



USF College of Nursing Receives \$2.1M Grant for RESTORE LIVES Center Research

(Excerpts)

Project will study best ways to help soldiers of Iraq and Afghanistan overcome psychological trauma and other health problems

Tampa, FL (Sept. 17, 2010) - Helping service members and veterans of Iraq and Afghanistan heal from symptoms of combat exposure, including post traumatic stress and mild traumatic brain injury, will be the focus of a \$2.1-million federal grant to the University of South Florida College of Nursing. The project is part of the **Research to Improve Emotional Health and Quality of Life among Service Members with Disabilities (RESTORE LIVES)** Center, which was established to develop and evaluate treatments to complement services to the military provided by the VA Healthcare System, TRICARE, and the conventional health care system.

The RESTORE LIVES Center will conduct five studies investigating state-of-the-art therapies, including the promising Accelerated Resolution Therapy® (**ART**). The **ART** method is intended to help clients bring problems to a quick and effective resolution. The client uses back-and-forth eye movements, which integrate activities in the left and right sides of the brain, as their thoughts are focused by the psychological therapist. The revolutionary intervention employs a technique known as Voluntary Memory/Image Replacement, in which the client can replace a negative memory with a positive memory of their choice, or reinterpret the memory. Studies with non-veterans have shown that clients were able to resolve memories of painful or disturbing experiences in just one or two therapy sessions, and the RESTORE LIVES researchers will evaluate whether veterans experience this same level of benefit.

“Our principal goal is to aid our courageous military personnel,” said **principal investigator Kevin Kip, PhD**, associate professor and executive director of the College of Nursing Research Center. “With this research funding, we aim to evaluate and ultimately provide evidence for novel, flexible, and rapid methods to treat emotional problems and related symptoms that arise from serving in combat operations.”

Dr. Kip’s team recently trained licensed psychologists and mental health professionals at the USF Counseling Center and across the greater Tampa Bay area in the use of **ART**. “This research project has the potential to greatly benefit our student-veterans and has the support of the USF Office of Veterans Services,” said retired **Lt. Col. Larry Braue**, director of the USF Office of Veterans Services, which assists more than 1,000 veterans enrolled in academic programs at USF.

In addition to Dr. Kip, other key personnel include **Maureen Groer, RN, PhD, FAAN**, Gordon Keller Professor of Nursing, University of South Florida; **John Forsyth, PhD**, Director, Anxiety Disorders Research Program, University at Albany, State University of New York; **Edward Hickling, PsyD**, Research Scientist; and **Heather Belanger, PhD**, Neuropsychologist at the James A. Haley Veterans’ Hospital, Tampa, FL, as well as **Laney Rosenzweig, LMFT**, Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist at the Rosenzweig Center for Rapid Recovery, Hartford, CT.

Dr. Kip and colleagues expect to begin recruiting participants for the individual studies in spring 2011.