

By Zachary A. Goldfarb, Saturday, August 10, 2:44 PM [E-mail the writer](#)

ORLANDO — President Obama on Saturday announced a new initiative to help treat veterans with brain injuries and mental health conditions, as he and first lady Michelle Obama paid tribute to disabled veterans before departing on their summer holiday.

Speaking to the annual conference of Disabled American Veterans, which represents 1.2 million people nationwide, Obama announced a \$100 million grant to research centers, led by the University of Texas in San Antonio and Virginia Commonwealth University, dedicated to treating brain injury and mental health issues, particularly post-traumatic stress disorder.

He also said his administration would launch a new effort to share research among the numerous federal agencies studying and providing treatment to veterans with neurological problems.

Brain injury and disease is one of the enduring legacies of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, with significant numbers of veterans suffering post-traumatic stress disorder. In addition, the suicide rate among veterans has soared over the last decade.

“I’m not going to be satisfied until every veteran . . . gets the support and help they need to stay strong,” Obama told about 4,000 veterans gathered here. “We’ve got to end this epidemic of suicide among our veterans and troops.”