

THE CONSORTIUM CONNECTION

National VA Epilepsy Consortium Newsletter

In This Issue

- Caregiver Support
- EMU Consent Form
- EMU Pocket Cards
- EEG Accreditation
- ECoE In The News
- Upcoming Events

The ECoE Embraces VA Mission to Support Caregivers

Did you know that the VA offers a comprehensive national caregiver support program? The VA has recognized that caregivers are exceptionally important in improving the health of Veterans, and this is especially true for those with epilepsy and seizures. Caregivers are true partners in care; helping managing medication, driving to medical appointments, and reporting seizure events. You can learn more about programs available to caregivers at your VA by connecting with your local VA Caregiver Coordinator, calling the national VA caregiver support line at 1-855-260-3274, or check the website www.caregiver.va.gov.



The ECoE has embraced the VA mission to support caregivers by partnering with the VA caregiver support program. One example, the San Francisco ECoE has launched an Epilepsy Caregiver Support Group. Under the facilitation of Gui Scheid, BS, Program Specialist, and Jeannette Hilgert, LCSW, MSG, Caregiver Support Coordinator, the San Francisco ECoE has developed

a program where caregivers can connect with others, create a community of support, and build strength to continue to care for their loved ones without neglecting to care for themselves. To learn more about the San Francisco ECoE Epilepsy Caregiver Support Group, contact Gui Scheid at guiomar.scheid@va.gov.

The ECoE continues to look for opportunities to expand support for Veterans with epilepsy and seizures and their caregivers through the establishment of support groups and other educational programs. For more information visit the ECoE website at www.epilepsy.va.gov.

VISIT US ON THE WEB!
www.epilepsy.va.gov



Nursing Workgroup Initiatives

Epilepsy Monitoring Unit Consent Form

The Epilepsy Center of Excellence Nursing Workgroup has been working on a standardized Epilepsy Monitoring Unit consent for the entire VA healthcare system. The EMU consent form is currently undergoing the final stages of approval by VA Patient Care Services and will be rolled out nationally in the next 2-3 months. The new consent form will be available in CPRS through iMedConsent. Currently all Epilepsy Monitoring Units within the VA system are using different consent forms. The goal of creating one EMU consent form is to standardize the care and counseling Veterans receive across all VA Epilepsy Monitoring Units.

NURSING GUIDELINES FOR THE EPILEPSY MONITORING UNIT	
SITUATION	WHAT TO DO
Focal seizure ▪ With or w/o impaired responsiveness ▪ No convulsive activity ▪ Patient returns to baseline within 15 minutes	▪ Complete Nursing Seizure Assessment Note in CPRS
Two focal seizures with impaired responsiveness in <8 hours	▪ Complete Nursing Seizure Assessment Note in CPRS ▪ Call Neurology H.O. on-call
Generalized tonic-clonic seizure (convulsive)—stops within 2 minutes	▪ Complete Nursing Seizure Assessment Note in CPRS ▪ Call Neurology H.O. on-call
Generalized tonic-clonic seizure (convulsive)—continues for more than 2 minutes	▪ Call Neurology H.O. on-call ▪ Give Ativan 2mg IV Push ▪ Complete Nursing Seizure Assessment Note in CPRS
Generalized tonic-clonic seizure—continues for more than 5 minutes	▪ Call Rapid Response Team (SF)

IF YOU SEE A SUSPECTED PATIENT EVENT

- 1 Ensure patient's safety
- 2 Press the *Alarm & Nurse call* buttons
- 3 Pull down blankets and do not block camera
- 4 Perform the following assessment as soon as possible and REPEAT until the patient is back to baseline:
 - Are you OK?
 - What is your last name?
 - Remember the words "black cat"
 - Raise your right hand
 - Are you back to normal?
 - Show me three fingers
 - What were the 2 words I asked you to remember?

Check all motor commands bilaterally.

Epilepsy Monitoring Unit Pocket Cards for Nursing Staff

Nurses working in the Epilepsy Monitoring Unit cited a need for an easy- to-use tool to reference during the high-paced environment of managing a Veteran having a seizure. The EMU Pocket Card was created as a response to this need. The Pocket Card will be approximately 3" x 4" and printed on rigid plastic with a lanyard punch. The template for the Pocket Card will be available in the next 1-2 months and can be edited by individual sites to be tailored to their EMU protocols. If you are interested in an electronic form of the template to print Pocket Cards at your site, please email [Stephanie Chen, NP](mailto:stephanie.chen5@va.gov) at stephanie.chen5@va.gov.

Madison EEG Lab Earns Accreditation



Congratulations to the EEG Laboratory at William S. Middleton Veterans Hospital in Madison, Wisconsin in earning accreditation by the EEG Laboratory Accreditation Board of ABRET (LAB-EEG).

issues. Successful accreditation means the EEG Laboratory has met strict standards and is to be recognized as a place where patients and physicians can have confidence they are receiving quality diagnostics.

In addition to the diagnostic EEG studies performed in the accredited out-patient Neurodiagnostic Department, the technologists are competent in performing a wide range of other neurodiagnostic studies. These studies include in and out-patient long term monitoring (LTM), nerve conduction (NCV)/ electromyography (EMG), botox therapy under EMG guidance, quantitative sensory testing (QST) and evoked potentials (ABR, VER, SSERs).

The first question most physicians ask about EEG lab accreditation is "Why put forth the effort to become accredited?" The easy answer is that, by going through the accreditation process, the lab demonstrates that it is capable of producing quality, reliable EEG data, interpretable by anyone, anywhere. Technologists working in accredited labs are proud to prove that their work conforms to quality standards set forth by the American Clinical Neurophysiology Society (ACNS).

The American Board of Registration of Electroencephalographic and Evoked Potential Technologists (ABRET) is the credentialing board for EEG, Evoked Potential, Long Term Monitoring, and Neurophysiologic Intraoperative Monitoring Technologists. ABRET's Lab Accreditation process evaluates technical standards, the quality of the laboratory's output and lab management

The EEG Laboratory at William S. Middleton Veterans Hospital in Madison, Wisconsin is overseen by the Neurology Service Chief, Paul Rutecki, M.D. He also serves as the Northwest Regional Director of the Epilepsy Centers of Excellence (ECoE). Together with John C. Jones, M.D., Medical Director, they oversee treatments of outpatients, inpatients, and patients being monitored in the Epilepsy Center. Ronda Tschumper, serves as Supervisor Medical Instrument Technician (MIT) Electroencephalography with support staff Mary Maier, Vonda Starks, and Joan Schultz.

In the News

The Epilepsy Centers of Excellence have been featured in a recent online edition of "The Federal Practitioner".

The article highlights the mission of the ECoE program in providing high-quality care to Veterans with epilepsy and seizure disorders by creating a hub-and-spoke network of expert providers across the VA system. The article stresses the wide range of clinical services, educational offerings, research opportunities and the development of a consortium network.

Read "Department of Veteran Affairs Epilepsy Centers of Excellence" [Here](#).

The South East Regional Epilepsy Center has written an article featured in "U.S. Medicine."

The article addresses the prevalence of epilepsy and seizures in the Veteran population and the possible association of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), traumatic brain injury (TBI) and psychogenic nonepileptic seizures (PNES).

The article "Now That VHA Has Established Epilepsy Centers of Excellence, Will the Veterans Come?" can be read [Here](#).

Join us for SCAN-ECHO

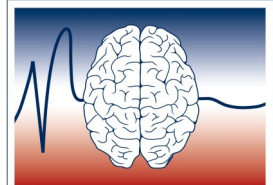
SCAN-ECHO is a service that provides consultation and clinical support from our Epilepsy specialist team to health care providers through video-teleconferencing.

Upcoming Sessions:

- | | |
|--|--|
| September 9th - 2:30 PM EST/11:30 AM PST
September Didactic Topic: <i>Temporal Lobe Epilepsy Surgery with Dr. Eddie Chang</i> | September 12th - 3:00 PM EST/12:00 PM PST |
| October 7th - 2:30 PM EST/11:30 AM PST
October Didactic Topic: <i>Psychogenic Non-Epileptic Seizures with Dr. Hamada Hamid</i> | October 10th - 3:00 PM EST/12:00 PM PST |
| November 4th - 2:30 PM EST/11:30 AM PST
November Didactic Topic: <i>Women and Epilepsy with Dr. Andre Lagrange</i> | November 7th - 3:00 PM EST/12:00 PM PST |

We are taking referrals for Epilepsy SCAN-ECHO sessions. Please contact Stephanie Chen at stephanie.chen5@va.gov or Angela Vargas at angela.vargas@va.gov for more information.

National VA Epilepsy Consortium Newsletter



Epilepsy Centers of Excellence

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

Improving the health and well being of Veteran patients with epilepsy and other seizure disorders through the integration of clinical care, research and education.

VISIT US ON THE WEB!
www.epilepsy.va.gov

Helpful Links:

The Epilepsy Foundation
www.epilepsyfoundation.org

American Epilepsy Society
www.aesnet.org

Citizens United for Research in Epilepsy
www.cureepilepsy.org

The Anita Kaufmann Foundation
www.akfus.org

Contact Us:

Epilepsy Center of Excellence
Department of Veterans Affairs
4150 Clement Street (127E)
San Francisco, CA 94121
Phone: 415-379-5599
Fax: 415-379-5666
E-mail: ECoE@va.gov

If you would like to submit content to be included in The Consortium Connection contact Angela Vargas at angela.vargas@va.gov.



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs