



## GRECC Clinical Programs Offer Value to Veterans and Caregivers

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

**Gainesville GRECC:** Think Delirium is a program that began as a non-institutional long-term care nurse driven project to early identify and treat hospitalized patients at risk for delirium. An interdisciplinary Delirium Consult Team consisting of nursing, psychiatry, geriatrics, and pharmacy was developed and is currently active at Gainesville and Lake City, FL VA Medical Centers. In addition, an electronic Delirium Response Order set is fully operational in both location thanks to the Veterans Integrated Service Network (VISN) 8 which funded the project. To date, over 898 consults were completed with an average of 5 new consults per day. Among Veterans in whom a consult was completed, 50% were discharged back to home and the 30-day re-admission rate was 22%. Most of the consult recommendations involved reducing polypharmacy and potential drug-drug interactions, using non-pharmacological approaches to delirium and addressing behavioral issues. For more information, please contact Rebecca Beyth by email at [Rebecca.Beyth@va.gov](mailto:Rebecca.Beyth@va.gov) or by phone at 352-548-6000 x. 6895.

**Minneapolis GRECC:** Improving the Diagnosis and Management of Neurocognitive Disorders (NCD) in Patient Aligned Care Teams (PACT) was initiated in 2014. The University of Minneapolis School of Nursing agreed to address this initiative as a QI project for students in their Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP). In 2017, the SKY PACT, a pilot clinic for this new model, began collecting outcome data. They collected data on 39 specific parameters for Veterans with suspected cognitive impairment. In 2018, the student DNPs worked with the biostatistician and GRECC staff to refine process and outcome variables. Their focus is on the updated 2016 Dementia Management Quality Measures with special attention to Advance Care Planning and palliative care counseling; education and support of caregivers; and screening and management of behavioral symptoms. For more information, please contact Riley McCarten by email at [Riley.McCarten@va.gov](mailto:Riley.McCarten@va.gov) or by phone at 612-467-3314.

**Palo Alto GRECC:** E-Consults and Dementia is a new collaborative project, initiated in 2017, between the GRECC and the Palo Alto Health Care System Medical Service. Comprehensive E-consults involving chart review and phone evaluation are utilized to provide management of disruptive behaviors in Veterans with dementia who are physically or geographically otherwise unable to assess such expertise by other modalities. Providing the consult requires that the consulting geriatrician review the electronic chart and make telephone calls to family caregivers, or to both family and caregiving staff, to ascertain details about the Veteran's behaviors, triggers for the behaviors, management attempts, and other information. Developed plans include both behavioral and environmental management techniques and, if necessary, prescribing of medications. All medications are prescribed and reviewed by the consulting geriatrician. For more information, contact Joyce Tenover at [Joyce.Tenover@va.gov](mailto:Joyce.Tenover@va.gov) or by phone at 650-849-0580.



Dr. Robert J. S. Reis leads a research group that studies the factors (genes, diet, etc.) that affect lifespan and the risk of age-related diseases. His group is supported by a VA Merit award (2018–2022) to study how failure to maintain correctly-folded proteins contributes to dementias such as Alzheimer's Disease

(AD). By defining the protein-protein contacts that bind damaged and misfolded proteins together as clumps or aggregates, and by computer-model screening of molecular libraries for the ability to disrupt those interfaces, they hope to find novel drugs that prevent or reverse AD. They are also funded through a Program Project Grant headed by Dr. Sue Griffin to study early events in Alzheimer's, and through a just-funded R01 award (2018–2023) to Drs. Reis and Ayyadevara from the National Institute on Aging, to analyze aggregates that form and grow with age in a variety of mouse tissues. Their goal in this new work is to discover and test common features that might underlie a wide variety of diseases and debilities associated with aging.

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### **Smoking Cessation for Older Veterans – Practical Care of Mature Adults**

Presented by Lana Brown, PhD, RN, NEA-BC, VHA-CM  
November 13, 2018 at 11:30 AM – 12:00 PM

### **Ask the Expert on Smoking Cessation for Older Veterans**

November 14, 2018 at 11:30 AM – 12:00 PM

Registration Link: [Practical Care of Mature Adults: Smoking Cessation for Older Veterans](#)

Day of Session Link for both sessions:  
[Geriatric Syndromes Live Webinars](#)  
For Audio: 1-800-767-1750  
Participant Code: 47322#

Contact [VISN16 GRECC Education Team](#) for details.

