

VA to play role in Defense-funded research on PTSD, TBI

A physician-researcher with VA and the University of California, San Diego (UCSD), will lead a \$60-million, five-year, multisite consortium funded by the Department of Defense Psychological Health and Traumatic Brain Injury Research Program to study posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and traumatic brain injury (TBI), which affect significant numbers of combat veterans of the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Murray B. Stein, MD, MPH, a professor of psychiatry and family and preventive medicine at UCSD and staff psychiatrist at the VA San Diego Healthcare System, will direct the effort, part of DoD's Congressionally Directed Medical Research Programs. At a news conference held last month to announce the project, Stein cited a report from the Institute of Medicine that underscored the need for more effective treatments for PTSD. He suggested the same could be said of TBI. "The [consortium] aims to contribute

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Research aims to help combat troops—Troops such as these National Guard members serving in Afghanistan, as well as future military cohorts, may benefit from studies on PTSD and brain injury to be conducted through a new DoD-funded consortium.

At Baltimore VA, stroke recovery studied from many angles



Reggae music pulses through the large, brightly lit gym in the basement of the Baltimore VA Medical Center. About eight men and women, some holding canes, slowly make their way around the green and yellow oval track. Each step seems to demand effort and concentration for the members of the group, but they are making steady progress toward their goal: recovery from stroke.

The Stroke Exercise Club meets three afternoons a week as part of a study on whether group exercise, reinforced with a home-based regimen, improves balance, fitness, walking ability and quality of life for stroke survivors. Exercise physiologist Jeff Beans—who says the eclectic mix of music for the classes ranges from Bob Marley to Frank Sinatra—believes the group atmosphere

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Regaining movement—Veterans James McMahon (left) and Harry Young participate in the "Stroke Exercise Club," part of a study at the Baltimore VA on the benefits of group exercise for stroke survivors.

