An Overview of the National VA Epilepsy Consortium

The National VA Epilepsy Consortium is a network of VA physicians, nurses, therapists, pharmacists, and other allied healthcare providers with interest and expertise in improving the health and well-being of Veteran patients with epilepsy and related seizure disorders through the integration of clinical care, education, and research across the VA healthcare system.

The goal of the National VA Epilepsy Consortium is to support the delivery of optimal care through professional education, collaboration, and peer support across the collective VA Healthcare System. All interested VA clinicians, including epileptologists, neurologists, gerontologists, general internists, practitioners, and other allied health professionals who serve Veterans with epilepsy and related seizure disorders are invited to participate. Together with the Epilepsy Centers of Excellence (ECoE), the National VA Epilepsy Consortium will create a hub and spoke model of care across the VA Healthcare System, expanding and streamlining the referral network for specialized epilepsy treatment, advanced neuro-diagnostics, and surgical evaluation. The National VA Epilepsy Consortium will ensure accessibility and continuity of specialized care for Veterans regardless of locality broadening the impact of the ECoE network.

Clinicians who serve Veterans with epilepsy and related seizure disorders are invited to register as a National VA Epilepsy Consortium Member. Visit http://www.epilepsy.va.gov/consortium for more information.

Benefits of National VA Epilepsy Consortium Membership

The National VA Epilepsy Consortium serves as a direct link to 16 ECoE sites staffed by epilepsy specialists or neurology clinicians. The consortium provides professional collaboration and educational offerings in epilepsy care.

Provider Education
Consortium member are provided with a suite of educational materials and opportunities for their professional development.

Provider Education Audio Conference - Audio conferences occur every other month. Find the 2014 Provider Education Audio Conference calendar on page 2 of this newsletter.

Mini Residency - The ECoE will host mini residencies for neurologists interested in hands-on training with an ECoE epilepsy specialist.

Patient Education
The ECoE offers information and learning opportunities for patients and caregivers.

Epilepsy and Seizures in Veterans
Epilepsy and Seizures in Veterans QuickSeries Handbook - This pocket guide is available to consortium members and their Veteran patients with epilepsy.

Patient and Caregiver Education Audio Conference
Audio conferences occur every other month. Find the 2014 Patient and Caregiver Education Audio Conference calendar on page 2 of this newsletter.

Annual Consortium Reception
The ECoE hosts a face-to-face meeting annually in conjunction with national society meetings. This networking opportunity allows members to meet their colleagues and the ECoE team.

Epilepsy Monitoring Unit Resources
For consortium sites with Epilepsy Monitoring Units, the ECoE has produced a Safety in the EMU training video for nurses. This video along with other helpful resources can be found at http://www.epilepsy.va.gov/nursing/

National VA Epilepsy Consortium Workgroup Audio Call
Members providing more comprehensive epilepsy services can assist in the development of clinical processes and procedures by participating in the National VA Epilepsy Consortium Workgroup. This group will meet to discuss best practices.

Epilepsy Awareness
Purple Day is March 26th

The Anita Kaufmann Foundation is a Global Sponsor of Purple Day. In a show of solidarity, the SFVAMC ECoE will be wearing purple ribbons and ECoE pins. These awareness ribbons will be mailed to ECoE and Consortium sites. So, join the movement! On March 26th, wear purple and spread the word about epilepsy.

Heads Up for Vets is a collaboration between The Anita Kaufmann Foundation and the Department of Veterans Affairs Epilepsy Centers of Excellence. Learn more at www.epilepsy.va.gov/ECoE_Kaufmann.asp
Welcome New Members

Join us in welcoming our new National VA Epilepsy Consortium members.

Ikuko Laccheo, MD - Hunter Holmes McGuire VAMC, Richmond, VA
Arletha Patterson-McClain, RN - Oklahoma City VAMC, Oklahoma City, OK
Divya Singhal, MD - Oklahoma City VAMC, Oklahoma City, OK
Edward Maa, MD - VA Eastern Colorado, Denver, CO
Viet-Huong Nguyen, Pharm.D. - VA Greater LA, Los Angeles, CA
Mary Wen, Pharm.D. - VA Greater LA, Los Angeles, CA
Sunita Dergalust, Pharm.D. - VA Greater LA, Los Angeles, CA
Hisanori Hasegawa, MD - Saginaw VAMC, Saginaw, MI
Frank L. Smith, RN - VA Puget Sound, Seattle, WA
Kamala Rodrigues, MD - VA Palo Alto, Palo Alto, CA

Husain named Journal of Clinical Neurology Editor-in-Chief

The Epilepsy Centers of Excellence along with the American Clinical Neurophysiology Society (ACNS) are delighted to announce that Aatif M. Husain, MD has been appointed the next Editor-in-Chief of the Journal of Clinical Neurophysiology, the official journal of ACNS. Dr. Husain takes over as editor on February 1, 2014.

Dr. Husain has been an ACNS member since 2005 and will assume the Presidency of the Society at the 2014 Annual Meeting in February. He is currently a Professor in the Department of Neurology at Duke University Medical Center and the director of both the Neurololgicar EVAL Center and Southeast Epilepsy Center of Excellence at the VA Medical Center in Durham, NC. Dr. Husain holds board certifications from ABPN, ABCN, ABEM and ABSM.

Congratulations, Dr. Husain!

Patient and Caregiver Education

Patient and Caregiver Education Audio Conferences
Sponsored by the Epilepsy Centers of Excellence & Employee Education System
Patients, caregivers, and anyone interested in learning more about epilepsy and seizures are welcome to call in.

1:00-2:00 PM Eastern Time
10:00-11:00 AM Pacific Time

April 3, 2014 – Epilepsy Medication”
Tung Tran, MD - Durham VAMC
June 5, 2014 – “Living Well With Epilepsy”
Patricia Banks, RN - Cleveland VAMC
August 7, 2014 – “Mental Health and Epilepsy”
Collette Evrard, NP – Portland VAMC

Educational Opportunities for Providers

Healthcare Provider Education Audio Conferences
Sponsored by the Epilepsy Centers of Excellence & Employee Education System
Provider calls are CME accredited for Physicians and Nurses.
1:00-2:00 PM Eastern Time
10:00-11:00 AM Pacific Time

March 5, 2014 – “Diagnosis and Management of Status Epilepticus”
Tom Frontera, MD - Tampa VAMC
May 7, 2014 – “Autoimmune Causes of Epilepsy”
Manu Hegde, MD – San Francisco VAMC
July 9, 2014 – “Driving and Epilepsy”
Allan Krumholz, MD - Baltimore VAMC
September 10, 2014 – “Epilepsy and Imaging”
Zulfi Haneef, MD – Houston VAMC

If you have any questions about patient and provider education, contact, Ryan Rieger, National Administrative Director, at 415-221-4810 x4119 or by email at ryan.rieger@va.gov.