Improving Care for Veterans Facing Illness and Death

Edited by Kenneth J. Doka and Amy S. Tucci

“The character of a nation is judged by many things including how it cares for its veterans. That care requires a completeness of understanding of veterans, their experiences, their lives, their families, their fears and their needs… the broader the understanding of veterans by caregivers the more comfort we can give to our veterans and their families.”

– Chuck Hagel, U.S. Secretary of Defense

HFA's book, Improving Care for Veterans Facing Illness and Death, examines the impact that the military experience can have on veterans who are dying or facing grief and loss; special issues in treating veterans at the end of life, including tangible concerns such as pain management, as well as emotional issues like the need for forgiveness; and grief and loss issues for both veterans and military survivors.

Stoicism permeates military culture, whether a veteran served in combat or not. Combat veterans, and others who have served in dangerous-duty assignments, have to additionally cope with traumatic memories. For some, the memories crystallize into a constellation of symptoms known as Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Trust plays an important role in helping veterans with PTSD because these veterans do not trust easily. They have been taught not to trust… Combat veterans sometimes come to the end of their lives with unresolved grief or guilt related to military duty. Hospice can serve as a last chance to develop peace.

– Deborah Grassman, ARNP, former director of hospice program, Bay Pines VA

Authors include clinicians from the Department of Veterans Affairs, hospice professionals, and academicians. The book also contains personal perspectives from veterans themselves, shedding a different but equally important light on these topics.

Author List:

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- Deborah Grassman
- James Hallenbeck
- Diane H. Jones
- Anne Koepsell
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