

New “Glasses” Benefit Research

New research methods at the Western Blind Rehabilitation Center using special glasses called The Mobile Eye™ will improve visual function, not only in injured combat troops, but also in Veterans with age-related eye disease or vision loss associated with strokes and other causes of vision loss following brain injury. Additionally, the knowledge gained should readily transfer to the benefit of both Veterans and civilians with age-related vision loss or vision loss due to stroke, falls, motor vehicle accidents, and other events causing brain injury and vision loss.



Early research methods fell short, as it can be difficult to know why one object is visually identified and another not. Did the person not look at the hazard, or did they look but not mentally register it as a hazard? This new research will help answer these and other questions.

The Mobile Eye™ (Applied Sciences Laboratories, Bedford, MA) tracks and records the person's eye movement and superimposes it on a videotaped view of the environment recording both for review and analysis. This allows researchers and clinicians to “see what the person is looking at” and to do sophisticated analysis about the amount of time any object was fixated, directions of scan, and to identify how the individual manages areas of field loss.

Understanding how well the individual manages their areas of vision loss is critical to understanding how they interact with the world around them. This is important because it leads to a better understanding of the person's visual functioning and the effectiveness of rehabilitation. It should also lead to more effective rehabilitation therapies.

VA Palo Alto Health Care System

Special Emphasis Programs

- Acute Psychiatry (VISN 21's Primary Referral Site)
- Polytrauma Rehabilitation Center/Traumatic Brain Injury (1 of 4 centers in VHA)
- Domiciliary Care (VISN 21's Primary Referral Site – only Domiciliary in the Network)
- Hospice / Palliative Care (Only Non-Vet Inpatient Hospice Program in VHA)
- Gero-psychiatric Inpatient Care (VISN 21's Primary Referral Site)
- Med/Surg Tertiary Care (1 of 2 Tertiary Care Centers in VISN 21)
- Organ Transplant (1 of 5 National Centers in VHA)
- Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (1 of 7 National Centers in VHA)
- Spinal Cord Injury (1 of 24 Centers in VHA)
- War Related Injury and Illness Study Center (1 of 3 Centers in VHA)
- Western Blind Rehabilitation (1 of 10 Centers in VHA)
- Regional Amputation Center (1 of 7 Centers in VHA)

Graduate Medical Education and Research

VAPAHCS operates one of the largest integrated health-care systems in VA in terms of specialized programs, research and graduate medical education (GME)

- Primary Academic Affiliation: Stanford University School of Medicine
- 168 Active Affiliations
- Over 1,500 trainees
- 4TH largest Research Program in VHA
- Over 200 Investigators, more than 600 research projects
- Fiscal Year 2009 Research Budget: \$52,650,000

