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11201 Benton Street
Loma Linda, CA 92357

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News Release

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:
Annie Tuttle or Kristen Hall, Public Affairs Office
Office: (909) 583-6193 Cell: (909) 953-1370

Veterans Pulmonary Rehabilitation Program in Loma Linda Certified

LOMA LINDA, Calif.—The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Loma Linda Healthcare System's Pulmonary Rehabilitation Program received 3 year recertification from the American Association of Cardiovascular and Pulmonary Rehabilitation. The Loma Linda VA Program has been certified since 2003. This program cares for Veterans with lung diseases, including Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) and pulmonary fibrosis. Pulmonary rehabilitation has been shown to improve quality of life, increase functional status, and reduce health care utilization.

The Loma Linda VA Pulmonary Rehabilitation 8-Week Program incorporates breathing exercises, exercise and education about lung disease to help patients live a more satisfying life. Teaching correct breathing techniques and how to use inhalers correctly also helps patients increase stamina and tolerate the breathlessness associated with the disease.

COPD refers to a group of lung diseases that block airflow as you exhale and make it increasingly difficult to breathe. Chronic bronchitis and emphysema are two common diseases that make up COPD. Cigarette smoking is the leading cause. COPD can be medically managed, but there is no cure. It is 4 to 5 times more prevalent in Veterans than the population at large.

Pulmonary fibrosis occurs when lung tissue becomes damaged and scarred. The scarring associated with pulmonary fibrosis can be caused by a multitude of factors. But in most cases, doctors can't pinpoint what's causing the problem. The lung damage caused by pulmonary fibrosis can't be repaired, but medications and therapies can sometimes help ease symptoms and improve quality of life.

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