The Critical Warzone Experiences (CWE) Scale: Initial psychometric properties and association with PTSD, anxiety, and depression.* Psychiatry Research. 2014 ;220(3):1118-24.

Konecky B, Meyer EC, Marx BP, Kimbrel NA, Morissette SB. *Using the WHODAS 2.0 to assess functional disability associated with mental disorders.* American Journal of Psychiatry. 2014;171(8):818-20.

Mitchell JT, Dennis MF, English JS, Dennis PA, Brightwood A, Beckham JC, Kollins SH. *Ecological momentary assessment of antecedents and consequences of smoking in adults with attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder.* Substance Use & Misuse. 2014 Sep;49(11):1446-56.

Naylor JC, Borckardt JJ, Marx CE, Hamer RM, Fredrich BS, Reeves S, George MS. *Cathodal and Anodal Left Prefrontal tDCS and the Perception of Control Over Pain* Clinical Journal of Pain. 2014; 30(8):693-700.

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Each CBOC MH Rounds presentation is now offered twice a month.

Wednesday January 14 from 9-10 am ET
Thursday January 15 from 12-1 pm ET
ADHD

Wednesday February 11 from 9-10 am ET
Thursday February 12 from 12-1 pm ET
CBT and Chronic Pain

Remember to register in TMS for a session to receive credit. Log into your TMS account to join the presentation.

March 11 &12	***Geriatric Addiction***
April 8 & 9	***Brief CBT***

Contact Ashley McDaniel with any questions:
ashley.mcdaniel@va.gov or 501-257-1223

★ Free ★ Web Courses for Providers

Treating the Invisible Wounds of War **www.ahecconnect.com/citizensoldier**

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

1 - ***Treating the Invisible Wounds of War (TTIWW) (english & spanish editions)***
2 - ***TTIWW - A Primary Care Approach***
3 - ***TTIWW - Employee Assistance in the Civilian Workforce***
4 - ***TTIWW - Issues of Women Returning from Combat***
5 - ***TTIWW - Recognizing the Signs of mTBI during Routine Eye Examinations***
6 - ***TTIWW - Understanding Military Family Issues***
7 - ***TTIWW - Taking a Military History: Four Critical Questions***

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.

Journal Articles

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Nieuwsma JA, Jackson GL, DeKraai MB, Bulling DJ, Cantrell WC, Rhodes JE, Bates MJ, Ethridge K, Lane ME, Tenhula WN, Batten SV, Meador KG. *Collaborating across the Departments of Veterans Affairs and Defense to integrate mental health and chaplaincy services.* Journal of General Internal Medicine. 2014; 29 Suppl 4:885-894.

Runnals JJ, Garovoy N, McCutcheon SJ, Robbins AT, Mann-Wrobel MC, Elliott A; Veterans Integrated Service Network (VISN) 6 Mental Illness Research Education and Clinical Centers' (MIRECC) Women Veterans Workgroup. *Systematic Review of Women Veterans' Mental Health.* Women's Health Issues 2014; 24 (5):485-502.

Shura RD, Hurley RA, Taber KH. *Insular Cortex: Structural and Functional Anatomy.* Journal of Neuropsychiatry and Clinical Neuroscience. 2014; 26(4): iv, 277-282.

Zhang J, Sheerin C, Mandel H, Banducci AN, Myrick H, Acierno R, Amstadter AB, Wang Z. *Variation in SLC1A1 is related to Combat-Related Posttraumatic Stress Disorder.* Journal of Anxiety Disorders. 2014;28(8):902-7.

Educational Resources from the
TBI Model Systems Carolinas Site

Heads Up - *An Ounce of Prevention*
Heads Up - *Fatigue*
Heads Up - *Irritability*
Heads Up - *Plans for the Future*
Heads Up - *Wake Up Call (Sleep Disturbances after TBI)*

http://www.carolinashealthcare.org/carolinas-rehab-heads-up-educational-resources

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

Online Training Resources for Veterans: http://www.veterantraining.va.gov/

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 such as relationship and parenting problems, financial hardship, and re-adjustment issues.

Moving Forward - Overcoming Life's Challenges An educational and life coaching program that teaches Problem Solving skills to help you better handle life's challenges

Parenting for Service Members & Veterans This course provides parents with tools that strengthen parenting skills and helps them reconnect with their children.

PTSD Coach Online PTSD Coach Online is for anyone who needs help with upsetting feelings. Trauma survivors, their families, or anyone coping with stress can benefit.