

# Health *POWER!*

Prevention News • SUMMER 2015



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Recently, I got sunburned—really, truly scorched—during an afternoon of body-surfing at the beach, and despite a liberal application of sunscreen. How badly sunburned? Well, picture the red hue associated with a Maine lobster fresh from boiling water, an over-ripe Jalapeño pepper, or maybe the old Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary. It was an epic burn, just like some of the nasty ones I got during the summers of my youth, which were spent, *sans* sunscreen, on the beaches of New England.

Eight to ten hours a day swimming, catching blue crabs, and fishing with my friends? No sun protection, no problem! Back in the day, we didn’t know what a sun protection factor (SPF) was, and we didn’t have or use sunblock. Worse yet, the “Coppertone tan” was in vogue, and fair-skinned youngsters like me weren’t really thinking about the long-term effects of sun exposure as we got our bronze on.

Fortunately, sun awareness and protection has improved since then. So

has the Veterans Health Library, which was recently updated to improve the experience of VHA (Veterans Health Administration) users and is discussed in this newsletter’s feature article. We also showcase a Health Behavior Coordinator (HBC) who’s using the *Manage Stress Workbook* to help Veterans at the Lebanon, Pennsylvania, VAMC (Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center) improve their overall health. Additionally, we include articles on a user survey of the HealthLiving Assessment and a MOVE! Program “bright spot” from VISN (Veterans Integrated Service Network) 6. Some great photos of staff, nice quotes about our resources, and a MOVE! success story round out this summer issue.

So put on your sunscreen—the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends applying a broad-spectrum one with at least SPF 15—and then safely enjoy this issue of the VHA National Center for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention’s (NCP’s) HealthPOWER! the next time you head to the shore!

*Ted Slowik*

## Re-Design Makes Veterans Health Library Easier for Veterans to Use

Changes to the Veterans Health Library (VHL) are helping Veterans and VHA clinical staff get the health information they need more quickly and more easily, according to Becky Hartt Minor, a health educator at NCP.

“In July, the VHL got a refreshing new look that makes it more user-friendly to Veterans who want to improve their health,” she explains. “They’re finding that the Library is much more responsive to their needs—it gives them a better sense of what’s available and gets them to the pages they want with fewer clicks.”

### More Responsive

Several of the changes were based on the recent re-design of VA’s Web page, which now gives users a better sense of where they’ve been and where they’re going on the site. “When VHL users move their cursor over a menu topic—called ‘hovering’—they can now see the subtopics, too,” Hartt Minor says. “And they can see the ‘trail’ of pages they’ve visited, because these ‘breadcrumbs’ have been placed more prominently on each page.”

Additionally, the *Search* and *A-Z* tools are now larger and easier to find because they appear under the

navigation bar on each VHL page. “The navigation bar was moved to the top of the page, and ‘fly-out’ menus have been added so that users don’t have to click as much,” she explains. “Both features help users get more quickly to the information they want.”

### Better Experience

Hartt Minor thinks that other changes to the VHL’s Search features will improve users’ experiences, as well as save time when looking for information. “We changed how search terms work in the VHL—they’ve been narrowed so that users have fewer results to review,” she says. “Additionally, we’ve added instructions to help them get more specific results from their searches. And the information that comes up during a search is now labeled to indicate the type of resource it is—a Go-to-Guide is an ‘Interactive Workbook’, each video has a ‘Play’ icon, and each of the Online Guides is noted as a PDF, for example.”

Important changes also were made to the VHL’s Home Page, which sports a new layout designed for easier viewing and use. “The home page now contains four blocks, each with images and text, that randomly show videos from the entire video library, rotating through the main subtopics within that section,” says Hartt Minor. “The Mental Health Library, for example,

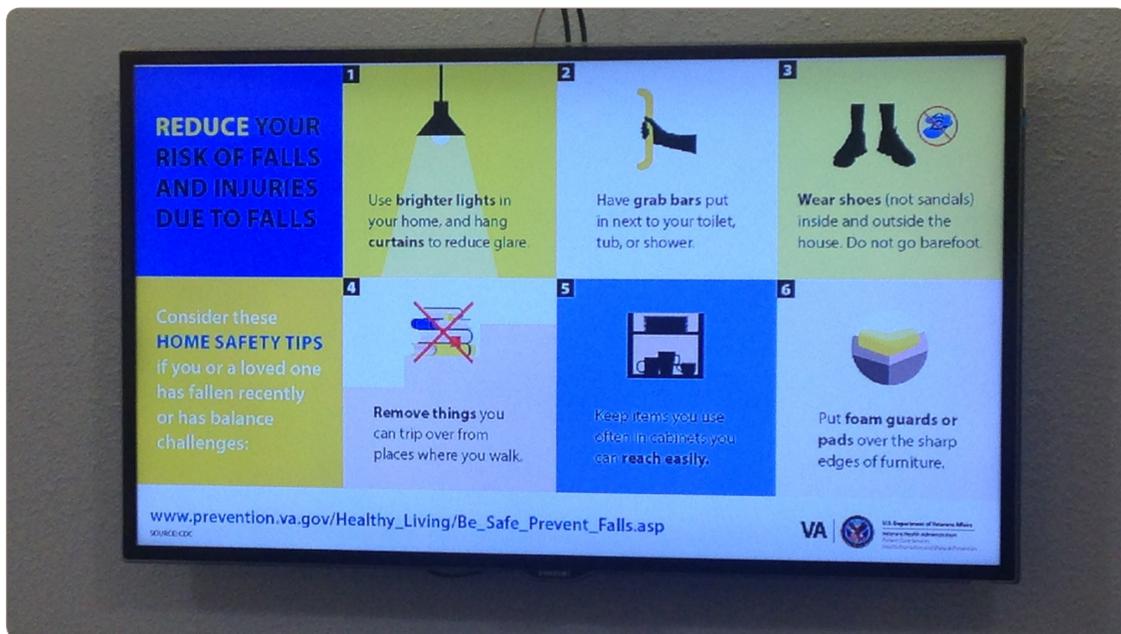
is featured on the home page, and a new video preview allows users to hover over video to watch it, too.” For improved visibility, the *Print* and social media icons are now bigger and at a new location on each VHL page.

### Fresh, New Feel

Spanish-speaking Veterans are also benefitting from the changes to the VHL. A new feature, the *En Español* button, is now located at the top of the each VHL page. “Clicking this button translates the entire top navigation into Spanish; clicking the *En Inglés* button translates the text back to English,” says Hartt Minor. “This feature helps Veterans move more easily between English and Spanish information in the VHL.”

Another important improvement expands users’ access to the VHL, as it can now be viewed on both mobile devices and laptop computers. “Taken together, all of these changes have created a fresh, new feel for the Library and they really help users get the most out of it,” Hartt Minor explains. “It’s really exciting for us to continue to enhance the ways in which Veterans and VHA clinical staff use this powerful resource for better health and improved well-being.”





Examples of NCP’s June “Prevent Falls” infographic used locally as a hallway banner (top, Lebanon (PA) VAMC) and electronic bulletin board (bottom, VA Eastern Colorado Health Care System (HCS)).

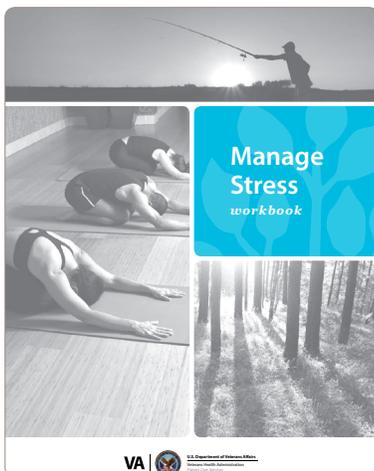
## HBC at Lebanon VAMC Lauds NCP's *Manage Stress Workbook*

"A wonderful resource."

That's how HBC Dr. Christine Cooper describes NCP's *Manage Stress Workbook*, which she's been using for several months to augment patient care at the Lebanon (PA) VAMC. And that's probably the way that it would also be described by Veterans, who are now discovering that the workbook is a valuable tool to help them improve their overall health.

### Many Applications

Cooper, who's been at the Lebanon VA for over 8 years and has been Lebanon's HBC since 2012, praises the workbook because it's simple, well-written, and full of easy-to-use techniques. She's also found that it's not only applicable to conventional stress management. "I've found it to be an effective, practical way to augment interventions for conditions such as anxiety and depression, and even chronic pain, tinnitus, insomnia, and neuropathy," she adds. "It's good for everything!"



As the facility's Military Sexual Trauma (MST) Coordinator and a clinician in the Tobacco Cessation Clinic, Cooper has successfully used the workbook with a variety of patients. "Getting them to recognize, then address, their stress is critical, and the workbook provides all the tools they need to better identify and manage their stressors," she explains. "It gives a nice overview of all the different techniques for stress management, and importantly, helps them identify when to use them. And if patients don't like one technique, several others are offered." Cooper says that the workbook has been a particularly good aid for many of the MST patients with whom she's worked. "The workbook helps them manage their unpleasant thoughts 'in the moment,' which is really important," she explains. "MST patients who don't like to use the full-body scan meditation, for example, can find alternative stress-management techniques in the workbook."

### Something For Everyone

With practice, Cooper says that patients get better at using the workbook's techniques to address other issues, such as pain and cravings. "Veterans say that they really like the CD included in the workbook, and many have found the breathing exercises to be particularly helpful," she says. "The emphasis on self-compassion, for example, gives powerful insight to Veterans. Although they feel great compassion for others, they tend to be tough on themselves and less able to validate their own pain

and feelings." Cooper also says that Veterans appreciate the workbook's stress-tracker tool, which helps them chart their progress in managing stress.

In addition to the facility's patients, Cooper has promoted the workbook widely and shared it with clinicians as part of her HBC responsibilities at the VAMC. "The workbook really has something for everyone, and it integrates well with the other staff training I help facilitate here, like *TEACH* and Motivational Interviewing (MI)," she notes. "For Veterans, it provides an array of proven stress management techniques. And for clinicians, it can be an effective part of treating a wide range of patient health issues by giving patients additional self-care tools to use between visits."



### Effective Model

NCP's National Program Manager for Health Behavior, Dr. Peg Dundon, led the team that developed the workbook and is excited to hear how it's helping Veterans and clinicians, and reinforcing the direct role that an HBC takes in patient care. "The workbook can be used for much more than just stress management groups or

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individual self-management, and the integrated approach Christine is using is likely to be most effective,” notes Dundon. “We envisioned that the workbook would have application beyond conventional stress management, and it’s great to see the success of Christine’s model for using it to augment care across a variety of health psychology concerns.”

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**For questions about the *Manage Stress Workbook* or other stress management resources, please contact Dr. Peg Dundon at [Margaret.Dundon@va.gov](mailto:Margaret.Dundon@va.gov) or (716) 604-5446.**

*The Workbook is available through the Depot (IB 10-622, Manage Stress Workbook; stock number P96657) and up to 30 workbooks may be ordered at a time (limit 30 per request per station). Facilities must place their orders through the FP Orders System via their local Forms & Publications PCO; the facility PCO can be found at the VHA PCO listing: <https://vawww.vha.vaco.portal.va.gov/sites/VHACOS/10B4/PCO/Lists/Station%20POCs/AllItems.aspx>.*



**NCP's Sue Raffa** (second from right) met with **VISN 16 MOVE! Coordinators** in Jackson, MI, May 2015. (L to R: Robert Krause, Jordyn Forsyth, Melinda Smiley, Jo Ann Calcote, Wendy Wolber, Kristi Bellard, Susan Berryhill, Alison Jones, Tyler Duerr, Emily Walker, Raffa, and Candace Dodge).

# Recent Survey Reveals Value and Impact of HealthLiving Assessment

A little over a year after its launch, more than 32,000 Veterans have tried NCP's HealthLiving Assessment (HLA). And according to a recent survey of users, this easy-to-use online tool is helping them understand and lower their health risks, and improve their overall health.

## Encouraging Results

"We were pleased to see that a good number of the surveyed Veterans were aware of the HLA, which is accessed

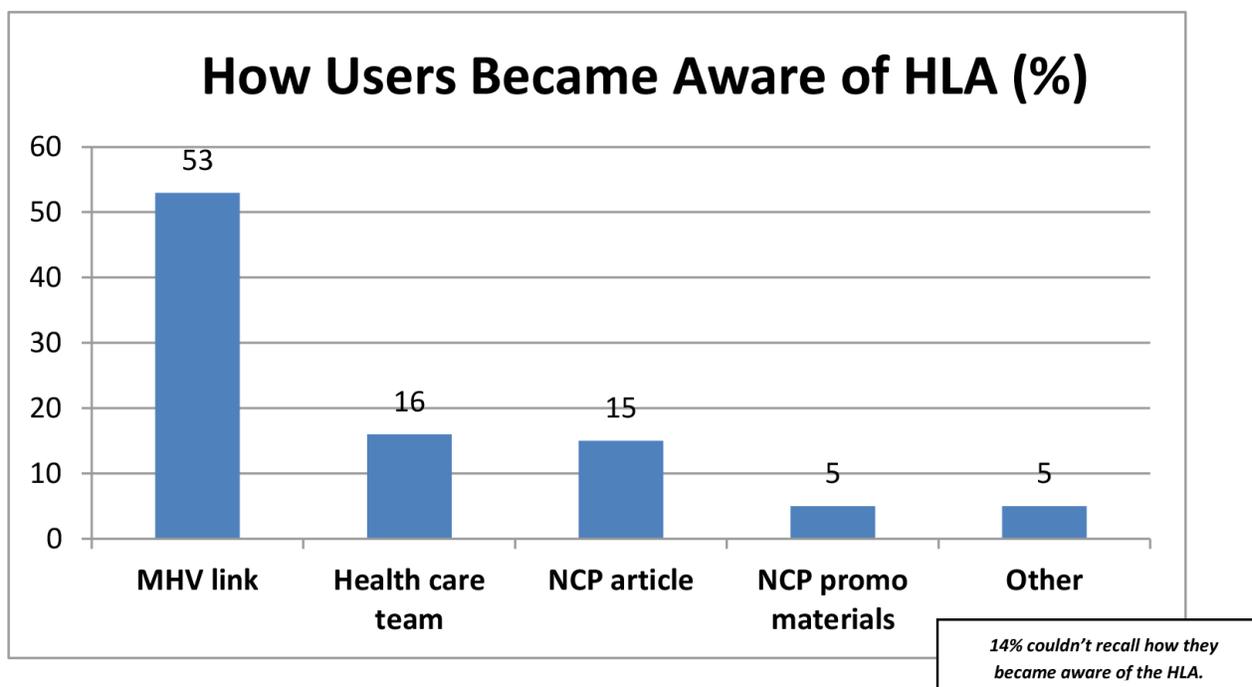
via the My Health<sup>e</sup>Vet (MHV) Web site," explains Heidi Martin, NCP's HLA Project Manager. "Although many have yet to take the assessment, almost two-thirds of respondents who started the HLA have taken it at least once, and about three-quarters will take, or may take, it. All of these findings are encouraging because they show that HLA awareness and use are high and likely growing."

Of the 1,699 respondents who completed the HLA, over 70 percent reported no technical problems while taking it. Martin says that this is

another important finding that reflects the HLA technical team's successful, ongoing efforts to stay on top of the issues that typically come with implementing a new technology.

## Easy To Use

"Seventy-nine percent of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the questions and response choices in the HLA were easy to understand," says Dr. Jane Kim, NCP's Deputy Chief Consultant for Preventive Medicine and the HLA's clinical lead. "And about 75 percent felt that the



HLA was the right length. Taken together, these results indicate that they find the HLA to be a practical resource for making positive health behavior changes.”

Martin and Kim say that they’re probably most excited to see that respondents are using what they’ve learned in the HLA to actually improve their health. “The survey revealed that 53.9 percent reviewed the Summary Report generated for them after they completed the HLA—a really important step towards understanding one’s health and knowing which health areas to address,” Martin notes. “Using the report, about one-third have already made changes to their health behaviors, and almost a quarter are working on changing at least one health behavior! Importantly, they’re also using the HLA to engage their VA providers—about 61 percent have discussed, or plan to discuss, their HLA results with their health care team. This finding really shows the multi-faceted value that the HLA has for VA patients and providers.”

HLA Feature	Percentage of Users Who Found it “Most Helpful”
My Health Age	62
Recommendations for improving my health and lowering my risk of disease	53
My percent risk for heart disease, diabetes, stroke, and certain cancers	37
Assessments for how I am doing on diet, physical activity, stress, tobacco, alcohol, safety, etc.	36
Care that may be due	25

### Highly Recommended

Martin adds that early analyses of the survey results demonstrated similarity between male and female responses, and across the demographic groups who participated. “A clear majority of all respondents felt that the HLA was a valuable resource for their fellow Veterans,” she reports. “About 73 percent said they’d recommend it to others, and 76 percent thought it was a useful tool.”

A secure messaging feature is planned for the HLA later this year, and recent enhancements include access for mobile devices and a feature that allows users to compare current and previous Summary Reports. “We believe that these features will make the HLA even more valuable to Veterans who want to take charge of their health by improving their health behaviors,” says Kim. “We’re pleased with the results of the survey, which show the impact the HLA can have in providing Veterans with the proactive, personalized health care that they deserve.”

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Veterans can **access the HLA** by going to **VA’s MHV Home page** and scrolling down to the “Most Popular Features” Section: [https://www.myhealth.va.gov/mhv-portal-web/anonymous.portal?\\_nfpb=true&\\_nfto=false&\\_pageLabel=mhvHome](https://www.myhealth.va.gov/mhv-portal-web/anonymous.portal?_nfpb=true&_nfto=false&_pageLabel=mhvHome)

**For questions about the HLA**, contact **Heidi Martin** at (919)-383-7874, ext. 4260, or [Heidi.Martin@va.gov](mailto:Heidi.Martin@va.gov)

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# Stories From the Field: McGuire VA Medical Center Offers MOVE!® to Rural Veterans

*(This article was originally written by Steve Goetsch, Hunter Holmes McGuire VAMC, Richmond, VA)*

A small rural community's municipal building in Central Virginia might be the last place you would think Veterans are receiving health care. But for patients near Tappahannock, Virginia, the McGuire VAMC's Rural Health Initiative (RHI) team is offering MOVE!, VA's national weight management program.

## A Growing Program

MOVE! was designed to assist Veterans in losing weight and keeping it off by providing education and support to live a healthier lifestyle. It uses behavioral, nutritional, and physical activity components, and changes the focus each week to keep Veterans engaged.

The Tappahannock MOVE! sessions are taught by McGuire nurse Clarissa Sweeney, who has seen the program steadily grow over time. "Each time we have class, I see a new face," she said. A Navy Veteran,



Sweeney was excited to have the opportunity to teach MOVE! because she enjoys interacting with and motivating Veterans.

Sweeney shared that one of the goals of the RHI is to provide health promotion, disease prevention, and wellness education for rural Veterans residing in McGuire's catchment areas. Tappahannock was chosen because the RHI team listened to Veteran feedback requesting help with weight management.

## Convenience, Need

"I registered in MOVE! because I have been fighting diabetes for about 10 years," said Navy Veteran David Stanbridge. "I had the opportunity to go to the MOVE! Class at McGuire, but if they didn't offer it here at Tappahannock, I couldn't drive to the VAMC every week."

Stanbridge was one of a couple of Veterans who brought their spouses to the class, which is open to them even if they are not Veterans. "I brought my wife to class with me because she was with me while in service, so she is with me here now," he explained.

Stanbridge and his fellow Veterans in the Tappahannock MOVE! Program who struggle with weight management are not alone. Ruth Meyer, the McGuire MOVE! Program Coordinator says that obesity is an epidemic. "There is a high cost to obesity and more than 75% of Veterans seen in VHA are obese or overweight," said Meyer.

McGuire VAMC has almost 52,000 Veterans assigned to a primary care provider. Of those, a number are obese, which is characterized as having a body mass index (BMI) of 30 or greater (a BMI of 25 – 29.9 is characterized as overweight). Others considered to be at high risk for obesity-related conditions include females who have waist size of over 35 inches and males with a waist over 40 inches.

## Multiple Components

The program component on nutrition teaches students how to read food labels, learn about food ingredients, and practice portion control. That has been a challenge for Veteran Raymond Barnes, who has set a goal to decrease his weight to 200 pounds. "I have always been active, but I like to eat," Barnes said. "So portion control has been an issue for me."

Sweeney cautions MOVE! participants not to get hung up on the numbers they see on the scale during their weekly weigh-ins. But that advice has not dissuaded Barnes from keeping an eye on his scale and using the numbers to stay on track. "Coming here at least motivates me," Barnes explained. "It seems to be working because I've lost over 11 pounds."



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In addition to exercise recommendations, the program's physical activity component includes stretching and breathing exercises. Participants are provided pedometers that provide the information they need to set realistic physical activity goals, and track their activity levels and progress. MOVE!, Mobile Medical unit services, and the health education classes offered by McGuire are all part of an effort to reach the almost 17,000 enrolled Veterans who live in rural or highly rural areas like Tappahannock. Meyer said MOVE! is available at all of the VAMC's Community-based Outpatient Clinics, and there is a plan to bring it to the Cumberland, Virginia, area, too.

### Putting it into Practice

World War II Veteran Luther Derby, who is the oldest participant in Sweeney's MOVE! group and knew he had to lose weight, likes the class because he is learning about things he can do to have a positive impact on his health. "It covers all phases of your health—exercise, diet, and nutrition," he said. "If you put the information to work, you will be much healthier." Derby admits that prior to class, he just never paid attention to most of the things he has learned—but understood that his high blood pressure needed to change. The Army Veteran put his theory into practice and lost 10 pounds by the third MOVE! session!

Veteran Charles Lengford, who also attended MOVE! with his wife, said he wants to lose weight so that he can reduce the number of medications he takes. Meyer added that there are a host of conditions associated with an unhealthy weight—hypertension, diabetes, high cholesterol, gastric reflux, and sleep apnea, for example—and losing some weight can help with these issues.

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**For more information about VA's MOVE! Program, and to view more MOVE! success stories,** visit <http://www.move.va.gov>.

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## ***What They're Saying About:***

### ***NCP's Monthly Healthy Living Message resources***

*"I forwarded the [May] physical activity links to my providers and nurses and received positive feedback. Thanks much...!"*

*----Nurse Practitioner and Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Program Manager (HPDP PM), VISN11*

*"THANK YOU SO MUCH for putting these updates out there so I can print some materials for the waiting rooms and add the videos to our waiting room playlist."*

*----Registered Nurse, Oscar G. Johnson VAMC*

*"The [Prevent Falls and Safe Driving Month resources] are GREAT! Love the videos, too—perfect for our facility's digital signage. Thank you!"*

*----Public Affairs Officer and Congressional Liaison, VISN 15*

Several **articles of interest to VHA clinicians** were recently published:

- “Management of Dyslipidemia for Cardiovascular Disease Risk Reduction: Synopsis of the 2014 U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and U.S. Department of Defense Clinical Practice Guideline,” Downs JR, O’Malley PG. *Ann Int Med*. Published online, June 23, 2015
- “Less is More: When Documentation Supersedes Patient Communication: An Example From an Endoscopy Unit,” Shah UK, DiMura C, Agrawal D. *JAMA Int Med*. Published online April 27, 2015
- “The Effectiveness of Telemedicine for Weight Management in the MOVE! Program,” Ahrendt AD, Kattelmann KK, Rector TS, Maddox DA. *J Rural Health*. 2014;30(1):113-9
- “Evaluation of a Health Coaching Course for Providers and Staff in Veterans Health Affairs Medical Facilities,” Collins DA, Shamblen SR, Atwood KA, Rychener DL, Scarbrough WH, Abadi MH, Simmons LA. *J Prim Care Comm Health*. June 18, 2015. [Epub ahead of print]
- “Electronic Documentation of Lifestyle Counseling and Glycemic Control in Patients With Diabetes,” Hosomura N, Goldberg SI, Shubina M, Zhang M, Turchin A. *Diabetes Care*. Published online, June 12, 2015
- “Screening for Cancer: Advice for High-Value Care from the American College of Physicians,” Wilt TJ, et al. *Ann Int Med*. 2015;162(10):718-725
- “A Value Framework for Cancer Screening: Advice for High-Value Care from the American College of Physicians,” Harris RP, et al. *Ann Int Med*. 2015;162(10):712-717
- “The Healthy Lifestyle Team is Central to the Success of Accountable Care Organizations,” Arena R, Lavie CJ. *Mayo Clin Proc*. 2015;90(5):572-576
- “Healthy Lifestyle Interventions to Combat Noncommunicable Disease—A Novel Nonhierarchical Connectivity Model for Key Stakeholders: A Policy Statement From the American Heart Association, European Society of Cardiology, European Association for Cardiovascular Prevention and Rehabilitation, and American College of Preventive Medicine,” Arena R, Guazzi M, Lianov L, et al. *Mayo Clin Proc*. June 26, 2015. [Epub ahead of print]



There have been **656,056 visits to the Veterans Health Library** through May 2015, and 2.4 million to the Library since April 2012.



Over **32,300 HLA assessments have been completed** through June 2015.



Through June 2015, there have been **over 4,000 downloads of the MOVE! Coach Mobile app**.



Two **national clinical reminders for Hepatitis C screening and testing** were released on May 21, 2015 in patch PXR<sup>M</sup>\*2.0\*52:

- **Hepatitis C Risk Assessment Reminder** allows for the assessment of risk factors for Hepatitis C. The reminder excludes those with previously documented risk factors for Hepatitis C (birth cohort 1945-1965, drug abuse, alcohol abuse/dependence, HIV); these individuals will bypass the Hepatitis C Risk Assessment reminder and go straight to the Hepatitis C Testing reminder (#2). If a patient has previously been tested for Hepatitis C, they are excluded from the cohort for this reminder.
- **Testing for Hepatitis C Reminder** applies to individuals in the birth cohort, who have a history of drug abuse, alcohol abuse, HIV, or who have other risk factors identified in the Screening for Hepatitis C reminder (#1).

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These reminders follow the guidance outlined in the VHA Clinical Preventive Services guidance statement on Screening for Hepatitis C: Screening for Hepatitis C - VHA National Center for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention (NCP) ([http://vaww.prevention.va.gov/Screening\\_for\\_Hepatitis\\_C.asp](http://vaww.prevention.va.gov/Screening_for_Hepatitis_C.asp)). There is no mandate to use these national reminders, although local facilities may want to consider use of the national reminders or modifying locally developed reminders to align with VHA policy. Please contact NCP's Jane Kim ([Jane.Kim3@va.gov](mailto:Jane.Kim3@va.gov)) or Heidi Martin ([Heidi.martin@va.gov](mailto:Heidi.martin@va.gov)) with questions.



NCP's **Screening for Overweight and Obesity** and **Screening for Cognitive Impairment (Dementia) Guidance Statements** are in the final phases of review. The **Tdap/Td, Zoster Vaccine Reminder** will be tested in the summer of 2015.



**CDC's Clear Communication Index Widget** is a research-based tool to help you develop and assess public communication materials for your office. The Index is designed to help you communicate clearly with your audience, and can be used to:

- Design and develop a new communication product
- Assess the clarity of a communication product before or after public release

With just a click of your mouse, you can begin scoring and developing materials that enhance people's understanding of the message you want to deliver! To access the Clear Communication Index Widget or for more information on the Clear Communication Index please visit: <http://www.cdc.gov/ccindex/index.html>.



The **United States Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF)** has posted its **Final Research Plan on Behavioral Counseling to Promote a Healthful Diet and Physical Activity for Cardiovascular Disease Prevention in Adults without known Cardiovascular Disease Risk Factors**. The plan covers behavioral counseling to promote a healthful diet and physical activity for cardiovascular disease prevention in adults without known cardiovascular disease risk factors. USPSTF reviewed all of the recent public comments that were submitted and took them into consideration as it finalized the research plan, which can be viewed at:

<http://www.uspreventiveservicestaskforce.org/Page/Document/final-research-plan154/healthful-diet-and-physical-activity-for-cardiovascular-disease-prevention-in-adults-without-known-risk-factors-behavioral-counseling>



**Pooja Jani, M.D.**, is our newest Preventive Medicine Resident from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC). She attended medical school at the Medical College of Georgia and completed an internship in Pediatrics at Georgetown University. She joined the UNC Ophthalmology Department as a Postdoctoral Research Fellow in 2011, where she began pursuing her interests in public health and eye care. She is currently a resident enrolled in the Health Care & Prevention Master of Public Health program, and she continues to serve as the Project Director on a grant-funded project to build the North Carolina Diabetic Retinopathy Telemedicine Network. Her major career interests include international preventable blindness, telemedicine/tele-education, implementation science, global health, and public health informatics.

## A MOVE!-ing Experience: Veteran Bill Creager Discusses How MOVE!® Helped Him Lose 50 Pounds

“My VA doctor reviewed my blood work and told me that everything looked good. He was pleased with my results. But then came the sermon that I’ve heard so many times before: ‘Well, you know you could stand to lose a little weight.’ He noticed me rolling my eyes, but continued. ‘We have this program here called MOVE!,’ he said, ‘and I think you could really benefit from trying it.’

I thought to myself, ‘that’s just what I need...a program.’

As I sat there, he went into a long explanation of MOVE!. My mind was racing and I wondered if the appointment would ever end. Finally he said, ‘Look, why don’t you go to the introductory session and see what it’s all about? If you don’t think it’s something that you can benefit from, you don’t have to continue.’

At that point, I would’ve agreed to just about anything. So to pacify him, and to end the conversation and hopefully keep it from coming up again, I committed to the 2-hour MOVE! introductory class.

With my wife for support (and to keep me from falling asleep), I attended the class. Much to my amazement, I found it to be interesting and informative. Becky and Terri,

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two really energetic nurses at the Daytona Beach OPC, explained the program. They pointed out that rather than a typical diet program, MOVE! was more of an attitude adjustment. I kept thinking to myself, 'I can do that!' Then came the bad part: participants had to attend 16 weekly MOVE! classes—something I didn't want to do.

But before I realized it, the introductory session was over...and I just didn't have an opportunity to not join.

I had a month and a half until the first class. So I decided to try some of the suggestions they made at the introductory class—weighing myself daily and keeping a chart to track my results. I did it partly out of curiosity, and yes, partly because I wanted to prove that the program wouldn't work.

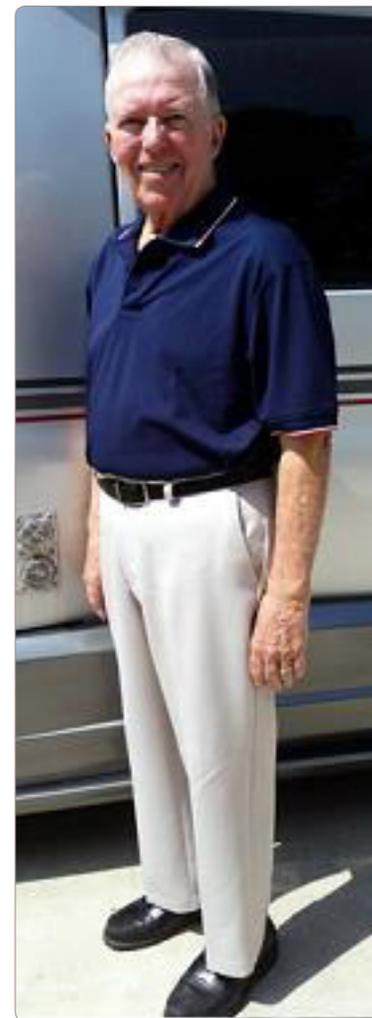
I failed to lose weight on every diet I'd tried before; I was convinced this one would be no different. And I'd have a record to prove it—after all, the scale wouldn't lie, right?

Well, my plan to 'beat the system' backfired. By the time the first MOVE! class started, I'd already lost 20 pounds! At that point, I started thinking about what I could accomplish if I attended more classes. I'd outsmarted myself right into the program!

Classes started and yes, I went. Much to my surprise, they were interesting and fun. Becky and Terri's enthusiasm was infectious, and they motivated us to make the effort. The whole class was my support group. When class members reached a special goal or had a recordable weight loss, they got the praise from everyone in the group.

By the 11th week of MOVE!, I'd reached my personal goal of losing 50 pounds! My pants went down four sizes and my shirt, two sizes. Best of all, my blood pressure and cholesterol medications were cut in half. My doctor is now considering whether I have to take them anymore.

I'm proud to share my personal achievements, but I deserve only part of the credit. I worked at controlling my calorie intake, did some reasonable exercise, and kept the weight and food charts. But more credit goes to the program's two wonderful nurses, my great wife, and all of my supportive classmates."



# CALENDAR *of* EVENTS

## **NCP Education Conference Call**

2nd Tuesday of the month

1:00 pm ET

1-800-767-1750, Access Code 18987#

• Upcoming calls—August 11, September 8

## **VISN MOVE!® Coordinators Call**

2nd Tuesday of the third month of each quarter

3:00 pm ET

1-800-767-1750, Access Code 59445#

• Upcoming call—September 8

## **Veterans Health Education Hotline Call**

4th Tuesday of the month

1:00 pm ET

1-800-767-1750, Access Code 16261#

• Upcoming calls—August 25, September 22

## **Health Promotion/Disease Prevention Conference Call**

1st Tuesday of the month

1:00 pm ET

1-800-767-1750, Access Code 35202#

• Upcoming calls—August 4, September 1

## **VISN/Facility MOVE!® Coordinators and Physician Champions Call**

2nd Tuesday of the first and second month of each quarter

3:00 pm ET

1-800-767-1750, Access Code 59445#

• Upcoming call—August 11

## **National Health Behavior Coordinators Call**

2nd Wednesday of the month

12:00 pm ET

1-800-767-1750, Access Code 72899#

• Upcoming calls—August 12, September 9

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.

**VA**



**U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs**

Veterans Health Administration  
Patient Care Services  
Health Promotion and Disease Prevention

VHA National Center for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention (NCP)  
Office of Patient Care Services  
Suite 200, 3022 Croasdaile Drive, Durham, NC 27705

### 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.

**Address suggestions, questions,  
and comments to the editor:**

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