

HealthPOWER!

Prevention News • FALL 2015 (ANNIVERSARY SPECIAL)



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Ted Slowik, Ph.D.



In case you haven't heard, 2015 is a big year for both our office and our MOVE! Program!

The Veterans Health Administration (VHA) National Center for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention (NCP) reached its 20th anniversary this year, and MOVE!'s 10th anniversary is only months away.

So break out the platinum and diamond jewelry, because this issue is a celebration of the history of NCP and MOVE!, and of the contributions made to improved Department of Veterans (VA) care. In the newsletter, we cover the past, present, and future of NCP and MOVE! in two articles that I think you'll find to be interesting reading. And you'll see that history has been full of ongoing challenges, big changes, and impressive successes as our office and flagship program

have strived to enhance VA preventive services over the years.

We also pay tribute to Dr. Linda Kinsinger, who will retire after 12 years of service in VA and 10 years at NCP's helm. We'll all greatly miss Linda's sage leadership, clinical expertise, and clear vision through a period of major transformation. We hope you enjoy the article on her impressive, lasting legacy in preventive medicine and Veteran health.

And a final note—we've just hit another exciting milestone, the culmination of months of hard work on rebranding NCP and its programs. At the end of the newsletter, we give you a 'sneak peek' at the latest logos we've developed and are now disseminating to the field.

Cheers!

Ted Slowik

HealthPOWER! is an award-winning, quarterly publication from the VHA National Center for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention, highlighting health promotion and disease prevention activities in VA.

Legacy of Accomplishment: NCP Celebrates 20 Years of Successes in VA Prevention

When the VHA National Center for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention officially opened in Durham, North Carolina two decades ago, few could've predicted the important contributions it would make during a period of unprecedented transition in VA and VHA. Fast forward to 2015, as NCP celebrates its 20th Anniversary, and NCP's story—from three-person field office to driving force in VA's transformation of patient care—is one of multiple accomplishments and measurable success in promoting forward-looking, patient-centric preventive care for millions of Veterans.



Beginning, Growing

The history of a planned approach for VHA preventive services dates to 1983, when public law authorized VA to provide preventive health services to Veterans. In response, VHA organized a field advisory group, task force, and policy council to oversee these services, and prevention coordinators were appointed in VA facilities. Nine years later, Congress passed legislation requiring the establishment of a field-based VA Central Office (VACO) program office called the *National Center for Preventive Health*. Under this original name, NCP officially opened its program office in Durham in January 1995, and immediately began to “make the case for prevention” in VA.



“We started out with a handful of staff members, working out of small office with a limited budget,” recalls current Administrative Officer Pamela Frazier, who joined NCP under original Director Dr. Robert Sullivan (1995-99). “Over the next few years, NCP slowly grew in size and responsibility, and with that came important early accomplishments.” During this period, staff laid the blueprint for future NCP initiatives by conducting an annual Veterans Health Survey of preventive services (1997-99), developing the first VHA Handbooks and Program Guide (1996, 1999), and holding a first-ever National Summit on VA Health Promotion and Disease Prevention (1998). NCP also began the first of many highly productive partnerships: the Director became VHA liaison to the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force in 1999, and staff began holding regular conference calls with the Veterans Integrated Service Network (VISN) Preventive Medicine Leaders

in 2000. Taking the lead in developing clinical prevention tools, NCP rolled out the first of many effective resources for clinicians, such as a quarterly newsletter for the field, *Prevention Notes* (1997; which became *HealthPOWER!* in 2001), and the “Flu Toolkit” (2002-05), a seminal clinical resource based on the recommendations of the National Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP).

Moving Forward

Through changes in the responsibility and authority of the NCP's Director in 2000, NCP staff continued to shape the vision for and practice of VA prevention that would culminate in today's model of Veteran care. "An initial priority was addressing the high prevalence of overweight and obesity in the VA population," explains current VA Chief Consultant for Preventive Medicine, Dr. Linda Kinsinger, who joined NCP's staff in 2002 as Assistant Director of Policy, Program, Training and Education under former Director Dr. Steven Yevich (2001-05). "In the early 2000's, we began an ongoing focus on weight management, and NCP developed a comprehensive weight management program for VHA—the MOVE!® Weight Management Program for Veterans. This 'flagship program' was piloted from 2003 to 2005, launched nationally in January 2006, and is a program of which we're really proud."



Kinsinger says that a program with MOVE!'s scope had not been attempted before, but was successful in part because it was implemented in VA. "NCP touched every aspect of MOVE!—conception, planning, launch, guidance, training, dissemination, and assessment," she notes. "It's a great example of what VA does well—develop, implement, and measure population-level health programs that are evidence-based, multi-disciplinary, collaborative, and patient-centered."

Notably, MOVE! has kept up with Veterans' needs by embracing change, as well as emerging technology and clinical practice.

"Programs like TeleMOVE!, Telephone Lifestyle Coaching (TLC), 'Be Active and MOVE!' Clinical Video TeleHealth (CVT), and MOVE! Buddy have given Veterans and clinicians new ways to use MOVE!, and extended its reach and effectiveness," says Dr. Ken Jones, NCP's National Program Director for Weight Management/MOVE! from 2004 to 2014. "There's no 'magic pill' for weight loss, and it's often difficult to make the long-term lifestyle changes needed to control weight. So over the years, we made MOVE! as inclusive, convenient, and interactive as possible for Veterans."

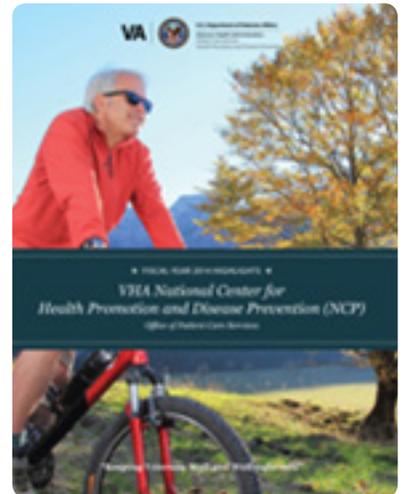




“As of the summer 2015, over 650,000 Veterans have participated in MOVE!, and of the approximately 1 in 5 patients who had sustained, intense participation, most achieved stable weight loss,” notes Dr. Susan Raffa, NCP’s current National Program Director for Weight Management. “We know the program is having an impact on Veteran health, especially when you consider the large numbers of overweight/obese patients in VA. Additionally, NCP has stayed on the leading edge with the recent launch of *MOVE! Coach*, a self-guided weight-management program, available via mobile app, that’s helping Veterans set, meet, and maintain their weight and health goals by encouraging lasting, positive health behavior change.”

Expanding Reach

In 2004, NCP moved to its current Durham office and in 2005, Kinsinger became NCP’s Director; in 2007, her title changed to Chief Consultant for Preventive Medicine, VHA Office of Patient Care Services. During the mid-2000’s, NCP continued to expand its reach and influence, and fine-tuned prevention training and resources for VHA clinical staff. By 2006, NCP had initiated a program of monthly prevention topics and monthly prevention calls with guest speakers, and a new section of NCP, Veterans Health Education and Information (VHEI), was founded and staffed in 2007. Through 2010, NCP led the *HealthierUS Veterans* initiative, an important VA - U.S. Department of Health and Human Services collaboration on diabetes and obesity prevention. “It was an exciting time,” recall Rosemary Strickland and Susi Lewis, who joined the office in 2002 and 2000, respectively, and are currently on NCP’s MOVE! Team. “Many of our programs were coming of age, as was our support for the field, and the office was well-positioned for the organizational changes that were to come.”



During this period of growth and change, Kinsinger says that a number of factors helped NCP successfully advance the quality and effectiveness of VA’s preventive health care services. “We always received great support and collaboration from field staff, leadership in the Office of Patient Care Services (PCS), and others in VACO. And of course, we’ve always had dedicated, forward-thinking people working at NCP,” she comments. “This helped us make

a strong case for the value of prevention, implement programs that worked, and build on the success of our earlier initiatives. Also, at key points along the way, we’ve gotten the resources to enhance our programs and training even more.”



Taking the Initiative



In 2008-2009, NCP firmly established its role as the VHA office responsible for clinical preventive services guidance coordination. Office staff also completed a strategic plan—a well-timed exercise that prepared the office for the new direction and resources associated with then-Secretary Eric Shinseki’s *VA Transformational Initiatives for the 21st Century* (T21) in 2010. Through the sweeping changes of the T21 New Models of Care initiatives, NCP focused on promoting and enhancing evidence-based clinical preventive care in VHA. A “paradigm shift” was occurring in NCP, according to Kinsinger, as leadership turned the focus to health behavior change as a means for health promotion and disease prevention (HPDP). NCP also hired additional clinical staff (Associate Chief Consultant for Preventive Medicine, Dr. Michael Goldstein; National Program Manager for Health Behavior, Dr. Peg Dundon; and Communications Specialist Jay Shiffler) and more support staff for the new HPDP missions. Key NCP staff involved in transformational activities who have moved on to other positions or retired were Dr. Leila Kahwati (2004-2012), Terri Murphy (2008-2014), and Sue Diamond (2008-2015).

NCP continued to promote and expand preventive care as it embarked on its own multi-component transformational initiative. 2010’s *Preventive Care Program* had several core elements: promote healthy living among Veterans, provide facility support for preventive care, train clinical staff in patient-centered communication, and develop additional HPDP resources for Veterans. “NCP took the lead in integrating HPDP into VHA’s then-new Patient-Aligned Care Teams (PACT), because we knew that prevention needed a stronger field presence to be successful,” explains Kinsinger. “Within a few years, HPDP committees were in nearly every facility, and key HPDP staff—HPDP Program Managers, Health Behavior Coordinators, Veterans Health Education Coordinators (VHECs), and MOVE! Coordinators—were present in most facilities and partnering with Primary Care colleagues to ensure that patients get the highest-quality preventive care.”



Strengthening Partnerships

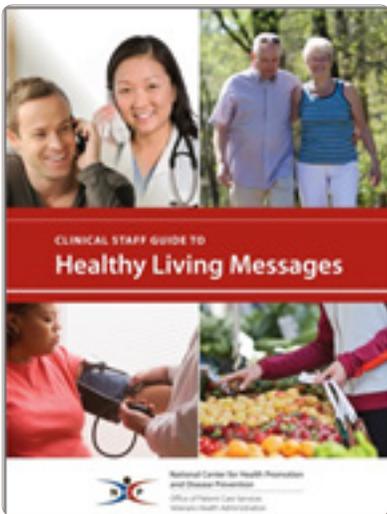


Through the hard work and collaborations of many, NCP staff also have grown Prevention Policy and Practice in VA, which included developing a full set of VHA Guidance Statements for clinicians and clinical preventive services recommendations for patients. “To date, we’ve partnered with our Preventive Medicine Field Advisory Committee to update over 40 of these guidance statements, which provide clinicians with ‘one-stop stopping’ for guidance on VHA’s clinical preventive services and resources,” says NCP’s Deputy Chief Consultant for Prevention, Dr. Jane Kim, who joined NCP in 2013. “Combined with numerous national clinical reminders developed over the years and quality improvement projects on cancer screening, we’ve been able to create a set of preventive services policies for VHA that promotes current, evidence-based preventive care.” These initiatives have contributed to improved performance rates of cancer screening in VA. NCP just completed a successful, multi-site demonstration project on VA-wide implementation of lung cancer screening services that will inform VHA plans for wider dissemination of lung cancer screening.

One cornerstone of NCP’s approach to prevention—training providers in patient-centered communication techniques—has also benefitted thousands of clinicians and, in turn, their patients. “Since 2010, NCP staff have trained over 32,000 and 16,000 clinical staff in provider-patient communication, *Patient Education: TEACH for Success (TEACH)* course, and Motivational Interviewing, respectively, and supported ongoing clinician coaching education to further develop these skills,” explains Goldstein. “We’ve used a ‘train-the-trainer’ model, so staff have then passed on these critical skills to their peers. Local feedback on the value of this training has been overwhelmingly positive.”



Recent Successes



Enhancing patient-centered education and communication has also been an ongoing focus—and success—for the VHEI Program, according to current National Program Manager Dr. Rose Mary Pries, who helped launch the program. “We’ve used a coordinated, VA-wide approach to planning, delivering, and evaluating evidence-based, Veteran-centric health education and information, which also takes into account Veterans’ unique health literacy and numeracy needs,” she explains. “After almost 10 years of VHEI programs, services, and products, and professional development, support, and training for VHECs, VA facilities are effectively delivering—through tools like the Veterans Health Library (VHL)—the educational programs and information that Veterans need to partner with their health care teams to enhance and self-manage their health.”

Several of NCP’s more recent programs demonstrate just how far the office has come from its humble origins two decades ago. These include NCP’s *Healthy Living initiative* (begun in 2010-11), which includes 9 key Healthy Living messages and the popular *My Health Choices* goal-setting tool; the comprehensive VHL (2013), which has had over 2.5 million page views on MyHealthVet; and the online *HealtheLiving Assessment (HLA; 2014)*, a health risk assessment tool that over 36,000 Veterans have used to understand and reduce their risk of certain diseases. In 2015, in Kinsinger’s tenth year of leadership, NCP also launched the *Gateway to Healthy Living* pilot program, a brief lifestyle intervention session for PACT patients. NCP recently submitted a proposal for a national *Telephone Lifestyle Coaching* program, which, in a 2-year pilot, was shown to help Veterans successfully improve key health behaviors through phone-based health coaching. “These innovative products are the culmination of years of planning and testing,” notes Kinsinger, “and we’re excited to continue offer effective, patient-driven resources that provide measureable improvement and long-term value in Veteran health.”



Lasting Legacy



Moving beyond 2015, NCP will continue to develop and enhance its many ongoing HPDP initiatives and resources, and sustain a long-standing legacy of health promotion and disease prevention that supports VA's ever-improving and evolving vision for Veteran care. "The challenge in preventive care is that you typically can't see the things you prevent, and you often don't get specific or dramatic results that indicate success," explains Kinsinger. "Prevention is applied at the individual level, but needs to be viewed and assessed at the population level, with a long-term view and reliance on data to show impacts. But we're confident that the foundations and interventions of preventive care that VA and NCP have laid over the past two decades will

help achieve those impacts, and help guide Veterans in improving their health and well-being for years to come."

Prevention Milestones: NCP Over the Years

- 1996 - First VA Handbook (1101.8); first Preventive Medicine Conference
- 1997 - Veterans Health Survey begins; first NCP newsletter published
- 1998 - National Summit on VA Health Promotion and Disease Prevention
- 1999 - Director becomes VHA liaison to the US Preventive Services Task Force
- 2002 - Flu Toolkit published
- 2003 - MOVE! pilot starts
- 2004 - First Annual Report published; office moved to current location
- 2006 - Office restructured, moved on PCS org chart; title of Director changed to Chief Consultant; MOVE! launched nationally; monthly prevention topics developed; monthly prevention calls began
- 2007 - VHEI Program launched
- 2009 - Tagline, "Keeping Well and Well-Informed," debuted
- 2010 - Preventive Care Program sub-initiative of T21 begins; HPDP staff positions funded at local facilities; *TEACH* and MI trainings began
- 2011 - Healthy Living messages campaign launched
- 2012 - National TLC pilot, Diabetes Prevention (DPP) pilot and Lung Cancer Screening Demonstration Project pilot launched
- 2013 - VHL launched
- 2014 - HLA launched
- 2015 - MOVE! Coach Mobile and Gateway to Healthy Living launched

Passion and Dedication: Dr. Linda Kinsinger Retires After Leading Transformation of VA Preventive Care

In 2002, when Dr. Linda Kinsinger joined NCP as the Assistant Director of Policy, Program, Training and Education, she says that she was excited to work in VA, which was then a new environment for her. “It was a great opportunity to promote prevention in a large, defined population of patients who receive care from an integrated health system designed just for them,” she explains. “You can create the policy, do the planning, and implement practice in the system over the long term—where and when prevention makes the biggest impact. So you can actually see prevention work.”

Now, as Kinsinger prepares to retire after 13 years in VHA, it’s easy to see her impact and legacy as a leader and advocate for improved Veteran health and VA care. Under her leadership for 10 years, the now 20-year-old NCP has steadily expanded its reach and impact, benefiting thousands of Veterans and their VA providers through numerous initiatives, programs, and resources. Former Deputy Chief Consultant for Preventive Medicine, Dr. Leila Kahwati, who worked at NCP from 2004 to 2012, notes, “Linda’s highly respected, both in and out of VA, and she’s set the bar and the example for how clinical operations and research operations can work together to bring value to each partner. Linda has ‘walked the walk’—both literally and figuratively—in prevention, and served VA, NCP, the field, and our Veterans with great integrity.” Adds current Deputy Chief, Dr. Jane Kim, “For a lot of people, Linda’s been an inspiring example of passion for and dedication to preventive medicine and VA care. And that shows in the impressive array of programs and policies that were implemented during her tenure.”



Launch of VA’s Lung Cancer Screening Clinical Demonstration Project, Walter Reed National Military MC, 2013

Prevention Into Practice

Kinsinger says that she realized early on, while practicing Internal Medicine in the Midwest, that she was interested in the challenge of helping patients, especially younger ones, avoid chronic disease. A move to North Carolina in 1987 started a long involvement as resident and residency director in Preventive Medicine, and faculty in General Internal Medicine at the University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill, and provided her initial contact with VA and NCP. Three years after joining NCP, she assumed the role of NCP’s Director; by 2007, her position title changed to VA’s Chief Consultant for Preventive Medicine. Former and current NCP staff and colleagues say that Kinsinger’s characteristics—high-energy personality; caring, level-headed leader; warm friend; talented writer; great mentor; thoughtful, highly knowledgeable clinician; coalition-builder; and visionary—were immediately evident and a “breath of fresh air” in the office’s early years.

“Linda just rolled up her sleeves and got things done, whether it was developing early clinical guidance statements for providers, to writing the ‘Ask Dr. Linda’ newsletter column, to giving flu shots to NCP staff! And under her leadership, NCP quickly became known as a huge supporter to the clinical field staff in the field,” recall Rosemary Strickland and Susi Lewis, who have each worked at NCP for over a decade. “Over the years, NCP has listened and responded to what the field needed most to take prevention into practice, and then provided training to help them do that.” Under Kinsinger’s guidance, NCP

staff, for example, have trained over 33,000 and 12,500 clinical staff in provider-patient communication (TEACH) and Motivational Interviewing, respectively, as part of NCP's Preventive Care Program sub-initiative of the 2010 VA *New Models of Care Transformational Initiative*. Kinsinger also has lead the charge within NCP to provide the many tools and resources clinicians need, from NCP's first "Flu Toolkit" in 2002, for example, to the VHA recommendation tables for clinical preventive services for men and for women that were posted in fall of 2015.

Population-Focused, Evidence-Based

Perhaps Kinsinger's most impressive—and possibly her proudest—single accomplishment was leading the implementation of NCP's signature program, the *MOVE!® Weight Management Program for Veterans*. "After a pilot period, we launched the program nationally in early 2006, and it's thrived in the VA system. NCP took the program from planning through sustainment, creating a population-level approach to reducing obese/overweight in Veterans," she explains. "All you have to do is read some of the many MOVE! success stories to see the positive influence it's had on Veteran health. As of this summer 2015, the program has treated over 650,000 Veterans and helped most of them achieve weight loss or stabilization."

Kinsinger says that MOVE! was also an example of one important NCP goal over the years: promoting evidence-based clinical care in VA. "We've developed a full set of VHA Guidance Statements for clinicians—over 40 at last count—and an array of clinical preventive services recommendations for Veterans, all of which have contributed to improved performance rates of cancer screening in VHA in recent years," she says. "And we've undertaken several pilot projects, such as the Diabetes Prevention Program and the eight-site Lung Cancer Screening Demonstration, which we've shown can work the VA setting and are now being rolled-out in VA with great promise for improving Veteran health. The Lung Cancer Screening Demonstration, in particular, is an important project that will inform not only VHA, but other health care systems, as well, about how to implement this complex new screening recommendation."



Press conference for VA's Diabetes Prevention Program, Minneapolis VAMC, 2012

Continued Support, Change

Along the way, Kinsinger says that the successes achieved were the result of great partnerships. "So many outstanding staff in VA—VACO, PCS leadership, facility administrators, research collaborators, and field clinical and prevention staff, for example—had a hand in NCP's accomplishments in Veteran care," she recalls. "And at key points along the way, we got the support we needed to build on early accomplishments and continue to make the case for prevention."

One of those milestones was the 2010 VA *New Models of Care Transformational Initiative*, under which NCP initiated its *Preventive Care Program* sub-initiative. "A key part of these transformational efforts was to effectively integrate HPDP services and staff into VHA's PACT," Kinsinger explains. "After strategic planning in 2008-2009, NCP was poised to begin implementing and supporting HPDP at the local level in 2010." Several years and a lot of training, support, and guidance later, Prevention Committees are now in nearly all facilities, and HPDP Program Managers, Health Behavior Coordinators, VHECs and MOVE! Coordinators are in most VA facilities. This grass-roots HPDP support has provided the strong field presence that, along with the "paradigm shift" of NCP's more recent focus on health behavior change for healthy living, has transformed and enhanced VA preventive care.



NCP's Jay Shiffler, Kinsinger, and Marty Larson (l to r) with former NFL player Chris Draft (c), VA's Lung Cancer Screening Clinical Demonstration Project, Durham VAMC, 2013

Well And Well-Informed

Patient-oriented HPDP tools were also an important part of NCP's efforts over the years, and Kinsinger oversaw the development of a number of innovative resources for Veterans. NCP's *Healthy Living initiative* (begun in 2010-2011) comprised 9 *Healthy Living messages*, as well as goal-setting and problem-solving tools. The VHL, launched in 2013 on MyHealtheVet, gave Veterans and their caregivers a comprehensive source of VA-vetted health information. 2014's online HealthLiving Assessment has helped tens of thousands of Veterans understand and reduce their risk of disease. Kinsinger says that it's exciting to see these tools being successfully used and heartening "to see that we're touching Veterans lives" and keeping them well and well-informed.

2015 has been a particularly important year in NCP's continued promotion of preventive care, as initiatives that NCP has been testing and developing for years came to fruition. "For example, NCP initiated a pilot of the promising *Gateway to Healthy Living*, a group program designed to support PACT patients in health behavior change through a brief lifestyle intervention," Kinsinger notes. "We're also looking to move forward on a national *Telephone Lifestyle Coaching* program, which has helped Veterans successfully improve key health behaviors through phone-based health coaching. Finally, we launched *MOVE! Coach*, which is an online mobile phone app that has given over 6,400 Veterans the ability to participate a 19-week, self-managed MOVE! Program—when and where they want."

Gratifying Results

As Kinsinger leaves VA and NCP, praise for her contributions to VA health care has come from all levels. Current National Program Manager for Health Behavior Dr. Peg Dundon relates that “Linda has given tremendous intellectual support and passionate dedication to our work in prevention.” NCP staff and field clinicians echo the opinion that Kinsinger has led a “prevention transformation” throughout VHA and made a significant impact on Veteran health in her time at NCP. Explains Dr. Maureen McCarthy, Acting Assistant Deputy Under Secretary for Health for Patient Care Services in VHA, “the list of Linda’s accomplishments is too long to mention, but things like MOVE!, the VHL, and Clinical Preventive Services Guidance come immediately to mind. She has been a highly respected leader in VHA because of her remarkable achievements, and will be missed very much, both professionally and personally.”

Kinsinger says that she has so many things to be proud of and has been fortunate to have worked with a lot of great staff, in NCP, VHA, and VA. “These strong connections and partnerships have been very gratifying,” Kinsinger notes. “It’s often hard to ‘see’ the results of prevention because they take time and work at the population level. But together, we’ve made a significant, lasting impact on VA patients by transforming our approach to preventive care and creating a solid foundation of HPDP for Veterans and VA. I tell NCP staff all the time that, ‘ain’t nuthin’ easy,’ but all of NCP’s and VHA’s hard work in prevention has been worth it because it’ll provide long-lasting dividends for Veterans health.”



NCP Goal Setting Video Production, Los Angeles, 2012

Success, Challenge, Change: MOVE! Weight Management Program Celebrates 10 Years of Helping Veterans Get Healthier

In 2015, NCP's MOVE! Weight Management Program for Veterans (MOVE!) approached its 10-year anniversary. Members of the MOVE! team recently reflected on the past and future of the program, which has continued to evolve in helping Veterans improve their health and well-being by eating wisely, moving more, and weighing less.

What has MOVE! accomplished in the past decade?

Dr. Susan Raffa, National Program Director for Weight Management: "MOVE! has really helped make **obesity and overweight part of the conversation** clinicians have with Veterans. We've been using performance measures for years to assess the program's reach and impact, and the results are impressive. The program has a wide reach—we currently screen over 90 percent of Veterans for obesity/overweight. And it's had a measurably positive impact on Veteran health—a recent analysis, for example, showed that of the approximately 1 in 5 patients who have sustained, intense participation in MOVE!, most achieve stable weight loss."

Dr. Ken Jones, former (2004-2014) National Program Director for Weight Management: "The program has been pioneering—no other U.S. health care system has really done what VA's done

with MOVE!. We've always been at the **leading edge of weight care and prevention**—many of the things that are being talked about now, we've been doing for years in the MOVE! Program."

Megan Skidmore, MOVE! Physical Activity Program Coordinator: "MOVE! has **touched so many Veterans' lives** over the years. In late 2013, a half-million Veterans had participated in the program, and by the late summer of 2015, that number was over 650,000 patients."

What were some of the program's most significant events over the years?

Suzanne Harp, MOVE! Special Projects Coordinator - Clinical Resources: "I remember our **MOVE! toolkit** as one of our first big accomplishments, and something that had a huge impact in the field. In 2006, just after MOVE! went national, we sent a 42-item toolkit to every facility MOVE! Coordinator and each Community-Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC). They loved the toolkits, which had everything needed to help Veterans get started with MOVE! and make the program a success. Looking back, I think those toolkits really helped kick-start the program."

Lynn Novorska, MOVE! Dietitian Program Coordinator: "In 2009, the

U.S. Army adopted MOVE!, and that was a big deal because it required a lot of hard work and really confirmed the effectiveness and value of the program. That same year, we registered MOVE! as a service mark with the U.S. Office of Patents and Trademarks, which identified it as a unique service and was a major validation for the program."

Sophia Hurley, former (2008-2012) MOVE! Physical Activity Program Coordinator, current Prevention Programs Coordinator: "I also remember things like the **first VA Symposium on Obesity, Nutrition and Fitness**, and our collaboration with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) on the *HealthierUS Veterans project*, both in 2007. They were great examples of the **many productive partnerships** MOVE! has had over the years. In 2009, for example, we partnered with the Veterans Canteen Service and others to sponsor a national health promotion event, *The Champions Challenge*, which raised awareness of the HHS' 2008 Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans. It was another one of those successful, multi-partner collaborations that helped thousands of Veterans get healthy and more physically active."

Harp: "I feel like each new tool we developed for the program has been a significant event—each new resource has improved and enhanced the MOVE! experience for clinicians

and their patients. But getting dedicated staff in **permanent FTE positions (FTEs)** here at NCP has been really important because it's allowed us to consistently develop these new resources and programs for the field."

Hurley: "Yes, and so are programs like **TeleMOVE! in 2008 and Telephone Lifestyle Coaching (TLC)**—first MOVE! TLC in 2009-2010, and National TLC, which we successfully piloted from 2011-2013 and hope to develop into a national program soon. These are examples of great new programs that have really extended the reach and impact of MOVE!. I also think that things like the *MOVE! Handbook* and the **VA/DoD Clinical Practice Guideline for Screening and Management of Overweight and Obesity**, which we contributed to in 2008 and 2014, were important in defining and supporting clinical practice in VA."

Raffa: "A significant recent milestone for the program this year was the **launch of MOVE! Coach**, a mobile app that offers Veterans a comprehensive, weight management program, right at their fingertips. I think it shows how MOVE! has always been at or ahead of the cutting edge in clinical trends and technology."

Karen Eisner, Project Manager: "Yes, to develop MOVE! Coach, we partnered with 11 VHA facilities to complete a full field test for the app in 2014. We learned so much from the field champions and participants during that test, and really appreciate the staff and Veterans who helped shape the design and implementation being used today. And we've been fortunate to partner with such a **great Office of Information and Technology**

(OI&T) mobile development team—who provided the talent and skill to make the app a reality—and to collaborate with the **VA Mobile Communications team** on promoting and marketing."

Skidmore: "And we've had over **6,400 downloads of MOVE! Coach** through this month—so Veterans are successfully using it to get healthy and active, and better manage their weight."

What challenges has MOVE! overcome?

Jones: "In the early years of the program, many VA clinicians were **hesitant to promote physical activity** for patients—mostly out of safety concerns—and wanted more training on providing weight management care to patients. We were able to overcome these issues, and MOVE! has become a model for other national programs."

Novorska: "We've faced—and overcome—some other significant challenges over the past 10 years. From day one, the program has been an **unfunded mandate**, so at the local level, MOVE! staff, clinicians, and leadership just worked with what they had to make the program successful. There were times, like in 2013, when we weren't sure if the program would continue, mainly because some questioned its impact on Veteran health and validity as a weight management program. Fortunately, the data have always shown that the program has clear clinical value to Veterans."

Hurley: "Local MOVE! programs often face the challenge of limited resources. But in 2010, the local **HPDP Program Managers and Health Behavior Coordinators (HBCs)** got

involved in supporting MOVE!. They were really able to strengthen and complement the efforts of the local **VISN and Facility MOVE! Coordinators and MOVE! Physician Champions**, who deserve so much praise because they are the 'heart and soul' of the program. In the early years, the challenges MOVE! faced were in implementation, but lately, the challenge has been to keep improving and enhancing it."

Harp: "With **less money available for travel**, we don't get out into the field as much to train staff and that's been a challenge. We've relied on face-to-face training a lot over the years, and that was an important part of the program's success."

Raffa: "To address this issue, we've been doing more **online training for MOVE! staff**. We started doing it back in 2006, with an update in 2012 and additional updates planned for 2016. Plans are also underway to utilize other virtual training methods."

Harp: "**Stop codes** were a big issue, and even though guidelines went into place in 2006, we've had to clarify their use with MOVE! over the years. The **copy issue** also was a big problem early on—Veterans were being charged for MOVE! care. Ken Jones led a 2-year process, from 2008-2009, to get the copy exemption, and we finally got it waived through a change in Federal regulations."

Novorska: "**Integrating MOVE! with CPRS** was something that Ken Jones really championed from 2003-2005, and early on, he got support from VISN 8 to make it happen. The integration eventually worked, but there are still technology challenges."

What does the future hold for the program?

Rosemary Strickland, MOVE! Special Projects Coordinator: “I’ll be interested in seeing how MOVE! looks in 5 and 10 years. VA health care continues to evolve and change, as does technology and clinical care. With the programs and products we’ve developed over the years, I think MOVE! is **well-positioned for the future.**”

Novorska: “One focus has been to **increase physical activity programming** as a healthy prevention goal, as well as for programming within MOVE!. This is an area that we can enhance by providing resources like Be Active and MOVE! (BAM) to local MOVE! programs. We’re also working on **version 2 of MOVE! Coach**, and hope to continue to add many more helpful features and benefits for Veterans and their families as they proceed on their journey to better health.”

Skidmore: “Recently, we’ve also seen an **increase in the use of CVT** with MOVE!, as well as in the use of BAM at local facilities. So we’ll continue to develop resources to support clinicians and Veterans who use these technologies.”

Raffa: “One thing we’re now planning is a **State of the Art Conference in 2016** that will focus on the role of bariatric surgery in treating obese/overweight Veterans and weight management in VHA more generally, both of which are particularly relevant to our patients.”

What about MOVE! makes you most proud?

Tony Rogers, MOVE! Communications and Data Program Coordinator: “It’s really **inspiring for all of us** on the MOVE! team to see the program working. It’s also great to see that it’s made a difference in so many Veterans’ lives.”

Harp: “I’m most proud of all the **success stories from Veterans**, and the program outcomes that say ‘MOVE! works.’”

Strickland: “From the time MOVE! started, we’ve been **impressed by the field staff** who embraced this program and have continually worked with us to make it better. I feel like Veterans have really benefited from MOVE!.”

Eisner: “We’re very proud to be part of expanding technology offerings, with the release of MOVE! Coach as the very first mobile app to be created in-house by the OI&T developers.”

Novorska: “MOVE! **has continued to grow** over time, with new programs, resources, tools, and staff, and we’ve enjoyed being part of it and seeing it happen.”

Skidmore: “It’s great that we’re able to **offer MOVE! in so many ways.** TeleMOVE!, group and individual MOVE! classes, MOVE! Buddy, BAM CVT, TLC, and even NCP’s Diabetes Prevention Program pilot all make weight management really accessible and user-friendly for Veterans.”

Jones: “I’m particularly proud of the **multi-disciplinary nature of MOVE!** and the amazing success achieved by individual Veterans. It’s been a pleasure to work with a great team at NCP and in the field, and it shows in the outcomes of MOVE! on the population- and individual-level.”

Raffa: “It’s been a privilege for me to join the team of dedicated health professionals who make MOVE! a success here at NCP and in the facilities. They all work tirelessly to champion the program and I’m inspired by their commitment to their work and Veterans. I think we all look forward to working together to make MOVE! the best program that it can be.”

NCP is proud to unveil its new office and program logos. We're now disseminating these logos to the field, along with information on how to use them in your facilities.

National Center for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention



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NCP MISSION

The VHA National Center for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention (NCP), a field-based office of the VHA Office of Patient Care Services, provides input to VHA leadership on evidence-based health promotion and disease prevention policy. NCP provides programs, education, and coordination for the field consistent with prevention policy to enhance the health, well-being, and quality of life for Veterans.

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