

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 image is a promotional flyer for a "Chat & Chew: Mind Matters" event. At the top, it features the New York State Department of Veterans' Services logo, which includes a map of New York State and the text "NEW YORK STATE" and "Department of Veterans' Services". Below this are logos for "nki" (Nathan S. Kline Institute) and "Tap In!" (with the tagline "Mind Matters, Body Matters"). The event title "CHAT & CHEW: MIND MATTERS" is in bold capital letters, followed by "COGNITION, MEMORY, AGING, ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE & RISK REDUCTION". The date "JANUARY 29, 2026 | VIRTUAL | 1:00-2:00 PM ET" is listed. A paragraph of text describes the event's purpose: "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." It also mentions the panelists: "Dr. Chelsea Reichert, Geriatrics Psychiatry Nathan S. Kline Institute, Rev. Denise Lawson, Tap In! Dementia Tool Kit, and Dr. Mena Stramenga, Licensed Psychologist." The "Join Us" link is "https://tinyurl.com/2tek3dhd". The moderator is "Moderated by Dr. Lessie Branch, DVS Special Assistant for Community Engagement". There is a small photo of Dr. Lessie Branch. Below the text is a photograph of a sandwich.

DVS Chat & Chew Flyer

CHAT & CHEW

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