**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE CONTACT: Dana Kauffman**

June 25, 2018  **202-416-7608**

[**DanaK@pva.org**](mailto:DanaK@pva.org)

**Paralyzed Veterans of America Publishes New Clinical Practice Guideline:   
*Identification and Management of Cardiometabolic Risk after SCI***

WASHINGTON, DC — [Paralyzed Veterans of America](https://www.pva.org/), in collaboration with the Consortium of SCI Medicine, has published a new Clinical Practice Guideline (CPG) to guide healthcare providers in helping veterans and others living with [spinal cord injury](https://www.pva.org/spinal-cord-injury-information) (SCI) to prevent and treat deadly cardiometabolic diseases (CMD). The CPG is available for download at [www.pva.org/publications](http://www.pva.org/publications) and the Apple Store for free.

“This long awaited clinical practice guideline will help physicians and other providers in monitoring the 'silent killer' in veterans and others living with spinal cord injury,” said Cheryl Vines, director of research and education at Paralyzed Veterans of America. “We are grateful to Dr. Mark Nash and Dr. Suzanne Groah for leading this panel of experts in developing the guidelines. Now it is our role to get this document into the hands of those who can best put it to use; physicians in acute care, rehabilitation and community care, other providers and veterans, family members, and other stakeholders who will have a resource to advocate for the care they need and deserve.”

While the guidelines were founded in recommendations for the general population, they include essential issues related to spinal cord injury. Some of the key recommendations included in the guidelines are:

* Evaluate all individuals with new SCIs *before discharge* from rehabilitation and those living with SCI now at the first opportunity (clinic visit);
* Assess obesity beginning at the time of discharge from rehabilitation, and follow-up testing at least every three years following initial assessment;
* Screen adults with SCI for diabetes and prediabetes, and repeat testing at least every three years if tests are normal;
* Measure blood pressure at every routine visit;
* Annual screening of persons with SCI in the presence of multiple risk factors for dyslipidemia (high cholesterol), or when evidence of dyslipidemia is confirmed or treatment initiated;
* Individuals with SCI should participate in at least 150 minutes per week of physical exercise according to their ability beginning as soon as possible following acute spinal cord injury.

Over all, comprehensive, frequent (at least every 3 years, even without symptoms) monitoring of the key components of cardiometabolic health should begin immediately, before discharge from rehabilitation, in those with new spinal cord injuries and continue throughout their lifetime.

“These strategic guidelines provide an extensively vetted, evidence-based standard in cases where no such guideposts have been fashioned or applied for the benefit of the SCI population,” said Dr. Nash, chair of the Cardiometabolic Clinical Guideline Panel for the Consortium of SCI Medicine. “When adopting standards used for the general population, we have also identified areas in need of investigation so that the foundational evidence for CMD identification and management can become even more representative of, and relevant for, the SCI population.”

*###*

**About Paralyzed Veterans of America**

Paralyzed Veterans of America is the only congressionally chartered veterans service organization dedicated solely for the benefit and representation of veterans with [spinal cord injury](http://www.pva.org/site/c.ajIRK9NJLcJ2E/b.6344373/k.4182/Spinal_Cord_Injury_Information.htm) or [disease](http://www.pva.org/site/c.ajIRK9NJLcJ2E/b.6348315/k.FC88/Spinal_Cord_Disease.htm). For more than 70 years, we have ensured that veterans have received the [benefits](http://www.pva.org/Find-Support/services/Veterans-Benefits) earned through their service to our nation; monitored their care in VA spinal cord injury units; and funded [research and education](http://www.pva.org/site/c.ajIRK9NJLcJ2E/b.6305817/k.3A08/Spinal_Cord_Research__Education.htm) in the search for a cure and improved care for individuals with paralysis.

As a partner for life, Paralyzed Veterans of America also develops training and career services, works to ensure [accessibility](http://www.pva.org/site/c.ajIRK9NJLcJ2E/b.6305451/k.8CF7/Accessible_Design.htm) in public buildings and spaces, provides health and rehabilitation opportunities through sports and recreation and advocates for veterans and all people with disabilities. With more than 70 offices and 33 [chapters](http://www.pva.org/site/c.ajIRK9NJLcJ2E/b.6452325/k.A0ED/Chapters_and_NSOs.htm), Paralyzed Veterans of America serves veterans, their families and their [caregivers](http://www.pva.org/site/c.ajIRK9NJLcJ2E/b.6306123/k.B389/Caregivers_Support.htm) in all 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico.