

# THE CONSORTIUM CONNECTION

## National VA Epilepsy Consortium Newsletter

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## A Message from Dr. Parko



It is with extreme joy that, on behalf of Robert Ruff, MD, PhD, VA Neurology Service Director, I am able to deliver news that the Epilepsy Centers of Excellence (ECoE) have been placed into the VA budget as a line item at 6

million dollars annually and the sunset designation has been removed! Please join me in delivering the good news to your local site.

I would like to express our gratitude to Ryan Rieger, MHPA, ECoE National Administrative Director; Glenn Graham, MD, VA Deputy

Director of Neurology; Marc Dichter, MD, PhD, ECoE National Advisory Committee Chair; and Mike Amery, Legislative Counsel, American Academy of Neurology, who were instrumental in making this happen.

I hope that you will all thank those in your region who supported us during this critical time. This was a tremendous group effort.

I am grateful to be able to work with all of you and share in the success of our hard work.

Karen L. Parko, MD  
National Director  
VA Epilepsy Centers of Excellence

## Please Join Us for SCAN-ECHO

**SCAN-ECHO** is a new initiative to provide consultation and clinical support from our Epilepsy specialist team to other health care providers through video-teleconferencing.

**What does SCAN-ECHO stand for?** Specialty Care Access Network-Extension for Community Healthcare Outcomes.

**How does it work?** First, the referring provider makes a formal consult request in CPRS. During our scheduled SCAN-ECHO clinic, the referring provider and Epilepsy SCAN-ECHO team discuss the patient via videoconferencing. The Epilepsy team will then deliver advice and a treatment plan to the referring provider. Other health care providers not involved in the Veteran's care are able to listen, learn

and participate in the discussion.

### How does SCAN-ECHO benefit my patients?

Patients benefit from improved quality and reduced variation in epilepsy care.

### got patients?



Patients can be cared for locally instead of traveling long distances to see a specialist. Improved communication between providers may prevent excessive testing and the burden of untreated disease.

### How does SCAN-ECHO benefit the health care provider?

Referring providers have the opportunity to listen to case-based discussions, ask questions and learn from the advice given by the Epilepsy team. In addition to teaching providers by answering real clinical questions, the Epilepsy team will also give a short didactic presentation about managing epilepsy. Providers benefit from the opportunity to interact and network with colleagues and experience improved professional satisfaction.

### I'm interested. Who do I contact for more information?

We look forward to speaking with you about our program. Please email Stephanie Chen, NP at [stephanie.chen5@va.gov](mailto:stephanie.chen5@va.gov), Angela Vargas at [angela.vargas@va.gov](mailto:angela.vargas@va.gov) or call us at (415) 379-5599.

## 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. Join the movement! On March 26th, wear purple and spread the word about epilepsy.

If you would like an ECoE ribbon for Purple Day, please email Angela Vargas at [angela.vargas@va.gov](mailto:angela.vargas@va.gov). Supplies are limited.

**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](http://www.epilepsy.va.gov/ECoE_Kaufmann.asp)

# Recruiting for Policy For Optimal Epilepsy Management (P.O.E.M.) Study



patientslikeme®



Epilepsy Center of Excellence

The San Francisco VAMC Epilepsy Center of Excellence has partnered with the free online patient community PatientsLikeMe to conduct a study for Veterans with epilepsy (seizure disorder). We are seeking any Veteran with access to a computer and email to participate and help us determine whether and how this online tool helps with self-management of epilepsy and seizures. Another recent study revealed people with epilepsy using PatientsLikeMe perceive key

benefits to improving their health experiences. Patients using the website are finding others just like them, gaining a better understanding of seizures, and learning more about symptoms or treatments.

Please tell your Veteran patients about this study and direct them to visit: [www.poemstudy.com](http://www.poemstudy.com). For more information you may also call (415) 379-5599 and ask for SFVAMC study lead Dr. John Hixson.

## Upcoming Events

### Provider Education Audio Conferences

March 6th - "**Psychogenic Non-Epileptic Seizures**" with Dr. Martin Salinsky from the Portland VAMC

May 1st - "**Epilepsy Medication: Selecting the Appropriate Anti-Epileptic Drug**" with Dr. Barry Gidal from the Madison VAMC

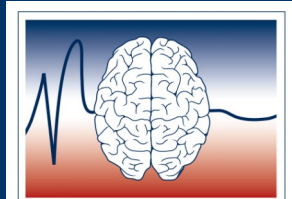
Dial-in: 1-800-767-1750 Access Code: 45129#  
1:00-2:00 PM Eastern Time  
10:00-11:00 AM Pacific Time  
Provider calls are CME accredited for Physicians and Nurses.

### National Epilepsy Events

**Purple Day: March 26th** - The Largest Grassroots Epilepsy Awareness Initiative in the World! Visit [www.akfus.org/purple-day](http://www.akfus.org/purple-day) for more information.

**National Walk for Epilepsy: April 20th** - A family oriented, noncompetitive walk in our nation's capital, Washington D.C. to raise awareness and funds to continue the fight to stop seizures, find a cure and overcome the challenges created by epilepsy. Find more information at [www.epilepsyfoundation.org](http://www.epilepsyfoundation.org)

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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](http://www.epilepsy.va.gov)

### Helpful Links:

The Epilepsy Foundation  
[www.epilepsyfoundation.org](http://www.epilepsyfoundation.org)

American Epilepsy Society  
[www.aesnet.org](http://www.aesnet.org)

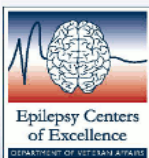
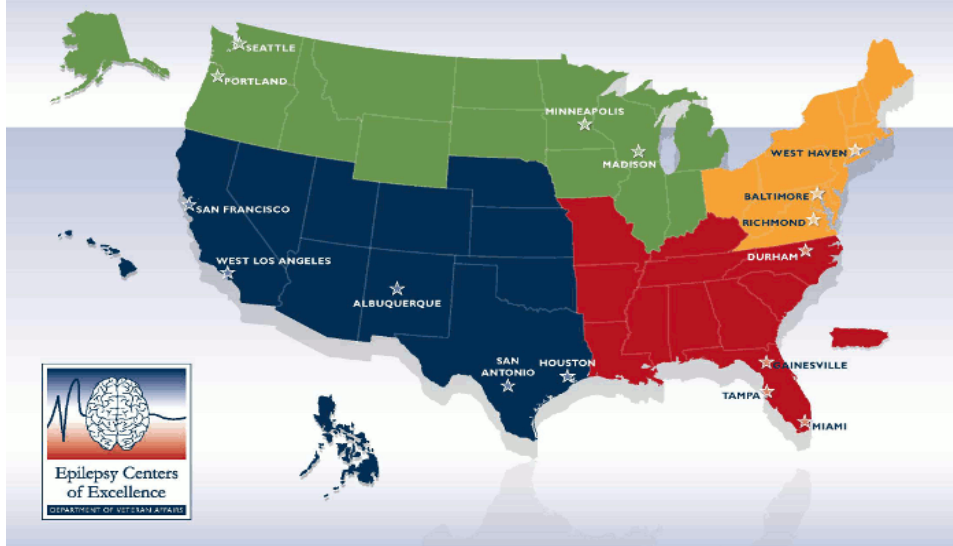
Citizens United for Research in Epilepsy  
[www.cureepilepsy.org](http://www.cureepilepsy.org)

The Anita Kaufmann Foundation  
[www.akfus.org](http://www.akfus.org)

### Contact Us:

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## EPILEPSY CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE REGIONAL MAP DEPARTMENT OF VETERAN AFFAIRS



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs