



**Department of
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News Release

VA Honors Psychologist with Olin Teague Award

Washington - A psychologist for the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) in Charleston, S.C., has been recognized with the Olin Teague Award for his achievements treating Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) in combat Veterans.

VA psychologist Peter Tuerk, Ph.D., was awarded the Department of Veterans Affairs 2010 Olin E. Teague Award, a national award that recognizes contributions in an area critical to the rehabilitation and improvement in the quality of life of war-injured Veterans.

“Approximately 15 percent of Veterans who served in Operation Enduring Freedom or Operation Iraqi Freedom are diagnosed with PTSD,” said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki. “Dr. Tuerk’s work exemplifies the strides VA is taking in understanding and treating this condition.”

Tuerk, who works with the Charleston VA Posttraumatic Stress Clinical Team and is an assistant professor of psychiatry and behavioral sciences at Medical University of South Carolina, runs the first VA clinic in the country to offer Prolonged Exposure Therapy (PET) via telehealth or video conferencing technology to rural Veterans.

This evidence-based treatment for PTSD has significantly improved outcomes for Veterans suffering from PTSD who may not live close to a VA medical facility. Tuerk broke new ground in VA providing this specialty telehealth treatment to Veterans who might not otherwise have access, while proving its effectiveness in several research studies that were published in top-tiered national journals including the American Journal of Psychiatry and the Journal of Traumatic Stress. Tuerk’s VA clinic was also the first clinic anywhere in the U.S. to provide and publish research on in-home exposure therapy for Veterans with PTSD.

The award is named in honor of the late Olin E. Teague, a disabled World War II Army war hero and Texas congressman of 32 years, who spent 18 years chairing the House Veterans Affairs Committee.

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