



CLINICAL SCIENCE R&D SERVICE NEWSLETTER

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Message from the Director

Ever since I took on the role of Director for Clinical Science, it had been my intent to find a way to communicate better with our funded scientists and others who may be interested in our program. I am delighted that our staff managed to pull a mail list together now so that we can communicate from this office, as well as let you know whom to contact with questions (see below!). The format is intended to provide you both news and resources, and I'd be delighted to respond if you have any particular questions or suggestions as we move forward. I continue to be amazed at the breadth of research VA researchers support, and I thank you for your efforts to make the world a better place for Veterans as our ultimate goal.

Terri Gleason

Shlipak Barnwell Award Ceremony

Michael Shlipak, MD, MPH, of the San Francisco VA Health Care System, was the recipient of the 2018 Barnwell Award in recognition of his pivotal work in understanding that patients with chronic kidney disease (CKD) and kidney failure are at an increased risk of injury and death from heart failure and vascular disease. Dr. Shlipak's work has led to CKD being recognized as an established risk factor for cardiovascular disease by the American Heart Association (AHA), the National Kidney Foundation, and other leading guidelines. Dr. Shlipak also has made major contributions to the understanding of how CKD impacts heart failure treatment. His systematic review in the Annals of Internal Medicine led directly to changes in the ACC/AHA Heart Failure guidelines. Dr. Shlipak established cystatin C as superior blood test for kidney function over the current standard, serum creatinine. The use of cystatin C is now recommended by international CKD guidelines to improve the diagnosis and classification of CKD and is being widely adopted in Europe for high-risk patients and patients where the traditional creatinine test may be inaccurate. His novel work will continue to impact the care of our Veterans and shape care guidelines around the world, especially as we expand the clinical implementation across VA.

Career Development Symposium

The Directors of CSR&D and BLR&D hosted 26 Career Development Awardees in Washington, DC on July 29-30, 2019 for the annual Career Development Award Symposium. Awardees were given the opportunity to present their research accomplishments, to participate in round table discussions to develop their careers, and to network with fellow Awardees.

New CSR&D Career Development Opportunities

CSR&D is excited to announce new early training opportunities utilizing the CDA-1 funding mechanism. These RFAs will support an early mentored research training program open to psychiatrists or military Veterans or Historically Black Colleges & Universities (HBCU) applicants. The award is intended to be used to gain entry into a VA research career while developing robust preliminary data to assist applicants in making them competitive when applying for a CDA-2 award. Applicants must be within two years of obtaining their terminal degree. More information about the Career Development Awards can be found on our [Career Development webpage](#) and an announcement will be made on the [CSR&D homepage](#) when the RFAs are posted.

Merit Review News

The requirement for submitting a Letter of Intent (LOI) for Epidemiology Merits has been eliminated as of the Spring 2020 round.

New RFAs are planned for Spring 2020, including a collaborative Merit program with BLRD and a new phased clinical trial award. The RFAs will be published by early October, and the deadline for Letter of Intent being November 1, 2019. LOIs are reviewed for both eligibility and portfolio interest. Staff here endeavor to provide critical feedback on LOIs so that applicants can strengthen their applications from the input. Please read over the feedback you receive and talk with your scientific program officer here if you have questions.

Future Directions

Future issues will describe CSR&D priorities as we head into the new fiscal year, with more emphasis placed upon engaging the national enterprise under programs of research. Some recent examples include the [PTSD Psychopharmacology Initiative](#) (PPI) and a coordinated effort to determine risks and benefits of ketamine. These coordinated efforts are intended to move evidence forward that will benefit Veterans, and thus we encourage our scientists to be communicating actively with your scientific program officer to make sure you have the more current information about our activities on a specific topic.

Please Meet Us at Conferences

Here are a few places where our staff will be over the next few weeks:

- Administrative Professionals Conference, New Orleans, LA September 23-26, 2019
- Infectious Diseases Society of America ID Week 2019 Premeeting Workshop , Washington, DC October 1, 2019
- Society for Neuroscience Annual Meeting, Chicago, IL, October 19-23
- San Antonio Combat PTSD Conference. San Antonio, TX, October 23-24, 2019
- ISTSS (International Society for Traumatic Stress Studies) 35th Annual Meeting, Boston, MA, November 14-16, 2019
- PRIM&R (Public Responsibility in Medicine and Research) Conferences, Boston, MA, November 17-20, 2019

Useful Links

[CSR&D Home](#)

[Scientific Portfolio Managers' Contacts](#)

[RFAs and Program Announcements](#) (Can only be accessed on a VA computer)

[ORD Field Conference Call Minutes](#)

If you have any questions about this Newsletter, please email VHABLRD-CSR&D@va.gov.