

around. The findings support the idea of mutual maintenance between PTSD and alcohol use. Integrated treatments for both PTSD and alcohol use may be better than expecting patients to reduce alcohol use before beginning trauma-focused treatment, say the researchers. ([Psychology of Addictive Behavior](#), Feb. 27, 2020)

Many Veterans prefer virtual health care visits



Photo: iStock/SDI Productions

Many patients using VA-issued tablets preferred video health care to in-person care, found a VA Palo Alto study. In 2016, VA began issuing tablets to Veterans to allow them to receive care virtually. The program aimed to improve care access for Veterans who face barriers such as transportation issues. Researchers surveyed about 600 tablet recipients about their experiences with telehealth. Satisfaction with the tablet program was high. Almost a third of patients said they preferred virtual care to in-person visits, while 36% said care was “about the same.” Patients were more likely to prefer video visits if they felt uncomfortable in a VA setting, had communicated well with their doctor, had substance use disorder, or lived in a place with better broadband coverage. Patients with more chronic conditions were less likely to prefer video visits. The results will help identify which patients would benefit from virtual care, say the researchers. ([Journal of Medical Internet Research](#), April 15, 2020)

Survey: Majority of women Veterans feel welcome at VA



Photo: iStock/monkeybusinessimages

(05/06/2020)

Researchers surveyed women Veterans at 26 VA locations. Out of more than 1,000 women, 85% said they felt welcome at VA. Not quite a third of the women surveyed answered an open-ended prompt about their experience with VA. Of those, 26% told of feeling uncomfortable or being harassed at a VA facility. Suggestions to improve VA included providing additional resources and clinical services for women Veterans, changing male Veterans' behavior toward women, and making treatment of women and men the same. Although most women Veterans felt welcome in VA, opportunity exists to make them more comfortable and improve their experience in VA, say the researchers. ([Women's Health Issues](#), April 24, 2020)

Pandemic could increase suicide risk (04/16/2020)

An editorial by VA Puget Sound psychologists warns that COVID-19 may lead to increased risk of suicide. The “secondary consequences” of social distancing could put people at higher risk. These consequences include economic stress, social isolation, decreased community support, and barriers to mental health treatment. Increased national anxiety linked to 24/7 news coverage and a surge in U.S. gun sales could also

raise the suicide risk for some, say the researchers



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The editorial suggests several steps to improve suicide prevention during the crisis. Staying socially connected by telephone and video can help ease feelings of isolation. Efforts to increased access to mental health care, especially using telemedicine, could give at-risk patients the support they need. The authors also offer an optimistic view of one possible result of the pandemic. Suicide rates have historically declined after national disasters and tragedies such as the 9-11 terrorist attacks. It is possible that pulling together when facing trying times can strengthen social connectedness and make people feel that life is more precious, say the researchers. ([JAMA Psychiatry](#), April 10, 2020)

Many providers unaware of COPD treatment guidelines

(03/19/2020)

Many primary care providers in VA are unaware of recommendations for treating chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, found a VA study. Inhaled corticosteroids are recommended for COPD only when patients have frequent exacerbations. But more than 50% of Veterans with mild to moderate COPD are prescribed the medication. A survey of primary care providers at 13 VA facilities found that providers are largely unaware of current evidence and recommendations.



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For example, 46% of those surveyed did not know of the risk of pneumonia caused by corticosteroids. Providers said they were unable to keep up with current literature because of the broad scope of practice. Many were also reluctant to change prescriptions from other doctors. The results support the idea that lack of awareness on guidelines is an important part of corticosteroid overuse, say the researchers. ([Journal of General Internal Medicine](#), January 2020)



Verse of the Day

Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?

Matthew 6:25 KJV

YOU TOO CAN BE A MEMBER OF THE VETERANS FOR CHRIST, INC.

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All Honorably Discharged Veterans are welcome to come and observe the VFC; feel free to ask questions and learn more. If we don't know the answer we know someone who does. Please browse our web site www.veteransforchristinc.org. There you'll find information on many subjects of interest to veterans. You'll also find a Newsletter for your branch of service and links to Social Security and many other links with an abundance of information.

Our monthly meetings are on hold until the pandemic is cleared and a vaccine is developed. No meetings are being held at the Wesley Chapel Library at 2861 Wesley Chapel Rd., Decatur, Ga. Our meetings are the fourth Thursday of every month and start at 6:30 (PM) for approximately one hour and a half, unless otherwise advertised. We will be respectful of your time.

Thank you for your interest in the VFC. We look forward to communicating and fellowshiping with you soon. We are looking for a corporate sponsor for our VFC Gerald Prince College Scholarship which is donated each September at our Anniversary Luncheon

"Be on your guard, stand firm in the faith, being men of courage, be strong." 1Cor 16:13

Sincerely,

William A. Harris, Jr.

William A. Harris, Jr., USAF Retired
President, Veterans for Christ, Inc.
www.veteransforchristinc.org