

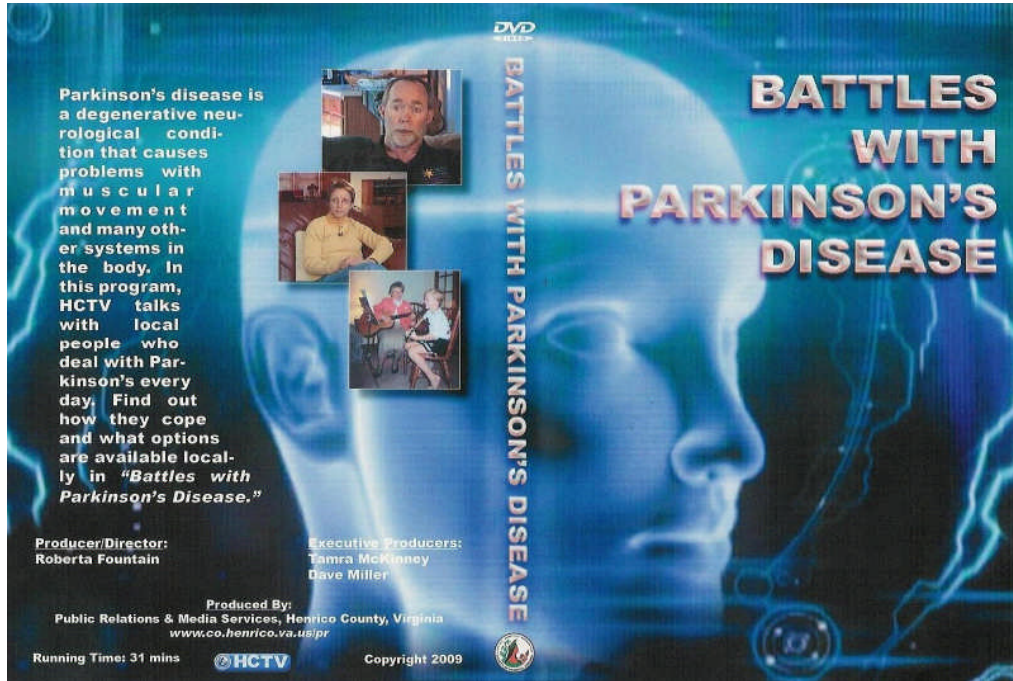


# NEWS

Volume 7 Number 1  
Summer 2009

The Newsletter of the Veterans Health Administration's **SOUTHEAST PADRECC**  
(Parkinson's Disease Research Education & Clinical Center) at McGuire VAMC

## Henrico County TV helps Battle Parkinson's



### Inside this issue:

<i>Henrico County TV helps Battle PD</i>	1, 5
<i>SE PADRECC Staff</i>	2
<i>DBS Corner</i>	2, 6
<i>Parkinson's Education &amp; Exercise Programs</i>	3
<i>Southeast Region Resources</i>	4
<i>Parkinson's Luncheon at Hanover Tavern</i>	5
<i>Southeast PADRECC Research Highlights</i>	7
<i>In the Clinic at PADRECC</i>	8
<i>Dr. Bennett, Director, VCU Parkinson's Center</i>	9
<i>Eligibility/Enrollment for VA Healthcare</i>	10
<i>National VA PD Consortium Network</i>	11
<i>Virginia Support Group Highlights</i>	12

"Battles with Parkinson's Disease" is a new educational video produced by Henrico County Television (HCTV), Public Relations and Media Services. It was released in April 2009, just in time for Parkinson's Disease Awareness Month. The DVD is 31 minutes. It features interviews with people from the Richmond area affected by Parkinson's Disease (PD), including local veterans and their family members. PADRECC SE staff members also play a part in the film.

Roberta Fountain, Television Producer and Director for HCTV, began the project in December 2008. She met with PADRECC staff and visited support groups in the Richmond area to learn about the disease.

"Battles with Parkinson's Disease" is a high quality production that explains the disease from the view of insiders. Roberta went to the homes of individuals with PD. They shared stories about their lives before and after diagnosis, including how the diagnosis was made, what treatment they take, and how they cope with a degenerative disease. Highlights of the film include the importance of voice therapy, physical exercises, and social support. Sinemet (or carbidopa/levodopa), the "gold standard" medication for PD, as well as deep brain stimulation surgical treatment are covered in the documentary.

*Continued on page 5*



## Southeast PADRECC Staff

### Multidisciplinary Team

#### *Movement Disorder Neurologist:*

**Mark Baron, MD**  
Director, PADRECC Southeast

#### *Physiatrist:*

**Abu Qutubuddin, MD**  
Assoc. Director, Rehabilitation

#### *Neurosurgeon:*

**Kathryn Holloway, MD**  
Director, PADRECC  
Neurosurgical Services

**Lynn Klanchar, RN, MS**  
Assoc. Director of Education

**Peggy Roberge, RN**  
Clinic Nurse Coordinator

**Miriam Hirsch, MS, RN**  
Neuro-surg Nurse Coordinator

**William Carne, PhD**  
Psychologist

**Cathy McGrady**  
Administrative Officer

**Vanessa Banks**  
Program Support Assistant

**George Gitchel**  
Research Assistant

*Our team of caring and qualified professionals consists of full-time, part-time, government, contract, and fee-basis employees. We also have some volunteers that work without compensation. Many staff have academic affiliations at Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) Medical Center.*

### STAFF CHANGES

#### **Farewell**

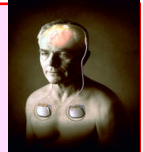
**Dr. Anna Hristova**, Movement Disorder Specialist, now working full time at VCU Neurology Department.  
**Dr. Gopi Kasturi**, Fellow, now at VAMC Fresno, CA  
**Odetta Semple**, Program Support Assistant

#### **Welcome**

**Vanessa Banks**, Program Support Assistant

## DBS Corner

by Miriam Hirsch, MS, RN, Neurosurgical Nurse & Kathryn Holloway, MD, Neurosurgeon, SE PADRECC



### 6-Year Study Comparing Best Medical Therapy vs. Deep Brain Stimulation for the Treatment of Parkinson's Disease Concludes

Researchers from the Department of Veteran's Affairs and the National Institutes of Health through the Cooperative Studies Program (CSP) recently completed a six-year, two phase study involving deep brain stimulation surgery (DBS) for the treatment of Parkinson's Disease. Seven Veteran's Affairs and six affiliated university medical centers enrolled 255 patients. The Southeast PADRECC at McGuire VAMC and Virginia Commonwealth University Medical Center in Richmond, VA were two of the 13 participating study sites. Dr. Kathryn Holloway was the primary investigator and neurosurgeon who performed all of the DBS procedures at the Richmond study sites.

Phase I of the study compared, for 6 months, motor functioning such as tremor, stiffness, and slowness in patients treated with DBS versus those treated non-surgically with best medical therapy (BMT) along with speech, physical and/or occupational therapy as needed. In Phase II of the study, the motor functioning of those treated with DBS was compared based on the surgical target site, either subthalamic nucleus (STN) or globus pallidus (GPi).

The results of Phase I were published in the January 7, 2009 *Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA)* and conclude that those who had DBS gained an average of 4.6 hours per day of good motor control. In addition, 71% of those in this treatment group showed significant improvement in motor functioning compared to 32% in the BMT group. However, those in the DBS group were four times more likely to experience a serious adverse side effect including, but not limited to, infection, falls, depression, gait and balance problems and pain. Most of these events were resolved by the end of the six-month study period. Phase II data is in the process of being analyzed and the results are forthcoming.

More DBS Corner on page 6



## Parkinson's Education and Exercise Programs

**Saturday, November 7, 2009 in Richmond, VA**

*Annual Parkinson's Disease Community Education Day*

- \* **Dr. Fred Wooten**, University of Virginia, Movement Disorder Specialist/ APDA I&R Center Director
- \* **Becky Farley**, PT, PhD, University of Arizona, Physical Therapist/Researcher, LSVT BIG (physical rehab program specific for PD)
- \* **Dave Iverson**, Producer/Director of PBS Frontline "My Father, My Brother and Me - Life with Parkinson's Disease"
- \* **J. Dyess Calhoun**, Caregiver/Author of "Lessons from the Ancients: a humorously helpful guide for Caregiving"
- \* **Dr. Jim Bennett**, Founding Director of VCU Parkinson's Center (see page 9)

Registration forms will be available in September for this annual fall event at the Koger Conference Center, Holiday Inn Select, Richmond, VA.

Contact: PADRECC (804-675-6952), APDA Richmond Metro Chapter (804-730-1336), or APDA I & R Center (434-982-4482)



**October 23-24, 2009 in Dallas, TX**

*First Joint Young Onset Conference sponsored by APDA and NPF*

The American Parkinson Disease Association's (APDA) National Young Onset Center and the National Parkinson Foundation's (NPF) Young Onset Parkinson Network will co-sponsor a series of conferences for those living with young-onset Parkinson's disease and their caregivers. The goal is to leverage the strong networks of both organizations and offer a high-quality educational and networking experience that is so critical for people who will live decades with the disease. Interested participants can register online at the APDA Young Onset Center's web site [www.youngparkinsons.org](http://www.youngparkinsons.org), or at the NPF web site [www.parkinson.org](http://www.parkinson.org).

**October 24-25, 2009 in Charlotte, NC**

*LSVT® BIG Training and Certification Workshop for PTs and OTs*

This two-day program is designed to train physical and occupational therapists in an intensive whole body amplitude-based training protocol for individuals with Parkinson's Disease. For more information and registration, visit: [www.LSVTGlobal.com](http://www.LSVTGlobal.com) or call 1-888-438-5788. Email: [info@LSVTGlobal.com](mailto:info@LSVTGlobal.com). LSVT®LOUD training and certification also available for speech therapists.

**September 28 - October 1, 2010 in Glasgow, Scotland**

*World Parkinson Congress*

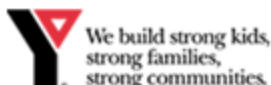
The World Parkinson Congress inaugural meeting was in Washington DC in 2006. This program will offer something for everyone in the PD community including researchers, clinicians, people living with the disease or caring for someone with the disease. Go to [www.worldpdcongress.org](http://www.worldpdcongress.org) and sign up to receive **WPC eNews** by clicking on the "Join Our List" icon. You will get updates and details about dates and costs of registration and booking hotel rooms as this information becomes available.

*Moving to agility, balance and joy!*

**Exercise Class  
for People Living with PD**

**Tuesdays & Thursdays  
11am - 12 noon**

**John Rolfe Family YMCA  
Richmond call (804) 360-8767**



**PADRECC Exercise Class**

**Fridays at  
11am - 12noon**

**Located at:  
Sitter & Barfoot  
Veterans Care Center**



Doctor's approval required.  
Inquire at PADRECC or call Lynn at  
**(804) 675-6952**





*National Organizations, Regional Groups,  
APDA Information & Referral (I&R) Centers, and NPF Centers*  
**Southeast Region Resources**

**NATIONAL**

**PDF Parkinson's Disease Foundation** and  
**PINS Parkinson's Information Service**  
(800) 457-6676 [www.pdf.org](http://www.pdf.org)

**PAN Parkinson Action Network** (800) 457-6676 or  
(202) 842-4101  
[www.parkinsonsaction.org](http://www.parkinsonsaction.org)

**APDA American Parkinson Disease Association**  
(800) 223-2732  
[www.apdaparkinson.org](http://www.apdaparkinson.org)

**NPF National Parkinson Foundation** (800) 327-4545  
[www.parkinson.org](http://www.parkinson.org)

**MJFF Michael J Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research** (800) 708-7644  
[www.michaeljfox.org](http://www.michaeljfox.org)

**REGIONAL**

**PFNCA Parkinson Foundation of the National Capital Area** (serving the Washington, DC Metropolitan area) (703) 891-0821  
[www.parkinsonfoundation.org](http://www.parkinsonfoundation.org)

**Parkinson Association of the Carolinas** (serving North and South Carolina)  
(704) 248-3722  
[www.parkinsonassociation.org](http://www.parkinsonassociation.org)

**Richmond Virginia Metro Chapter APDA**  
(804) 730-1336  
[www.parkinsonrichmond.com](http://www.parkinsonrichmond.com)

**APDA****APDA I & R Centers**

**Atlanta GA:**  
(404) 728-6552

**Baltimore MD:**  
(410) 328-0916

**Birmingham AL:**  
(205) 833-4940 or  
(205) 934-9100

**Charlottesville VA:**  
(434) 982-4482

**Deerfield Beach FL:**  
(800) 825-2732

**Jacksonville FL:**  
(904) 953-7030

**Lexington, KY**  
*New! University of Kentucky*  
*Contact: Renee Wagner*  
(859) 257-2732 or  
toll-free (866) 554-APDA

**Memphis TN:**  
(901) 516-0677

**Nashville TN:**  
(615) 342-4635 or  
(800) 493-2842

**St. Petersburg FL:**  
(727) 328-6246

**Special APDA Centers:**  
**APDA Armed Forces Veterans Center, VAMC**  
**Reno, NV** (775) 328-1715

**APDA National Young Onset Center, Winfield IL**  
(877) 223-3801 or  
(630) 933-4382  
[www.youngparkinson.org](http://www.youngparkinson.org)

**NPF****NPF Centers**

**Augusta, GA**  
Medical College of Georgia  
Movement Disorders

**Baltimore, MD**  
Johns Hopkins PD &  
Movement Disorders Center  
(410) 955-8795

**Chapel Hill, NC**  
University of NC at  
Chapel Hill, School of  
Medicine

**Durham, NC**  
Duke University Medical  
Center (919) 668-1538

**Ft Meyers, FL**  
Lee Memorial Parkinson's  
Outreach Center  
(239) 335-7261

**Gainesville, FL**  
University of Florida PD &  
Movement Disorders Center

**Louisville, KY**  
University of Louisville  
Div. of Movement Disorders

**Miami, FL**  
University of Miami,  
Miller School of Medicine  
(305-243-6732)

**Nashville, TN**  
Vanderbilt University  
Medical Center

**Tampa, FL** University of  
South Florida, PD &  
Movement Disorders Center

**Washington, DC**  
Georgetown University  
Hospital (202) 444-1762

**NPF****Affiliated Chapters**

**Aventura, FL**  
Herbert Kay Parkinson  
Chapter  
(305) 937-1197

**Carolina, PR**  
Asociacion Puertorriquena  
de Parkinson  
(787) 768-5565

**Grovetown, GA**  
Central Savannah River  
Area Parkinson Support  
Group, Augusta Chapter  
(706) 725-4164

**Naples, FL**  
Parkinson Association of  
Southwest Florida NPF  
(239) 254-7791

**Nashville, TN**  
Middle Tennessee Chapter  
(615) 662-4379

**Rome, GA**  
Northwest Georgia PD  
Association  
(706) 413-3264

**San Juan, PR**  
Fundacion Puertorriquena  
de Parkinson, Inc.  
(787) 764-4898

**Tallahassee, FL**  
North Florida Parkinson  
Awareness Group  
(850)-385-8186

**Vero Beach, FL**  
Alzheimer/Parkinson Asso-  
ciation of Indian River  
County (772) 563-0505



Henrico County continued from page 1

Roberta researched, developed, shot, and edited the broadcast production. She operates all video, audio, and lighting, equipment, and supervises productions in the field and studio. Many of Roberta's documentaries have earned national awards for excellence in television production.

For residents of Henrico County with cable TV, the film can be viewed on HCTV-Channel 17. Anyone who wants to obtain a copy of the DVD may contact Henrico County Public Relations & Media Services at (804) 501-4257 or go to their website at [www.co.henrico.va.us/pr](http://www.co.henrico.va.us/pr).

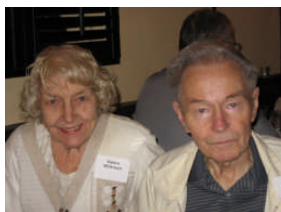


L to R: Marian Gagliano with Roberta Fountain, producer

## Parkinson's Luncheon at Hanover Tavern



April is designated as Parkinson's Disease Awareness Month. So, on April 4th, PADRECC support group veterans, and others from the Richmond Parkinson's community, joined PADRECC staff for the 2nd annual Parkinson's Disease Luncheon. This year the luncheon was held at "Michelle's", a restaurant inside historic Hanover Tavern. The ambience of the old tavern and the company of almost 50 people made for a delightful outing. Special guests included Roberta Fountain, television producer for Henrico County, and Kathy Morton, President of Richmond Chapter APDA. Dr. Charles Bryan, past CEO of the Virginia Historical Society, and an instrumental figure in the development of the VCU Parkinson's Disease and Movement Disorders Multidisciplinary Research and Clinical Center (see page 9) was also present. Many of the "stars" from the "Battles with Parkinson's" documentary came to the luncheon and Ms. Fountain brought copies of the DVD for all the guests. The food was exceptionally good, with entree choice of trout, meatloaf or fried chicken. A delicious cake was served for dessert, decorated with a Parkinson's Awareness logo and positive messages. Michelle's at Hanover Tavern generously donated \$1 per guest to the APDA Richmond Metro Chapter.



Some people and scenes from the Parkinson's Disease Awareness Luncheon at Hanover Tavern

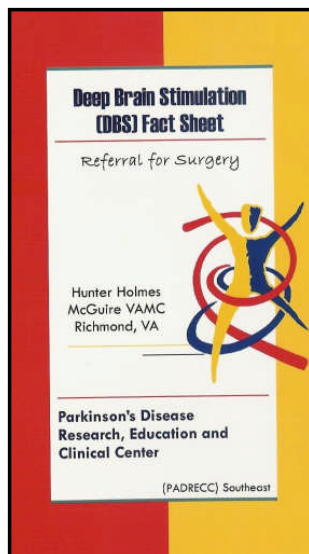


DBS Corner continued from page 2

## Rechargeable Battery



Dr. Kathryn Holloway, Neurosurgical Director at Southeast (Richmond) PADRECC and Professor of Neurosurgery at Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU), was the first surgeon in the United States to implant the new rechargeable battery for Deep Brain Stimulation (DBS). The device called "Activa RC" by Medtronic, Inc. was implanted on June 3, 2009 at VCU Medical Center/Medical College of Virginia. Benefits include its smaller size, advanced programming options, and 9 year battery life. The "Activa RC" is available to veterans receiving care for a movement disorder at the PADRECC who are candidates for DBS. This longer lasting battery requires recharging, compared to a traditional battery that must be changed every 3-5 years. The new device allows for fewer surgical procedures and overall reduced costs. Key factors for patient selection for the rechargeable model are patient interest, caregiver support, cognitive function, and expected battery consumption.



## DBS Booklet

This booklet is a useful resource for those who want to know how to access DBS surgery services from Southeast/Richmond PADRECC at the McGuire VAMC.

- Provides information for doctors who have questions such as: When it is time to consider DBS? Who makes a good candidate? How do I refer a patient?
- For patients thinking about or preparing for the surgery, the booklet reviews expectations, benefits, risks, steps in the evaluation process, how the procedure is performed, and pre/post op care.
- This 8 page booklet includes brief biographies of the specialists on the DBS team.
- The information is good for anyone who wants to learn more about DBS .
- View or download the booklet from the website [www.parkinsons.va.gov](http://www.parkinsons.va.gov). Choose "Southeast", then "Deep Brain Stimulation" from the sidebar links.
- Inquire at the PADRECC clinic to obtain a copy.

## "O-arm"

### Use of Computerized Tomography (CT) During Placement of Deep Brain Stimulators

The effectiveness of deep brain stimulation (DBS) in the treatment of movement disorders such as Parkinson's Disease, essential tremor and dystonia depends on accurate placement of a DBS lead or brain electrode in a certain part of the brain that is no longer working properly. During the standard DBS procedure, placement of the lead(s) is not known for sure until after the surgery is over, and a CT scan is completed and analyzed. Dr. Kathryn Holloway, along with Medtronic Navigation, is conducting a research study aimed at improving the placement of DBS leads during frameless DBS surgery through the use of an intra-operative (during surgery) portable CT "O-Arm" scanner. The "O-Arm" CT scanner is currently used primarily in spine surgery. The purpose of this research is to determine whether or not this device can be used to confirm where the DBS lead is placed during surgery. A second purpose of the study is to determine if the "O-Arm" images can be used to locate specific target areas within the brain. With the standard frameless DBS procedure, this information is obtained several days prior to surgery from a pre-operative CT scan, along with the placement of several small bone screws that are secured to the skull. The goal of the study is to allow those screws to be placed at the time of the surgery and eventually, eliminate the need for the screws all together. For more information, contact Miriam Hirsch at McGuire VAMC (804) 675-6284.





## Southeast PADRECC Research Highlights

**EYE MOVEMENT STUDY** by George Gitchel, Research Assistant Staff at McGuire VAMC/ Southeast (Richmond) PADRECC and Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) are currently studying the eye movement behavior of patients with movement disorders. The eye tracker is a small headband-like device that sits on a person's head. It has two small cameras that follow the tiny motions made by a person's eyes during various tasks. The experiment takes about 20 minutes. After answering a general vision questionnaire, the subject is asked to read a few paragraphs, and then watch a dot move on a computer screen. Patients will be tested on and off parkinson and essential tremor medications. Immediately after the test, the patient is shown exactly what the output of the eye tracker looks like. The motion of their eyes is explained and how it relates to their vision. This investigational study is currently being used to collect data in hopes that this will one day be used as an early diagnosis tool, as well as being capable of differentiating between different movement disorders. Initial results are very promising with the research. As more patients and normal controls are enrolled in the study and the data is analyzed, a more accurate final result will emerge.

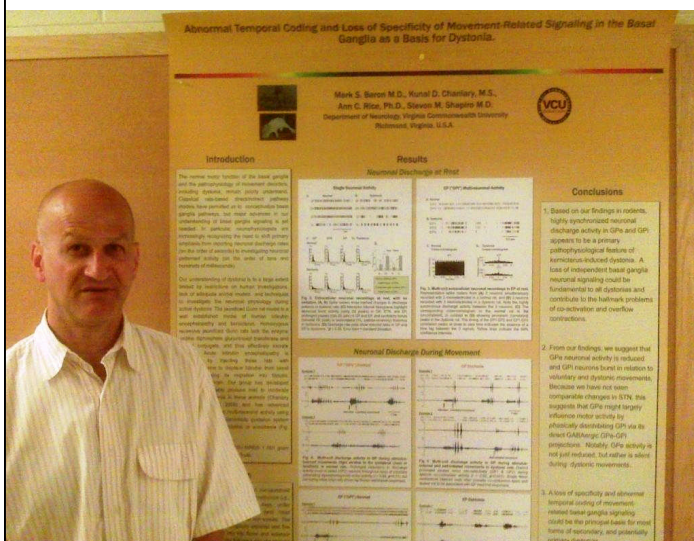


The eye tracker device



### DYSTONIA POSTER PRESENTED IN PARIS

Dr. Mark Baron, Director of Southeast (Richmond) PADRECC and Associate Professor of Neurology at Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) presented his research **“Abnormal Temporal Coding and Loss of Specificity of Movement-Related Signaling in the Basal Ganglia as a Basis for Dystonia”** at the Movement Disorder Society's 13<sup>th</sup> International Congress of Parkinson's Disease and Movement Disorders on June 7-11, 2009 in Paris, France. The study was the first to record neuronal discharge patterns in a dystonia model using multiple electrodes. The research demonstrated abnormal burst and pausing of discharge activity that was highly synchronized between basal ganglia neurons and phasically related to dystonic muscle contractions in dystonic animals.



### BALANCE & VITAMIN D IN HEALTHY POPULATIONS

The PADRECC interdisciplinary team led by our Physiatrist, Dr. Abu Qutubuddin, in conjunction with Dr. Robert Adler, Chief of Endocrinology at the McGuire VAMC, continues to study the characteristics of balance and posture as they relate to Parkinson's Disease (PD). In a recent study, healthy middle-aged subjects without PD had their Vitamin D blood levels drawn and then were given a computerized balance test. Previous studies in older individuals have suggested that low Vitamin D levels are associated with balance problems and falling. The current study did not find any association between balance and Vitamin D in the healthy, middle-aged group. However, of note, almost all of the studied individuals had very low Vitamin D levels. Further study is planned on the impact of Vitamin D on Parkinson's patients with balance difficulties.



## In the Clinic at PADRECC

### Some of the services offered for Veterans with Parkinson's Disease, Essential Tremor and other movement disorders:

- New and follow up visits
- Multidisciplinary Approach—assessment/treatment by:
  - Movement Disorder Specialist
  - Registered Nurse
  - Rehabilitation Doctor/Physiatrist
  - Neuropsychologist
  - Neurosurgeon
- Medications and medical management
- Deep Brain Stimulation (DBS) surgery and programming
- Educational materials and events
- Complete rehabilitation evaluation
- Referrals to physical, occupational, and speech therapy
- Consultation with social work
- Palliative care and hospice care referrals
- Caregiver resources
- Exercise group and resources
- Support group
- Clinical trials/research studies
- Telemedicine visits (for convenience of veterans who live farther distances from Richmond, and if their primary VAMC has telemedicine connection capability)

### How do I get an appointment?

- To receive treatment at the PADRECC Clinic, you must be a Veteran & enrolled in VA Health Care (see page 10).
- Once enrolled, call **(804) 675-5931** to schedule an appointment at the PADRECC Clinic.
- VA doctors must order an electronic referral entitled "**Movement Disorders/Parkinsons/PADRECC**". Outside the Richmond VAMC catchment area, a CPRS inter-facility consult (IFC) is required.

### Research Opportunities

Occasionally, there are research projects that recruit from the community. Non-veterans and non-enrolled veterans may meet the criteria for participation. Inquire at the PADRECC.

**PADRECC Support Group** meets monthly and is open to the community as well as all Veterans. You do not have to be a Veteran or enrolled in VA Health Care to attend.



*Hunter Holmes McGuire  
Veterans Affairs Medical Center  
Richmond, Virginia  
Home to Southeast PADRECC*

PADRECC Clinic is located near the Neurology Department (2B) on the 2nd floor. Follow signs from the South Elevators to PADRECC (2C). Check-in: Room 2C-110.



*L to R: Colin Williamson assesses reach and flexibility with patient, Richard Duke.*

Southeast PADRECC served as a clinical site in early 2009 for student intern, Colin Williamson. Colin is a student of Exercise Science at Virginia Commonwealth University, School of Education, Health and Human Performance Department. Colin gained 100 hours of field experience at the clinic learning about patients with movement disorders. He worked with the PADRECC team to develop a pre-exercise assessment tool, and exercise prescriptions for individuals with PD.





## **Dr. James P. Bennett Jr.** **Appointed Chair of** **VCU Neurology** **Also named Founding Director** **of Parkinson's Center**

By Pamela DiSalvo Lepley, VCU Communications and Public Relations (released 6/1/2009)

Virginia Commonwealth University recently announced that James P. Bennett Jr., M.D., Ph.D., has been appointed chair of the Department of Neurology and founding director of the VCU Parkinson's Disease and Movement Disorders Multidisciplinary Research and Clinical Center. Bennett, who assumes his new duties July 1, comes to VCU from the University of Virginia, where he is professor of neurology and psychiatric research, director of the Center for the Study of Neurodegenerative Diseases and director of the Morris K. Udall Center of Excellence for Parkinson's Disease Research at UVA.

"Dr. Bennett is a world class physician-scientist who will be leading an outstanding team of investigators and clinicians seeking cures for neurological diseases," said Jerome F. Strauss, M.D., Ph.D., dean of the VCU School of Medicine. "Establishing a center for Parkinson's Disease and other movement disorders is a university and a community priority, and we are indeed fortunate to have Dr. Bennett as the founding director of this important program."

Bennett said his priority is to launch a highly integrated translational research center that moves research from novel approaches in the laboratory to clinical trials to use in patients. "It is important to understand the biology of the disease and then develop novel treatments and therapies that can be clinically tested," Bennett said. "It is not enough to provide state-of-the-art care. We want to alter the trajectory of the disease."

A Richmond-based advocacy group for people with Parkinson's Disease, the Movers and Shakers, has been instrumental in raising funds to hire a highly regarded researcher to be the center's founding direc-

tor. Bennett said the "passion, devotion, forward thinking and pragmatism of the group," as well as the vision of the VCU Medical School, were instrumental in his decision to come to VCU. "Coming to VCU is an opportunity to pursue a shared vision for improving the lives of people with Parkinson's Disease," Bennett said.

Charles Bryan, one of three original members of the Movers and Shakers and president and CEO emeritus of the Virginia Historical Society, said Bennett's appointment is part of the group's efforts to ensure that as much research as possible is conducted to find a cure and improve the treatment of Parkinson's Disease. "To have someone of Jim Bennett's qualifications and skills will be a tremendous boost to the Parkinson's program at VCU," Bryan said.

As director of the center, Bennett will lead a team of physicians that works in partnership with the McGuire VA Medical Center's PADRECC, Parkinson's Disease Research, Education and Clinical Center, one of only six such multidisciplinary centers in the country. The new VCU Parkinson's Center will allow PADRECC's clinical care to be extended to the civilian community.

"Dr. Bennett is the quintessential translational researcher," said Dr. Sheldon Retchin, vice president for Health Sciences at Virginia Commonwealth University. "Dr. Bennett moves discoveries from the laboratory to the bedside as well as any researcher I know. He will bring enormous expertise and a wealth of creativity to a disease that plagues so many people. We are delighted he has chosen to continue his outstanding career at VCU." Bennett has published more than 130 research papers and book chapters. He is a prolific researcher and will be bringing three active projects to VCU studying drug, genetic and external laser irradiation therapies that are expected to go to clinical trial within the next three years.

Bennett earned a bachelor's degree in chemistry from the University of Florida and his medical and doctoral degrees from Johns Hopkins University.

*For information about Neurology Clinic Appointments  
at VCU: call (804) 828-9350*



# Eligibility/Enrollment for VA Healthcare



**Who is eligible for Veterans Affairs (VA) Health Care and care at the PADRECC?**

**All Veterans are potentially eligible.**

Eligibility for most veterans' health care benefits is based solely on active military service in the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, or Coast Guard (or Merchant Marines during WWII), & discharge under other than dishonorable conditions.

**All veterans are encouraged to enroll in the VA Health Care System.**

**How do I enroll?**

To begin the process, complete **VA Form 10-10EZ, Application for Health Benefits**

**To get an application form, you can:**

- call toll free **1-877-222-VETS (1-877-222-8387)**
- go to the Eligibility/Health Benefits Office at a VAMC
- go to the website [www.va.gov/1010ez.htm](http://www.va.gov/1010ez.htm)

You can submit the application form on-line. Or you can print it out, mail it, or bring the application to the Eligibility/Health Benefits Office at the VAMC you select as your primary treatment facility.

To speak to someone in the Richmond VAMC Eligibility Office, please call (804) 675-5434. The Office is located in Room 1B-232.

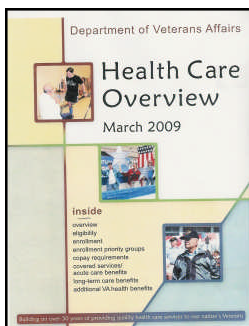
**VA encourages all Veterans to apply so their enrollment eligibility can be determined.**

After your application is processed, the VA Health Eligibility Center will notify you via mail of your enrollment status and priority group assignment. The enrollment system is based on priority groups to ensure that health care benefits are readily available to all enrolled Veterans. The priority groups range from 1 through 8 with Priority Group 1 being the highest priority, and Priority Group 8 the lowest. Changes in VA's available resources may affect the number of priority groups VA can enroll in a given year. If that occurs, VA will publicize the reenrollment changes and notify affected enrollees.

**New for 2009:**

**Priority Group 8 Enrollment Relaxation**

In 2003, VA made the difficult decision to stop enrolling Veterans with no service-connected disabilities or other special eligibility for care (Priority Group 8). These Veterans were excluded from VA health care enrollment when income limits were imposed. **Under a new regulation effective June 15, 2009, VA will enroll Veterans whose income exceeds current means-tested thresholds by up to 10%.** While this new provision does not remove consideration of income, it does increase income thresholds. Vets who applied before January 1, 2009, but were denied enrollment because their income was too high, must reapply. They are encouraged to take advantage of an online calculator to self-assess how they stand against VA's updated income thresholds. Go to: [www.va.gov/healtheligibility/apps/enrollmentcalculator](http://www.va.gov/healtheligibility/apps/enrollmentcalculator)



## Health Care Overview Brochure

This 24 page guide was designed to provide information needed to understand VA's health care system—eligibility requirements, enrollment process, priority groups, co-pays that may be charged, and the health benefits and services available. Included is information about MyHealtheVet (VA's award-winning online Personal Health Record), Credible Coverage for Medicare Part D, Income Verification and medically related travel benefits. To download a copy of this brochure, go to: [www.va.gov/healtheligibility/library/pubs/healthcareoverview](http://www.va.gov/healtheligibility/library/pubs/healthcareoverview). Additional assistance:

- Veterans Health Benefits Service Center 1-877-222-VETS (8387)
- Your local VAMC Eligibility Office

## Two Parkinson's Disease Related Bills introduced in Congress

**H.R. 1428** will create a presumption of service connection for disabled veterans living with Parkinson's Disease who were exposed to Agent Orange while serving in Vietnam. Parkinson's Action Network (PAN) along with the U.S. Military Veterans with Parkinson's (USMVP) are working to secure support for HR 1428.

**H.R. 1362/S. 1273** is the National Multiple Sclerosis and Parkinson's Disease Registries Act that will create for the first time, separate permanent and coordinated MS and PD national registries in the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

To learn more, contact Parkinson's Action Network [www.parkinsonsaction.org](http://www.parkinsonsaction.org).



**MyHealtheVet** ([www.myhealth.va.gov](http://www.myhealth.va.gov))

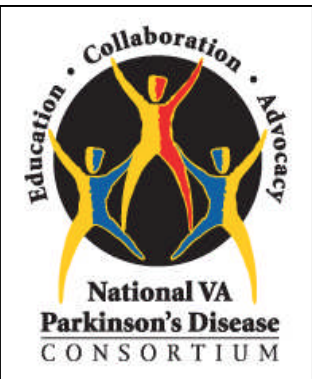
is the gateway to Veterans health benefits and services. It provides access to:

- On-line VA Prescription Refills
- VA Benefits and Services
- Trusted Health Information
- Personal Health Journals

In the future, MHV registrants will be able to view appointments, co-pay balances, portions of their medical records and more.



# National VA Parkinson's Disease Consortium Center Network



The National VA Parkinson's Disease Consortium began as a means to broaden the impact of the six Parkinson's Disease Research Education and Clinical Centers (PADRECCs). Health care providers at VA medical centers across the nation caring for veterans with movement disorders are encouraged to participate. The goal is to provide up-to-date, quality health care for all veterans with movement disorders. In 2006, a network of Consortium Centers with Directors (often Movement Disorder Specialists) was established and continues to grow. Currently there are 49 Centers established across the country, representing every VISN. Together with the PADRECCs, this hub and spoke model of care helps provide effective and convenient services to all veterans regardless of where they live. Veterans unable to access services at a PADRECC, can receive specialized care at the nearest Consortium Center. For more info, go to [www.parkinsons.va.gov](http://www.parkinsons.va.gov)

**PADRECCs**

**Philadelphia**  
John Duda, MD  
Director  
(215) 823-5934

**Southeast (Richmond)**  
Mark Baron, MD, Director  
(804) 675-5931

**Houston**  
Eugene C. Lai, MD, PhD  
Director  
(713) 794-7841

**Northwest (Portland/Seattle)**  
Joseph Quinn, MD  
Director  
(503) 721-1091 or  
(206) 277-4560

**San Francisco**  
William J. Marks, Jr., MD  
Director  
(415) 379-5530

**Southwest (West Los Angeles)**  
Jeff Bronstein, MD, PhD  
Director  
(310) 478-3711 x48001

**Southeast Network Consortium Centers & Directors**

**Atlanta (Decatur), GA (VISN 7)**  
Marion Evatt, MD  
(404) 321-6111 x 7121

**Augusta, GA (VISN 7)**  
John Morgan, MD, PhD  
(706) 733-0188 x2415

**Birmingham, AL (VISN 7)**  
Anthony Nicholas, MD  
(205) 933-8101 x4734

**Durham, NC (VISN 6)**  
Burton Scott, MD  
(919) 286-0411 x15611

**Gainesville, FL (VISN 8)**  
Frank Skidmore, MD  
(352) 374-6058

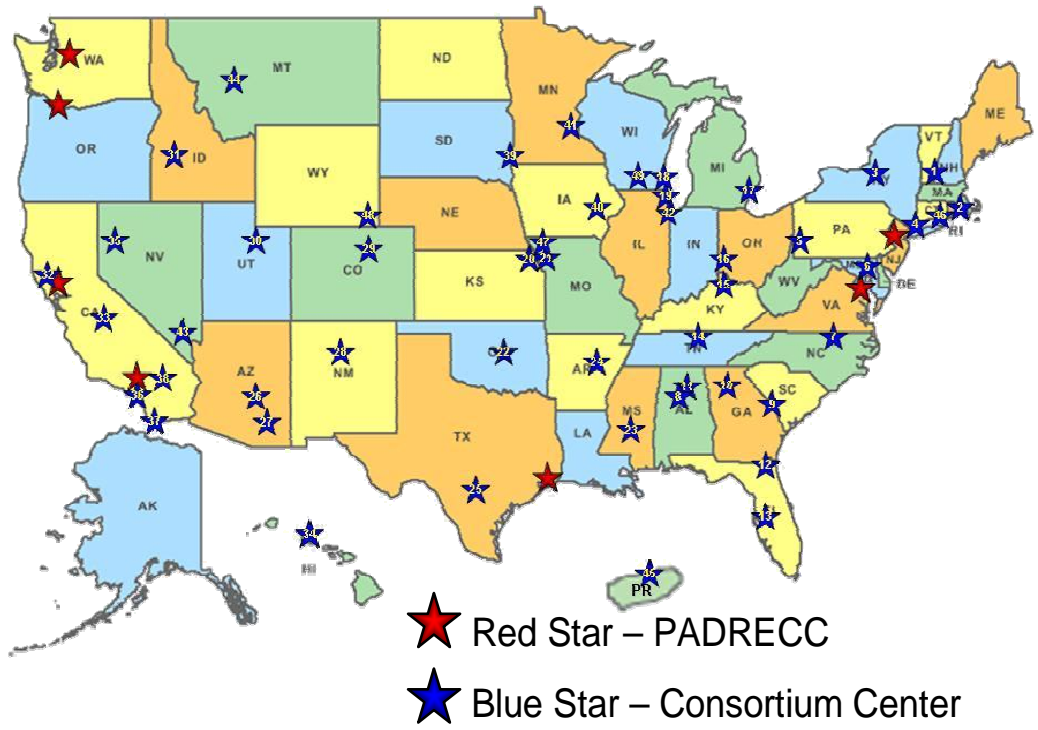
**Lexington, KY (VISN 9)**  
John Slevin, MD  
(859) 281-4920

**Nashville, TN (VISN 9)**  
John Fang, MD  
(615) 327-4751 x5244

**Tampa, FL (VISN 8)**  
Theresa Zesiewicz, MD  
(813) 972-7633

**Tuscaloosa, AL (VISN 7)**  
Fernando Franco, MD  
(205) 554-2000 x4136

**San Juan, Puerto Rico (VISN 8)**  
Ana Vidal-Cardona, MD  
(787) 641-7582





## Virginia Support Group Highlights

### PARKINSON'S DISEASE

NOTE: this is not a complete list

Call the APDA I&R office at (434) 243-5422 for complete list or download a list of support groups from [www.parkinsons.va.gov](http://www.parkinsons.va.gov). Please call the contacts listed, especially if it is your first meeting.

**Bedford: 2nd Thurs at 2:30pm,** Carillon Bedford Memorial Hospital. Contact: Dave or Meg Ballard (540) 586-1406.

**Charlottesville: 2nd Mon at 2pm,** Westminster Canterbury of the Blue Ridge (on Pantops). Contact: Susan Dietrich (434) 243-5422.

**Fishersville: 1st Sat at 2pm,** Blue Ridge Church of Christ. Contact: Keith Shank (540) 255-1847

**Fredericksburg: last Wed at 10:30am,** The Disability Resource Center. Contact: Earline Haney (540) 371-7334.

**Front Royal: 1st Wed at 1pm,** The Sutherlands. Contact: Lee Mangene (540) 635-8122.

**Hampton: 1st Tues at 2pm,** Sentara Careplex. Contact: Susie Garrison (757) 727-7296.

**Harrisonburg: 3rd Sat at 1pm,** Cancer Center, Rockingham Memorial Hospital. Contact: Eva Showalter (540) 879-9743.

**Newport News: 3rd Wed at 1pm and 3rd Friday,** Mary Immaculate Conference Center. Contact: Cynthia Dowd (757) 886-6381.

**Newport News: 4th Wed at 7pm,** Riverside Regional Medical Center. Contact: Sandy Snapp (757)594-2301.

**Northern Neck/Middle Peninsula: 3rd Wed at 2pm,** and **Care partners group, 1st Mon at 10:30 am** Rappahannock Westminster Canterbury. Contact: Rita DePew (804) 435-9553.

**Norfolk: 3rd Wed at 6:30pm** (dinner at 5:30) and also **Care partners group,** First Baptist Church. Contact: Greg Smith (757) 362-0586.



**Richmond PADRECC: 4th Thurs at 1pm,** (speaker & discussion), McGuire VAMC

Contact: Lynn Klanchar (804) 675-6952.

**Richmond: 3rd Sun at 2pm,** (educational), Health South, 5700 Fitzhugh Avenue. Contact: Kathy Morton (804) 730-1336.

**Richmond: 1st Tues at 7pm** (discussion), **New location!** Circle Center, 4900 W. Marshall Street (behind Krispy Kreme on Broad Street near Staples Mill Road. Contact: Ann Spinks (804) 355-5717.

**Suffolk, Chesapeake, Portsmouth: 1st Sat at 1pm,** Church of St. Therese. Contact: Barb Voelkel (757) 538-0655.

**Virginia Beach: 4th Monday at 1:30pm,** Thalia United Methodist Church. Contact: Jill Valentine (757) 687-8923.

**Virginia Beach: 1st Wed at 10am,** St. Andrew's United Methodist Church. Contact: Zelia Graham (757)321-7119.

**Williamsburg: 2nd Mon at 1:30 pm,** 5700 Williamsburg Landing. Contact: Bob or Joan Byrne (757) 898-6674.

### ESSENTIAL TREMOR

**Richmond: evening group** Our Lady of Hope, 13700 Gayton Rd. Contact: Diana Campbell (804) 556-2345.

**Richmond: daytime group** Contact: Peter Muller (804) 754-4455.

**Lexington:** Contact: Mary Barker (540) 463-7269.

**Lynchburg:** Contact: Terry Houck (434) 525-6085.

**Roanoke:** Contact: Mike Hopkins (540) 721-2087.



Volume 7 Number 1  
Summer 2009

Southeast Parkinson's Disease Research  
Education & Clinical Center (PADRECC)  
Hunter Holmes McGuire VAMC (652/127)  
1201 Broad Rock Boulevard  
Richmond, Virginia 23249

Phone: 804-675-5931  
Toll-free: 800-784-8381 ext 5931  
Fax: 804-675-5939  
Web: [www.parkinsons.va.gov](http://www.parkinsons.va.gov)

## PADRECC NEWS

Please report address changes or contact us if you would like to be added to the mailing list. Please contact the editor: Lynn Klanchar, Associate Director of Education, Southeast PADRECC by email: [lynn.klanchar@va.gov](mailto:lynn.klanchar@va.gov) or phone (804) 675-6952