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MANAGEMENT DECISION  
AND RESEARCH CENTER

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**National Survey of VA Researchers  
2002**

**Volume 2  
Facility-Level Results:  
VISN 7**

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**HEALTH SERVICES RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICE**

**OFFICE OF RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT  
DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS**

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**National Survey of VA Researchers  
2002**

**Volume 2  
Facility-Level Results:  
VISN 7**

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## 2002 National Survey of VA Researchers

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## **2002 Survey of VA Researchers Facility-Level Results: VISN 7**

### **Introduction**

This third and final section of the 2002 Survey of VA Researchers report presents results at the facility level for VISN 7. For reasons of score reliability and respondent confidentiality, results are reported only for those facilities with 10 or more respondents. In the case of integrated facilities, results are reported separately for each campus that met this sample size criterion. In the case of integrated facilities where no single campus had 10 or more respondents, a score for the integrated facility overall is reported if the cumulative total of respondents at all campuses combined was 10 or more.

For those facilities that met these criteria, the survey results are presented in 13 exhibits. Characteristics of the respondents are presented in Exhibit 1. Note that the individual facility sample sizes reported in Exhibit 1 will typically not sum to the overall VISN sample size. This is because the VISN sample size includes all respondents from that VISN, whereas only those individual facilities that met the sample size criteria are reported separately.

In Exhibit 2, a performance overview is provided in the form of a table of summary scale scores for each facility. Facilities with scores that are significantly different from the VHA national average are noted. This is followed by a series of bar graphs (Exhibit 3 through Exhibit 8) depicting facility scores on each summary scale along with the VISN and VHA national averages. Each graph also includes as a benchmark the score at the best facility nation-wide on the scale in question.

Beginning with Exhibit 9, the focus shifts from the summary scales to the individual survey questions. For each facility that met the sample size criterion, the percentages of dissatisfied, neutral and satisfied respondents are reported for each survey question that contributed to one of the summary scales.

The section concludes with an appendix that lists the individual survey items that compose each of the summary scales.

**Exhibit 1. Characteristics of 2002 Respondents in VISN 7 Facilities**

Characteristic	Categories	Atlanta (n=47)	Augusta (n=11)	Birmingham (n=21)	Charleston (n=26)	Columbia (n=10)	VISN 7 (n=118*)
		Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
Principal Research Affiliation	Medical	70	82	60	85	70	73
	Rehabilitation	21	9	25	0	10	15
	Health Services	4	9	0	12	20	7
	Cooperative Studies	2	0	10	0	0	3
	Other	2	0	5	4	0	3
Years in VHA	0 to 5	23	36	50	24	30	30
	6 to 10	19	0	10	20	10	16
	Over 10	57	64	40	52	60	53
Clinical Affiliation	Surgery	4	0	16	4	0	5
	Rehabilitation	9	0	11	0	0	5
	General Internal Medicine	4	9	0	12	10	6
	Medical Subspecialty	37	27	42	56	50	41
	Psychiatry / Psychology	9	27	11	12	10	14
	Dentistry	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Other	24	27	21	4	30	19
None	13	9	0	12	0	9	
Gender	Female	36	27	5	27	20	27
Ethnicity	African-American	4	0	5	0	10	3
	Asian or Pacific Islander	0	18	5	8	0	4
	Hispanic	2	9	0	0	10	3
	White	89	73	89	88	70	85
	Other	4	0	0	4	10	3
Research Project Funding	Any	94	82	90	96	90	92
	VA	74	55	48	73	50	66
	Other Federal	55	27	38	81	40	54
	Foundation	32	45	38	46	20	36
	Pharmaceutical / Business	45	27	29	42	50	42
Principal Investigator Funding	Any	94	82	95	96	90	93
	VA	70	55	52	73	50	65
	Other Federal	45	9	24	62	30	40
	Foundation	23	27	33	31	30	27
	Pharmaceutical / Business	40	18	33	42	40	38
Degree	PhD only	40	20	25	28	33	32
	MD (MD only or MD/PhD)	60	80	75	72	67	68

\*Facility sample sizes may not sum to VISN sample size because only those facilities with 10 or more respondents are reported.

## Exhibit 2. VISN 7 Overview: Facility Scores on 2002 Summary Scales

	Research Work	Local Support	VISN Leadership Support	Overall VISN Support	National Research Program	Protected Time for Research
Atlanta, GA	3.78	3.27	2.53	2.39	3.15	3.36
Augusta, GA	3.54	3.46	3.50*	2.95	2.93	2.50
Birmingham, AL	3.38	2.87*	2.72	2.46	3.14	3.15
Charleston, SC	3.66	3.56	2.95	2.67	3.34	3.16
Columbia, SC	3.46	3.44	3.30	2.81	3.02	2.44
VISN Average	3.63	3.30	2.84	2.56	3.16	3.11
VHA Average	3.59	3.30	2.69	2.48	3.14	3.08

For reasons of data reliability and respondent confidentiality, only sites with 10 or more respondents are reported. In the case of integrated facilities and health care systems, separate results are reported for each campus/division that had 10 or more respondents.

All measures reported in this table utilized a 1-5 response scale with a higher score indicative of higher levels of satisfaction. Scale definitions are provided in the appendix to this chapter; scale development is described in the national summary chapter.

**VISN Leadership Support** is a single-item measure of the supportiveness of VISN leadership (Q3a).

**Overall VISN Support** is a more comprehensive scale that includes the VISN leadership item (Q3a) and seven others (Q3b through Q3h) representing a variety of VISN-based research support activities.

**VISN Average** = VISN average in 2002.

**VHA Average** = VA national average in 2002.

\* A single asterisk indicates a difference between the facility and national average that was significant ( $p < .05$ ) without a Bonferroni adjustment for multiple comparisons, but was not significant when the Bonferroni adjustment was applied.

\*\* Double asterisks indicate a difference between the facility and national average that was significant ( $p < .05$ ) even after the Bonferroni adjustment for multiple comparisons was applied (i.e., a difference that was significant both with and without the Bonferroni adjustment).



Exhibit 3  
Satisfaction with Research Work at Local VA  
2002 Survey of Researchers, VISN 7

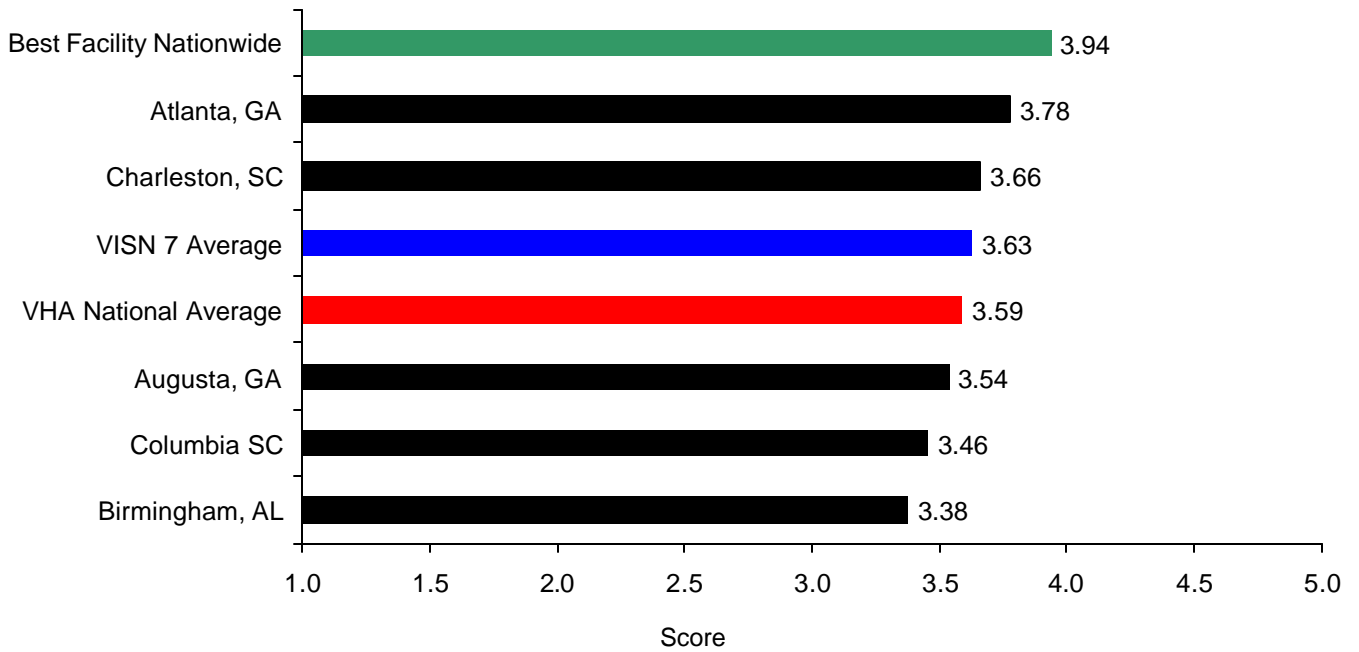
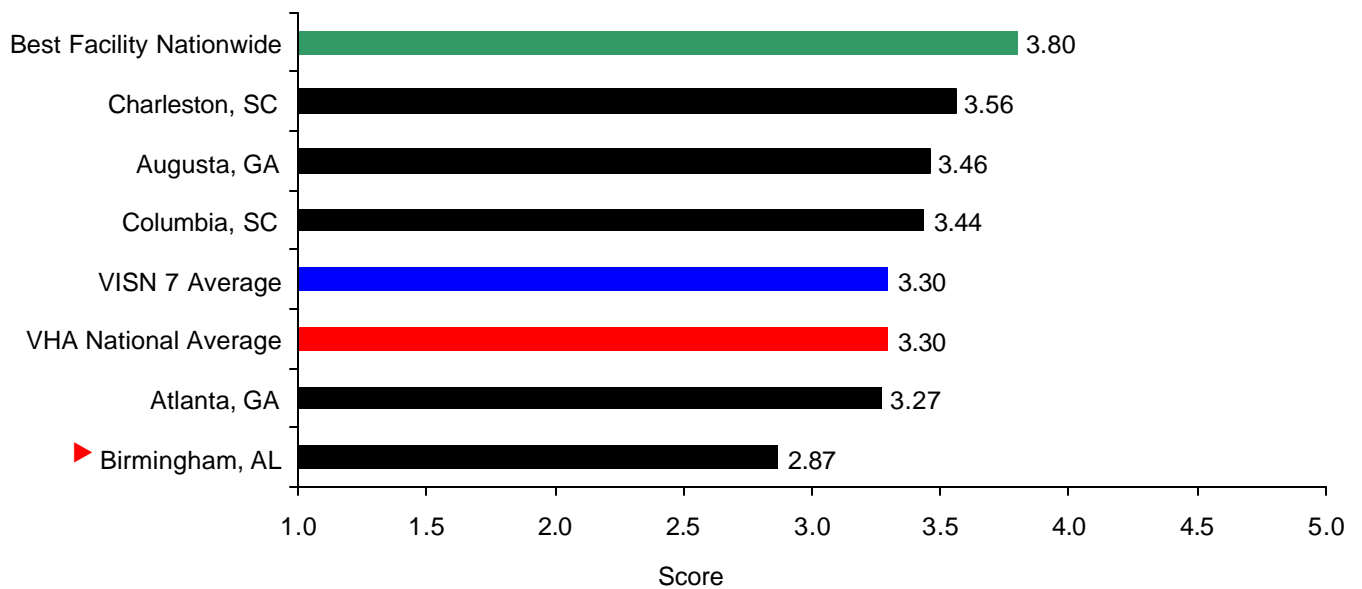


Exhibit 4  
Satisfaction with Research Support at the Local Facility  
2002 Survey of Researchers, VISN 7



▶ Denotes score is significantly different from national average.

**Score.** The response scale ranged from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

Exhibit 5  
Satisfaction with VISN Leadership Support  
2002 Survey of Researchers, VISN 7

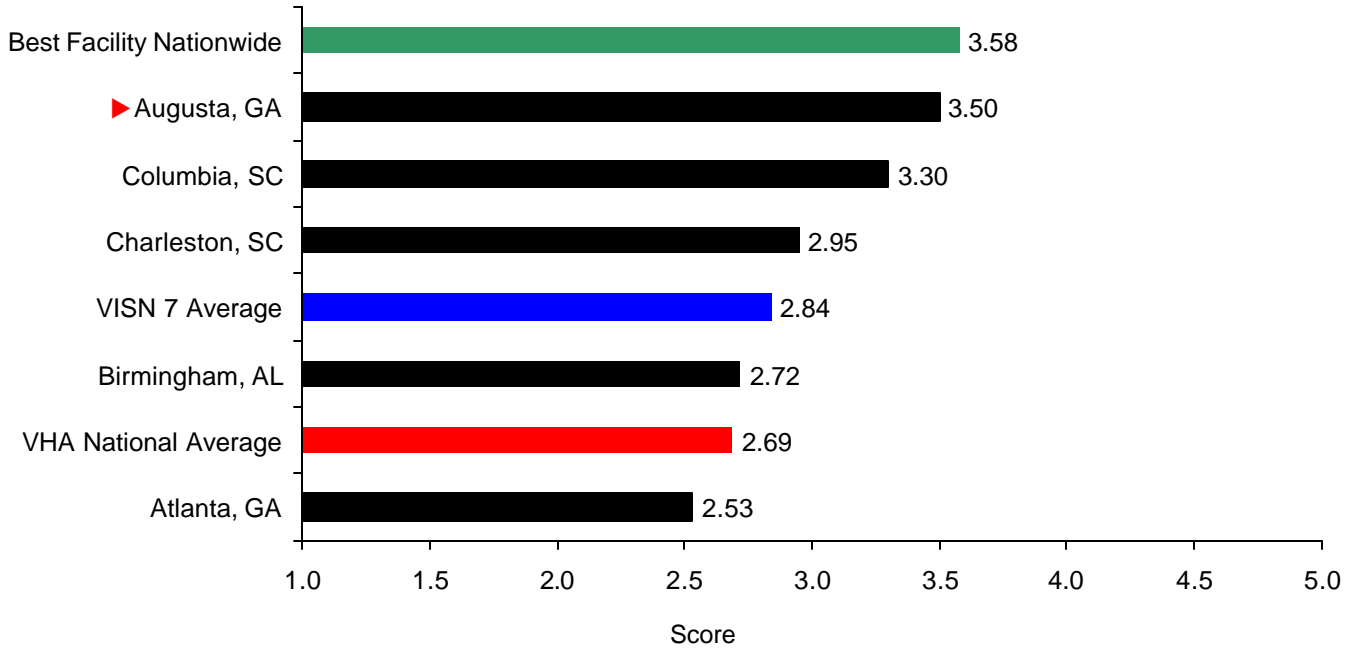
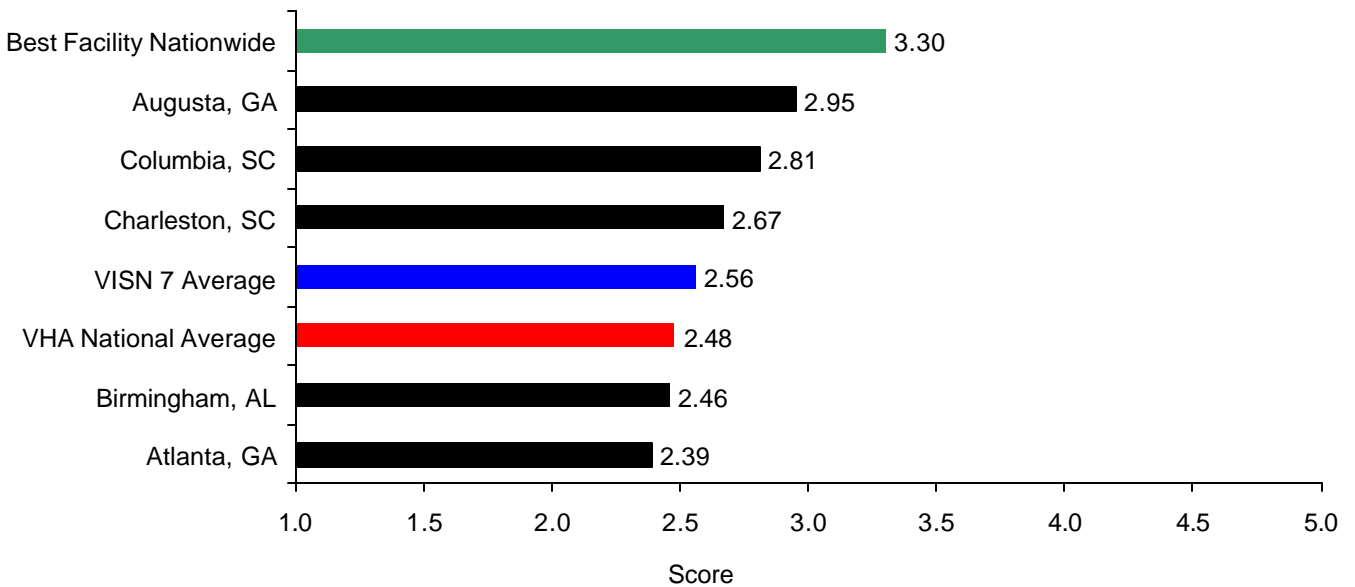


Exhibit 6  
Satisfaction with Overall VISN Support  
2002 Survey of Researchers, VISN 7



▶ Denotes score is significantly different from national average.  
**Score.** The response scale ranged from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

Exhibit 7  
Satisfaction with Support from the National Research Office  
2002 Survey of Researchers, VISN 7

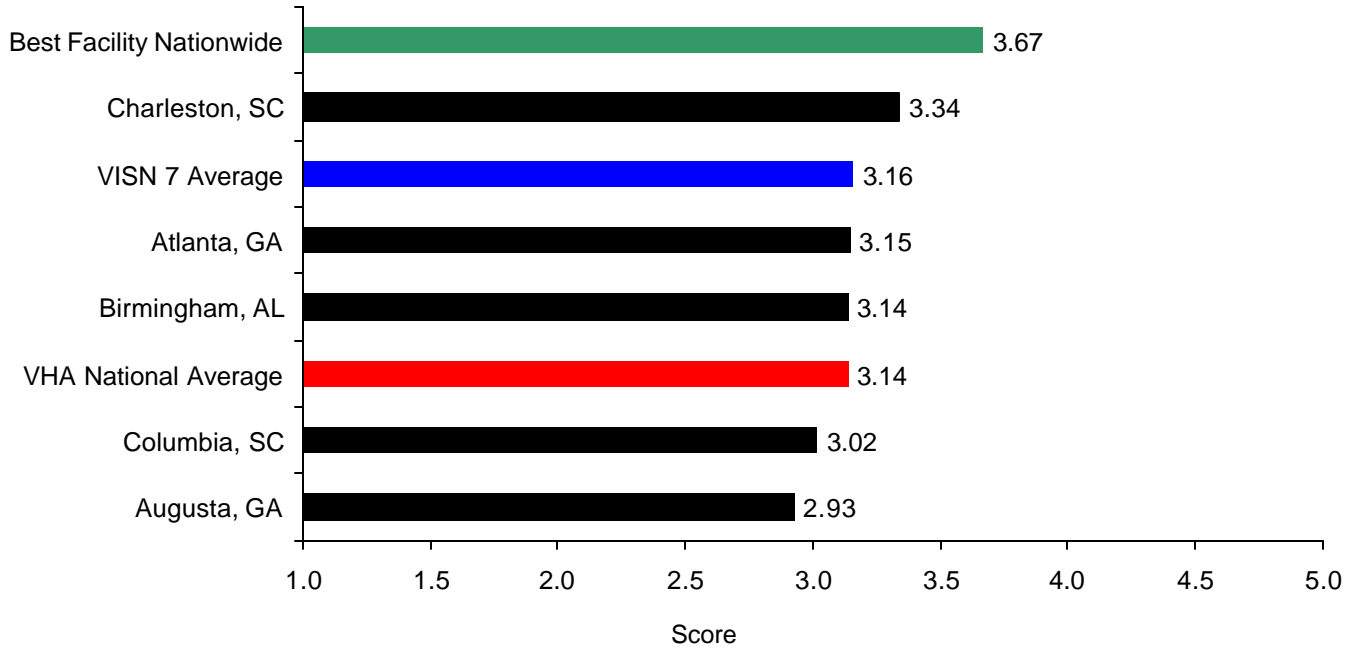
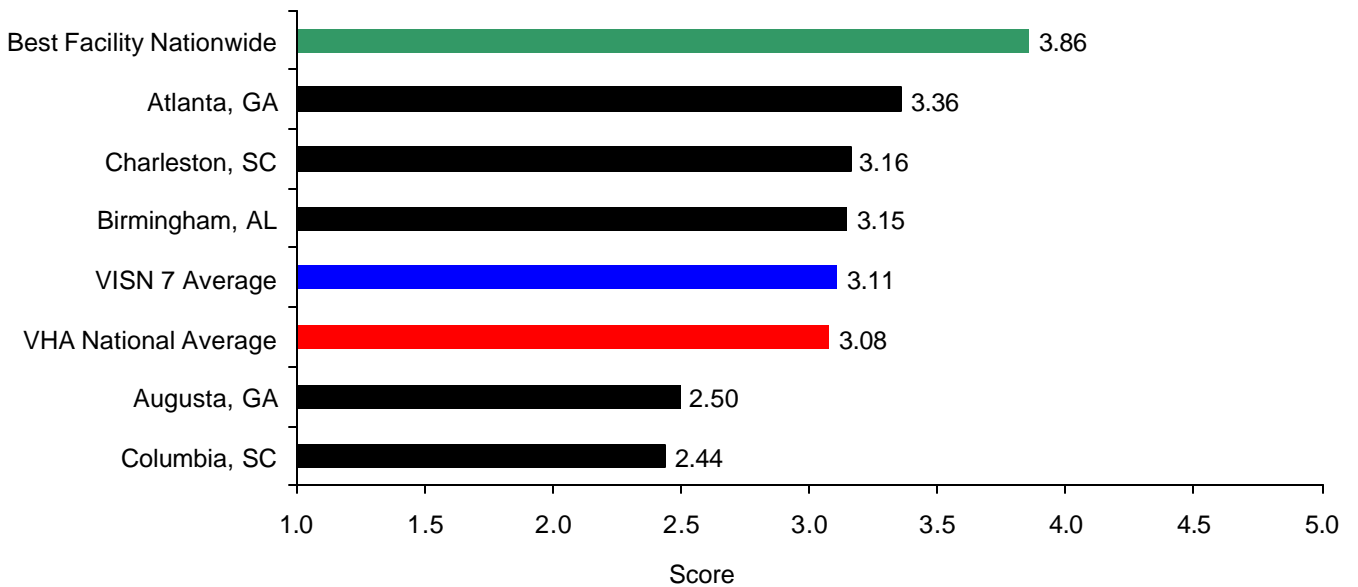


Exhibit 8  
Adequacy of Protected Time for Research  
2002 Survey of Researchers, VISN 7



► Denotes score is significantly different from national average.  
**Score.** The response scale ranged from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

**Exhibit 9. Satisfaction with Research Support at the Local Facility**

Question 1	Atlanta (n=47) Percent			Augusta (n=11) Percent			Birmingham (n=21) Percent			Charleston (n=26) Percent			Columbia (n=10) Percent		
	D*	N*	S*	D	N	S	D	N	S	D	N	S	D	N	S
a Availability of RAs / technologists	33	33	35	45	18	36	32	26	42	36	44	20	70	10	20
b Availability of clerical support	51	30	19	55	9	36	58	26	16	58	15	27	60	10	30
c Competence of support staff	22	22	57	11	11	78	33	33	33	38	15	46	11	33	56
d Assistance with research project management	20	20	61	20	40	40	26	32	42	50	13	38	30	20	50
e Availability of collaborators	9	17	74	9	36	55	32	21	47	12	12	76	20	50	30
f Mentoring / collegial support	19	15	66	18	36	45	32	21	47	4	20	76	30	20	50
g Office space / facilities	42	21	37	10	20	70	42	32	26	21	8	71	40	0	60
h Laboratory space / facilities	44	21	36	0	29	71	71	6	24	13	17	70	29	0	71
i Animal care facilities	0	13	88	0	0	100	38	25	38	0	6	94	25	0	75
j Supportiveness of local VA leadership	21	21	57	30	30	40	37	26	37	8	15	77	20	20	60
k Supportiveness of affiliated university	26	21	53	0	18	82	5	5	89	8	15	77	40	30	30
l Adequacy of protected research time	23	27	50	50	38	13	40	15	45	36	8	56	56	22	22
m Computer systems / support	34	19	47	30	30	40	25	15	60	13	22	65	20	10	70
n Libraries	30	32	38	10	20	70	30	25	45	4	52	43	20	30	50

\*D=Dissatisfied / N=Neutral / S=Satisfied

**Exhibit 10. Satisfaction with Research Work at Local VA**

Question 2	Atlanta (n=47) Percent			Augusta (n=11) Percent			Birmingham (n=21) Percent			Charleston (n=26) Percent			Columbia (n=10) Percent		
	D*	N*	S*	D	N	S	D	N	S	D	N	S	D	N	S
a Salary / fringe benefits	27	25	48	50	17	33	47	29	24	30	26	43	20	50	30
b Future security of research opportunities	28	32	40	38	25	38	32	42	26	12	48	40	20	40	40
n Job security	22	26	52	11	44	44	0	50	50	13	29	58	10	40	50
c Workload	13	40	47	22	22	56	37	16	47	29	17	54	20	30	50
d Level of stress	28	26	47	33	33	33	32	32	37	28	28	44	20	60	20
e Opportunities for creativity	6	19	74	22	33	44	25	25	50	12	24	64	10	30	60
f Opportunities to use my skills	4	21	74	9	36	55	15	30	55	12	24	64	10	40	50
g Opportunities to expand my skills	6	26	68	9	36	55	20	40	40	20	20	60	20	30	50
h Enjoyment of the research	2	7	91	0	0	100	10	20	70	4	12	84	20	30	50
i Autonomy to choose research direction	2	15	83	0	9	91	5	10	85	4	12	84	0	30	70
j Amount of paperwork	55	34	11	45	27	27	55	20	25	44	36	20	40	20	40
k Communication within local research services	19	40	40	18	9	73	35	35	30	20	40	40	20	20	60
l Overall satisfaction with local research environment	21	21	57	18	36	45	35	30	35	20	24	56	20	20	60
m Attractiveness of my position compared to other job opportunities	11	26	63	22	44	33	32	21	47	25	33	42	20	30	50

\*D=Dissatisfied / N=Neutral / S=Satisfied

**Exhibit 11. Satisfaction with Research Support from the VISN**

Question 3	Atlanta (n=47) Percent			Augusta (n=11) Percent			Birmingham (n=21) Percent			Charleston (n=26) Percent			Columbia (n=10) Percent		
	D*	N*	S*	D	N	S	D	N	S	D	N	S	D	N	S
a Supportiveness of VISN leadership	44	38	18	10	40	50	39	39	22	27	45	27	20	50	30
b VISN support for protected time	43	40	17	38	25	38	41	24	35	27	45	27	20	40	40
c VISN educational programs	49	39	12	13	63	25	41	35	24	26	58	16	10	40	50
d VISN support for specific projects	44	44	12	20	50	30	32	47	21	30	50	20	20	30	50
e Opportunities to contribute to decisions	58	30	12	30	60	10	56	33	11	55	25	20	20	60	20
f VISN rewards and recognition for research	56	31	13	50	40	10	59	24	18	50	27	23	10	30	60
g Synergy among researchers in VISN	48	39	14	30	50	20	61	28	11	36	36	27	10	40	50
h VISN recognition of work at university	49	40	11	56	33	11	75	19	6	52	33	14	20	30	50

\*D=Dissatisfied / N=Neutral / S=Satisfied

**Exhibit 12. Satisfaction with Support from the National Research Office**

Question 4	Atlanta (n=47) Percent			Augusta (n=11) Percent			Birmingham (n=21) Percent			Charleston (n=26) Percent			Columbia (n=10) Percent		
	D*	N*	S*	D	N	S	D	N	S	D	N	S	D	N	S
a Supportiveness of VA research headquarters	24	33	42	25	63	13	20	30	50	4	56	40	22	44	33
b Communications w/VA research headquarters	27	43	30	25	50	25	16	47	37	16	52	32	33	33	33
c VA letter of intent process	16	40	44	13	75	13	26	32	42	20	44	36	13	63	25
d VA grant review process	21	37	42	13	50	38	15	40	45	16	24	60	33	56	11
e Funding level, VA investigator initiated grants	31	27	42	38	38	25	37	26	37	30	35	35	33	56	11

\*D=Dissatisfied / N=Neutral / S=Satisfied

**Exhibit 13. Attractiveness of VA Position**

Questions 6-11, 13 <sup>4</sup>	Atlanta (n=47) Percent			Augusta (n=11) Percent			Birmingham (n=21) Percent			Charleston (n=26) Percent			Columbia (n=10) Percent		
	No <sup>1</sup>	Neutral	Yes <sup>2</sup>	No <sup>1</sup>	Neutral	Yes <sup>2</sup>	No <sup>1</sup>	Neutral	Yes <sup>2</sup>	No <sup>1</sup>	Neutral	Yes <sup>2</sup>	No <sup>1</sup>	Neutral	Yes <sup>2</sup>
6 If you had to decide all over again, do you think you would choose a career in the VA?	7	24	70	10	30	60	19	33	48	16	12	72	20	20	60
7 Would you recommend a research career in the VA to a colleague?	9	28	63	30	20	50	24	33	43	12	27	62	20	30	50
8 Do you think you will look for a job outside of the VA in the next year?	57	24	20	82	18		62	19	19	50	27	23	30	20	50
9 Is it likely that you will retire from the VA in the next five years?	70	4	26	80	0	20	71	19	10	60	24	16	60	30	10
10 Do you personally know of any individual whose recruitment to VA was made possible by the availability of research opportunities and support in the VA?	17	NA	83	64	NA	36	43	NA	57	19	NA	81	40	NA	60
11 Do you personally know of an individual who could not be recruited to the VA because opportunities and support for research in the VA were insufficient?	39	NA	61	64	NA	36	57	NA	43	46	NA	54	50	NA	50
13 If research opportunities were <u>not</u> available in the VA, how likely do you think it is that you would currently be working in the VA system? <sup>3</sup>	79	NA	21	36	NA	64	48	NA	52	73	NA	27	60	NA	40

NA = Not applicable; no neutral response category for this question.

<sup>1</sup>Includes “probably not” and “no.”

<sup>2</sup>Includes “probably yes” and “yes.”

<sup>3</sup>Respondents indicating that there was less than or equal to a 5% chance that they would work in VA if research opportunities were not available were defined as “No.”

<sup>4</sup>Question 12 not included in this table because of differences in response scale.



## Appendix. Scale Definitions

Scale	Definition	Survey Items
Research Work	Satisfaction with own research work (e.g., levels of stress, opportunities for creativity, attractiveness of my position compared with other available job opportunities).	Q2c - Q2i and Q2m
Local Support	Satisfaction with local VA facilities and support (e.g., availability of support staff, computer systems/support, laboratory space).	Q1b - Q1d, Q1f - Q1j, Q1m, Q1n, Q2k and Q2L
VISN Leadership Support	Satisfaction with supportiveness of VISN leadership	Q3a
Overall VISN Support	Satisfaction with VISN support and opportunities (e.g., VISN rewards and recognition supporting research, VISN support for specific research projects, supportiveness of VISN leadership)	Q3a - Q3h
National Research Program	Satisfaction with support and opportunities in VA national research system (e.g., supportiveness of research headquarters, satisfaction with grant review process)	Q4a - Q4e
Protected Time for Research	Adequacy of own protected time for research	Q1L