



GRECC Education Programs Offer Value to Veterans, Trainees and Providers

...what follows is a small sampling of initiatives from among the many Educational Activities currently underway in VHA's Geriatric Research, Education and Clinical Centers (GRECCs).

Eastern Colorado GRECC: Interprofessional Case Conferences - Associated health professional trainees such as social work, pharmacy, occupational health, and psychology get together with Geriatric Fellows and participate in a monthly Interprofessional Case Conference. Information from an actual case that is specific to a given discipline, like pharmacy, is provided to the associate health trainees and clinically-relevant information is presented to fellows such as pharmacological aspects are provided to pharmacy residents. Trainees must ask one another questions necessary to elicit other information, which will allow the team to co-create an appropriate care plan. Preceptors observe and provide feedback. This method has been implemented with all of the GRECC trainees. Feedback from trainees has been extremely positive as they feel that this activity enhances their training experience. For more information, contact Kathryn Nearing, PhD at kathryn.nearing@ucdenver.edu or by phone at 720-475-6234.

Salt Lake City GRECC: Rocky Mountain Geriatric Conference - The Salt Lake City GRECC hosted the 15th Annual Rocky Mountain Geriatrics Conference held August 28-29, 2017, titled "Getting to the Heart of Aging: An Inter-professional Approach to Cardiovascular Health." The focus of the conference was on patient centered approaches in cardiac care specifically related to older adults. The conference planners utilized technological innovations to promote distance learning modalities (web-streaming) that allowed participants to participate remotely. There were thirty-two participants who attended in person, ninety-seven that participated through Adobe Connect video, and eleven that attended from other VISNs around the country. For more information contact, Jorie Butler at jorie.butler@va.gov or 801-582-1565 x. 1964.

New England GRECC: Home Safety Workbook - Dr. Lauren Moo led the modification and dissemination of "A Guide for Families: Keeping the Person with Memory Loss Safer at Home," a home safety workbook for caregivers of Veterans with dementia. The workbook is extremely popular among clinicians and caregivers. It is a stand-alone, self-paced educational workbook with practical tips for home safety written with literacy considerations. The workbook is 508 compliant for distribution and available on the GEC internet site: https://www.va.gov/geriatrics/docs/home_safety_booklet_8-1-17.pdf For more information, contact Dr. Lauren Moo; lauren.moo@va.gov or 718-687-2596.

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VA Pittsburgh GRECC develops Aphasia Rehabilitation Residency Program

Aphasia is a communication disorder that is common in brain injured Veterans and estimated to affect more than 100,000 US Veterans age 55 and older. The "**Pittsburgh Aphasia Rehabilitation Training Network and Residency**" (**PARTNeR**) program is an innovative targeted workforce development initiative that leverages the expertise and infrastructure of VA Pittsburgh's Program for Intensive Residential Aphasia Treatment and Education (**PIRATE**). Specifically, PARTNeR brings together scholarship awardees and GRECC clinical and research faculty recognized worldwide for their expertise in aphasia rehabilitation and research with Veterans undergoing treatment within PIRATE's novel point-of-care environment. The 5-week residency program includes core curricula addressing assessment, intervention, counseling, and outreach/advocacy aspects of aphasia management, and case-based experiential learning activities grounded in current psycholinguistic and cognitive-neuropsychological approaches to aphasia therapy to provide specialized training in theoretically motivated and patient-centered aphasia rehabilitation services consistent with current best evidence.

The VA Pittsburgh Healthcare System has awarded 6 Aphasia Rehabilitation Residency Scholarships to Speech Language Pathologists from the Cincinnati, Martinez, Minneapolis, Nashville, Richmond, and Seattle VA Medical Centers. Upon completion of the program, PARTNeR residents will have improved knowledge and competencies in aphasia rehabilitation, and will be prepared to serve as valuable resources and advocates for this underserved veteran population upon return to their home communities.

