Welcome and Opening Comments
Rachel Ramoni

A brief overview of the agenda and some initial highlights of upcoming meetings and research enterprise tools were provided.

ORD / Research Enterprise
Grant Huang

- Welcome to new ACOS-Rs

New and Acting ACOS-Rs were introduced to welcome them to the ORD Field Community. They included: Marty R. Jacobson, PhD, MSc, VA Western Colorado Health Care System in Grand Junction, CO; Steven Dobsha, MD at the Portland VAMC and Maria Navas, MD who was appointed as the acting ACOS-R for VA Sierra Nevada Health Care System in Reno, NV.

If there are others who have recently joined the VA research enterprise as an ACOS-R or AO, please send a note to Grant Huang so that we can announce them to the field.

- Annual ACOS-R meeting updates

A recent memo (sent on July 12) providing travel guidance to the NAVREF-ACOS-R annual meeting was highlighted.

- Field training and development resources

In light of recent presentations at the AO meeting, the ORD Finance team has a SharePoint site of training resources on fiscal/budget topics. The link is at Field Training and Resources.

ORD encourages field R&D Office staff to be familiar with these VA and non-VA offerings. If people forget to bookmark this link, the signature block of ORD Finance Team members will have it included.

Additionally, the ACOS-R Leadership Training and Support team, headed by Melissa Middleton and Carrie May, has been actively working to respond to ACOS-Rs’ suggestions on how to better support these leadership roles. Based on the feedback, the team recognized the essential need for a formal introduction and orientation. Partnering with the Veteran’s Experience Office they have successfully developed a number of design concepts. The team has now also working with the VA’s Healthcare Leadership Talent Institute to further build out some of the design concepts to test with ACOS-Rs. From there, the team with gather your thoughts, ideas, and feedback, before kicking off the pilot phase.

One of the things already in place, based on your input, was the development of the ACOS-R QuickStart Guide. This is now provided to every new ACOS-R. We are also beginning to pilot a Welcome Letter to accompany that guide to let the new ACOS-R know who we are, how to
contact Central Office support, and to welcome them to our Team. You will receive an updated version of that QuickStart guide soon, as the team is also working with VA Publication Services to professionalize the guide as well as make it ADA compliant.

We will continue to reach out to you to be a part of feedback sessions and to join pilot teams, so look out for those opportunities.

Finance

John Verwiel

The RAFT Q3 execution report was due July 17. This is a national report that is used to determine excess research funding out in the field. As of today, ORD has 96% participation which is great. The next step will be to rack and stack the responses, identify excess funding, and begin withdrawing those funds.

The Toxic Exposure Fund, (or TEF) cost transfers were also due July 17th. This activity was documented in detail in the TEF Guidance Memo that was distributed back in May. Each site receiving TEF funding is required to process the cost transfers timely and document the purpose to ensure compliance. Be advised that OIG has already reached out to us to audit these TEF obligations and Cost Transfers. Our guidance memo addressed each audit component that was requested, so our response was well-prepared and justified. We provided the initial documentation as requested. However, we anticipate quarterly OIG documentation requests which we will be following up with the field on as they come in.

The FY24 Op Plan is underway and has been well received so far. ORD Fiscal team met with several directors and program managers to assist with completion of the Op Plans.

Field communication regarding Reimbursement Balances is scheduled to be released this week regarding the need for cost transfers to be processed.

Field Training (Finance Monthly Training Series: Introduction to ORD Financial Management Resources) on Wednesday at 3 PM EDT to cover:
- Helping new/existing Research Office Staff who work in budget functions understand the resources available related to Financial Management.
- This will include internal courses, external course, and the ORD Field Administrative Officer and Financial Management SharePoint Site.

Regulatory and Policies

Molly Klote

Dr. Klote provided an update on Research IT system Support. The full presentation will be available on the ORD Teams site. Some highlights are detailed below.

Research Scientific Computing Devices (RSCD): ORD has hired an enterprise Biomedical Engineer who is now able to place RSCDs on the isolated LAN. RSCDs are basic and clinical instruments run by a computer but cannot be put on the VA LAN. The reasons may be they accept VA security software as it ruins the equipment operating system, or it may require software to run that is not allowed on the VA LAN. Most VAMCs have an isolated LAN that they can be on and access the internet. If you have an RSCD that you would like to have on the internet, isolated LAN please send the following to carl.grunfeld@va.gov. 1) The POC. 2) The name and a very brief description of the machine and why it needs to be on the LAN. 3) Any brochure that might help to better understand the structure.
VABox
VA Box is now available for transfer of large files within the VA and with the outside. A document on how to use VABox will be uploaded to the TEAMS site.

Service Funding Opportunities, Reviews and Updates

- National Institute on Aging (NIA) Opportunity

ORD Cross Service Announcements
Mentored Physician & Clinical Psychologist Award in Alzheimer’s Disease and Related Dementias (MPCPS-ADRD)

Dr. Lisa Opanashuk from NIA presented on the purpose of this Program which is to attract early stage physician-scientists and clinical psychologist-scientists from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to an Alzheimer’s disease and Alzheimer’s disease-related dementias (AD/ADRD) research career. To accomplish this goal, the VA and the National Institute on Aging (NIA) have created a two-part opportunity for eligible VA applicants to pair with both VA- and NIA-funded mentors in the AD/ADRD field through an IK2 career development award from the VA (described in VA RFAs BX-23-030, CX-23-030, HX-23-030, and RX-23-030) and an administrative supplement from NIA (NOT-AG-22-020). The research can focus on any aspect of the AD/ADRD field (e.g., disease mechanisms, biomarker discovery, diagnosis/clinical assessment, therapeutics, patient care, community care/social determinants of health, caregiver issues, and models of care). The VA RFAs and NIA NOSI will also promote developing and implementing a collaborative framework to facilitate co-funding and support of shared research priorities between NIA and the VA, enabling increased coordination between the two organizations.

RR&D

RR&D REVIEW UPDATES:

SCIENTIFIC REVIEW TIMELINES (refer to applicable FOA/RFA for details): Please continue to contact RR&D for guidance and to ask questions.

Spring 2023 - Center and Research Enhancement Award Program (REAP):
- Administrative Review/Site Visits – Summer 2023
- Intent-to-Award notifications – Subsequent to site visit

Spring 2023 – Total Brain Diagnostics (TBD) Proof-of-Concept (PoC) Merit Award (I01):
- Scientific Review – May 3, 2023; Administrative Review – May 11-12, 2023
- Scores and Summary Statements released – week of May 15th
- Funding Decisions - TBA

Summer 2023 – Merit, Career Development and Research Career Scientist:
- Summer 2023 RFAs published – March 30, 2023
  - NEW Parent RFA RX-23-006 – See updated Special Emphasis Areas
  - Special Funding Opportunities:
- **RX-22-012 Durability of Rehabilitation Interventions for Vェtェrェnts (DRIVE) Award (I01):** the goal of this RFA is to examine whether a multimodal approach, including short-term clinician-directed rehabilitation interventions and long-term Veteran self-managed components, combined with adjunct approaches (such as, but not limited to, psychological support, performance feedback or whole health) significantly improves Veterans’ adherence, motivation and maintenance of physical and psychological function and quality-of-life in the long-term.

- **RX-22-020 Translational Rehabilitation Research Award: Stage 1 (TRRA-1) (IU1):** the goal of this RFA is to facilitate the translation of promising VA research discoveries in the realm of neurological, musculoskeletal and sensory systems into new treatments for Veterans to obtain functional gains and to provide VA PD/PIs with funding for services NOT provided through a standard Merit Award and to prepare the PD/PI for TRRA-2 – Pre-clinical Good Laboratory Practice testing of the product for FDA IND/IDE submission. A TRRA-1 award provides administrative support for: 1) Preparatory planning for preliminary FDA interactions and early peer-review of the technical merit and feasibility of the approach. 2) An FDA regulatory consultant. 3) A Project Officer/Administrator (preparation and maintenance of a Masterfile, manages regulatory tasks, etc.). 4) Travel (if needed) for team members to meet.

- **RX-22-032 Developing and Validating Alternatives to the Use of Canines, Felines and Non-Human Primates in VA Research (I01):** the goal of this two-phased FOA/RFA is to provide VA investigators currently using sensitive species (e.g., non-human primates (NHP), canines and/or felines), with funding to develop and validate alternative methods.

- **NEW RX-23-007 Translational Rehabilitation Research Award: Stage 2 (TRRA-2) (IU1):** the goal of this RFA is to accelerate VA scientific discoveries into new treatments for neurological and musculoskeletal disorders to maximize Veterans’ functional independence, quality of life and participation in the community. This RFA supports Stage 2 of a two-stage translational award for pre-clinical testing activities towards e-filing a U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Investigational New Drug (IND) or Investigational Device Exemption (IDE). TRRA-1 is the first stage of this two-stage funding mechanism (FOA/RFA RX-22-020) that enables VA investigators to prepare for preliminary FDA interactions. A funded TRRA-1 must proceed an application submission to this FOA/RFA (TRRA-2). The main objectives of TRRA-2 are to provide VA Project Directors/Principal Investigators (PD/PIs) with funding for a full pre-clinical, milestone-driven award to support the research and development efforts towards filing a FDA Investigational New Drug (IND) or Investigational Device Exemption (IDE).

- **NEW RX-23-035 Parent Merit Review Award (Pain and Opioid Actively Managed Portfolio (I01):** This is the PОp-AMP’s principal mechanism for funding preclinical, translational, behavioral, epidemiological and health services/implementation research applications where pain and opioid use and the consequences of opioid use are the primary outcome(s) of the study. The primary focus of research supported by this RFA is preclinical, translational, clinical, or health services/implementation research in the Veteran population where pain and opioid use, and the consequences of opioid use are the primary outcome(s) of the study.

- **NEW RX-23-036 Pain and Opioid Actively Managed Portfolio (POp-AMP) Clinical Trials:** This RFA supports investigator-initiated clinical trials on painful conditions and opioid use in the Veteran population. Studies supported under this RFA include interventional studies involving Human Subjects for research purposes, and methodological studies focused on research with Human Subjects. This RFA accepts applications that involve:
  - Clinical trials that include treatment regimens in any of the specific aims,
  - Pragmatic clinical trials that include an intervention,
Comparative-effectiveness clinical trials that compare different interventions and/or implementation of treatments and approaches. The primary focus of research supported by POoP-AMP is to support novel and innovative approaches to treat acute and chronic painful conditions, opioid safety and opioid use disorder. The primary outcome(s) for the study must focus on alleviation of pain and/or reduction of harms from opioid use.

- Pre-application (LOI and waiver request) submission deadline – May 1, 2023
- Full award application submission deadline (no changed/corrected applications after this date) – June 12, 2023 (as June 10 falls on a Saturday)
- Scientific Review – August 7-15, 2023
- Scores released – August 17, 2023
- Summary Statements released – September 8, 2023
- Intent-to-Award notifications – late September 2023

**Fall 2023 – SPIRE:**

- Updated SPIRE RFA published – June 15, 2023
- Pre-application (LOI and waiver request) submission deadline – August 1, 2023
- Full award application submission deadline (no changed/corrected applications after this date) – September 12, 2023
- Scientific Review – October 24, 2023
- Scores and Summary Statements released – November 15, 2023
- Intent-to-Award notifications – early December 2023

All submissions require Biographical Sketch Format template (OMB No. 0925-0001 and 0925-0002 (Rev. 10/2021 Approved Through 09/30/2024)) or later version is required.

**HSR&D**

The HSRD COIN RFA was released at the end of June and a Cyberseminar describing the RFA was held on July 17. Please refer questions to COIN Scientific Program Manager, Dr. Bonnie BootsMiller c/o bonnie.bootsmiller@va.gov .

Congratulations to the recipients of the recent round of HSRD Field-Based awards who include the following investigators. **Sarah L. Krein, PhD, RN**, is the recipient of the 2022 HSR&D Daniel Deykin Award for Outstanding Mentor, which is presented each year to an HSR&D researcher(s) who exhibits outstanding dedication in mentoring the next generation of researchers. Skills of importance include fostering an appreciation for the vital input provided by VA stakeholders, including policymakers and Veterans, and guiding mentees toward an understanding of the positive impact research can have on the health and care of Veterans. There was a three-way tie for the 2022 HSR&D Best Research Paper of the Year Award, which is shared by **Kritee Gujral, PhD, David Oslin, MD, and John Piette, MSc, PhD**, for their respective papers. This award honors an article or collection of articles resulting from one or more HSR&D- or QUERI-funded investigations. Research studies also must involve Veterans, with results that are important to Veterans’ health and care, and to the VA healthcare system. **Laura Damshroder, MS, MPH**, is the recipient of the 2022 HSR&D Health System Impact Award. This award honors HSR&D- and/or QUERI-funded research that has had a direct and
important impact on clinical practice or clinical policy within the VA health care system – and that has been successfully translated into VA's policy or operations.

A Nursing Research State of the Art (SOTA) Planning Committee Meeting will be held in-person all day on July in Washington, DC with the Nursing Research SOTA Meeting itself to be scheduled sometime in early November.

General announcements

- Next Field Research and Advisory Committee meeting – July 19, 2023
- Next ORD Field Call – August 21, 2023
- If your information in the ACOS-R/AO Directory (https://www.research.va.gov/about/national_directory.cfm) is missing or is incorrect, please email: ORD.Web@va.gov
- ORD Field call minutes to be posted at: https://www.research.va.gov/resources/ORD_Admin/call_notes/default.cfm and at
- ORD Field Community Teams site: https://teams.microsoft.com/l/channel/19%3a2nyfplJuZK26bJxK98HfZGRKy5wXX3Pld1_quZ3Po1%40thread.tacv2/General?groupId=c6b5cfe2-8445-4363-8b9a-d0875b06bd19&tenantId=e95f1b23-aba7-45ee-821d-b7ab251ab3bf