



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Veterans Health Administration
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**FOR
IMMEDIATE
RELEASE**

Lebanon VA Medical Center, Lebanon Valley College therapeutic photography program begins implementation at other VA hospitals

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LEBANON, Pa. – A therapeutic photography pilot program developed here is beginning implementation at other VA hospitals using the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs innovation investment program designed to ensure best practices are spread throughout the VA health care system.

This innovative ten-week program, called The Seeing Lens, fuses therapy and art together to assist Veterans in recovery by increasing skills such as self-awareness, coping and mindfulness.

Each week focuses on a different aspect of recovery and ties it to photography. For example, the recovery topic of clarity and attention is tied to the photography lecture on aperture and depth of field. Each Veteran enrolled in the program is provided a camera and a textbook for the duration of the course.

“Initially I thought photo recovery was far-fetched,” said U.S. Army Veteran, Corrin Lee Mac, a participant in the program. “But...it promotes mindfulness. Looking through the lens, this second in time you are here in the moment.”

The program’s impressive results included 91-percent completion rate with zero no calls and no shows, according to Amy Cook, a recreation therapist assigned to Lebanon VAMC.

Dr. Grant Taylor, a Lebanon Valley College professor of art and art history, and fellow creator of the program said, “it’s so exciting, most of my impact is in this community, and so to have an impact at the VA in Lebanon was great, and to have an impact beyond that and maybe in different parts of the country is just incredible.”

Cook agreed, “it feels really good that this model can be carried forward. We know the power of the group.”

Lebanon VA Medical Center is one of 170 medical centers in the nation with the sole purpose of providing world-class medical care to America’s Veterans. Lebanon VAMC serves a nine-county area in South Central Pennsylvania covering Adams, Berks, Cumberland, Dauphin, Lancaster, Lebanon, Perry, Schuylkill and York counties. Lebanon VAMC also currently oversees community clinics located in Lancaster, Mechanicsburg, Pottsville, Wyomissing, York and Fort Indiantown Gap. If you are a Veteran, you may be eligible to receive care and benefits from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. To learn more, call (717) 272-6621, ext. 6000.

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