



**VA National Center for Health
Promotion and Disease
Prevention
(VA NCP)**

**2006
Annual Report**



*Linda S. Kinsinger, MD, MPH
Director*

Message from the Director

It's an exciting time to be in the field of prevention! FY 2006 was a very active year for prevention across the Veterans Health Administration. VA, a recognized leader in health care, continues to receive accolades for setting the standard for high quality preventive care. In the July 17, 2006 issue of Business Week, a VA physician noted that preventive care provided by VA "has saved thousands of lives over the years." Also in July, VA won Harvard's prestigious Innovation in American Government Award, based in part because of its outstanding delivery of preventive services.

The VA National Center for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention (which we shorten to "NCP") is playing a leading role in assisting VA facilities in providing recommended preventive care to veterans. NCP is a section of the VHA Office of Patient Care Services, very ably led by Chief Officer Madhu Agarwal, MD, MPH. Through NCP's work to implement the *MOVE!* Weight Management Program for Veterans in 2006,

VA is leading the country in providing evidence-based healthcare services to help veterans control their weight. NCP also led development of a new project this year, HealthierUS Veterans, which provides education and support for healthy eating and increased physical activity for the large community of veterans and their families.



These are just two of the major initiatives NCP focused on in FY 2006. As you read this report, you'll see the wide range of activities we addressed this year. We're proud of the impact these accomplishments have had on the health and healthcare of our veterans.

Our Mission

The VA National Center for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention (NCP), a field-based office of the Office of Patient Care Services, provides input to VHA leadership on evidenced-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.

Our Vision

To improve and maintain veterans' health status and quality of life by providing high quality preventive health care.

Health Promotion

Richard Harvey, PhD

This year a new Health Promotion section was established at NCP. The Health Promotion section provides useful tools, support, and guidance to VHA clinicians and others to promote healthy behaviors and wellness for both patients and staff.

Accomplishments for the year:

- Supported an expanding network of Wellness Coordinators and other interested staff in VHA through bimonthly conference calls and individual/group e-mail contact.
- Conducted a survey of VHA facilities in May 2006; 12 facilities were offering “*MOVEmployee!*” program.
- Prepared a *MOVEmployee!* Manual, posted on the NCP websites, which provides comprehensive guidance on implementation and operation of a *MOVE!*-based weight management program for employees.
- Expanded a “Wellness Toolkit” developed by the NCP Wellness Advisory Council and posted on the NCP websites. The Toolkit provides a guide for starting an employee wellness program and numerous tools for implementation.
- Revised the Employee Wellness pages on the NCP websites to be more user-friendly.

Prevention Practice

Pamela Del Monte, MS, RN, C

Prevention Practice serves to provide guidance and support interactions between NCP, clinical staff in the field and Central Office staff on prevention-related issues. The section also helps to coordinate partnerships with governmental and nongovernmental prevention agencies, consistent with Strategic Initiatives 8.1a and 8.1b.

Accomplishments for the year:

- Increased participation at the monthly Prevention Conference Calls to an average of 64 lines used (with a high of 113).
- 84 Monthly Prevention Topic patient handouts and associated resources were prepared and posted on the websites.
- Materials for Public Health Week “Designing Healthy Communities” were prepared and posted on the websites.
- Participation and activities encouraged for the Great American Smokeout and Veterans Day, November 2005.
- Employee Health and Fitness Day (May 17, 2006) had activities held in every VISN, with more than 6,000 employees participating. A summary of those activities, the Wellness Digest 2nd Edition, was published and posted on websites.
- VISN Preventive Medicine Leader calls established on a quarterly basis, with a face-to-face meeting at the Primary Care Preventive Medicine Conference in July 2006.
- New NCP Prevention internet website (www.prevention.va.gov) launched in late August 2006; has had >14,600 visits.
- The NCP intranet website (<http://vaww.nchpdp.med.va.gov/>) continues to be updated and resources added; has had >20,200 visits, with the Monthly Prevention Topics being the most frequently visited section.



MOVE! Program

Kenneth Jones, PhD

FY 2006 was a very productive year for the *MOVE!* Weight Management Program for Veterans at NCP and VHA facilities.

Accomplishments for the year:

- Extensive toolkits were mailed out in January 2006 to VISNs, VAMCs/HCSs, and CBOCS to support *MOVE!* implementation.
- Discipline-specific online training was provided with CEs for 5 disciplines.
- Managing Overweight and Obesity for Veterans Everywhere Handbook was signed by Under Secretary of Health in March 2006, making *MOVE!* Levels 1 & 2 (or comparable) programs mandatory at all VA facilities
- *MOVE!*23 Patient Questionnaire intranet and CPRS interface tools were developed and launched.
- *MOVE!* Handouts were revised to enhance readability.

- *MOVE!* Handouts were translated into Spanish.
- In collaboration with VSSC, the *MOVE!* Utilization Data Cube was developed to provide workload information.
- *MOVE!* Annual Report survey was prepared and distributed for first annual report.

At the close of FY 2006, over 30,000 veterans had *MOVE!*-related clinical activity. This number does not include the many thousands of patients who have been screened, counseled on the risks of overweight or obesity, and offered *MOVE!*.

Veterans Health Education and Information

Rose Mary Pries, DrPH, CHES

The Office of Veterans Health Education and Information (VHEI) was created in August 2006 to promote veteran health education services across the VHA healthcare continuum to enhance health outcomes and patient satisfaction and to promote patient-centered and compassionate care. The creation of the office followed from the work of the Health Education Task Force, chartered by Dr. Kussman in November 2005. The Task Force had one face-to-face meeting in January 2006 and completed its work in the spring, sending a report that recommended the formation of an office within the National Center for Prevention. The Task Force identified the following elements as the major focus of the new office:

- To assess, develop, coordinate, and implement policies, guidance, and programs related to health education and information for veterans;

- To collaborate with VACO program, research offices;
- To maintain ties to Patient Education Network to share best practices;
- To support staff training and provide updates; and
- To promote evidence-based practices.

The Program Manager, Dr. Rose Mary Pries, began in August and the Health Education Coordinator, Dr. Pam Hebert, will begin in October 2006. We are very pleased to have these 2 patient education experts leading this new endeavor.

Other Accomplishments

NCP staff also participated and/or contributed to the following in FY 2006:

HealthierUS Veterans

The HealthierUS Veterans initiative, a joint effort of the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Department of Health and Human Services to promote healthy eating and physical activity to all veterans and family members to address the increasing incidence of obesity and diabetes, was launched by the two Secretaries on February 27, 2006.

- Components of the initiative include:
 - Promotion of *MOVE!* Weight Management Program
 - Prescription for Health, a paper prescription to encourage veterans to increase their physical activity
 - Fitness Challenges
 - Partnerships with the CDC's Steps to a HealthierUS grant programs to 40 communities around the country
 - Fit for Life Volunteer Corps
- Goals of the initiative are to:
 - Integrate the HealthierUS Veterans message into VAMC activities and incorporate into policy and programs
 - Reach out to non-VA veterans and families
 - Promote and establish community partnerships re: obesity and diabetes
- HealthierUS Veterans website (www.healthieusveterans.va.gov) launched in mid February and has had >30,800 visits.
- Online toolkit of resources, references and other materials was developed, including a Guide to Implement and Promote the HealthierUS Veterans Initiative.
- A national kick-off event was held in Washington DC in conjunction with the 50th anniversary of the President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports in May, 2006.
- Regional kick-off events were held in Boston and Seattle in May, 2006.

- Secretary R. James Nicholson introduced the initiative to VACO staff with presentations by Dr. Linda Kinsinger, Ms. Ellen Bosley and others in September, 2006.

Primary Care – Preventive Medicine Conference

NCP collaborated with Dr. Gerald Cross and the national Primary Care Office in Patient Care Services this year for a combined national meeting, held July 18-20, 2006 in Alexandria, VA. Over 300 VA employees attended the highly-rated 2.5 day conference. Dr. Perlin gave the keynote address, in one of his last appearances as Under Secretary for Health. The plenary and small group sessions covered a wide range of topics important to primary care providers and prevention coordinators. Over 30 posters were presented during the poster session.

Research Collaborations

In FY 2006, NCP collaborated with several VA researchers and a group of researchers at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill on obesity and *MOVE!*-related projects and proposals. These projects evaluated obesity care practices and bariatric surgery outcomes in VHA and tested enhancements to the basic *MOVE!* delivery model.

Publications in 2005 and 2006

1. Straits-Tröster KA, Kahwati LC, Kinsinger LS, Orelie J, Burdick MB, and Yevich SJ. Racial/Ethnic differences in influenza vaccine in Veterans Affairs Healthcare System. *AJPM* 2006;315.
2. Das SR, Kinsinger LS, Yancy WS, Wang A, Ciesco E, Burdick MB, and Yevich SJ. Obesity prevalence among veterans at Veterans Affairs Medical Facilities. *AJPM* 2005;28 – listed in the “Top 10 most highly

Other Accomplishments (cont'd)

viewed AJPM articles on www.ajpm-online.net from January through December 2005”.

3. Wang A, Kinsinger LS, Kahwati LC, Das SR, Gizlice Z, Harvey RT, Burdick MB, and Yevich SJ. Obesity and weight control practices in 2000 among veterans using VA facilities. *Obesity Research* 2005;13.

Staff Changes During FY 2006

Three staff members – Mary Burdick, PhD, RN; Tracey Bates, RD, MPH (contractor); and Michael Anderson (contractor) – completed work with NCP in FY 2006. Dr. Burdick accepted a new assignment within Patient Care Services. Three new staff members were hired during the year or at the start of FY 2007 – Rose Mary Pries, DrPH, CHES; Pamela Hebert, DrPH, CHES, and Sejal Dave, MS, RS, CDE (contractor). Two contract employees were hired as full-time VA employees – Tony Rogers and Leila Kahwati, MD, MPH. Dr. Kahwati will become the Clinical Deputy Director in FY 2007.



Looking Toward the Future

FY 2007 will be another busy year for NCP. We will continue to support on-going activities in our *MOVE!*, Prevention Practice, Health Promotion/Employee Wellness, HealthierUS Veterans, and VHEI sections.

Plans for 2007 include:

- Developing a comprehensive, coordinated process for clinical preventive services policy-making in VHA;
- Providing tools and resources to support prevention coordinators and VISN Preventive Medicine Leaders;
- Continuing collaborative evaluation and research activities for *MOVE!*;
- Continuing to support the field in the implementation, expansion, and maintenance of *MOVE!*;
- Working with the Office of Care Coordination and others to make *MOVE!* weight self-management support tools available on existing self-management support technologies;
- Collaborating with the My Health_eVet Program Office and Clinical Advisory Board to provide excellent patient education materials on the My Health_eVet web portal;
- Enhancing the health literacy of patient education resources; and
- Addressing many other issues important to prevention in VHA.

**VA National Center for Health Promotion
and Disease Prevention
Office of Patient Care Services**

FY 2006 Staff

Director—Linda Kinsinger, MD, MPH

Executive Assistant—Rosemary Strickland, APRN, BC

Deputy Director, Administration—David Pattillo, MHA

Office Manager—Pamela Frazier, BS

Program Support Assistant, Contractor—Shirley Bullock

Special Assistant—Connie Lewis

IRM/ISO—Kraig Lawrence, BBA, CSP

IT —Tony Rogers

Deputy Director, Clinical — Kenneth Jones, PhD

Program Manager for Prevention Practice—

Pamela DeL Monte, MS, RN, C

Program Manager for *MOVE!* - Kenneth Jones, PhD

***MOVE!* Medical Consultant, Contractor**—

Leila C. Kahwati, MD, MPH

***MOVE!* Project Coordinator, Contractor**—

Karen Crotty, PhD

***MOVE!* Project Coordinator, Contractor**

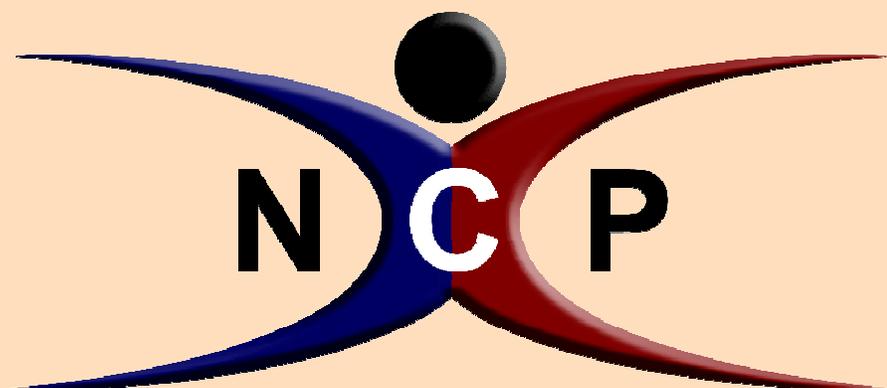
Susi Lewis, MA, RN

Program Manager for Health Promotion—

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Rose Mary Pries, DrPH, CHES



For additional information on VA prevention activities, please contact:

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