**Release of Guidebook: Whole Health System Approach to Long COVID**

As the leaders in the recognition, treatment and research of Long COVID, today the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Veterans Health Administration (VHA) is releasing the [Patient-Aligned Care Team (PACT) Guidebook: Whole Health System Approach to Long COVID.](https://www.publichealth.va.gov/n-coronavirus/COVID_19_Response_Reports.asp) The first of its kind, this guidebook identifies the most common possible symptoms that can be attributed to Long COVID and makes recommendations for treatment from a Whole Health approach to treating Veterans.

As the largest healthcare system in the country, VHA clinicians and researchers were among the first healthcare providers to recognize the national pattern that a secondary illness was occurring in those who had initially recovered from COVID-19. As a dedicated innovator in health care procedures and processes, in May 2022, VA brought together its Office of Research and Development, Long COVID Community of Practice, and Long COVID Integrated Project Team to address patients suffering from Long COVID.

“VA has always been a leader in treating COVID-19, so it is a natural progression that we are at the forefront of treating Long COVID,” said VA Secretary Denis McDonough. “As the largest health care system in the county, VA was uniquely positioned to form a community of practice and pull together brilliant minds to develop this Long COVID guidebook. I’m proud of our team of experts for their work and know that Veterans and civilians fight Long COVID across the country will benefit from their wealth of knowledge.”

Although this guidebook was initially developed for Veteran patients at VHA medical facilities, Long COVID is an urgent medical situation affecting patients worldwide. VHA is responding to this need by making the guidebook available to health care providers across the nation to help them care for their Long COVID patients.

The guidebook includes a hyperlinked directory of signs, symptoms, and other potential conditions; a primer on the Whole Health System approach; and a section of one-page quick reference guides for navigating care based on a suspected diagnosis of Long COVID.

Whole Health is an evidence-based, multi-disciplinary, personalized Veteran-driven approach. It empowers and equips Veterans to take charge of their health and well-being, and to live life to the fullest. Where Long COVID is concerned, Whole Health will help clinicians better define, assess, refer, and manage the signs, symptoms, and potential subsequent conditions of the illness. With the possibility of varying symptoms in one patient, a Whole Health approach will also allow clinicians to prioritize treatment based on the patient’s needs.

The quick reference guide includes the most common symptoms in one page reference sheets:

* Anosmia and Dysgeusia
* Autonomic Nervous System Dysregulation
* Chest Pain
* Cognitive Impairment
* Cough
* Dyspnea
* Fatigue and Activity Intolerance
* Headaches
* Mental Health (Anxiety, Depression, PTSD)
* Other Potential Conditions: Cardiometabolic and Autoimmune

Long COVID research is in its infancy and the information available is ever changing. For example, there is minimal evidence to-date on Long COVID and special populations such as racial and ethnic minorities and transgender people. The guidebook will be periodically updated and republished as the scientific community learns more about Long COVID.