U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Veterans Health Administration

Providence Healthcare System

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

VA Providence Research Study Reveals Neurobehavioral Therapy's Impact on Seizures and Mental Health

Providence, RI – A groundbreaking study conducted by Dr. Ryan Van Patten, Ph.D., ABPP, Board Certified in Clinical Neuropsychology, at the VA Providence Healthcare System has revealed promising results for individuals suffering from seizures associated with epilepsy and functional neurological disorders, including those with traumatic brain injury (TBI). The study utilized a 12-session psychotherapy technique known as Neurobehavioral Therapy (NBT) to not only reduce seizure frequency but also to improve mental health and overall quality of life.

The research included 89 adults with functional seizures and TBI, 29 adults with epilepsy and TBI, and a control group of 75 individuals with TBI who did not receive the treatment. Findings indicated that participants in the two seizure groups showed significant improvement following the NBT intervention, with some effects persisting post-treatment, while the untreated TBI group did not exhibit any change.

NBT is an evidence-based psychotherapy that has gained international recognition for its effectiveness in treating epilepsy, functional seizures (also known as psychogenic non-epileptic seizures (PNES)), and other neuropsychiatric conditions. This integrative approach combines elements from various psychotherapies to address the multifaceted nature of seizures and commonly occurring symptoms such as depression and anxiety.

The therapy is delivered through a structured workbook, "Taking Control of Your Seizures: Workbook," which facilitates the therapeutic process with a seizure counselor. The workbook aids patients in understanding the interplay between emotions, thoughts, and environmental factors, as well as in recognizing and altering unhelpful thought patterns and bodily symptom misinterpretations.

This Department of Defense-funded study, along with prior clinical trials conducted by senior author and principal investigator, Dr. W. Curt LaFrance, Jr., MD, MPH, has demonstrated that NBT can lead to a reduction in seizures and improvements in co-occurring symptoms, enhancing the quality of life for both veterans and civilians.

For more information on Neurobehavioral Therapy and the VA Mind Brain Program, please visit https://marketplace.va.gov/innovations/va-mind-brain-program.

Contact: Justyn Charon, Public Affairs Specialist, VA Providence Healthcare System
Phone: (401) 678-9591
Email: Justyn.Charon@va.gov

About VA Providence:
The VA Providence Healthcare System is committed to advancing medical research and providing state-of-the-art treatment to improve the lives of our veterans and service members. This study is a testament to our dedication to innovative care and the relentless pursuit of therapeutic options that can make a real difference.



Dr. Ryan Van Patten, Ph.D., ABPP, VA Providence
Staff Neuropsychologist

VA | U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Veterans Health Administration
Providence Healthcare System