





# Complementary and Integrative Health Evaluation Center (CIHEC) QUERI Partnered Evaluation Initiative's

Compendium on Use of Complementary and Integrative Health Therapies and Chiropractic Care at the VA

Volume 1:

Use and Characteristics of Users, Fiscal Years 2017-2019
October 2020

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https://www.queri.research.va.gov/national\_partnered\_evaluations/cih.cfm https://www.hsrd.research.va.gov/centers/cshiip.cfm

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# e Compendium is 1 of 3 Types of CIHEC National Products

Complementary and Integrative Health Evaluation Center (CIHEC) QUERI PEI has conducted 3 types of national products:

- 1) 2017 National survey on Veterans' interest in and use of CIH therapies
  - Taylor SL, Hoggatt K, Kligler B. Complementary and Integrated Health Approaches: What Do Veterans Use and Want. *J Gen Intern Med* 2019 Jul;34(7):1192-1199
- 2) 2017-18 National survey of VAMCs on the details of their CIH programs
  - Farmer M M, McGowan M, Yuan A, Whitehead A, Osawe U, Taylor SL. The Organization of Complementary and Integrative Health Practices at the VA: A National Survey. *Journal Alternative and Complementary Medicine*. In press
- 3) This CIH Compendium, which reports on FY17-FY19 VA EHR data
  - With subsequent volumes released annually, expanding on the scope



# 5 Reasons Why So Much Attention Paid to CIH Therapies

- 1) CIH therapies have been part of several VA priorities past decade, as part of the national VA Whole Health transformation
- 2) The evidence for many CIH therapies is strong for several health conditions
- CIH therapies are now part of US national pain mgmt. strategy and ACP treatment guidelines
- 4) Veterans want non-pharmacologic options to manage their health
- 5) Given all of this, 9 CIH therapies + chiropractic care are medical care in the VA



## CIH Therapies Have Been a VA Priority for Decade

2010 Army Surg Gen. pain mgmt plan for VA/DoD

2014 VA's Blueprint for Excellence

2015 MyVA Integrated Plan (first strategy)

2016 Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act (CARA) - VA expand research on, delivery of, and education on CIH to veterans.

2016 VA USH declared 8 CIH practices as medical care (chiro was in 2005)

2017 VA Office of Research and Development-wide priority

2018-2024 VA Strategic Plan

2019 in VHA's Plan for Modernization (10 Lanes of Effort)

2020 Veteran Mental Health Care Improvement Act; Whole Veteran Act

Recent Incentives - VISN Performance plan, VERA reimbursement

# H's Mind-Body Therapies (VA "Medical Care" as of 2017)

**Hypnosis** 

**Meditation** 

**Biofeedback** 

**Y**oga

Tai chi/Qigong

Therapeutic massage

**Acupuncture** 

Chiropractic\* (earlier)

Art therapy

Music therapy

Relaxation training (guided imagery, progressive muscle relaxation)

Healing touch

Movements (Feldenkrais, Alexander

tech., Pilates, Rolfing, etc.)



## Purpose of the 2020 CIH Compendium

#### To examine Veterans':

- Use of 10 CIH therapies and chiropractic care
- Sociodemographic and health characteristics of those users
- Among a FY17-19 national cohort of VHA users

#### Using VA national data:

- In the VA electronic medical records and
- From community-based claims

#### 10 therapies:

 Traditional acupuncture, Battlefield Acupuncture, biofeedback, clinical hypnosis, guided imagery, massage therapy, meditation, Tai Chi/Qigong, yoga, and chiropractic care



## CIH Compendium Table of Contents

- 1. National trends in CIH therapy utilization
- 2. CIH therapy utilization patterns
  - Geographic trends
  - By sociodemographic characteristics
  - By health conditions
- 3. Community-based CIH therapies



#### Methods – Cohort Definition

#### **User Cohort**

- Users included if they had a primary care, mental health, or pain clinic visit in the FY (identified by stop code)
- Select the latest visit in the fiscal year to use as reference date and for facility assignment

#### User Demo

- Demographics calculated with respect to the reference visit facility and date
- Clinical diagnoses calculated with respect to the reference visit date (usually a 1 year look back window)

#### **Utilization**

- Outpatient therapy utilization uses data from all VHA facilities and PIT claims
- Use categories determined by utilization within the fiscal year



## Methods – Defining Utilization

#### **Coding Challenges**

- Limited structured coding (e.g., CPT codes) established
- Alternative structured coding (VA accounting codes) take time to establish
  - New clinic set-ups
  - Multiple services provided in the same visit
- Unstructured coding (clinic notes, clinic names) vary across sites

Visit Type	CPT Code	Accounting Codes	Search Strings
Acupuncture	97810, 97811, 97813, 97814	BFA: IACT  Trad: ACUP	Includes: 'acup' 'acpu' Excludes: 'acupressure'

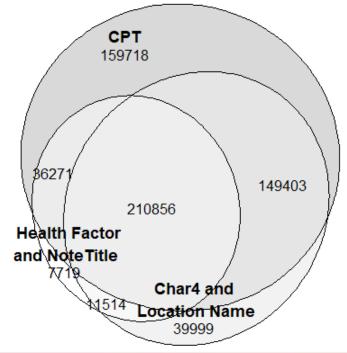


## Methods – Defining Utilization (cont.)

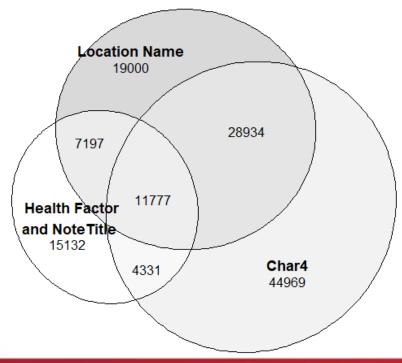
#### Approach:

- Combine information from CPT codes, VA accounting codes (Char4, stop codes), clinic names, and clinic notes to find utilization
- Each therapy has a unique coding pattern

#### **Acupuncture**



#### **Meditation**





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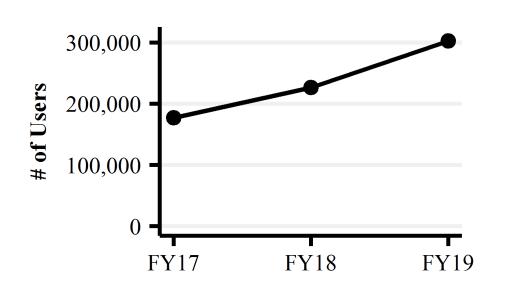


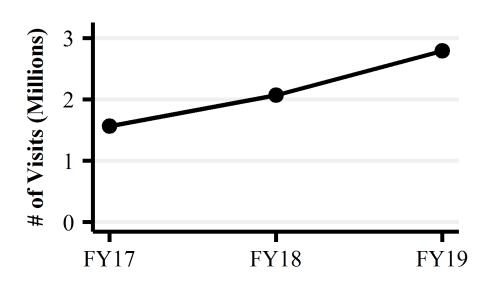
# Use of CIH Therapies and Chiropractic, National, FY19

Therapy	# of Users	# of Visits
Any Therapy	302,296	2,792,653
Chiropractic Care	159,506	1,224,324
Acupuncture - Traditional	112,826	868,728
Acupuncture - BFA	27,990	79,911
Massage Therapy	38,582	386,828
Meditation	15,317	60,866
Yoga	14,424	92,163
Tai Chi/Qigong	9,806	62,038
Biofeedback	3,534	12,051
Guided Imagery	1,340	3,209
Clinical Hypnosis	1,138	2,535



# Utilization is Increasing across VHA

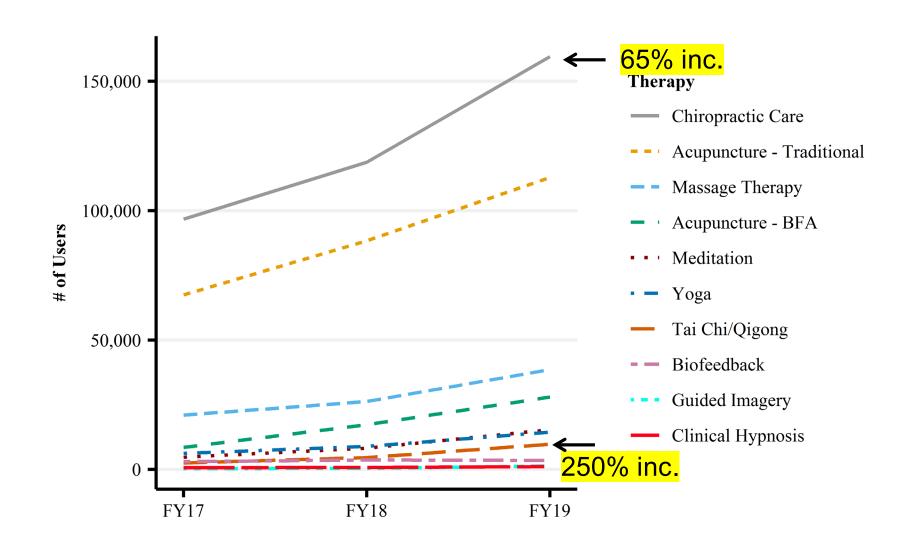




Veterans' Use of CIH Therapies and Chiropractic Care, FY17-FY19					
	FY17	FY18	FY19	% Change FY17 to FY19	
# VHA Users	5,032,129	5,158,300	5,260,941	5%	
# of Therapy Users	177,253	226,539	302,296	70%	
# of Therapy Visits	1,567,387	2,072,023	2,792,653	78%	



# Use of All CIH Therapies Increased in 3 Years





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## CIH Use Data by VISN

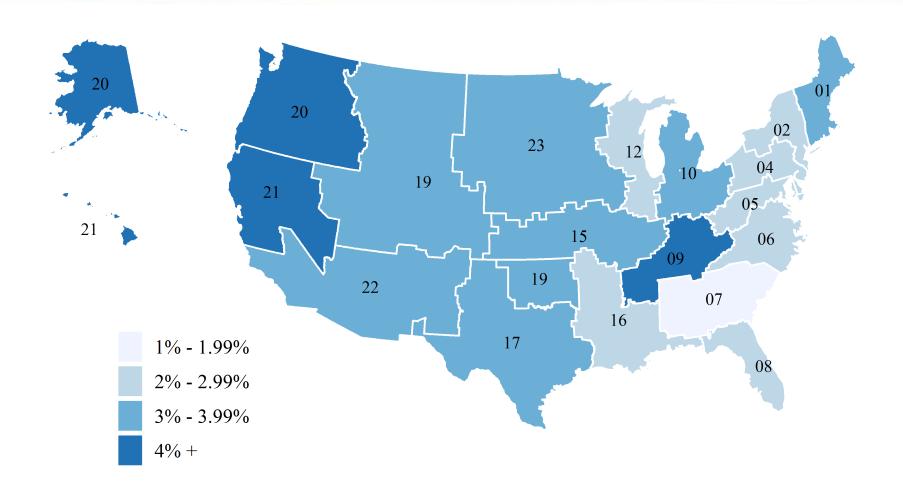
We report data on the use of CIH therapies and chiropractic care:

- By each VISN
- By each facility (under development)

VISN	# of VHA Patients in VISN	Any Therapy	Chiro- practic	Acup Trad.	Acup BFA	Massage Therapy	Medi- tation
1	210,415	13,006 (6.2%)	6,353 (3.0%)	6,134 (2.9%)	629 (0.3%)	1,533 (0.7%)	687 (0.3%)
2	232,383	14,966 (6.4%)	5,752 (2.5%)	6,533 (2.8%)	638 (0.3%)	4,182 (1.8%)	1,081 (0.5%)
4	245,460	12,162 (5.0%)	5,753 (2.3%)	5,400 (2.2%)	1,307 (0.5%)	705 (0.3%)	515 (0.2%)

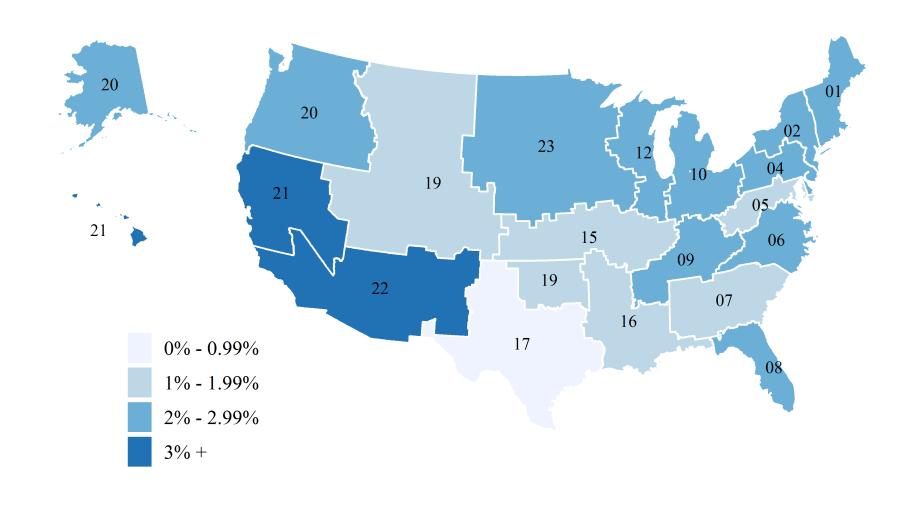


# % of Vets in VHA Using Chiropractic Varied by VISN, FY19





# % of Vets in VHA Using Acupuncture Varied by VISN, FY19





## Who is More Likely to Use These Therapies

- 1) Sociodemographic factors
- Gender
- Age
- Urban/rural residence
- 2) Health conditions
- Mental health (anxiety, depression, PTSD)
- Chronic musculoskeletal pain
- Other chronic conditions (cardiovascular diseases, obesity, diabetes)



#### Women More Likely to Use Therapies than Men in FY19

Women were more likely than men to use CIH/chiropractic care

- Women were 9% of VHA users but 17% of CIH/chiropractic users
- Relatively, women were most likely to use yoga, making up 26% of yoga users
- Relatively, men were most likely to use chiropractic care, making up 83% of users

Therapy	% Men	% Women
Overall VHA	91%	9%
рор.	9170	9 70
Any CIH	83%	17%
Chiropractic	83%	17%
Yoga	74%	26%



## Use Varied by Age, FY19

- Younger Veterans (ages 18-49):
  - Were more likely than Vets ages 70% to use CIH/chiropractic care
  - Relatively most likely to use chiropractic care; least likely to use Tai Chi/Qigong
- Veterans age 70+:
  - Represented 40% of VHA users but 21% of CIH/chiropractic users
  - Relatively most likely to use Tai Chi/Qigong

Therapy	% Age 18-49	% Age 70+
Overall VA pop.	23%	40%
Any CIH	37%	21%
Chiropractic	44%	17%
Tai Chi/Qigong	22%	27%
Biofeedback	42%	14%



#### Racial/Ethnic Patterns in Use, FY19

In FY19, African American Veterans were:

- least likely to use chiropractic care and massage
- most likely to use yoga, Tai Chi/Qigong, biofeedback, and guided imagery

In FY19, White Veterans were:

- least likely to use Tai Chi/Qigong
- most likely to use chiropractic care

In FY19, other racial/ethnic groups were just as likely as the overall VA user population to use CIH/chiropractic care



# Racial/Ethnic Patterns in Use, FY19 (Cont.)

Therapy	African – American	White	Latino/a
Overall VA population	18%	72%	6%
Any CIH therapy	18%	70%	8%
Chiropractic care	15%	73%	7%
Tai Chi/Qigong	29%	63%	6%



## Use by Veterans with Chronic MSK Pain, FY19

- Vets with chronic musculoskeletal pain were >2x more likely than all VHA users to use CIH/chiropractic care:
  - Most likely to use traditional and Battlefield Acupuncture
  - Least likely to use meditation and chiropractic care

CIH Use by Veterans with Chronic MSK Pain		
Therapy	% with Pain	
Overall VA population	23%	
Any CIH therapy	55%	
Traditional Acupuncture	64%	
Battlefield Acupuncture	67%	
Meditation	52%	
Chiropractic Care	51%	



## Use by Veterans with Selected Mental Health Conditions

- Vets with depression, anxiety, or PTSD were >1.5x more likely than all VHA users to use CIH/chiropractic care
  - >70% of users of 5 CIH therapies had one of these documented mental health conditions
  - Relatively most likely to use yoga, meditation, and biofeedback

CIH Use by Veterans with MH Conditions			
Therapy	% with MH Conditions		
Overall VA population	33%		
Any CIH therapy	54%		
Yoga	72%		
Meditation	76%		
Biofeedback	81%		



## Use by Veterans with Other Chronic Health Conditions

- Vets with obesity were 2x more likely than the overall VHA patient population to use Tai Chi/Qigong, yoga, and guided imagery
- Vets with cardiovascular disease or diabetes were slightly less likely than the overall VHA patient population to use CIH therapies

<b>Use by Veterans with Chronic Health Conditions</b>				
Therapy	% with Obesity	% with CVD	% with Diabetes	
Overall VA population	17%	60%	24%	
Any CIH therapy	24%	51%	21%	
Yoga	32%	54%	23%	
Tai Chi/Qigong	29%	61%	29%	
Guided Imagery	33%	60%	27%	



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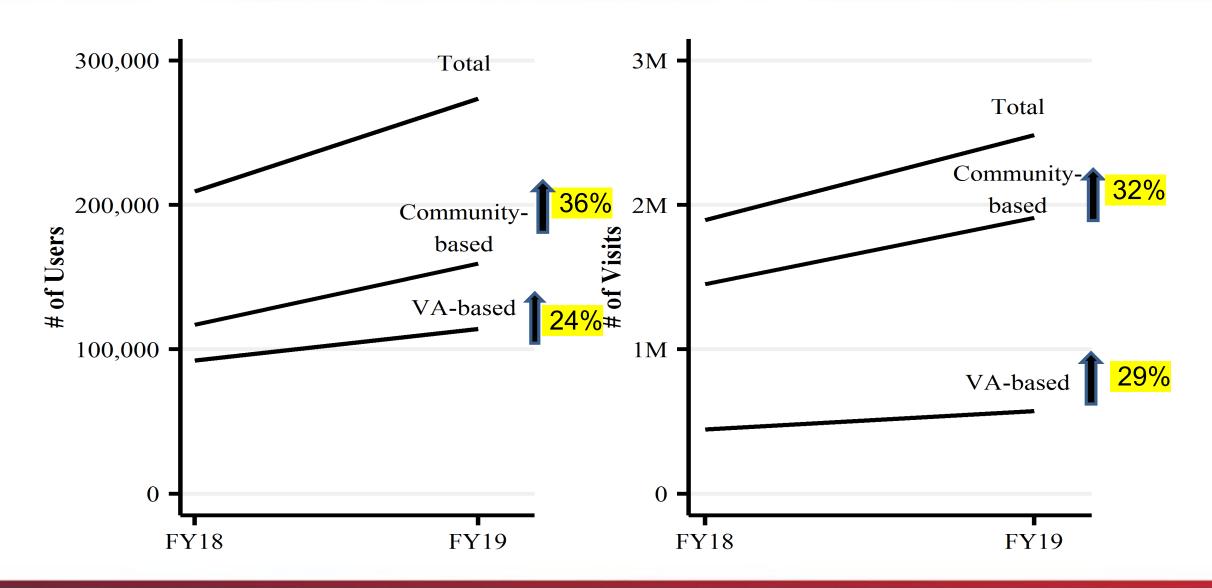
# Community-Based Chiropractic, Acupuncture, and Massage in FY19

- Chiropractic care, acupuncture, and massage therapy are tracked through CPT codes in claims from community-based providers
- Relative to VA-based care, in FY19 community-based care:
  - Was provided to almost 50% more <u>users</u>
  - Was provided in >3x as many <u>visits</u>
  - Resulted in >2x visits/user

FY 19 Community- and VA-based Utilization					
# of Users # of Visits					
VA-based	114,131	572,174			
<b>Community-based</b> 159,386 1,907,7					



# Use of Community-Based Care is Increasing





## Thank you!

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