**Parkinson’s Disease: Demographic and Geographic Distribution of Affected Veterans (1998-2002)**

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**OBJECTIVE:** To describe the demographic and geographic distribution of veterans with an ICD-9 CM diagnostic code for Parkinson’s Disease (332.0) within the US Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) health care system during fiscal years 1998-2002.

**BACKGROUND:** To emphasize the importance of supporting clinical and research activities to enhance the Centers (PADRECC), each with a sphere of responsibility for a portion of the US. The current research was undertaken to gain more knowledge about the general characteristics and distribution of veterans with Parkinson’s Disease (PD) across the US. For PD, an understanding of these patients’ geographic location will be informative.

**METHODS:** Data collected from VA medical centers across the US were incorporated into a central repository and selected elements extracted in 2000. These databases were queried to identify veterans with an ICD-9-CM code for PD, which were then linked to patient demographics and county (country) data using geographic codes. The 2000 population data were used to link the PD patient data to the 2000 population data by gender, age, and race/ethnicity. The PD patient data, along with the geographic codes, were used to create and display PD prevalence and disease burden estimates for each VISN and county.

**RESULTS:** A total of 79,448 unique veterans with PD were treated nationally over the five-year period. Veterans were 98% men and their mean age was 73.4. In 2000, the percentage of people living in non-metropolitan counties (RUCC codes 4-9) was 17.4% for the US population, 23.7% for total VA veterans, and 25.6% for veterans with PD.

**CONCLUSIONS:** A substantial number of veterans with PD seek medical care through the VA health care system. The total number of these patients has been increasing in recent years. The combined use of VA national databases with GIS mapping provided estimates of the characteristics and locations of veterans with PD across the US.

**Number of PD (ICD-9 CM 332.0) patients seen per 1,000 VA patients seen during FY2002.**