



# PROMISE CENTER NEWS

## December 2009

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### FEATURED STAFF:

Christine Hence



Kim Kelley



### SUCCESS STORIES:

Click here to read the new story about success in emotional support scores preceding the death of the Veteran at Coatesville VAMC

Follow this link to see the recently updated FAQ section of the PROMISE website

There is a new version of the Bereaved Family Survey, Click here to learn more

A COLLABORATION BETWEEN VA HOSPICE AND PALLIATIVE CARE (HPC) AND THE CENTER FOR HEALTH EQUITY RESEARCH AND PROMOTION (CHERP)

### PROMISE news and updates:

PROMISE is now collecting data from all 21 VISNs in Quarter 1. This is an enormous achievement, and we couldn't have accomplished this without the help of all 21 Program Managers. Thanks! We would also like to thank the following people for all their help and support:

- David Kaplow of VISN 3, for sharing his 'kids build' software for data extraction
- Kenneth Mortimer of VISN 15, for his assistance and expertise in data extraction
- Jeffrey Jenkins of VISN 4 for managing and maintaining the shared drive
- Diane Jones, MSW, for her guidance throughout the entire process

### PROMISE and our Program Manager partners:

Here at the PROMISE Center, our coordinators have the opportunity to work with many dedicated and talented people at the facility and VISN levels. In particular, we've gotten to know the Program Managers and Clinical Champions who are responsible for coordinating palliative care across their VISNs. Starting this month, we want to begin recognizing these people for all of the hard work they do to improve end-of-life care for Veterans.

Christine Hence, MS, is the PROMISE Coordinator for VISN 11. Christine has been part of the PROMISE Project for 6 months and works with the VISN 11 Program Manager Kim Kelley to meet the needs of bereaved family members of deceased Veterans. "Kim is an outstanding Program Manager for VISN 11," Christine says. "She always gets back to me promptly for referrals for complaints and bereavement support."

Kim Kelley, MA, MSW, LCSW is the Palliative Care Program Manager for VISN 11. She has been with the VA system for eleven years. Prior to her current position, she was the Palliative Care Coordinator at VA Illiana Health Care System. "Christine and the PROMISE staff have been great to work with. They answer my unending questions and are always willing to help!"

### Update from the CELC QuIRC

The CELC Quality Improvement Resource Center (QuIRC) is developing recommendations to improve initial inpatient palliative care consultations. In September, an interdisciplinary panel of 11 VA clinical experts reviewed existing evidence and recommended the following items to be included in palliative care consultation templates (in descending order of priority):

**Elements of Care** 1) Decision making ability of the patient; 2) Choice of surrogate; 3) Chief complaint; 4) Functional status; 5) History of present illness

**Processes of Care:** 1) Surrogate is determined; 2) Chronic opioid is prescribed with bowel prophylaxis; 3) Short-acting opioids are initiated with long-acting opioids; 4) Change from moderate to severe pain treatment is followed up; 5) Dyspnea is assessed on admission.

A preliminary report with these results is now posted on the HPC National Sharepoint site, and includes a form for comments. Please contact Dr. Karl Lorenz (Director QuIRC @ Karl.Lorenz@va.gov) with questions.

### Update from the CELC Implementation Center

Congratulations to the 17 VISNs that have completed VA-PCLC training and are now in their mentoring phase. The remaining 4 VISNs will complete their two day PCLC training by February, 2010. Alba Lopez, LCSW is the new Program Coordinator for the Implementation Center. Alba will be working closely with the Program Managers and Clinical Champions on PCLC training and mentoring, the QI pilots on Emotional Support After Death (Bereavement-7/1/09 and Spiritual Support-10/1/09) and maintaining our National HPC Sharepoint. Please e-mail Alba.lopez@va.gov or Carol.Luhrs@va.gov if you have any questions about the Implementation Center projects.



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