VETERANS HEALTH ADMINISTRATION (VHA) WHOLE HEALTH SYSTEM APPROACH TO LONG COVID:

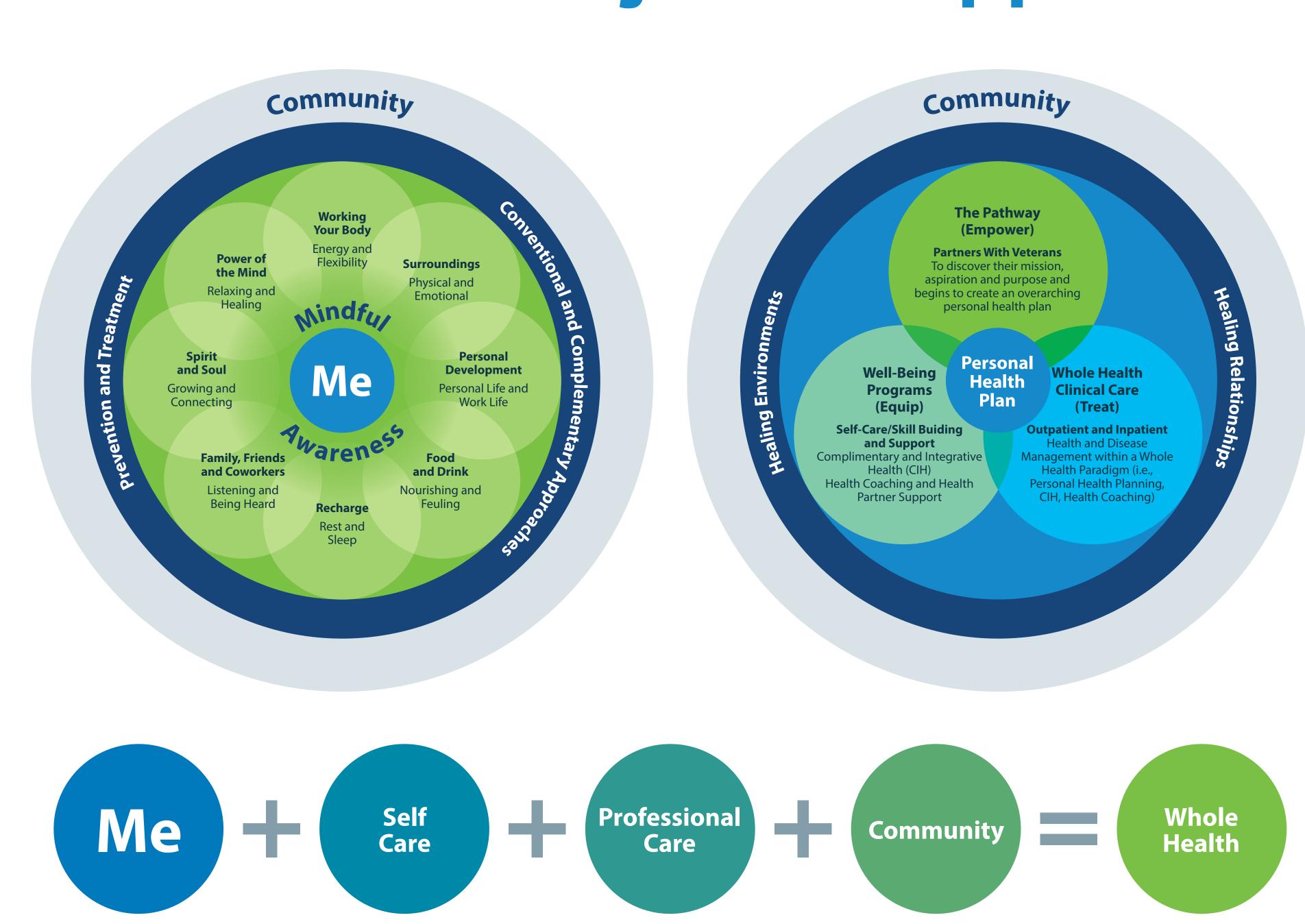
# Supporting Veterans and Their Primary Health Care Teams

Omar Awan, MD; Pulmonary/Critical Care physician, Washington DC VA Medical Center Ilana Seidel MD, ABIHM; VISN 21 Clinical Resource Hub Long COVID Section Chief

## Background

- ▶ Long COVID remains a significant public health issue for large numbers of Veterans and the general population.
- VA has treated approximately 700,000 Veterans diagnosed with COVID-19. Current estimates indicate that 4% to 7% of Veterans have developed some form of Long COVID symptoms, but this number may rise or fall as researchers reach consensus on how to define Long COVID.
- In May 2022, VA brought together its Office of Research and Development, Long COVID Community of Practice, and Long COVID Integrated Project Team to support the primary care teams caring for Veterans suffering from Long COVID.

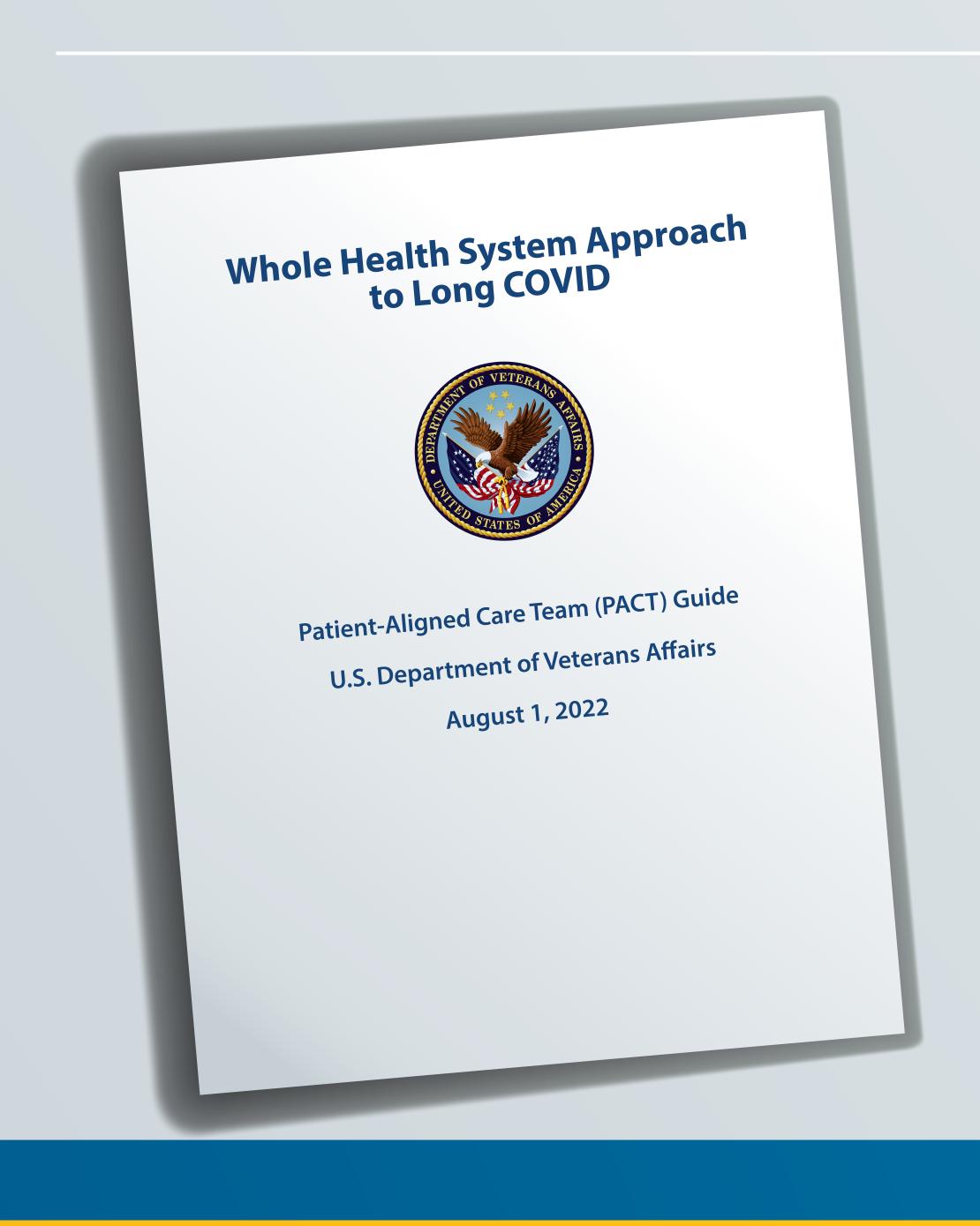
### Whole Health Systems Approach



### WHOLE HEALTH SYSTEM APPROACH TO LONG COVID:

## Primary Care Guide

The Whole Health System Approach to Long COVID guide equips healthcare providers with a patient-centered holistic approach to caring for patients with Long COVID. The first of its kind, the Guide identifies the most common Long COVID symptoms and conditions and provides recommendations using a Whole Health approach for managing care.



## Find the by following this QR Code



#### Or By Visiting https://www.public health.va.gov/n-cor onavirus/COVID\_19 \_Response\_Reports. asp#LongCovid

### Primary Care Guide Topics

- Anosmia and Dysgeusia
- Autonomic Nervous System Dysregulation
- Chest Pain
- Cognitive Impairment
- Dyspnea
- Other Conditions: Cardiometabolic and Autoimmune

- Cough
- Fatigue and Activity Intolerance
- Headaches
- Mental Health (Anxiety, Depression, PTSD)

## ioint pain, muscle CoagulationDisordersblood clots Al-Aly et al. Nature 2021 PAGES FROM THE Primary Care Guide

COVID-19: Lasting Impact

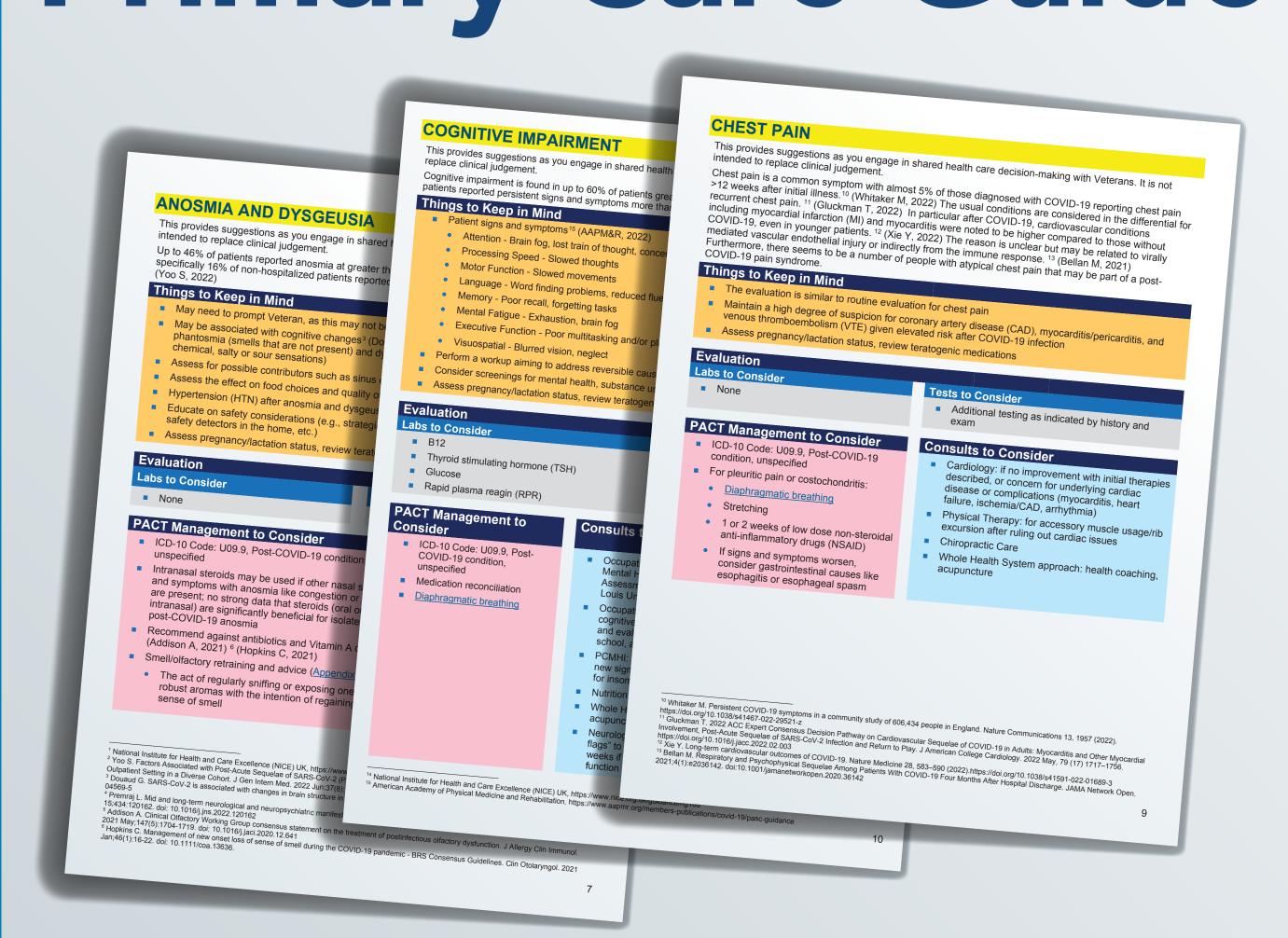
**Nervous System** 

acute coronary

Kidney

acute kidney

Musculoskeletal



### Reviews and Quotes

This guidebook packages up the best practices we've learned about treating Long COVID, and it will help health care providers across America improve the lives of Veterans and non-Veterans alike."

-VA Secretary Denis McDonough, MSFS

Not only did the handbook help me refine my illness script and create an evidence-based approach to judiciously order diagnostics, but it also empowered my Veterans! I have shared the handbook with my patients and they report feeling validated and reassured that their symptoms aren't 'just in my head:' and we have tools to help."

-Jenny Cohen MD, MPH, FAMIA

Sites really enjoy it (the Primary Care Guide), ...(it is) easy to read; providers shared it with their team; they are really excited about the opportunities, and they enjoyed the whole health component. It was nice to see them share (the guide) to their front-line staff. It was well received and we really appreciate it."

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Dr. Steven Lieberman, Dr. Elizabeth Brill, Tammy Czarnecki, Dr. Ralph Schapira, Marian Adly and Amanda Purnell. VHA Long COVID Integrated Project Team, VHA Long COVID Community of Practice, VHA Office of Primary Care, VHA Office of Healthcare Innovation and Learning, VA Office of Information & Technology, Office of the Chief Technology Officer, VHA Office of Healthcare Transformation, VHA Office of Patient Connected Care and Cultural Transformation, VHA National Center for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention, VHA Pharmacy Benefits Management Services, San Francisco VA HCS and Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion



This guide is a living document. As we continue to learn more about Long COVID, updates will be made to the Guide and shared on the same link



