

MID-ATLANTIC MIRECC UPDATE

In the News



The VA National Chaplain Service announced plans for the FY21 Community Clergy Training Initiative, with funding support from VA's Office of Rural Health. The invitation was extended to Chaplain Service Lines at VA facilities across the country. Those that have accepted the invitation to participate will work in collaboration with their local Suicide Prevention Coordinator to host 1-2 virtual events for community clergy. In support of this effort, VA's Mental Health and Chaplaincy (MH&C) program has worked in collaboration with the National Chaplain Service to identify and share existing MH&C resources, including videos specifically designed for clergy and faith communities who are interested in collaborating in care in support of Veterans. The video clips include reflections from Veterans, clergy from different denominations, and mental health providers that are intended to provide some educational information and prompt discussions about how to better care for Veterans and create places of community and belonging. The MH&C team also hosted two brief calls, one in late January and one in early February, for VA Chaplains who expressed an interest in learning more about the materials, lessons learned from prior use of the materials, and available support resources (e.g. brief facilitator's guide and discussion questions). Approximately 52 facilities have indicated they plan to host at least one Community Clergy Training as part of the FY21 efforts and 35 facilities have expressed interest in using or learning more about available MH&C materials in support of this work. For more information, click [here](#).

Community Services



Recently, **Dr. Rajendra Morey** (MIRECC Faculty & Neuroimaging Lab Director), started volunteering as a COVID-19 vaccinator at the Southern High School in Durham. His desire was to volunteer his time and work in an underserved area with a diverse patient population, including Veterans and the general public. Dr. Morey stated that "the experience is very gratifying and he looks forward to assisting the large and well-coordinated team of healthcare workers in a fast-paced environment."

Grants

Co-PIs: Drs. Jackson, G., **Nieuwsma, J.**, Crowley, M., Cutrona, S. (MH&C).

Type: QUERI Program Merit Review Award. **Title:** Dynamic Diffusion Network QUERI Program. **Funded by:** (2020-2025) QUERI, Dept. of Veterans Affairs. (\$3,099,454).

PI: **Dr. Lad S.**, MIRECC 2nd year postdoctoral fellow, Salisbury site.

Type: Early Career Psychologist Professional Development Grant. **Title:** Adapting to Military Diversity: The need to update Clinical Neuropsychology Norms. **Funded by:** Military Psychology, Division 19. (\$1,250.00).

Education and Dissemination

Transitions



Dr. Cindy Swinkels has been named the new Clinical Core Co-Director to continue to advance the mission of translating postdeployment mental health through clinical training, consultative, evaluation and implementation efforts. Dr. Swinkels is highly engaged with both VA Central Office and the Department of Defense and brings a wealth of knowledge and awareness of national priorities to the MIRECC. As an expert in behavioral sleep medicine and other clinical repertoires, she embodies the true spirit of the MIRECC.

National Services



Dr. Holly Miskey (MIRECC Fellowship Co-Director, Salisbury site), was invited to join *The International Neuropsychological Society's Education Committee*. The committee is responsible for the content of continuing education opportunities, developing the online Oral History Archive project which includes interviews with leaders in our field and developing other educational resources for its membership.

Honors & Awards



Dr. Robin Hurley, MIRECC Associate Director of Education, was honored on December 3rd by the Wake Forest School of Medicine (WFSM) with the 2020 *Special Achievement Award* for her many years of work to establish and grow research and educational relationships between the Salisbury VAMC and WFSM. The VISN 6 MIRECC was the first and longest standing research relationship

between the two entities. This successful partnership has led the two institutions to many years of growth in collaborative research in multiple disciplines, education of the next generation of medical providers in over 23 medical subspecialties, and to improved clinical care for the Salisbury VAMC Veterans. Congratulations to Dr. Hurley and her team.

Invited Lectures

Drs. Bryan, B. (previous MIRECC Fellow, and current Director of the Salisbury Psychology Internship and Psychology Residency, PTSD Program Director), and **Hurley, R.A.** (MIRECC Associate Director of Education), presented an invited lecture to Neuro Community Care, LLC for continuing education credits on February 16 on the topic "Windows to the Brain: Understanding PTSD in times of COVID-19." (**virtual**)

FOCUS ON THE VISN

Invited Lectures (Cont.)

Dr. López-Ojeda, W. (MIRECC Asst. Director of Education) offered a lecture presentation in January 25 for 3rd & 4th year Osteopathic and Allopathic medical students and other graduate interprofessional health trainees. His lecture was entitled "Neuroanatomical Perspectives on the Cranial Nerve Zero (CNO): A Multidisciplinary Educational Approach." **(virtual)**

Dr. Naylor, J. (MIRECC Deputy Director), presented an invited lecture to the Grand Rounds at Duke University for continuing education credits on December 17 on the topic "Biomarkers and New Therapeutics for Pain: A Novel Neurosteroid Intervention." **(virtual)**

Invited Presentations

Cantrell, W., Wortmann, J. (2021). *Mental Health and Chaplaincy: Development, Implementation, and Formative Training in Professional Chaplaincy and Integrated Care.* VA CPE Monthly Enrichment Seminar. **(virtual)**

Nieuwsma, JA. (2020). *Acceptance and Commitment Therapy.* Two-day workshop presented to Mental Health Chaplain Fellows, Hampton, VA. **(virtual)**

Nieuwsma, JA. (2020). *Moral Injury in Veterans: Considerations for Care Providers and Others.* VITAL Webinar Series.

Nieuwsma, J., Cantrell, W., Sullivan, S. (2020). *Collaborating in Care: Ministry and Mental Health.* Presented to Winston-Salem (NC) area clergy, faith community-based lay leaders, and mental health professionals. **(virtual)**

Sullivan, S., Anderson, S. (2020). *Moral Injury.* Presented to Minnesota "Vets and Friends." **(virtual)**

Wortmann, JH. (2021). *Mental Health and Chaplaincy: Equipping for Collaboration and Building Communities of Care.* ACPE Behavioral Health Community of Practice. **(virtual)**

Poster Presentations

Kilts, JD., Naylor, JC., Allen, Trina B., Reinhardt, AA., Buchanan, RA., Keefe, RSE., Shampine, LJ., Parke, G., Marx, CE. (2021). *Pregnenolone Improves Functional Capacity and Verbal Learning in Schizophrenia: A Randomized Controlled Trial.* International Meeting on Steroids and Nervous System and the associate Satellite Symposium. **(virtual)**

Marx CE., Naylor JC., Kilts JD., Parke GJ., Shampine LJ., Reinhardt AA., Spasojevic I., Mook RA. (2021). *Novel Long-Acting Neurosteroid Derivatives for Pain, Depression, and other CNS Disorders.* 11th International Meeting on Steroids and Nervous System and the associate Satellite Symposium. **(virtual)**

Naylor JC., Linnstaedt, SD., Bortsov, AV., Kilts, JD., Reinhardt, AA., Swor, R6, Peak, DA., Jones, J., Rathlev, N., Lee, DC., Domeier, R., Hendry, PL., McLean, SA., Marx, CE. (2021). *Genetic Variant in Steroid 5 α -reductase Type 3 (SRD5A3) is Associated with PTSD Following Motor Vehicle Collision Trauma.* 11th International Meeting on Steroids and Nervous System and the associate Satellite Symposium. **(virtual)**

Poster Presentations (Cont.)

Parry, K., Perry, K., Hicken, B., Ferguson, S., Nieuwsma, J., King, H. (2020). *Novel Types of Potentially Morally Injurious Events in post 9/11 Veterans: Results from a Qualitative Descriptive Study.* International Society for Traumatic Stress Studies Annual Conference, Atlanta, GA. **(virtual)**

Reinhardt, AA., Naylor JC., Kilts, JD., Shampine, LJ., Parke, GJ., VA Mid-Atlantic MIRECC Workgroup, Jain, S., Grant, G., Lang, AJ., Stein, MB., Marx, CE. (2021). *Neurosteroids and Inflammatory Markers.* 11th International Meeting on Steroids and Nervous System and the associate Satellite Symposium. **(virtual)**

Trimm, V., Smigelsky, M., Nieuwsma, J., Parry, K., King, H. (2020). *Surrounding Support: Investigating the Relationship of Moral Injury and pre-deployment, Deployment, and post-deployment Social Support in post-9/11 Veterans.* International Society for Traumatic Stress Studies Annual Conference. **(virtual)**

Publications

Bateman JR, Taber KH, Hurley RA. (2020). *Complex Metal Ions: Neuropsychiatric and Imaging Features.* J Neuropsychiatry Clin Neurosci. **(Read more)**

Hurley, RA. (2021). *A Tribute to Katherine H. Taber, Ph.D., FANPA.* J Neuropsychiatry Clin Neurosci. **(Read more)**

King, H., Nieuwsma, JA., & Parry, K. (2020). *Moral Injury: Rurality, Access to Care, and Service Preferences.* Veterans Rural Health Resource Center Issue Brief. U.S. Dept. of Veterans Affairs' Office of Rural Health.

Martindale, SL., Shura, RD., Rostami, R., Taber, KH., Rowland, JA. (2021). *Research Letter: Blast Exposure and Brain Volume.* Journal of Head Trauma Rehabilitation. **(Read more)**

Nieuwsma, JA., Brancu, M., Wortmann, JH., Smigelsky, MA., King, HA., VISN 6 MIRECC Workgroup, Meador, KG (2020). *Screening for Moral Injury and Comparatively Evaluating Moral Injury Measures in Relation to Mental Illness Symptomatology, Course, and Diagnosis.* Clinical Psychology and Psychotherapy. **(Read more)**

Ord, AS., Shura, RD., Curtiss, G., Armistead-Jehle, P., Vanderploeg, R., Bowles, A., Kennedy, JE., Tate, DF., Cooper, DB. (2020). *Number of Concussions Does Not Affect Treatment Response to Cognitive Rehabilitation Interventions Following Mild TBI in Military Service Members.* Archives of Clinical Neuropsychology. **(Read more)**

Pawa, S., Banerjee, P., Kothari, S., D'Souza, S., Martindale, SL., Gaidos, JKJ., Oxentenko, A., Burke, CA. (2021). *Are all Endoscopic-related Musculoskeletal Injuries Created Equal?: Results of a National Gender-Based Survey.* American Journal of Gastroenterology. **(Read 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](#)."

ONLINE LIFE TRAINING SKILLS FOR VETERANS

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.

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

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.

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.



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.



CBOC Mental Health Grand Rounds

UPCOMING WEBINARS FOR NATIONAL CBOC MENTAL HEALTH GRAND ROUNDS

March 10 & 11
Using An All-Encompassing Approach to Treat Affective Disorders (9am-10am EST).

April 14 & 15:
Ethics of Responding to Hate Speech and Microaggressions (9-10am EST).

May 12 & 13:
Treating Substance Use Disorder and the National Telemental Health SUD Consultation Service (9am-10am EST).

Check the website for previous webinars in this series available for credit in TMS.

For direct links to webinars, click [here](#).



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VA



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

To develop, disseminate and apply scientific knowledge and best practices to enhance post-deployment mental health and wellness for our Nation's Veterans and their families.

Stay Up to Date on Mid-Atlantic MIRECC
Contact (leonard.deshield@va.gov) to ensure you're on the mailing list to receive copies of our newsletter.



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