VA Mid-Atlantic Health Care Network

VISN 6 Mid-Atlantic MIRECC
Post Deployment Mental Health

Editors: Katherine H. Taber, PhD
Robin A. Hurley, MD

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MIRECC Leadership

Director
John Fairbank, PhD
john.fairbank2@va.gov

Associate Director - Education
Robin A. Hurley, MD
robin.hurley@va.gov

Assistant Director - Education
Katherine H. Taber, PhD
katherine.taber@va.gov

Associate Director - Clinical
Harold Kudler, MD
harold.kudler@va.gov

Assistant Director - Clinical
Eric Crawford, PhD
eric.crawford@va.gov

Associate Director - Evaluations
Richard Weiner, MD, PhD
richard.weiner@va.gov

Co-Associate Director - Research & Assistant Director - Research - Genetics
Jean C. Beckham, PhD
jean.beckham@va.gov

Co-Associate Director - Research & Assistant Director - Research - Interventions
Christine Marx, MD
marx0001@mc.duke.edu

Assistant Director - Research - Health Services
Patrick Calhoun, PhD
patrick.calhoun2@va.gov

Assistant Director - Research - Neuroscience
Scott D. Moore, MD, PhD
scott.moore2@va.gov

Assistant Director - Research - Neuroimaging
Rajendra A. Morey, MD
morey@biac.duke.edu

Assistant Director - Research - Neurocognitive
Larry A. Tupler, PhD
larry.tupler@va.gov

Associate Directors - Special Fellowship for Physicians
Christine Marx, MD - **Durham VAMC site**
marx0001@mc.duke.edu

Robert Schneider, MD - **Richmond VAMC site**
robert.schneider3@va.gov

Robin Hurley, MD - **Salisbury VAMC site**
robin.hurley@va.gov

Associate Directors - Special Fellowship in Psychology/Allied Health
Patrick Calhoun, PhD - **Durham VAMC site**
patrick.calhoun2@va.gov

Scott McDonald, PhD - **Richmond VAMC site**
scott.mcdonald@va.gov

Ruth Yoash-Gantz, PsyD - **Salisbury VAMC site**
ruth.yoash-gantz@va.gov

VISN 6 Leadership

VISN 6 Director
Daniel F. Hoffmann, FACHE

Director - Mental Health Service Line
Miguel Lapuz, MBA, MD

Focus on the VISN

Supporting Provider Resilience

Trauma clinicians and staff who routinely hear disturbing trauma histories are at risk for developing burnout. Early prevention is a key strategy for promoting resilience and staff retention. **Dr. Harold Kudler** (MIRECC Associate Director, Clinical) facilitates a monthly session (in person and teleconference) for clinicians treating Veterans with PTSD designed to strengthen clinical skills and improve self-care. **Dr. Mira Brancu** (MIRECC Registry Managing Director) recently wrote a focus article for *Trauma Psychology* designed to help early career psychologists working in the trauma field identify risk factors and implement strategies early in order to build resilience.

Connecting Veterans & Families to Services

The nonprofit Charlotte Bridge Home was formed to help Charlotte, NC area Veterans successfully transition home after military service. The focus is on identifying their education, employment and healthcare needs and connecting them to available community, state and federal resources. **Dr. Katherine Taber** (MIRECC Assistant Director, Education) has served on the Physical and Mental Health/Wellness strategic working group since its inception in October of 2012. **Dr. Robin A. Hurley** (MIRECC Associate Director, Education) was a presenter and discussant for this organization's first employer round table in May of 2013.

VA Research Week Activities

Dr. Robin A. Hurley (MIRECC Associate Director, Education) presented *"Nuts and Bolts of Research"* at the Annual Research Week Luncheon sponsored by the Salem Research Institute, Salem VAMC, May 16, 2013.

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Education Component Update

www.mirecc.va.gov/newsletter/current.asp

RESEARCH: *Study Shows the Benefits of Bringing Alcohol Dependence Treatment into Primary Care*

EDUCATION: *Meeting Clinicians Where They Are: A New Approach to Training*

CLINICAL CARE: *VA Implements Evidence-Based Substance Use Disorder Treatment Nationwide*

Recently Approved Grants

Katherine Taber (PI) *Creating a Virtual Mild TBI Patient to Train Clinical Evaluation Skills.* VA QUERI LIP

Approved Research Sites & Contacts:

Durham VA	Hampton VA	Richmond VA	Salem VA	Salisbury VA
Study Coordinator	Monica Cook	Robin Lumpkin	Sarah Voss Horrell	Mary Peoples
mireccstudies@va.gov	monica.cook@va.gov	robin.lumpkin@va.gov	sarah.vosshorrell@va.gov	mary.peoples1@va.gov
919-416-5915	757-722-9961 ext 2324	804-675-5000 ext 4251	540-982-2463 ext 1-1467	704-638-9000 ext 2956

VA Research Week Activities

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The Richmond VA MIRECC site collaborated with their academic partners at Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) to provide information on clinical and community resources and opportunities to participate in research to Veterans during Richmond's Research Day festivities. Pictured are VCU Fellow Ruth Brown, **MIRECC Fellows Lillian Stevens and Kelcey Stratton**, VCU Research Coordinator Sage Hawn and **MIRECC Research Coordinator Robin Lumpkin**, who put together the resources (and candy) and worked the table.

National Service

Dr. Mira Brancu (MIRECC Registry Managing Director) has been appointed to a 90-day detail to serve as the Interim Director of the VA Heart of Texas Health Care Network (VISN 17) Center of Excellence for Research on Returning War Veterans. The center is considered to be a "sister" center to the VISN 6 MIRECC with its similar focus on post-deployment mental health of Iraq and Afghanistan era Veterans.

Dr. Robin Hurley (Associate MIRECC Director, Education Component) has recently agreed to contribute questions for the Brain Injury Medicine Examination being developed by the American Board of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation and the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology. The term of service is 3 years.

Two members of our MIRECC, **Drs. Robin Hurley and Eric Elbogen,** served as peer reviewers for *"A Structured Evidence Review to Identify Treatment Needs of Justice-Involved Veterans and Associated Psychological Interventions"* which was recently completed for VHA by the Center for Health Care Evaluation at the Palo Alto VAMC.

MIRECC Fellow Wins Honor

Congratulations to Dr. Elizabeth Van Voorhees!

She was selected for the 2013 New Research Approaches for Mental Health Interventions (NCDEU) New Investigator Award at the NCDEU annual conference in May. Her research presentation was *"Sex Differences in Smoking Risk in Attention-Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder"*.

Transitions

We wish the best of luck to MIRECC Fellows moving on to new positions. **Dr. Cindy Swinkels** finished her fellowship at our Durham site and accepted a full-time position as the new Durham site lead for Coaching Into Care.

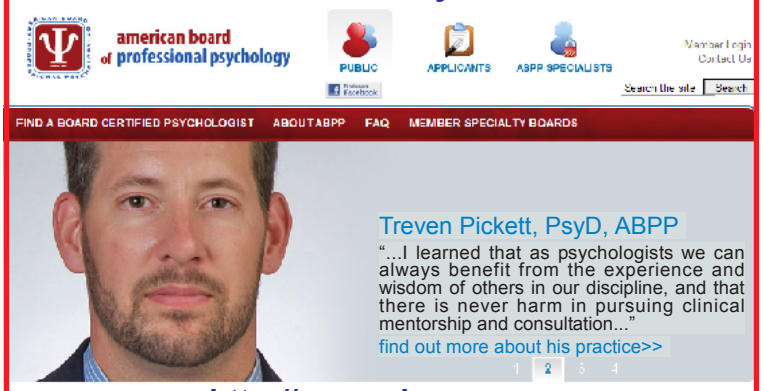
Invited Lectures

Dr. Robin A. Hurley (MIRECC Associate Director, Education) was a presenter and discussant for *"Understading Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) in Returning Veterans: Successful Veteran-Informed Employment Strategies"*, an employer roundtable sponsored by Charlotte Bridge Home, May 10 2013, Charlotte NC. Dr. Hurley presented *"Nuts and Bolts of Research"* at the Annual Research Week Luncheon sponsored by the Salem Research Institute, Salem VAMC, May 16, 2013.

Dr. Rajendra Morey (MIRECC Neuroimaging Lab Director) and Dr. Carlo Pierpaoli presented *"mTBI: Technology Advances in Diagnosis: DTI (Diffusion Tensor Imaging)"* as an HSR&D cyberseminar May 13, 2013.

Dr. Jason A. Nieuwsma (MIRECC researcher) presented *"Expanding the Frame on Integrated Care: Inviting Chaplains into Mental Health Care Systems"* to the Duke University Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences Grand Rounds in May 2013. **Dr. Nieuwsma** and Chaplain Ethridge (Acting Director, VA National Chaplain Center) presented *"Integrating Chaplaincy and Behavioral Health Care: From Clinical Inceptions to Current Implementations"* as part of the VA Clinical Pastoral Education Training Didactic Call in June 2013.

MIRECC Faculty Featured!



http://www.abpp.org

Journal Articles

Beckham JC, Calhoun PS, Dennis MF, Wilson SM, Dedert EA. *Predictors of Lapse in First Week of Smoking Abstinence in PTSD and Non-PTSD Smokers.* Nicotine Tob Res. 2013 Jun;15(6):1122-9.

Brancu M. *Identifying and managing burnout, compassion fatigue and vicarious traumatization.* Division 56 Trauma Psychology American Psychological Association Newsletter. 2013;8(2):29-31.

Perlick DA, Straits-Troster K, Strauss JL, Norell D, Tupler LA, Levine B, Luo X, Holman C, Marcus T, Dixon LB, Dyck DG. *Implementation of Multifamily Group Treatment for Veterans With Traumatic Brain Injury.* Psychiatr Serv. 2013 64(6):534-40.

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Meeting Presentations

May 16-18, San Francisco CA

Symposium: Structural Plasticity and Modulation of Amygdala Function with Stress, Trauma and PTSD

Vulnerability or Consequence: Amygdala Volume Changes with PTSD in a Large Case-Controlled Veteran Group presented by **Dr, Rajendra Morey**

Morey RA, Haswel, CC, Hurt SD, Lamar CD, Hurley RA, Taber KH. *White matter compromise in blast-exposed veterans without mild traumatic brain injury.*

Morey RA, Haswel, CC, Hurt SD, Lamar CD, Hurley RA, Taber KH. *White matter compromise in blast-exposed veterans without mild traumatic brain injury.* 19th Annual Meeting of the Organization for Human Brain Mapping, Seattle, WA. June 16-20, 2013.

Swinkels CM, Ulmer C, Means M, Beckham JC, VISN-6 Registry Workgroup, Calhoun PS. *The Association of Sleep Disturbance and Suicidal Ideation among OEF/OIF/OND Veterans.* Sleep 2013, 27th annual meeting of the American Academy of Sleep Medicine, June 1-5, Baltimore, MD.

Van Voorhees EE, Bidwell LC, McClernon FJ, Beckham JC, Kollins SH. *Sex differences in smoking risk in attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder.* 53rd Annual NCDEU Meeting, Hollywood, FL, June 2013.

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 - *Sleep Disturbances after TBI*

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

Journal Articles

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Scholten J, Cernick A, Hurley RA, Helmick K. *Department of Veterans Affairs's Traumatic Brain Injury Screening and Evaluation Program: Promoting Individualized Interdisciplinary Care for Symptomatic Veterans.* J Head Trauma Rehabilitation 2013 May/June;28(3):219-222.

Sripada RK, Marx CE, King AP, Rampton JC, Ho S, Liberzon I. *Allopregnanolone Elevations Following Pregnenolone Administration are Associated with Enhanced Activation of Emotion Regulation Neurocircuits.* PRIORITY COMMUNICATION. Biological Psychiatry. 2013 Jun 1;73(11):1045-53.

Stevens FL, Weisman O, Feldman R, Hurley RA, Taber KH. *Oxytocin and Behavior: Evidence for Effects in the Brain.* Journal of Neuropsychiatry and Clinical Neuroscience 2013 Spring; 25(2): iv, 97-102.

Straits-Troster K, Gierisch JM, Strauss JL, Dyck DG, Dixon LB, Norell D, Perlick DA. *Multifamily Group Treatment for Veterans With Traumatic Brain Injury: What Is the Value to Participants?* Psychiatr Serv. 2013 Jun 1;64(6):541-6.

South Central MIRECC **CBOC Mental Health Rounds**

July 10 from 9-10 am ET
Caregiver Support Programs: Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers
Carolyn Blackstone, MSW, LCSW &
Veronica Castro, LCSW, C-ASWCM

You must register in TMS for these sessions in advance to receive credit.

Credits/Hours: 1
Accreditations: ACCME, ANCC, APA, ASWB
VANTS: 1-800-767-1750 Access code-26461#

At the conclusion of this educational program, learners will be able to:

- Describe the Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers application and eligibility process;
- Participate in providing feedback as it relates to identifying care needs of Veterans; and
- Educate Veterans/Caregivers and VA staff on the application process and other services available to Caregivers.

August 14 from 9-10 am ET
Safety Planning App

September 11 from 9-10 am ET
Interventions for Aggression in Dementia

October 9 from 9-10 am ET
Neuropsychiatric Side Effects of Medication

November 13 from 9-10 am ET
Gun Safety

December 11 from 9-10 am ET
Sleep Disorders

Contact Dr. Geri Adler with any questions:
geri.adler@va.gov or 713-794-8660

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

Outcome: By building on the experience of peers and senior clinicians, the attendee will increase his/her effectiveness in serving Veterans, strengthen his/her clinical skills and improve self-care.

Upcoming sessions: **July 7 August 14 September 11 October 9 November 11 December 18**

Participation available in person (Durham VA) or by audio-teleconferencing. Register to participate or present a case at an upcoming session by contacting Harold Kudler (harold.kudler@va.gov; 919-286-0411 ext 7021).

New Resources

MOVING FORWARD
OVERCOMING LIFE'S CHALLENGES

The VA and DoD partnered to develop *Moving Forward*, a free, on-line education and life coaching program that teaches problem solving skills to Veterans, Service Members and their families. This evidence-based program uses interactive exercises and video demonstrations to teach skills for overcoming life challenges such as relationship problems, financial hardship, and re-adjustment issues. Introduce your patients to this anonymous, always available, web-based resource and empower them to keep Moving Forward!

www.StartMovingForward.org

Noon V-tel Lecture Schedule:

September 13 **TBA**

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).

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.ahecconnect.com/citizensoldier**

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

1 - ***Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (english & spanish editions)***
2 - ***A Primary Care Approach***
3 - ***Issues of Women Returning from Combat***
4 - ***Recognizing the Signs of mTBI during Routine Eye Examinations***
5 - ***Understanding Military Family Issues***

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.