



VA Research: Improving Veterans' Lives Through Health Care Research

Veterans Community Advisory Board (VCAB)

The Center for Health Equity Research and Promotion (CHERP) Veterans Community Advisory Board was formed in May 2017 to promote Veteran engagement and incorporate Veteran perspectives in research at VA. The VCAB seeks to improve the design of patient-relevant research, increase uptake of research into practice, build Veteran support for research and restore trust in VA.

The VCAB is available to:

- Offer Veteran viewpoints about care experiences, preferences and priorities
- Strategize for Veteran-centered research, particularly health equity research
- Write letters of support for Veteran-focused projects
- Provide insight for recruitment and study info materials, and identify research partners
- Assist with Veteran engagement and education



The VCAB is designed to represent the vulnerable communities central to CHERP's health equity research mission (e.g. Veterans from ethnic minorities, LGBTQ+ Veterans, women Veterans, homeless Veterans, Veterans with stigmatizing social, mental and physical conditions, etc.).

VCAB Mission: "To advise, foster relationships, and contribute experience and input to CHERP Leadership and Researchers in order to promote health, healthcare, and health equity for the Veteran Community."

Divisions of VA Research & Development (R&D)

Biomedical Laboratory R&D

This division performs preclinical research for diseases affecting Veterans. Preclinical research is a first level phase of research to gather information and form theories for treatment. It includes research on animal models and investigations of tissues, blood, or other biologic specimens from humans, but does not include studies with people.

Clinical Science R&D

This division conducts clinical trials after a researcher has completed preclinical research. Under this division, researchers request approval for clinical trials and recruit volunteers for study treatments and therapies to be evaluated. Researchers can start to improve clinical practice and care. The Cooperative Studies Program within this division is responsible for planning and conducting VA's large multicenter clinical trials and disease studies vital to our nation's Veterans.

Health Services R&D

This division focuses on the delivery of new research products and services to Veterans in a health care setting like quality and organization of care, patient access and outcomes, and cost-effectiveness.

The division's Quality Enhancement Research Initiative (QUERI) is designed to translate research findings into improvements in Veterans' care.

Rehabilitation R&D

This division is dedicated to innovative research for Veteran rehabilitation. This division works with disabled Veterans to restore movement and independence.



Core Programs Across VA R&D Divisions

Program for Research Integrity Development and Education (PRIDE)

This program is responsible for policy development, guidance, training, and education to protect VA human research participants.

Technology Transfer Program

This program moves discoveries and inventions into everyday practice. They obtain patents and identify commercial partners to help ensure that Veterans benefit from the innovations of VA researchers.

Productive Partnerships

While embracing its status as an intra-mural program with close ties to its academic affiliates, VA Research also fosters and develops dynamic collaborations with other federal agencies, nonprofit organizations, and private industry. Such teamwork promotes the leveraging of resources, speeds the translation of study results into clinical practice, and maximizes the overall impact of VA Research. VA researchers study the full spectrum of health issues relevant to our nation's Veterans. Below are examples of high priority topics.

High Priority Topics in VA Research

Chronic Diseases

Chronic disease management is important for Veteran Health. Researchers are focusing on cardiovascular, diabetic, and arthritic care strategies, to name a few.

Prosthetics and Amputation Care

VA researchers are designing and testing prosthetic devices that are lighter, more natural, and more functional than existing models.

Veteran Homelessness

Stable Housing is a pillar in determining good health. VA has included housing research in its strategic plan.

Mental Health

Access to mental health services is a very important to VA. Education surrounding substance abuse, PTSD, anxiety and depression are available for Veterans.

Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans

Because prevention services are more effective than reaction, VA researchers are working to reduce psychological and physical pain for Veterans returning from Iraq and Afghanistan, the most recent conflict in US history.

Health for Women Veterans

The number of women Veterans using VA resources is growing. Therefore VA is dedicating more resources to accommodate the needs of women Veterans seeking services through VA, like fertility and infertility care.

LGBTQ+

VA is committed to providing comprehensive health care to the LGBTQ+ Veterans by investing time and resources into research for this under-served community.