



# VISN 6 Mid-Atlantic MIRECC Post Deployment Mental Health

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

Vol 9 (6) December 2013



## 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

## In Memoriam



We are saddened to report the death of Col. (Ret.) Hector Henry II, MD. Dr. Henry was a highly valued member of our Advisory Board for many years, bringing the Veteran's perspective to their work. He served our country for over 40 years as an officer, medical provider and commander. Col. Henry's combat deployments included Vietnam, Operation Desert Storm, the Second Gulf War, and Operation Enduring Freedom. An expert in adult and pediatric urology, he joined the Salisbury VA and Wake Forest School of Medicine seven years ago following more than three decades at Duke. The legacy of his remarkable military service and medical career is a wonderful gift to be cherished. Our thoughts and prayers are with his wife, children and other family members as they grieve his loss.

## Focus on the VISN North Carolina Vet-To-Vet (NCV2V)

Dr. Harold Kudler (Associate MIRECC Director, Clinical) and MIRECC colleagues have partnered with the North Carolina Division of Mental Health to facilitate development of a collaborative peer support system to augment existing outreach services and support for returning service members, Veterans and families. NCV2V is envisioned as a community-based veteran peer initiative that will reach all one hundred counties within the state. NCV2V will engage, educate and motivate Veterans and their families where they live to mitigate suffering within this population.

continued on page 2

## Recently Approved Grants

**Katherine Taber (Col)** (Perlick, PI - VISN 3 MIRECC) *Multi-Family Group Intervention for OEF/OIF Traumatic Brain Injury Survivors and Their Families.* VA RR&D

## Approved Research Sites & Contacts:

**Durham VA**  
Study Coordinator  
mireccstudies@va.gov  
919-416-5915

**Hampton VA**  
Monica Cook  
monica.cook@va.gov  
757-722-9961 ext 2324

**Richmond VA**  
Robin Lumpkin  
robin.lumpkin@va.gov  
804-675-5000 ext 4251

**Salem VA**  
Sarah Voss Horrell  
sarah.vosshorrell@va.gov  
540-982-2463 ext 1-1467

**Salisbury VA**  
Mary Peoples  
mary.peoples1@va.gov  
704-638-9000 ext 2956

## Focus on the VISN

continued from page 1

### Invited Lectures

**Dr. Robin A. Hurley** (MIRECC Associate Director, Education) presented *Windows to the Brain: Mental Health Aspects of TBI* as part of Wake Forest University Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences Grand Rounds on November 15, 2013 in Winston-Salem, NC. She was a presenter and discussant for "Traumatic Brain Injury...The Silent Epidemic", free training sponsored by Operation Recovery, November 20 2013, Mecklenburg County Police and Fire Training Academy, Charlotte NC.

**Dr. Jason A. Nieuwsma** (MIRECC researcher) presented "Integrating chaplaincy and mental health care: Findings from a mixed methods study in the U.S. Departments of Defense and Veterans Affairs" at the Duke University Center for Spirituality, Theology and Health Research Seminar in July 2013, Durham, NC.

### New Service Role

**Dr. Robin Hurley** (MIRECC Associate Director, Education) is serving as Chair of the TBI Advisory Committee workgroup addressing FY13 / FY14 Recommendation #11 "Summarize and educate the VHA clinicians in the field, Veterans and caregivers on the type and availability of mental health specialty care services related to TBI care".

### South Central MIRECC CBOC Mental Health Rounds

Each CBOC MH Rounds presentation is now offered **two** times every month.

**January 8 from 9-10 am ET**

**January 9 from 12-1 pm ET**

**Ethics**

**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#**

Contact Dr. Geri Adler with any questions:  
geri.adler@va.gov or 713-440-4480

### Education Component Update



**Mental Health Innovations**  
DECEMBER 2013  
Updates from VA's Specialized Mental Health Centers  
IN THIS ISSUE: Helping Veterans Find Their Way to Better Zzz's: Getting a Good Night's Sleep

Each issue of this news brief from the Education Components for the VA's Mental Health Centers of Excellence has a different topic focus. This time it is sleep.

[www.mirecc.va.gov/newsletter/current.asp](http://www.mirecc.va.gov/newsletter/current.asp)

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

## Clinical Component Update

### Training for Community Providers Goes National

There is now a national training program based on the workshops developed by **Dr. Harold Kudler** (Associate MIRECC Director, Clinical) in collaboration with the North Carolina Area Health Education Center (AHEC) and the University of North Carolina's Citizen Soldier Support Program. MIRECC personnel collaborated with the National AHEC on adapting the training. Ten regional "train the trainer" workshops prepared 247 AHEC staff/partners representing 135 centers (see maps) - more than half of the nation's 257 AHECs - to facilitate delivery of the training to civilian health professionals.



The goal of training 10,000 providers has been surpassed and the number continues to grow. As VA forges ahead in its efforts to provide Veteran-Centered Care in its facilities and in partnership with community providers, this national training continues to support community competence in recognizing and treating the effects of deployment stress in partnership with VA.

### Journal Articles

**Brown VM, LaBar KS, Haswell CC, Gold AL, Mid-Atlantic MIRECC Workgroup, McCarthy G, Morey RA.** *Altered resting-state functional connectivity of basolateral and centromedial amygdala complexes in posttraumatic stress disorder.* *Neuropsychopharmacology.* 2014; 39: 351-359.

**Curry JF, Aubuchon-Endsley N, Brancu M, Runnals JJ, VA Mid-Atlantic MIRECC Women Veterans Research Workgroup, VA Mid-Atlantic MIRECC Registry Workgroup, Fairbank JA.** *Lifetime major depression and comorbid disorders among current-era women veterans.* *Journal of Affective Disorders.* 2014; 152-154: 434-40.

**Eknoyan D, Hurley RA, Taber, KH.** *The Neurobiology of Placebo and Nocebo: How Expectations Influence Treatment Outcomes.* *Journal of Neuropsychiatry and Clinical Neurosciences* 2013; 25(4): iv, 251-254.

**Elbogen EB, Sullivan C, Wolfe J, Wagner HR, Beckham JC.** *Homelessness and money mismanagement in Iraq and Afghanistan veterans.* *American Journal of Public Health.* 2013; 103 Suppl 2: S248-54.

**Green KT, Beckham JC, Youssef N, Elbogen EB.** *Alcohol misuse and psychological resilience among U.S. Iraq and Afghanistan era veterans.* *Addictive Behaviors.* 2014 Feb;39(2):406-13.

continued on page 4

## Meeting Presentations



### International Society for Traumatic Stress Studies 29th Annual Meeting

November 7 - 9, 2013, Philadelphia PA

**Brancu, Kudler, Mann-Wrobel, Robbins, Swinkles** *Fostering Resilience in Providers: Compassion Fatigue Prevention for Researchers, Clinicians, and Helpline Responders Working with Trauma Populations* (Workshop)

**Brancu, Wagner, Calhoun, Thompson, Green, Elbogen, Robbins, Fairbank, Registry Workgroup, Beckham** *PTSD in Iraq and Afghanistan Era Veterans May Diminish the Impact of Social Support as a Resiliency Factor*

**Elbogen, Wagner, Beckham** *Developing a Risk Screen for Violence in Veterans*

**Hawn, Keuper, Overstreet, Stratton, Brown, Amstadter** *Examination of Risk Propensity, Perceived Threat, Combat Experiences and PTSD in a Sample of Returning Veterans*

**Keuper, Hawn, Overstreet, Berenz, Brown, McDonald, Pickett, Danielson, Thomas, Amstadter** *Family History of Alcohol Use Disorder Moderates the Relationship between Post-Deployment Social Support and Average Drinking Quantity in OIF/OEF Combat Veterans*

**Kirby, Ulmer, Dennis, Roberts, Beckham** *Effectiveness of Group ACT Interventions in Treatment of PTSD*

**Kirlic, Figley, Courtols, Kudler, Osofsky** *Building Resilience Among Young Clinicians and Researchers Working with Trauma-exposed Populations* (Workshop)

**McDonald, Mancini, Pickett, Kreutzer, Beckham, Ketchum, Melanko, Cifu** *Resilience is a Common Adjustment Trajectory After Traumatic Injury*

[continued on page 4](#)



## Program Update

### 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.

### Conferences

#### **Bridging Chaplaincy and Mental Health Care Conference**

September 12-13, Nashville TN

### Reports

**Nieuwsma J A, Rhodes J E, Cantrell W C, Jackson G L, Lane M B, DeKraai M B, Bulling D J, Fitchett G, Milstein G, Bray R M, Ethridge K, Drescher KD, Bates MJ, Meador KG.** *The intersection of chaplaincy and mental health care in VA and DoD: Expanded report on VA / DoD Integrated Mental Health Strategy, Strategic Action #23.* Washington, DC: Department of Veterans Affairs and Department of Defense. 2013. (Summary Report also available)

### Presentations

**Nieuwsma JA, Meador KG.** *Implementing integrated chaplain and mental health care service models in VA and the military.* Inaugural Summit on Transformative Innovation in Health Care, Duke Institute for Health Innovation, September 2013, Durham, NC.

**Ramchand R, Nieuwsma JA, Duncan D, Melvin J, Bartell S.** *Chaplains' engagement with suicidality in service members: Findings from the DOD/VA Integrated Mental Health Strategy.* In J. Rhodes (Moderator), Chaplain panel on suicide awareness: What the chaplain offers to the integrated mental health team. Symposium conducted at the fifth annual Warrior Resilience Conference, August 2013, Washington, DC.

**Nieuwsma JA.** *Integrating chaplaincy and mental health care: Findings from a mixed methods study in the U.S. Departments of Defense and Veterans Affairs.* Duke University Center for Spirituality, Theology and Health Research Seminar, July 2013, Durham, NC.

## ★ Free ★ Web Courses for Providers

### **Treating the Invisible Wounds of War**

[www.aheconnect.com/citizensoldier](http://www.aheconnect.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.

## Meeting Presentations

continued from page 3



**McDonald, Yoash-Gants, Walker, Pickett, Cifu, Tupler** *Mild Traumatic Brain Injury is Associated with Health Problems Beyond the Impact of PTSD, Depression, and Anxiety Disorders*

**Nieuwsma, Rhodes, Bates, Cantrell, Meador** *Chaplains' Engagement in Enhancing Resiliency for Service Members and Veterans*

**Overstreet, Hawn, Keuper, Stratton, McDonald, Amstadter** *Associations Between Distress Tolerance, Anxiety Sensitivity, and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder in Veterans*

**Stratton, Amstadter, McDonald** *An Evaluation of Three Models of Resilience in a Sample of Military Service Members and Veterans*

**Van Voorhees, Robbins, Calhoun, Dennis, Beckham** *DHEA, DHEAS, and Cortisol as Potential Biomarkers of Childhood Trauma Exposure and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder*

## Journal Articles

continued from page 2

**Green KT, Beckham JC, Youssef N, Elbogen EB.** *Alcohol misuse and psychological resilience among U.S. Iraq and Afghanistan era veterans.* *Addictive Behaviors.* 2014 Feb;39(2):406-13.

**Hertzberg JS, Carpenter VL, Kirby AC, Calhoun PS, Moore SD, Dennis MF, Dennis PA, Dedert EA, Beckham JC.** *Mobile contingency management as an adjunctive smoking cessation treatment for smokers with posttraumatic stress disorder.* *Nicotine and Tobacco Research.* 2013; 15(11): 1934-8.

**Kelley ML, Runnals J, Pearson MR, Miller MM, Fairbank JA, VA Mid-Atlantic MIRECC Women Veteran Workgroup, VA Mid-Atlantic MIRECC Registry Workgroup, Brancu M.** *Alcohol use and trauma exposure among male and female veterans before, during, and after military service.* *Drug & Alcohol Dependence.* 2013; 133(2): 615-24

**McCormick CL, Yoash-Gantz RE, McDonald SD, Campbell TC, Tupler LA.** *Performance on the Green Word Memory Test Following Operation Enduring Freedom/Operation Iraqi Freedom-Era Military Service: Test Failure is Related to Evaluation Context.* *Archives of Clinical Neuropsychology.* 2013; 28(8): 808-23.

**Ulmer CS, Calhoun PS, Bosworth HB, Dennis MF, Beckham JC.** *Nocturnal blood pressure non-dipping, posttraumatic stress disorder, and sleep quality in women.* *Behavioral Medicine.* 2013; 39(4): 111-2.

**Van Voorhees EE, Dennis MF, Calhoun PS, Beckham JC.** *Association of DHEA, DHEAS, and cortisol with childhood trauma exposure and post-traumatic stress disorder.* *International Clinical Psychopharmacology.* 2014 Jan;29(1):56-62.

continued in column 2

## In the News!

Dr. Eric Elbogen's research on returning Veterans' risk factors for dangerous behaviors was recently featured.

FALL 2013

# VA

## RESEARCH CURRENTS

Research News from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

**When reintegration goes awry: Unraveling the factors that put Veterans at risk for crime, violence, and homelessness**

<http://www.research.va.gov/currents/fall2013/fall2013-5.cfm>



### Excerpts

Elbogen is a forensic psychologist who studies the link between mental health and criminal behavior, particularly violent crime. In recent years, much of his work has focused on returning Veterans. .... one of his key messages is that PTSD is not the same for each Veteran. It's different from one person to the next. Some might have PTSD symptoms that, according to research, do predict violent behavior. Others might have a form of the disorder that is in no way linked to violence or aggression. ... He acknowledges that some of the factors are intertwined in subtle ways, and there is much that even the experts don't fully understand. But they all have to be considered to "avoid a kneejerk reaction" to a complex problem, he asserts. "The PTSD diagnosis is relevant," he says, "but it's the tip of the iceberg. And people often stop there in terms of looking at why an incident may have happened." ... The bottom line, he says, is that "the majority of Veterans, with or without PTSD, did not report violence, aggression, or criminal behavior. At the same time, the data indicated that violence remains a serious problem for a subset of Veterans."

<http://www.research.va.gov/currents/fall2013/fall2013-5.cfm>

continued from column 1

**Vrana SR, Calhoun PS, McClernon FJ, Dennis MF, Lee ST, Beckham JC.** *Effects of smoking on the acoustic startle response and prepulse inhibition in smokers with and without posttraumatic stress disorder.* *Psychopharmacology (Berl)* 2013; 230: 477-485.