

Veterans Administration Nursing Academic Partnerships In Graduate Education (VANAP-GE) and Residency in Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurse Practitioner Education

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Objectives

- Discuss common psychiatric disorders of Veterans
- Identify educational elements of the BVAMC and the UAB SON partnership for the VANAP-GE and VANAP Residency
- Summarize the benefits of the Veteran-centric MSN and MHNP Residency programs



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- Fourteen years of the Global War on Terror have exposed almost 1.1 million American Veterans to significant risks to their mental health.
- As the demand for psychiatric services increase, need for improved access to care becomes more critical.



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### Background and significance

- Mental health concerns of America's Veterans
  - 1.1 million American combat Veterans
  - Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), traumatic brain injury (TBI), mood disorders, substance use disorders- signature wounds of this war
  - Suicide rates for these Veterans twice that of the U.S. population
    - Bush, N. E., Reger, M. A., Luxton, D. D., Skopp, N. A., Klin, J., Smolenski, D. and Gahm, G. A. (2013), Suicides and suicide attempts in the U.S. Military, 2008–2010. *Suicide and Life-Threatening Behaviors*, 43, 262–273



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### Improved access to care needed

- To meet the demand for the psychiatric services for Veterans, a joint graduate education program was initiated in July , 2014
  - Sponsored by the Department of Veterans Affairs
  - Partners the Birmingham Veterans Affairs Medical Center (BVAMC) psychiatric and nursing services with the University of Alabama at Birmingham School of Nursing (UAB SON) psychiatric nurse practitioner program



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### BVAMC-UAB SON Partnership Overview

- Interprofessional focus
  - Educates UAB SON Master's level PMHNP students with the resources of the BVAMC to focus on the MH needs of the Veterans



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### VANAP-GE Graduate Education

- Enhance competencies and scholarship
- Promote innovation
- Include Veteran-specific MH problems in curriculum



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- Develop interprofessional education
- Develop Veteran-centric MH initiatives
- Increase recruitment and retention



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### VA Nursing Academy Partnership for Graduate Education

- First of its type
- VANAP-GE students have an immersion experience with BVAMC completing 70% of their clinical hours
- PMHNP residency is one year in length, post MSN



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- Both PMHNP residents and GE students rotate through all psychiatric clinics, including becoming certified in telemedicine
- GE students are embedded with interprofessional teamlets



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- This program offers an immersion experience for students within BVAMC interprofessional teams
- Students interested in developing clinical expertise with Veterans apply to the UAB MSN PMHNP specialty track and identify their interest in the program.
- Interprofessional teams with special foci on PTSD, substance use disorders, TBI, and serious mental illnesses. Lessons learned from the first year of the MHNPR will be reviewed.
- The result of the partnership will be clinically competent clinicians who are highly knowledgeable regarding the mental health needs of the 1.1 million Veterans who have served in Operation Enduring Freedom/Operation Iraqi Freedom.



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**Mental Health Nurse Practitioner  
Residency (MHNPR)**

- Novice NPs expand their competences treating psychiatric disorders of Veterans
- Supervised by board-certified psychiatric nurse practitioners and psychiatrists



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- Supplemented with didactic course work, readings, and capstone project
- Residents are mentored for their first year of practice
- One year paid position with benefits



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**Examples of Interprofessional Experiences**

- Didactic classes:
  - Psychopharmacology
  - Neuropathology (brain cuttings)



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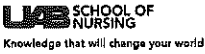
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- Training seminars:
  - Psychiatric Grand Rounds
  - Collaborative Interprofessional Training Opportunities (CITO) meetings
- Other:
  - Mood Disorders Journal Club
  - Comprehensive Neuroscience Center membership



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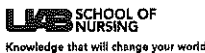
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### Program Outcomes

- Residency
  - Graduated 3 In Year One
  - Currently 3 in Year Two
- VANAP-GE
  - Currently 6 in clinical phase at BVAMC
  - Expecting 12 in new class in fall



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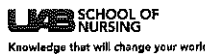
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### Questions?

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