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NEWS RELEASE

Eureka VA Clinic Staff Bring Comfort to Veterans in Need

Eureka – July 22, 2016 – The Eureka VA Clinic is providing additional support to Veterans with serious illnesses by offering self-care comfort kits to enhance self-management of their illness.

The clinic's Integrative Health Care Support (IHCS) team—Linda Ravetti, DNP, MPH, NP; Denise Sweeney, DNP, GNP; and Kel Stockdale, RN—received a VA mini-grant to provide 50 self-care comfort kits to Veterans who are involved in palliative (comfort) care or hospice care (specialized care for patients with terminal illnesses).

One Veteran known to clinic staff developed a serious illness. A telephone conversation with him prompted the idea to offer “comfort kits” to help Veterans better manage their condition. “I thought, how can we get something to help Veterans in their self-care? What is relaxing for patients, yet can empower them in their time of significant need?” says Kel Stockdale, RN.

On July 19, the Eureka VA Clinic IHCS team presented that Veteran with the very first comfort kit. He and his family were grateful.

The kit includes a large canvas tote bag filled with items to enhance a Veteran's self-care: a hand-held stress relief ball; a CD of mindfulness exercises; acupressure wrist bands to relieve nausea, a self-care notebook with a list of local resources, and an organized way to take notes when meeting with the health care team.

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“There’s a quote on the cover of each notebook, ‘Be good to yourself,’ as a reminder to our Veterans to take care of themselves, even when they are facing difficulties and challenges,” says the clinic’s psychiatric nurse practitioner Linda Ravetti, DNP, MPH, NP.

Veterans residing in or near Eureka who have a serious illness, and who are interested in obtaining a comfort kit, should contact Kel Stockdale at (707) 269-7504.

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Eureka VA Clinic’s Integrative Health Care Support team presents Veteran Ralph McCarthy with a comfort kit. From left: Kel Stockdale, RN; Susan Diehl-McCarthy, spouse; Ralph McCarthy, Veteran; Linda Ravetti, DNP; Shane McCarthy, son; and Ralph’s brother--also a Veteran--Paul McCarthy.