What are the benefits?

Veterans who participate may experience a decrease in their PTSD symptoms and an improvement in their quality of life. Though we cannot guarantee any benefits, all participants will have the satisfaction of knowing they are helping the many other veterans with this disorder.

Am I required to participate?

No, being in the study is entirely voluntary. Your are free not to participate and may withdraw from the study at any time.

How do I learn more about the study?

Please ask your provider or call Sybil Allison at 210-562-6704 or Dr. Stephen Stern, the principal investigator, at 210-617-5300, Ext. 14779. You may also stop by the front desk of the FTOPC Mental Health Clinic to let us know of your interest.

All of us at the VA and the Humane Society look forward to working together with you in this important study.

South Texas Veterans Health Care System

SAN ANTONIO HUMANE SOCIETY

Electronic Signature here

IRB Approved February 10, 2011

South Texas Veterans Health Care System

DO YOU HAVE POSTTRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER (PTSD)?

If so, you are cordially invited to consider participating in a treatment study of dog adoption that our team at the VA is conducting together with the San Antonio Humane Society.

SAN ANTONIO HUMANE SOCIETY

What is the goal of the study?

We are interested in examining the potential benefits of providing a dog from the Humane Society to veterans with PTSD. Many veterans with PTSD have told us how much they have been helped by having a dog. Our project, "A Pilot Study of Dog Adoption in Veterans with Posttraumatic Stress Disorder," is funded by a generous grant from the Disabled American Veterans (DAV) Charitable Service Trust.

Who is eligible for the study?

Veterans with PTSD who have not had a dog or other pet for the past 12 months. There are also other requirements, which the provider who is treating you for your PTSD and the staff of the study will be glad to discuss with you.

What does the study consist of?

Veterans who qualify for the study will receive a dog free of charge from the Humane Society, but following the adoption will need to pay the costs of caring for their pet. They will be able to choose from among the many dogs at the

Humane Society, where they will receive information about how to care for their dog and how to get the most from having it in their home. Participants will have 5 visits at the Audie L. Murphy VA Hospital over the course of 6 months, each lasting 1-2 hours, as well as brief phone calls between visits. There will also be a scheduled home visit during the first month. Veterans from Kerrville will need to come to San Antonio to adopt their dog but will have all their study visits at the Kerrville Clinic.

Will I be paid for my time?

Yes, veterans will receive compensation for their time - up to $220 for completing the 6-month study. Payments will be made regularly as parts of the study are completed.

Will being in the study affect the treatments I receive for my PTSD?

Not at all. Veterans will continue to receive whatever treatments their provider feels are most appropriate for their PTSD.

What are the risks of the study?

The chief risks are fatigue or inconvenience veterans might experience from participating in the study visits.