

JANUARY 2024

VA



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CAREGIVER SUPPORT NEWSLETTER

Mann-Grandstaff VAMC



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Upcoming Events

January 2024:

- **Jan. 10th- Caregiver Connections Group** (Support) from 2-3pm.
- **Jan. 11th - SAVE Training** 2-3pm with Kristen Boviall
- **Jan. 16th- PTSD and WE-** from 2-3pm Group will discuss unique challenges facing family members caring for a Veteran with PTSD (partnered with the Alaska VAMC).
- **Building Better Caregivers**
 - **This 6 week course can be done at your own pace.**

Check out the last pages of this newsletter to plan ahead!

Groups/Trainings

Caregiver Connections Group-A process group to share stressors and triumphs as a caregiver and build interpersonal connections with fellow caregivers.

Resources for Enhancing All Caregiver’s Health (REACH)-This individualized evidenced-based program can help with Caregiver stressors that result from caregiving. It involves 4 individual sessions with a REACH Social Worker focused on All Eras, PTSD, ALS, MS, and Dementia.

Caregivers First-An evidenced-based program with 4 interactive and flexible trainings designed to optimize caregiver functioning by building coping, seeking support, and developing hands-on skills and strategies when caring for the Veteran.

Suicide Awareness-SAVE-Training in partnership with Suicide Prevention on how to identify and support Veterans having thoughts, plans, and intent to follow through with suicide.

- Signs of Suicidal Thinking
- Ask Questions
- Validate Experience
- Encourage Treatment

TAKE 5- SEASONAL AFFECTIVE DISORDER

SAD or Seasonal Affective Disorder is a depressive disorder related to the season change. The holidays can be a strain on anyone and experiencing SAD throughout our chilly months in the PNW (pacific northwest), as beautiful as the snow may be, can bring about depressive related symptoms.

So, what can we do?

Treatment

Take 5 and exercise!

Bundle up and go for a walk. As the sun reflects off of the snow absorb some vitamin D. Your Veteran’s doctor can also place a referral to prosthetics for a SAD-Light!

Make a healthy snack! - see ideas from our team below.

Seek counseling resources.

Come to our Caregiver Connections support group!



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National Resources

REACH VA

Resources for Enhancing All Caregivers Health (REACH) VA offers one-on-one coaching and group support to caregivers of Veterans. REACH VA primarily supports caregivers of Veterans with dementia, spinal cord injury/disorders, multiple sclerosis (MS), post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), or amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS). There is also a unique program for spouses of post-9/11 Veterans. REACH VA is available for caregivers of Veterans enrolled in VA health care.

**Contact your CSP team for additional information or referrals
(509) 434-7755.**



VA Caregiver Support Line Monthly Telephone Education Calls

Presentations provide tools that support Veteran caregiver self-care. Join by telephone and listen in the comfort of your own home. This is open to Family Caregivers of Veterans of all eras.

If you would like to participate, please contact the VA Caregiver Support Line to register or learn more at 1-855-260-3274

January 2024:

Focusing on the Forgotten Me

- Tuesday, Jan. 2nd at 7:00 a.m.
- Wednesday, Jan. 10th at 4:00 p.m.
- Wednesday, Jan. 17th at 12:00 p.m.



Socio-Technology Resources – Outreach and Access to Evidence-Based Care



ACT Coach to support management of distressing thoughts, feelings, and impulses



MH Checkup Care coordination tool to review results, coping resources, and other supports



Mindfulness Coach teaches mindfulness to reduce stress and facilitate coping



Beyond MST provides support for the health and well-being of survivors of sexual assault or harassment



VetChange – guidance and resources for developing healthier drinking habits



STAIR Coach Skills Training in Affective & Interpersonal Regulation for coping with trauma (self-care and resources)



AIMS (Anger and Irritability Management Skills) to support coping and connections



Live Whole Health teaches skills to help reach whole health goals



Insomnia Coach provides training to help track and improve sleep



Video Connect provides secure connection to health care providers from anywhere



PTSD Coach & PTSD Family Coach for treating, supporting, and coping with PTSD



Annie – empowering resources that motivates by sending various automated self-care reminders



MHA provides MH checkups and connections to resources and supports



Virtual Care Manager care coordination app to create, edit, and join visits and / or emergency support info.



Psychological First Aid resources for engaging adults, families, and children



Caring4Women to help caregivers serve the unique physical and mental health needs of women Veterans



Prolonged Exposure resources, supports, and care coordination tools



Couples Coach encourages connections to improve partner communication, satisfaction, and strengthen protective factors



These apps are free to use and have been produced by or in partnership with the VA.

Do make sure the picture next to the app you download matches those above or it says its produced by the VA.....there's some questionable stuff out there!

2024 Classes for YOU

This year your Caregiver Support team will be hosting classes taught by us!

For the Month of February 2024 - *virtual*

Our Registered Nurse Kaye Slater will bring you

Vital Signs and Valentines Feb 21st at 1:00pm

February is known for many things: Black History Month, Valentine's Day, President's Day, and in 2024 we will see a Leap Year! February is also Heart Awareness month, which kind of fits with Valentines Day! ❤️ Join us for information about all Vital Signs, including those that tell us about the heart. How do vitals change when we are dehydrated? When we stand too quickly? When we eat a lot of salt? When we take certain medications? Join us for that and more!

In March 2024 we'll have our Occupational Therapist Wendy Bornstein with tips on safe transfers!

SNACK IDEAS FROM YOUR CAREGIVER SUPPORT CREW

Cassandra makes hummus and uses fresh baby carrots, small peppers, and cucumbers to dip. She also likes to roll meats and cheese, adding pickle and peanut butter in the middle!

Tom enjoys chips and guacamole!

Wendy wraps baby dill pickles with a slice of turkey or ham sandwich meat. She also likes tuna fish with light mayonnaise, mustard, diced pickles and a seasoning like dried basil and garlic. She salts it to taste with a few low carb crackers.

Rayanna enjoys seedless red grapes, cheese, and mixed nuts. She also likes using a healthy bagel slice with peanut butter, sliced bananas, and cinnamon to make a sandwich!



Have you participated in 1:1 REACH VA with a program coach, and are you interested in REACH VA group sessions? Give our PCAFC Coordinator Tom a call! His contact information is on the first page.