DoD and VA to Fund $100 Million PTSD and TBI Study

The Department of Defense (DoD) and the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) are investing more than $100 million in research to improve diagnosis and treatment of mild Traumatic Brain Injury (mTBI) and Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

"At VA, ensuring that our Veterans receive quality care is our highest priority," said Secretary of Veterans Affairs, Eric K. Shinseki. "Investing in innovative research that will lead to treatments for PTSD and TBI is critical to providing the care our Veterans have earned and deserve."

The two groups, the Chronic Effects of Neurotrauma Consortium (CENC) and the Consortium to Alleviate PTSD (CAP) will be jointly managed by DoD and VA.

A primary goal of CENC is to establish an understanding of the aftereffects of an mTBI. Potential comorbidities also will be studied; that is, conditions associated with and worsen because of a neurotrauma.

"PTSD and mTBI are two of the most prevalent injuries suffered by our warfighters in Iraq and Afghanistan, and identifying better treatments for those impacted is critical," said Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs, Dr. Jonathan Woodson. "These consortia will bring together leading scientists and researchers devoted to the health and welfare of our Nation's service members and Veterans."

More than 15 percent of service members and Veterans suffer impaired functioning as a result of PTSD. CAP will study potential indicators of the trauma, as well as prevention strategies, possible interventions, and improved treatments. Biomarker-based researched will be a key factor for CAP's studies.

On Aug. 31, the President signed an executive order to improve access to mental health services for Veterans, service members and military families. As part of that executive order, the President directed the Department of Defense, the Department of Veterans Affairs, the Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of Education to develop a National Research Action Plan that will include strategies to improve early diagnosis and treatment effectiveness for TBI and PTSD. He further directed the Department of Defense and Department of Health and Human Services to conduct a comprehensive mental health study with an emphasis on PTSD, TBI, and related injuries to develop better prevention, diagnosis, and treatment options.
Specific information on the consortia, including the full description of each award, eligibility, and submission deadlines, and General Application Instructions, are posted on the Grants.gov and CDMRP websites (http://www.grants.gov and http://cdmrp.army.mil, respectively).

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