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VA researchers named to TIME Magazine's list of 50 most influential people in health care

WASHINGTON — Two research scientists with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) were recently named to TIME Magazine's list of the [50 most influential people in health care in 2018](#).

TIME Magazine honored VA's [Dr. Ann McKee](#) and [Dr. Tony Wyss-Coray](#) among a roster of physicians, scientists, and business and political leaders whose works are transforming health care approach and delivery around the country.

"Dr. Ann McKee and Dr. Wyss-Coray are key VA health care leaders who are performing groundbreaking research," said VA Secretary Robert Wilkie. "And I'm proud to have them in our ranks searching for new ways to improve the lives of our Veterans."

McKee is chief of Neuropathology at the [VA Boston Healthcare System](#) and director of the [VA-BU-CLF Brain Bank](#), a joint endeavor between VA, Boston University and the Concussion Legacy Foundation. She is a pioneer in identifying and understanding the repercussions of chronic traumatic encephalopathy (CTE) — a degenerative condition caused by repeated traumatic blows to the head. CTE has been associated with repetitive, mild traumatic brain injury in military service members.

Her research has called widespread attention to the alarming prevalence of CTE in professional football players. After former New England Patriots tight end Aaron Hernandez died by suicide at age 27, McKee discovered CTE in his brain — the most severe case of CTE she had seen in someone his age. Her research has also demonstrated that adults are not the only ones at risk of brain injury from mild repetitive trauma. McKee has found evidence that children age 6 to 12 who play tackle football are also at risk for brain injury.

Wyss-Coray is a VA senior research scientist and associate director of the [Center for Tissue Regeneration, Repair and Restoration](#) at Palo Alto, California. He is also a professor of neurology and neurological sciences at Stanford University. His laboratory studies the effects of aging and immune responses on the brain and the role Alzheimer's disease plays in brain degeneration and memory loss.

Wyss-Coray is best-known for his groundbreaking research into the use of blood taken from young mice to combat the effects of aging and memory loss in older mice. The process originally involved surgically connecting young mice to older mice — so they would share blood circulation. Now, his team injects plasma from donor mice into older mice. He hopes, eventually, to perfect the technique for use in humans, with an eye toward treating Alzheimer's disease.

For more information on VA Research, visit www.research.va.gov.

TIME Magazine said it launched the Health Care 50 to highlight extraordinary people changing the state of U.S. health care this year. Winners were nominated by a team of health editors and reporters who evaluated their work on key factors, including originality, impact and quality.

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