

Mind Matters: NYSDVS Hosts Free Virtual "Chat & Chew" on Brain Health, Aging & Alzheimer's Risk on Jan 29, from 1-2 p.m.

Veterans, Military Spouses & Caregivers are Invited to Attend this Engaging Discussion Exploring How Cognition, Memory, and Aging Impact All Who Served

ALBANY, NY, NY, UNITED STATES, January 9, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- ALBANY, NY – The New York State Department of Veterans' Services ([DVS](#)) will host Mind Matters: A [Chat & Chew](#) Conversation on Brain Health, Aging & Alzheimer's Risk on Thursday, January 29, 2026, from 1:00–2:00 p.m. ET. This free, virtual event is open to Veterans, Military Families, caregivers, and community members statewide. Individuals are encouraged to register early at <https://tinyurl.com/2tek3dhd>.

The one-hour discussion will explore how cognition, memory, and aging impact all who served, while offering practical, evidence-based strategies to support brain health, reduce Alzheimer's disease risk, and strengthen resilience – particularly among aging Veterans and underserved communities.

"Brain health is a critical part of overall wellness, especially as Veterans and their families navigate the challenges of aging," said Viviana M. DeCohen, Commissioner of the New York State Department of Veterans' Services. "This conversation reflects our commitment to meeting Veterans where they are, providing trusted information, and ensuring that All Who Served have access to tools that support long-term health and dignity."

The discussion will be moderated by Dr. Lessie Branch, DVS Special Assistant for Community Engagement, award-winning author, scholar, and advocate. Panelists include Dr. Chelsea



DVS Logo Image

Reichert, Geriatrics Psychiatry, Nathan S. Kline Institute; Rev. Denise Lawson, Tap In! Dementia Tool Kit; and Dr. Mena Stramenga, Licensed Clinical Psychologist.

"Programs like Mind Matters allow us to translate research and lived experience into real-world guidance that Veterans and families can use," said Joel Evans, Executive Deputy Commissioner of the New York State Department of Veterans' Services. "By creating space for open dialogue with expert panelists, we help strengthen trust, connection, and access to care."

Dr. Branch emphasized the importance of culturally responsive, community-centered conversations around cognitive health.

"Brain health is deeply personal, but it's also profoundly communal," said Dr. Lessie Branch. "This Chat & Chew brings together science, faith, and lived experience to empower people with knowledge, reduce stigma, and remind us that caring for the brain means caring for the whole person."

Event Details:

Thursday, January 29, 2026

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DVS Commissioner Viviana M. DeCohen

1:00–2:00 p.m. ET

Virtual | Free

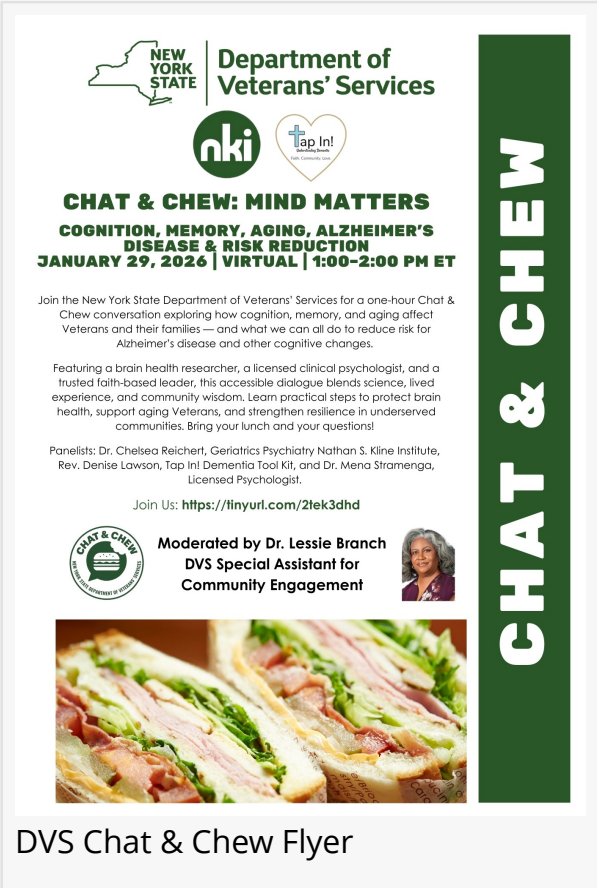
Registration: <https://tinyurl.com/2tek3dhd>

Space is limited and early registration is strongly encouraged.

About the New York State Department of Veterans' Services:

The New York State Department of Veterans' Services proudly serves New York's Veterans, Service Members, and Military Families, connecting them with benefits, services, and support. All who served should contact the

Department at 888-838-7697 or via its website – veterans.ny.gov – to meet in-person or virtually with an accredited Veterans Benefits Advisor to receive the benefits they have earned. Follow DVS on Facebook, Instagram, X, LinkedIn, Threads, and Bluesky Social.



The flyer is for a virtual event titled "CHAT & CHEW: MIND MATTERS" focused on "COGNITION, MEMORY, AGING, ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE & RISK REDUCTION" on January 29, 2026, from 1:00-2:00 PM ET. It is organized by the New York State Department of Veterans' Services, featuring logos for the state, NKI, and Tap In! The event description invites a one-hour conversation about brain health with experts. Panelists listed are Dr. Chelsea Reichert, Rev. Denise Lawson, and Dr. Mena Stramenga. Registration is via a provided URL. The event is moderated by Dr. Lessie Branch. A photo of sandwiches is shown at the bottom. A large green banner on the right side of the flyer reads "CHAT & CHEW".

CHAT & CHEW: MIND MATTERS
COGNITION, MEMORY, AGING, ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE & RISK REDUCTION
JANUARY 29, 2026 | VIRTUAL | 1:00-2:00 PM ET

Join the New York State Department of Veterans' Services for a one-hour Chat & Chew conversation exploring how cognition, memory, and aging affect Veterans and their families — and what we can all do to reduce risk for Alzheimer's disease and other cognitive changes.

Featuring a brain health researcher, a licensed clinical psychologist, and a trusted faith-based leader, this accessible dialogue blends science, lived experience, and community wisdom. Learn practical steps to protect brain health, support aging Veterans, and strengthen resilience in underserved communities. Bring your lunch and your questions!

Panelists: Dr. Chelsea Reichert, Geriatrics Psychiatry Nathan S. Kline Institute, Rev. Denise Lawson, Tap In! Dementia Tool Kit, and Dr. Mena Stramenga, Licensed Psychologist.

Join Us: <https://tinyurl.com/2tek3dhd>

Moderated by Dr. Lessie Branch
DVS Special Assistant for
Community Engagement

CHAT & CHEW

DVS Chat & Chew Flyer

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