



Clinical Science Research and Development



CSRD Newsletter

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Miriam's Message

I am happy to be sending you greetings as Acting Director as we here in CSRD carry on our mission following Terri Gleason's retirement.

I had the great joy of being Terri's deputy since February 2018, having worked with her in another capacity since December 2015. I would like to use my space in this issue of the CSRD Newsletter to comment on Terri's career in VA.

Terri dedicated almost 24 years to ORD. Throughout her career, she has been on the forefront of VA research, providing exceptional leadership in various roles, including her last role as Director/CSRD.

Terri's unwavering commitment to research to improve Veterans' health and well-being resulted in contributions to numerous groundbreaking research initiatives. Key among these activities was her dedication to strengthening the mental health research portfolio. Under her stewardship, ORD conducted clinical trials involving new therapeutics that could lead to treatment advances for PTSD, depression, anxiety, and addictive disorders. She made a particular commitment to suicide prevention research and built a strong foundation that will continue to advance the evidence needed to reduce suicide. She also led multiple efforts responding to White House or legislative directives, such as the National Research Action Plan for VA, PREVENTS to reduce suicide in Veterans, and the Hannon Act Precision Mental Health Initiative. Over the years she has developed and enhanced partnerships among stakeholders, community partners, other federal agencies, and academic affiliates.

Terri has also been highly dedicated to training the next generation of researchers in VA. Towards this end, she initiated early training opportunities for psychiatrists, Veteran scientists, and under-represented minorities.

Terri's stewardship and unwavering devotion to VA research will be missed.

I am including a photo of Terri holding a gift she received from ORD – an American flag that was flown over the United States Capitol on her official retirement date.

Best wishes to you all in your research endeavors!

Miriam



Congrats, Newly-Funded Investigators!

Congratulations to the 35 investigators selected for the Fall 2021 funding cycle! Applications were released on **Friday, February 18, 2021**, in eRA Commons Just-in-Time (JIT). Selected PIs and individuals with the Signing Official (SO) role were notified through email. Guidance documents and templates are on the ORD JIT website: [Just-in-Time Process to Release Funds \(va.gov\)](#).

The CSRD selectees for Fall 2021 cycle are:

- Bajaj, Jasmohan S., M.B.B.S., M.D., Richmond VAMC, "BCCMA: Targeting Gut Microbiome in Gastrointestinal and Liver Diseases in US Veterans; CMA4: At the Crossroads of the Gut Microbiome, Cirrhosis, and PTSD"
- Berenson, Charles S., M.D., Buffalo VAMC, "Alveolar macrophage dysregulation in the pathogenesis of Gulf War respiratory illness"
- Bremner, James Douglas, M.D., Atlanta VAMC, "Transcutaneous Vagal Nerve Stimulation in Veterans with Posttraumatic Stress Disorder"
- Brewster, Luke Packard, M.D, Ph.D., Atlanta VAMC, "Pilot Investigation of Ewing Amputation in Veterans with Peripheral Arterial Disease Undergoing Below Knee Amputation"
- Chu, Constance R., M.D., Palo Alto VAMC, "BCCMA: Targeting Osteoarthritis Pain and Progression: Defining biologic and inflammatory markers associated with rapid progression"
- Chung, Christine B., M.D., San Diego VAMC, "MR Biomarkers of Inflammation in Knee Osteoarthritis"
- Dell'italia, Louis J., M.D., Birmingham VAMC, "Exosome Mediated Effects on Cardiac Injury during Cardiopulmonary Bypass"
- Dhawan, Punita, Ph.D., Omaha VAMC, "Novel Tools for Colon Cancer Detection and Therapy"

- Green, Hadiyah-Nicole, Ph.D., Atlanta VAMC, "Safety Assessment of Laser Activated NanoTherapy (LANT) as a Potential Treatment for Veterans with Cutaneous Squamous Cell Carcinomas"
- Hartman, Rebecca Ivy, M.D., Boston VAMC, "Risk Factors for Clinically Aggressive Melanoma in Veterans"
- Hartwell, Emily, Ph.D., Philadelphia VAMC, "Genetic architecture of substance use disorders and major depression"
- Hays, Chelsea, Ph.D., San Diego VAMC, "Neurovascular Mechanisms Underlying the Negative Effect of Stress in Cognitive Aging"
- Ibdah, Jamal A., M.D, Ph.D., Columbia, MO, VAMC, "Low Dose Thyroid Hormone, Mitochondrial Fatty Acid Oxidation, and Treatment of Nonalcoholic Steatohepatitis (NASH)"
- Isseroff, Roslyn R., M.D., Sacramento VAMC, "Multiple targets for beta adrenergic antagonist mediate wound healing"
- Jagger-Rickels, Audreyana, Ph.D., Boston VAMC, "Identifying neural signatures of current and future suicidal thoughts and behaviors"
- Jones, Melissa Beth, M.D., Houston VAMC, "Pimavanserin for Insomnia in Veterans with Post-traumatic Stress Disorder"
- Kalantar-Zadeh, Kamyar, M.D, Ph.D., Long Beach VAMC, "Incremental Hemodialysis for Veterans in the First Year of Dialysis (InchVets): A Pragmatic, Multi-Center, Randomized Controlled Trial"
- Kopp, Ryan Patrick, M.D., Portland VAMC, "Precision Neoadjuvant Therapy for High Risk Localized Prostate Cancer with PTEN Loss"
- Leach, Joseph, M.D, Ph.D., San Francisco VAMC, "Imaging-based biomechanical assessment of abdominal aortic aneurysms for improved progression risk prediction"
- Lee, Mary, M.D., Washington, DC VAMC, "Low Intensity Focused Ultrasound for Tobacco Use Disorder: High Resolution Targeting of the Human Insula"
- Li, Ji, Ph.D., Tampa VAMC, "Activated Protein C in Acute Injury"
- Lipschutz, Joshua H., M.D., Charleston VAMC, "The role of beta agonists in the treatment of chronic kidney disease"
- Meshberg-Cohen, Sarah, Ph.D., West Haven VAMC, "Written Exposure Therapy (WET) as a brief trauma treatment for Veterans with Co-occurring Substance Use Disorders and PTSD"
- Na, Peter, M.D., West Haven VAMC, "Understanding the role of modifiable lifestyle and psychosocial factors in moderating genetic risk for alcohol use problems in veterans"
- Oates, James C., M.D., Charleston VAMC, "Targeting Pathogenic Endothelial Dysfunction in Lupus Nephritis"

- O'Rourke, Robert W., M.D., Ann Arbor VAMC, "Extracellular matrix-adipocyte metabolic crosstalk and diabetes"
- Pan, Chong-Xian, M.D, Ph.D., Boston VAMC, "A Phase II trial with copanlisib plus avelumab as a maintenance therapy for metastatic bladder cancer after platinum-based chemotherapy"
- Postolache, Teodor T., M.D., Baltimore VAMC, "Suicide risk modification by statin prescriptions in US Veterans with common inflammation-mediated clinical conditions- a controlled, quasi-randomized epidemiological approach"
- Shin, Daniel S., M.D., Los Angeles VAMC, "Phase Ib/II study of safety and efficacy of EZH2 inhibitor, tazemetostat, and PD-1 blockade for treatment of advanced non-small cell lung cancer"
- Sporn, Peter H., M.D., Jesse Brown VAMC, Chicago, IL, "Hypercapnia and Suppression of Antiviral Host Defense"
- Tseng, Elaine Evelina, M.D., San Francisco VAMC, "Developing Biomechanical Predictors of Ascending Thoracic Aortic Aneurysm Growth and Dissection"
- Wang, David H., M.D, Ph.D., Dallas VAMC, "A Phase II Trial to Evaluate the Effect of Itraconazole on Pathologic Complete Response Rates in Resectable Esophageal Cancer"
- Wysham, Katherine D., M.D., Puget Sounds VAMC, Seattle WA, "Quantifying the Impact of Frailty on Osteoporosis and Fractures in Veterans with Rheumatoid Arthritis"
- Zabetian, Cyrus P., M.D., Puget Sound VAMC, Seattle, WA, "Genetic Movement Disorders: Etiologies and Pathogeneses"
- Zerkowicz, Rachel L., Ph.D., Boston VAMC, "Psychological Drivers of Self-Destructive Behaviors in PTSD"

For questions related to JIT, send emails to the BLRD and CSRD shared mailbox: VHACOBLCSDJIT@va.gov.

Suicide Prevention RFA Posted

CSRD has posted a new Suicide prevention RFA for a Suicide Prevention Research Clinical Resource Center (S-CRC) that will serve suicide prevention investigators by providing critical research resources to facilitate programmatic and scientific needs.

The S-CRC will focus on accelerating clinical science (observational, interventional, epidemiological) in suicide prevention and assist in translation of this research into evidence-based prevention and intervention approaches to reduce Veteran suicide. The S-CRC will be closely associated with the established HSRD-funded Suicide Prevention Research Impact NeTwork (SPRINT).

This funding opportunity requires an approved LOI for submission of a full proposal. LOIs are due April 1 and the grants.gov deadline for submission of full proposals for the S-CRC is July 13.

Queries regarding the S-CRC may be addressed to Joe Constans, PhD
Joseph.Constans@va.gov.

CSRD Submission Opportunity: March 10

The next CSRD submission opportunity will be the Spring 2022 round. The deadline for submissions is March 10, 2022.

Post-COVID Proposals due April 14

In response to the RFA for Post-COVID conditions, 15 Letters of Intent (LOIs) were received and nine were approved. Of the 27 collaborative projects that may be submitted under these nine approved LOIs, 11 are CSRD. The deadline for submission of these collaborative proposals is April 14, 2022.

VA Biofabrication Symposium is May 4-5

Save the date for the first VA Biofabrication Community of Science Symposium to be held virtually May 4-5, 2022. The symposium will engage biofabrication researchers, practitioners, visionaries, and innovators to grow VA's biofabrication efforts. Biofabrication offers Veterans point-of-care solutions for the customized restoration of health. VA is establishing an integrated infrastructure that aims to serve Veterans first with patient-matched biofabricated solutions. Biofab COS provides a platform for internal and external stakeholders to connect across the biofabrication continuum to learn, ideate, research, and build solutions for Veterans. It also provides a set of practices to develop biofabrication solutions across every state of the development process and the eventual goal of first-in-human clinical trials. Clinical application areas are bone, vasculature, nerves, skin, and complex structures. Registration is at the following link: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/2G2LL5Z>. For additional information, contact Dr. Kimberlee Potter (Kimberlee.Potter@va.gov) or Dr Beth Ripley (Beth.Ripley2@va.gov).

DMC Members Needed

The CSRD Data Monitoring Committee continues to seek new members. Qualifications for membership include funding history and clinical trial experience, academic position of associate professor or above, a solid publications record, and review experience. Members are needed from the following areas: cardiology, pulmonology, oncology, urology, neurology, internal medicine, physical medicine and rehabilitation, and biostatistics. For more information, please contact Dr. Paine (Tamara.Paine@va.gov).

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