

GRECC AdVAnces

Veteran Health Administration – Geriatrics Center of Excellence
Research and Innovations for Older Veterans – *Summer 2022*



From the Director

This issue of **GRECC AdVAnces** provides details about:

- The work of the GRECC ad hoc Communications and Marketing Committee to add a specific section about Research to the GRECC website – it is cleverly named Research AIMS. It allows us to feature publications in more than one place on the website – publications are also listed at the end of each newly revised site-specific pages for GRECC locations.
- A new pocket card resource for providers and trainees, **The Delirium Reference Guide**, which includes key features and types of delirium, contributing and causal factors, assessment approaches and recommended non-pharmacological strategies for management and prevention.
- An innovative pilot program to improve care transitions for high-risk Veterans, which based on its results to date, is slated to convert from demonstration status to a program in 2023.

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Research Section on GRECC Website

The GRECC website has a new section called **Research AIMS**, which features 3 subsections. The featured projects and publications will be updated every 6 months.

At the Leading Edge

In part, the content reads: VA’s 20 GRECCs are at the leading edge of conducting research that will result in better care and outcomes for older Veterans and all older adults.

Improving Veteran Health

This section highlights the work of these GRECCs:

- Cleveland GRECC: Feasibility of a Nursing Home Antibiotic Stewardship Intervention
- Pittsburgh GRECC: Feasibility of an Academic Detailing Intervention to Support Deprescribing in the Nursing Home
- Tennessee Valley GRECC: Improving the Assessment and Documentation of Patient Mobility

Making an Impact



Last, this section details the work of several GRECCs:

- Birmingham/Atlanta GRECC: Integrated Management and Polypharmacy Review of Vulnerable Elders (IMPROVE)
- Multiple GRECCs: Coordinate Transition Care (CTraC)
- Multiple GRECCs: AssiSTed EaRly Mobility for Hospitalized Older Veterans (STRIDE)
- Multiple GRECCs: GRECC Connect



New Delirium Reference Guide

The Aging and Cognition Education workgroup has developed a new educational tool, called the “Delirium Reference Guide.” This pocket card is for health care professionals to assist in the detection, management and prevention of delirium. The workgroup includes education leaders from several VA GRECCs – this is the same group that brought you the popular “3Ds: Depression, Dementia, Delirium” pocket card. The Delirium Reference Guide is intended to educate providers and trainees about key features and types of delirium.

Delirium Reference Guide	
Delirium is a common and serious condition involving a disturbance in attention and awareness which develops over a short period of time. Delirium can lead to increased risk of mortality and morbidity. Its identification and swift treatment are critical. This guide is meant to provide information and tools for VA Providers as part of a comprehensive assessment.	
IDENTIFY DELIRIUM	
Attention/mental status change - inattention, unable to focus, confusion, disorientation	
Rapid onset/course - acute onset (hours to days) and fluctuating course (waxing and waning)	
Behavioral disturbance - may show restlessness, agitation, pulling/picking at clothes or lines	
Disorganized thinking - rambling or irrelevant speech, illogical thoughts, paranoia, hallucinations	
Change in consciousness - may be hyperalert, jittery or drowsy, difficult to arouse	
Delirium presentation - <i>Hypoactive</i> (drowsy, slowed movements, clouded thinking); <i>Hyperactive</i> (agitated, wandering, refusing care); or <i>Mixed</i> (features of both, fluctuations between both)	
	
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Veterans Health Administration Genomic Research, Education, and Clinical Centers	

This reference guide is in print production right now thanks to generous funding from the [Geriatric Scholars program](#) and the Office of Rural Health. To pre-order copies, contact Julie.Moorer@va.gov with the # of copies and a physical mailing address (no PO boxes, please). Want more info? Email Emily.Trittschuh@va.gov.

www.va.gov/GRECC

Pilot Program to Improve Transitions of Care for High-Risk Veterans

The Salt Lake City VAMC GRECC Clinical Innovations Section is 10 months into a pilot program (GHELP-TC) that monitors Veteran’s care as they move from the hospital to SNF to home (2 health care transitions). Led by a pharmacist and collaborating geriatrician the program:

- Verifies that medications are correct when transitioning from hospital to ECF to home
- Helps track follow-up appointments post-hospital discharge
- Follows other issues such as planning for discharge from ECF to home, wound care issues, etc.
- So far, the program has served 76 Veterans

Lessons learned to date:

- Medication errors occur frequently during transitions and can be potentially life-threatening
- Serious scheduling errors also occur often
- Establishing communication with staff at SNFs is often difficult and communication about planned discharge from SNF to home can be especially difficult

The value of the program has been recognized by the facility and it will transition from demonstration status to become a regular program in FY 2023. A HFMEA [Healthcare Failure Mode and Effect Analysis] to review health care transitions. For more information, email Paul.Eleazer@va.gov.



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