

EC&R Covid-19 News

EXTRA! EXTRA!
READ ALL ABOUT IT

Special Edition Newsletter by Extended Care & Rehabilitation Service Line

Enjoy this Special Edition of our Newsletter highlighting the many innovative practices your colleagues have pivoted to continue providing Veteran Centered Care during these challenging times!

I again want to express my appreciation for the many services that assisted the following clinics to move across campus to ensure we maintained a safe environment for our Community Living Center Residents!

Geri-Focused
 Physical Medicine

Geri-PACT
 Amputee

Spinal Cord Injury
 Polytrauma/TBI

A special shout out to all of our Screeners, Logistics, Engineering and Biomed in assisting all of us to be safe!

Mark Havran

Director, Extended Care & Rehabilitation

CLC COVID-19 TESTING



Melissa Boston, Leanne Haiwick and Anthony Atkinson

On behalf of EC&R Leadership we wanted to let everyone know that 100% of our CLC residents tested negative on the CLC Covid-19 surveillance project. Covid-19 testing was held in the CLC on April 27th to May 5th. Out of nearly 400 tests, we had 3 asymptomatic staff test positive. I know everyone is aware of the numerous care facilities across the State of Iowa as well as the nation that have had outbreaks. We implemented precautions with limiting staff and visitors as well as providing appropriate PPE for those working in the CLC. This is a huge accomplishment and illustrates the dedication all of you have shown in keeping this building free from Covid-19 thus protecting a very vulnerable population.

Moving forward, we will continue to have surveillance of all employees at the entrance of the CLC with temperature checks and questions regarding symptoms consistent with acute infection. Please continue to follow local guidance on PPE use and stay home if you become ill.

Again – Congratulations to all staff who worked over here in the CLC on a job well done!

EC&R Covid-19 News

Special Edition Newsletter by Extended Care & Rehabilitation Service Line

RECREATIONAL THERAPY



We have been busy trying to find creative ways to provide treatment, therapy and socialization for our CLC Veterans. Since the Veterans cannot leave and the Volunteers and Visitors cannot visit, we are adapting! Our wonderful Volunteers are still sponsoring bingos and dropping off the prizes, but Recreation Therapy is providing the weekly activity. Since Veterans cannot get to the Canteen or go on off-station trips, we are bringing tasty treats directly to them. Music Therapy has created videos of the Music and Movement groups so Veterans can do their exercises at any time. We have increased our Arts and Crafts activities and are providing more things for Veterans to do in their rooms. Our Veterans created Gratitude Lists and then took some photos so they could thank the staff for their continued excellent service. Recreation Therapy set up an indoor mini golf course as well as provided special “Eggs Your Way” breakfasts and fun dinners. Staff are assisting Veterans with video calls to see and talk to their families or are sending pictures of Veterans who can no longer communicate to loved ones. We have started Pen Pal groups with some local children and have received cards from our Domiciliary Veterans. We have had fun with movies, live-streamed some concerts, tried YouTube art tutorials and more. We are staying active and making the best out of this unique situation!



EC&R Covid-19 News

Special Edition Newsletter by Extended Care & Rehabilitation Service Line

COVID-19 STORY FROM MELISSA BOSTON

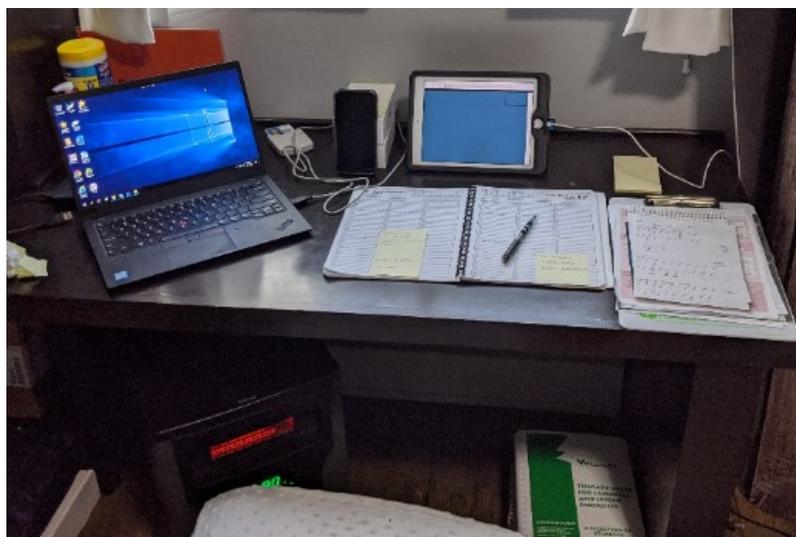
Jenny Scharn and I have been working closely to ensure Veterans are continuing to receive their speech therapies. Jenny is able to do swallow studies and exercises, as well, cognition tests via telehealth/VA pads. Each morning, Jenny gives us a schedule of her patients and we set up each Veteran with pads at that time. This has been very successful and Veterans seem to enjoy their daily dose of Jenny!



Melissa Boston, RN and Carlee Milne, LPN

COVID-19 STORY FROM JENNY SCHARN

Working from home and doing all treatment via VVC has taken some adjustments and looks a little different for treatment in the CLC. Thanks to the pivotal roll of our restorative nursing staff, I have been able to continue with ongoing assessment, treatment and team meetings to keep meeting POC and working with Veteran's on meeting their goals. Restorative staff works with me for scheduling and have assisted with getting food, setting things up, and moving the tablet around for completion of dysphagia bedside evaluations. They have helped print and post swallow precautions and exercise programs following these evaluations. They provide set up assistance of the tablet for cognitive and communication evaluations and treatment sessions. Things have been going really well and all Veterans thus far have been very excepting of the use of the tablet for their treatment sessions and evaluations.



Jenny Scharn's work from home setup

CREATIVE DART PAINTING



These canvases were created by Veterans from the Domiciliary. The painting was done by throwing darts and turned out to be a beautiful piece of art.

EC&R Covid-19 News

Special Edition Newsletter by Extended Care & Rehabilitation Service Line

COVID-19 STORY FROM RYAN SPREITZER

I am currently working with a 96 year-old gentleman who, despite his age, didn't hesitate to continue treatment for his neck pain, generalized weakness, and impaired balance through VA Video Connect. Due to COVID-19, his age-related risk, as well as the increasing need for he and his son to assist a wife/mother suffering from severe dementia, he was beyond thrilled by the opportunity. With the combined help of his son, the telehealth clinical technicians, and myself, this patient has been able to receive technical support, perform a test call, and complete 6 VVC appointments and counting. While both his 78 year-old son and he both have significant hearing impairments, visual cues and items available around their home have allowed us to perform most all of the exercises we had been performing in the clinic. Throughout the process, the patient has been a huge proponent of VVC and as of late, has experienced enough improvement to plant flowers, perform some light yardwork, and even "smart-off a little" (dance) in his living room.

COVID-19 STORY FROM JONI OSMUNDSON

Yoga VVC has been rough, although yesterday was comical... somehow we got connected to a sign language interpreters thing, so there was no sound and they were signing back to us, which of course we had no idea what was going on! (Haha) But then we finally got connected to the right bridge and then didn't have sound, so we had to call in on the phone while the video was playing.

COVID-19 STORY FROM KLAY QUECK

During these trying times of a global pandemic, our outpatient Recreation Therapists have continued to try to connect and provide services for our Veterans in the community. Craft kits (pictured to the right) consist of leather, wood, sketching, word finds/crosswords, among others have been mailed to Veteran's homes around the state of Iowa to give them creative outlets to occupy their free time and help them cope with isolation and quarantine. Veterans have verbalized their appreciation and thanks some saying it's the highlight of their week!



EC&R Covid-19 News

Special Edition Newsletter by Extended Care & Rehabilitation Service Line

COVID-19 STORY FROM KANDACE MCCUE

While making Blind Rehab Wellness checks, BROS learned that 76 y/o legal blind Veteran had been walking to local Walmart for groceries. Veteran did not have access to a facemask. BROS mailed Veteran one from her personal supply, and a additional one that, that day Volunteers had left at 7M check in point.

While making Blind Rehab Wellness Check calls, BROS spoke to Veteran's daughter, as Veteran is 96 and very hard of hearing. Veterans daughter expressed concern for her dad as he was having hallucinations that were affecting his mental wellbeing and sleep. BROS gave his daughter another avenue of diagnosis to consider. Many times Veterans with vision loss have hallucinations, known as Charles Bonnet syndrome. The Veteran's daughter was very appreciative for the information, as they have been to several doctors trying to diagnose the reason for hallucinations!

Blind Rehab Wellness checks found another 86 y/o Veteran who just needed some TLC. He hasn't been able to see his wife, she is in a facility for dementia. He had taken care of her for years until the recent last 6 months. He types her a letter daily and they will celebrate 70 years of marriage on July 28th.

COVID-19 STORY FROM STEPHANIE PEARSON

Last week, the Domiciliary staff received flower donations from Jabba. Since they currently have no Veterans, they decided to pay it forward to brighten our CLC Veteran's day. They took the time to make nearly 60 individual arrangements with them. They were well received by our Veterans. One Veteran commented that he was an organic gardener, and hadn't been home to see his flowers come up yet this year.



EC&R Covid-19 News

Special Edition Newsletter by Extended Care & Rehabilitation Service Line

ACUPRESSURE #LiveWholeHealth Episode #19

Join Acupuncturist, Juli Olson from the VA Central Iowa for a chance to experience acupressure for wellness. You can view the VAntage blog at: <https://www.blogs.va.gov/VAntage/74776/live-whole-health-self-care-blog-episode-19-acupressure/>

Acupressure is applying pressure to specific points on the body, often used to help relieve tension and pain. It has been used for thousands of years to provide comfort and to help heal our bodies.

Rubbing our temples during a headache or stressful moment is an example of how we naturally choose to place our hands on specific areas of our body for relief. From an Eastern medicine perspective, this may mean balancing and influencing the “qi,” “chi,” or the body’s energy that flows in that meridian.



Acupressure can be one way to treat pain and help improve your health from the comfort of home.

Youtube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eZ-tXvCx-iE&feature=youtu.be>

MUSIC THERAPY #LiveWholeHealth Episode #5



Music and movement can both be great ways to help relieve stress during tough times, but it’s also a fun combination together! Sing and move along with Music Therapist Matt Lloyd, MT-BC, from VA Central Iowa as he combines both music and movement for this 17-minute and 30-second virtual Music and Movement Group from the VA Central Iowa Health Care System.

Along with the benefits of music, being physically active is another important step that you can take to improve your health. Any amount of physical activity can improve health-related fitness.

For more information and self-care through the Whole Health Components of Health and Well-Being visit: <https://www.va.gov/WHOLEHEALTH/circle-of-health/moving-body.asp>

Youtube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2_1wjkSq5Ps&feature=youtu.be

EC&R Covid-19 News

Special Edition Newsletter by Extended Care & Rehabilitation Service Line

REDEFINING PRACTICE: VETERAN CENTERED CARE PAIN CARE

Within the Pain Clinic, the team has taken this opportunity to refine current practices to meet the needs of not only the local institution but also the standards and guidelines published by both the VA and CDC. Guidance has provided strong recommendations for facilities to implement risk stratification systems during evaluations of Veterans in pain.

The idea is that Veterans at greater risk for adverse events would have additional case management and more frequent monitoring of safety measures. As a result, the Pain team taken the last 60 days to

review, evaluate, and assume management of patients prescribed >50 MEQ or those identified as very high risk as defined by the STORM report. Using telehealth technology, the team has completed many team evaluations and provided not only recommendations for care, but assumed management and ensured engagement by the Veteran in the recommended care.



Nate Hinkeldey, Heather Meeks and Juli Olson

The team has also taken an active role in using telehealth to assist the facility in providing naloxone education and prescriptions to those without. Working with the Veteran and prescribing providers to accomplish the above, the process above defines patient centered collaborative care designed to improved the safety of our Veteran populations.

While face to face visits throughout the nation have been significantly reduced, the need for urgent care is still present. Specifically, patients with acute and chronic pain syndromes with comorbid mental health conditions pose a significant challenges in defining urgency. While this poses a challenge, one opportunity for pain providers to assist with musculoskeletal pain management during a pandemic is to work to keep said pain out of the emergency department. Throughout the past 60 days, the pain team has worked diligently to intervene and see many patients face to face that otherwise would have ended up using emergency medicine services for the management of their pain conditions. This practice is not related solely to the medical center, but extends to the CBOCs with telehealth services and physical presence with additional of our CBOC traveling chiropractor.

This pandemic has generated a great deal of “pain” for many. While it can be easy to see and voice these pain points, it is just as important to realize the opportunity for innovation and the need to continue to serve. ***“Thank you for continuing to provide the care!”***

EC&R Covid-19 News

Special Edition Newsletter by Extended Care & Rehabilitation Service Line

COVID-19 HIGH FIVES

"A huge high five for the collaborative efforts between CLC1, the BRO Team and Telehealth. They ensured that our families and our residents can visit while visualizing each other's faces during this time of isolation from family and friends."

Currently, there are 7 different residents who reside on CLC1 who have families that have downloaded the VA Video Connect App. Here's a few examples of the impact this has had:

- ⇒ One resident was so overwhelmed to see his wife's face, staff were unable to keep him from kissing the screen of the computer.
- ⇒ A wife of another resident stated, "This gave me a reason to put on makeup and do my hair today (knowing her husband would get to see her).
- ⇒ A daughter stated, "You don't know how much this means. I know I can call anytime, but to be able to actually see my dad is completely different."
- ⇒ A wife stated, "This is so amazing. I'm afraid that he (her husband) will forget me sooner if I cannot come visit."

Thank you to the Nursing Assistants, CLC1 MSA, the BRO SW, Natasha Merten, Jeremy Putzier, and Hannah Bingham for ensuring that the CLC1 IPAD got set up and staff have been educated on setting up VVC appointments to ensure that this can continue. Great Teamwork all around."



EC&R Covid-19 News

Special Edition Newsletter by Extended Care & Rehabilitation Service Line

EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH



Gladys McIntire accepting an award for Employee of the Month from Gail Graham

Join us in congratulating Gladys McIntire of Home-Based Primary Care who was named VA Central Iowa HCS' Employee of the month!

TRY THE ABC WORKOUT AND SPELL OUT YOUR NAME...
No Equipment Required!!

This ABC Workout poster was developed for the Domiciliary Veterans by Recreational Therapy (Jerra Buster and Megan Trimble) to keep them moving and active.



EC&R Covid-19 News

Special Edition Newsletter by Extended Care & Rehabilitation Service Line

I'm Bored...

Here are some fun ideas on what to do if you're starting to get stir crazy!

- | | |
|--|--|
| Adult coloring books | Learn a magic trick |
| Draw | Learn/play a new card game |
| Sudoku | Word searches |
| Listen to music or new music | Crossword puzzles |
| Create a positive playlist of songs | Crumple up a piece of paper and set up a point system (ex. 3 points for hitting a certain ceiling tile, door, etc) |
| Create a soundtrack for your life | Write a rap |
| Design your dream house | Write a poem |
| Write your name, and write down as many words you can make, from the letters | Call a friend you haven't talked to in <u>awhile</u> . |
| Watch YouTube videos/movie | Bird/squirrel/people watching-don't make it creepy... |
| Learn to crochet or knit | Solitaire |
| Write a letter to a friend/loved one. | Make a house of cards |
| Write a letter to a current servicemember(anysolider.com) | Write a grocery list |
| Read a book | Write down 100 things you want to do and/or have done (Bucket List) |
| Write a book | Plan a vacation |
| Take a song and rewrite the lyrics | Write down all of the places you want to travel |
| Make a list of all the movies you want to see. Or rate your top 50 movies. | Spring clean |
| Go for a walk/run | Yoga/meditate |
| Workout | Write high-fives |
| Do calf raises 10x anytime someone says your name | Find out a fun fact about your peers/staff |
| Find/try a new game on your phone/tablet etc. | Set a timer for 2 mins. Write down EVERYTHING you think of. |

EC&R Covid-19 News

Special Edition Newsletter by Extended Care & Rehabilitation Service Line

THANK YOU FROM OUR VETERANS



EC&R Covid-19 News

Special Edition Newsletter by Extended Care & Rehabilitation Service Line

THANK YOU FROM OUR VETERANS

