

HSR&D Research Briefs

TRANSLATING RESEARCH INTO PRACTICE

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Dr. Feussner to Retire from VA

After a long and distinguished VA career that spanned 28 years, John R. Feussner, MD, MPH, VA's Chief Research and Development Officer, recently announced his retirement.

In his position as Chief, he has been responsible for overseeing research in biomedicine, rehabilitation, health services, and clinical trials. But his roots are in health services research. In the early 1980's, when health services research was still a somewhat new science struggling to be understood and valued, Dr. Feussner was one of a small group of investigators who actively pursued this research for VA.

Dr. Feussner has been a funded investigator since 1982 and has far too many professional publications to list here. He served as Director of HSR&D's Center for Health Services Research in Primary Care in Durham, NC from 1983-1996. His academic appointments include serving as Professor of Medicine at Duke University and as Chief of the Division of General Internal Medicine at Duke University Medical Center from 1988 to 1996.

He moved to Washington, DC in 1996 when he was named VA's Chief Research and Development Officer. In this position he has worked tirelessly, not only to advance VA's research agenda to improve the health and care of veterans, but also to demonstrate a measurable impact of our research. Together with then Under Secretary for Health, Kenneth Kizer, MD, he developed the concept of VA's Quality Enhancement Research Initiative (QUERI), a nationally recognized program that focuses on translating research



John G. Demakis, MD presents John R. Feussner, MD, MPH with a plaque commemorating his 28 years of service.

Continued on next page

Welcome to the newest issue of *VA HSR&D Research Briefs*. HSR&D's enhanced web presence is featured in this issue, with links to the web site highlighted in a number of articles throughout the issue. Also included is an extensive list of recent publications by HSR&D-funded investigators. Please continue to be diligent about informing Central Office when an article is accepted for publication.

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findings into practice. He has worked to leverage resources for research by forging collaborations within VA, with other federal agencies, and with the private sector, as well as internationally. He has provided strong leadership on national issues and tackled head-on the complexities of research administration today such as compliance with research protections, infrastructure issues, and protected time for research.

During his VA tenure, he has received a number of prestigious awards. Recently, he received the 2001 John D. Chase Award from AMSUS (American Military Surgeons of the United States), an award for Sustained Excellence in Executive Leadership. Just this past May, he became the second recipient of the John Eisenberg National Award for Career Achievement in Research in General Medicine, presented at the 25th annual meeting of the Society of General Internal Medicine in Atlanta. Named for the first recipient and former director of the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ), the award recognizes members of the Society whose work has had an important impact on research methodology, patient care, or health

policy. Dr. Feussner was also the first recipient of the Mark Wolcott Award for Clinical Excellence, which recognizes VHA healthcare practitioners who have made outstanding contributions of national significance to enhance clinical care.

HSR&D thanks Dr. Feussner for his contributions and dedication to VA research. We congratulate him on his achievements, and extend our best wishes for continued success in all his future endeavors. He has been a great colleague and friend and we in VA research will miss him. In August, he will leave VA to become Chair of the Department of Medicine at the Medical University of South Carolina in Charleston.

John G. Demakis, MD
Director, HSR&D

HSR&D Enhances Web Presence



VA HSR&D Research Briefs is a biannual publication of the Office of Research and Development's Health Services Research and Development Service. Each issue will provide summary information about recently completed research projects and publications, as well as descriptions of new initiatives, solicitations, newly funded studies and other items of interest to a broad VA audience. For more information or to provide us with your questions or suggestions, please contact:

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VA HSR&D Research Briefs is available on the Internet at www.hsr.d.research.va.gov or Intranet at vaww.hsr.d.research.va.gov.

HSR&D recently enhanced its web presence by adding more content and restructuring the web site design, with the goal of increasing accessibility to important HSR&D information and providing an easy, user-friendly format. Enhancements of particular interest for researchers include the improved search of both currently funded and recently completed HSR&D studies and the inclusion of an HSR&D citations database.



All HSR&D funded studies, both current and completed, can now be searched by keywords, disease areas, principal investigator name, and by Designated Research Area (DRA) and Designated Research Element (DRE), as well as by Centers of Excellence. Each study is represented by a structured abstract that includes the study title, objectives, methods, findings, potential impact, and publications. We will strive to keep the listing of current studies up-to-date by adding new studies as they are awarded funding.

The new citations database allows users to search for HSR&D investigator publications by publication type (e.g. journal article, presentation, book), author, or date of publication. Publications from 1990 to the present are currently included in the database. In order for us to be able to keep the database up-to-date it is now more important than ever that investigators notify Central Office when they have articles accepted for publication so that new citations can be added on an ongoing basis.

HSR&D solicitations and letter of intent and proposal guidelines, which were always available on our site, are now organized in what we believe is a more intuitive manner. In addition, HSR&D's general publications such as *QUERI Quarterly*, *Forum*, and *Practice Matters* are searchable and more easily accessible. Research highlights and impacts are regularly updated and a monthly feature article will address an important research area. We hope that our new site allows you to address all of your HSR&D information needs with ease. As always, we are happy to hear your comments or suggestions for the HSR&D web site. Contact us via email at HSRDWeb.Boston@med.va.gov.

Visit the HSR&D site on the Internet at: <http://www.hsr.d.research.va.gov> or Intranet at <http://vaww.hsr.d.research.va.gov>.

Health Services Research Loses Vital Advocate

On March 10, 2002, John M. Eisenberg, MD, MBA, Director of the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ), passed away, leaving a legacy of significant accomplishments and contributions to the field of health services research. As Director of AHRQ, Dr. Eisenberg strengthened the agency's research portfolio to improve the quality of health care and worked to educate others, including Congress, on the importance of AHRQ's mission. He enhanced collaborations with other HSR organizations, including VA's HSR&D, sharing our belief in the importance of the impact of research on clinical practice. With his usual insight and vision, Dr. Eisenberg focused his organization on this new health services research challenge – translating evidence-based research into higher quality, more cost-effective care.

Regarded as one of the pioneer physicians in health services research, Dr. Eisenberg had the ability to make people understand the critical connection between medicine, research, and policy. He recognized the need to bring research further than the published journals in order to make a tangible impact on policy and practice. He also stressed the role of health services research in other important areas including health care disparities, patient safety, and reducing medical errors. Those of us at HSR&D will miss his humanity, generosity, and keen intellect; he will also be greatly missed by the broader health services research community that has lost such a vital advocate.



HSR&D National Meeting 2002

“Celebrating the Past, Shaping the Future” was the theme of HSR&D’s National Meeting held February 13-15 in Washington, DC. More than 550 researchers, clinicians, and policy makers participated in a variety of presentations, paper sessions, workshops, and a poster and exhibit session. Research topics showcased at the meeting included: ways to improve patient safety, clinical reminders as tools for quality improvement, the cost of chronic disease, advances in end-of-life care, and translating research into practice.

Hosted by HSR&D’s Midwest Center for Health Services and Policy Research, the meeting began with a special celebration to mark 25 years of HSR&D funding. The celebration featured a retrospective exhibit and video, and several honored guests were in attendance, including past HSR&D directors and Chief Research and Development Officer John R. Feussner, MD, MPH. Secretary for Veterans Affairs Anthony J. Principi addressed the attendees on the meeting’s second day, speaking specifically about the significant impact of HSR&D studies on veteran health care. In addition, the prestigious Under Secretary’s Award for Outstanding Achievement in Health Services Research was presented to Stephan Fihn, MD, MPH, director of HSR&D’s Northwest Center for Outcomes Research in Older Adults.

To view abstracts presented at the HSR&D National meeting, visit the HSR&D web site at:

http://www.hsr.d.research.va.gov/about/national_meeting/2002/index.htm. Copies of “Celebrating the Past, Shaping the Future”, the retrospective video shown at the meeting, are now available at all HSR&D Centers of Excellence.

New Research Solicitations

Since January, HSR&D has announced three new solicitations for investigator-initiated research. Following is a brief description of these new solicitations. Investigators who hold a paid VA appointment of at least 5/8 time are eligible to apply. A complete listing of HSR&D research solicitations and instructions for submitting a proposal may be found on the HSR&D web site at:

<http://www.hsr.d.research.va.gov/research/funding/>.

Translating Research into Practice (TRIP)

TRIP is a collaborative effort between HSR&D and the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ). The TRIP solicitation invites innovative and rigorous research and evaluation projects related to the translation of research findings into measurable improvements in quality, health care outcomes, cost, use, and access. The overall objective is to identify ways to increase the successful application of interventions and practices shown to be effective through prior research. Testing effective and efficient interventions that have the potential to improve clinical practice, enhance patient safety, and sustain practitioner behavior change across multiple health conditions, populations, and health care systems is a priority.

SAVE THE DATES

HSR&D’s 2003 National Meeting is tentatively scheduled for February 12-14, 2003, to be hosted by the Center for Mental Healthcare and Outcomes Research.



Priorities for Investigator-Initiated Research

HSR&D priorities for FY 2002 include both subject areas that were identified previously, for which additional research remains important, as well as new areas of emphasis. Priorities are determined based on the advice of the Health Services Research Subcommittee of VA's National Research Advisory Council, senior Veterans Integrated Service Network (VISN) leaders, and other internal and external leaders, advisers, and events. The following priorities have been identified for FY 2002:

- Access to care
- VA managed care
- Implementation of clinical practice guidelines
- Issues in telemedicine
- Pain management
- Ethnicity and culture in VA
- Patient-centered care
- Women's health

Terrorism: HSR Studies Relevant to Preparation for and Response to Nuclear, Chemical, Biological, or Explosive Attacks

The Veterans Health Administration (VHA) is establishing itself as a model for a systematic approach to linking research and practice to promote effective preparation for and response to terrorism. This solicitation therefore invites health services research that is focused on improving VHA's capacity to prepare for and/or respond to domestic attacks using nuclear, biological, chemical, and/or explosive weapons. Through this solicitation, HSR&D seeks to fill gaps in knowledge and practice in order to facilitate effective, data-driven choices by VA

leadership, thereby contributing to U.S. efforts to respond to both actual and potential threats. The following categories are recognized as research priorities: recognition, command & control, communications, medical response, decision-making, psychosocial aspects, and technical guidance after exposure or attack.

LOI Video Now Available

An updated version of HSR&D's Letter of Intent and Proposal Funding video is now available in all VAMC libraries, as well as at all HSR&D Centers of Excellence. This video presents an overview of the Letter of Intent and Proposal process, including submission requirements and deadlines, and is a useful tool for any investigator interested in HSR&D funded research opportunities. Topics covered include:

- preparing the letter of intent and the proposal,
- funding policies and procedures,
- submission criteria,
- the review process,
- how to avoid common mistakes, and
- additional resources to help improve the quality of the letter of intent and proposal.

Please contact your local HSR&D Center of Excellence or medical center librarian to view the video. If your facility library does not have a copy or if you'd like to provide us with any comments or suggestions about the video, please contact Diane Hanks at diane.hanks@med.va.gov.

For the most current funding priorities and procedures, please visit the HSR&D web site at: <http://www.hsr.d.research.va.gov>.



Research Enhancement Award Program

The goal of the Research Enhancement Award Program (REAP) is to increase HSR&D capacity by assisting VA sites that already show promise, as demonstrated by a history of HSR&D peer reviewed research and career development funding. Groups of investigators who are eligible for funding are those located at VA medical centers that do not contain and are not affiliated with an HSR&D Center of Excellence. HSR&D currently funds REAP projects in Tampa, Cleveland, Iowa City, Indianapolis, and San Diego. Following is a description of the newest project to receive funding. For more information on this program, visit the HSR&D web site at: http://www.hsr.d.research.va.gov/about/professional_development/reap.cfm.

Interdisciplinary Research Program to Improve Care for Older Veterans

Mary-Margaret Chren, MD
San Francisco VAMC
Funding Period: April 2002 – March 2007

The theme of this REAP is improving the care of older veterans by extending current knowledge about determinants of and improvement in comprehensive health outcomes of aging veterans, such as ability to function in daily activities and quality of life. Supported projects will examine complex outcomes of prevalent conditions of the elderly including frailty, cardiovascular diseases, cancer, and impaired mental health. Key health services research areas to be addressed include: refinements in methodology, especially in measurement; understanding determinants of health outcomes in the elderly; and interventions to improve health outcomes in the elderly.

Newly Funded Research Projects

Investigator-Initiated Research

Study to Lower Veterans' Blood Pressure: Patient/Physician Intervention

Hayden Bosworth, PhD
Durham VAMC
Funding Period: October 2001 – September 2005

The Prevalence and Needs of Veterans with Multiple Chronic Illnesses

Polly H. Noel, PhD
San Antonio VAMC
Funding Period: October 2001 – September 2003

Evaluation of Community Based Outpatient Clinic Costs Using DSS Data

Matthew Maciejewski, PhD
VA Puget Sound Health Care System
Funding Period: October 2001 – September 2004

A Cognitive-Behavioral Intervention for Depression and Anxiety in COPD

Mark E. Kunik, MD, MPH
Houston VAMC
Funding Period: January 2002 – December 2005

Measuring Health Outcomes and Care Delivery for Parkinson's Disease

Barbara Vickrey, MD, MPH
West Los Angeles VAMC
Funding Period: October 2001 – September 2003

Please take a moment to tell us what you think about *VA HSR&D Research Briefs* by sending an email to us at MDRC.boston@med.va.gov. Your comments and suggestions will guide us in our efforts to provide you with important HSR&D information in future issues.



Women Veterans' Ambulatory Care Use: Patterns, Barriers, and Influences

Donna Washington, MD, MPH

West Los Angeles VAMC

Funding Period: October 2001 – September 2004

Determinants of Clinical Guideline Implementation Effectiveness

Bradley N. Doebbeling, MD, MSc

Iowa City VAMC

Funding Period: October 2001 – September 2003

Sleep Disturbance and Outcomes of Rehabilitation in the Nursing Home

Cathy Alessi, MD

West Los Angeles VAMC

Funding Period: January 2002 – December 2004

Health Values and Spirituality in Veterans with HIV/AIDS

Joel Tsevat, MD

Cincinnati VAMC

Funding Period: May 2002 – June 2005

Service-Directed Research

Facilitating Implementation of the PHS Smoking Cessation Guideline

Melissa Partin, PhD

Minneapolis VAMC

Funding Period: October 2001 – September 2003

Factors Influencing Success of Computerized Clinical Reminders in VA

James Rothendler, MD

Bedford VAMC

Funding Period: February 2002 – January 2004

Evaluation of VA Practice Matters as a Strategy for Influencing Physician Behavior

Martin P. Charns, DBA

VA Boston Healthcare System

Funding Period: October 2001 – March 2003

Nursing Research Initiative

Can Lidocaine Reduce Urinary Catheter Pain?

Tina Keller, MSN

West Los Angeles VAMC

Funding Period: February 2002 – April 2003

Immunocompetency and Nutritive Status in Inpatient Geriatric Rehabilitation

Jonelle Wright, PhD

Houston VAMC

Funding Period: April 2002 – September 2006

Evaluating Telehealth Home Care for Elderly Veterans with Congestive Heart Failure

Bonnie J. Wakefield, PhD, RN

Iowa City VAMC

Funding Period: February 2002 – January 2005

Nurse Exercise Counseling in Primary Care

Patricia Dubbert, PhD

Jackson VAMC

Funding Period: April 2002 – July 2005

Stress-Busting Program for Caregivers of Patients with Neurological Diseases

Sharon Lewis, PhD

San Antonio VAMC

Funding Period: July 2002 – June 2006

Service-Directed Projects

From Research to Practice: Lipid Management for Low HDL-Cholesterol

Hanna B. Rubins, MD, MPH

Minneapolis VAMC

Funding Period: October 2001 – September 2003

Improving HIV Care Quality

Steven M. Asch, MD, MPH

San Diego VAMC

Funding Period: October 2001 – September 2003



New Career Development Awardees

HSR&D Career Development Awards provide VA clinician researchers with full salary support to enable them to pursue health services research training and experience, with minimal clinical responsibilities, under the guidance of an experienced mentor. Following are the most recent awardees, their locations, and areas of research interest to be pursued through their Career Development award. For more information on this program, visit the HSR&D web site at: http://www.hsr.d.research.va.gov/about/professional_development/.

Research Career Development Awardees

Joshua Chodosh, MD, MSHS

West Los Angeles VAMC
Screening for Dementia: A Feasibility and Impact Study

Maria Ferreira, MD, MAPP

VA Chicago Health Care System, Lakeside
Colorectal Cancer Screening Knowledge and Attitudes: Impact of Intervention

Adam Gordon, MD, MPH

Pittsburgh VAMC
Processes of Care for Alcohol Detoxification

Judith Long, MD

Philadelphia VAMC
Socio-economic Status, the Social Environment and Diabetes in Veterans

Karl Lorenz, MD, MSHS

West Los Angeles VAMC
Veteran Palliative Services Project

Joseph Mrus, MD, MSc

Cincinnati VAMC
Non-Health Related Mediators of Adherence and Health Values in HIV/AIDS

Jorge Parada, MD, MPH

Hines VAMC
Quality of Care Study of HIV-Related Community Pneumonia

Eli Perencevich, MD, MS

Baltimore VAMC
Models of Vancomycin-resistant Enterococci Transmission

Somnath Saha, MD, MPH

Portland VAMC
Improving Understanding of Racial Disparities in Health Care

Donna Washington, MD, MPH

West Los Angeles VAMC
Determinants of VA Ambulatory Care Used by Women Veterans

Advanced Research Career Development Awardees

Liana Fraenkel, MD, MPH, FRCP(C)

West Haven VAMC
Elicitation of Patient Treatment Preferences in Chronic Disease

Ian Gralnek, MD, MSHS

West Los Angeles VAMC
Measuring Processes and Outcomes of Care in VA Patients with Chronic Liver Disease

Jeffrey Pyne, MD

N. Little Rock VAMC
Outcomes Feedback: Informing Schizophrenia Treatment Decisions



Research Career Scientist Awardee

Nancy Kressin, PhD

Bedford VAMC

Key research areas: racial disparities in healthcare, assessment of health outcomes

Correction: In the November issue of HSR&D Research Briefs, we incorrectly listed Maude Rittman, PhD, RN as the Principal Investigator (PI) of the project "Creating a VA Health Care Atlas." The correct PI is Diane C. Cowper, MA, of the N. Florida/S. Georgia VA Health Care System.

Recent Publications

Ang DC, Ibrahim SA, Burant CJ, Siminoff LA, Kwok CK. *Ethnic differences in the perception of prayer and consideration of joint arthroplasty.* Medical Care 2002 Jun;40(6):471-76.

Barnett MJ, Kaboli PJ, Sirio CA, Rosenthal GE. *Day of the week of intensive care admission and patient outcomes: a multisite regional evaluation.* Medical Care 2002 Jun;40(6):530-39.

Bauer MJ, Maddox MK, Kirk LN, Burns T, Kuskowski MA. *Progressive dementia: personal and relational impact on caregiving wives.* American Journal of Alzheimers Disease and Other Dementias 2001 Nov-Dec;16(6):329-34.

Best WR, Khuri SF, Phelan M, Hur K, Henderson WG, Demakis JG, Daley J. *Identifying patient preoperative risk factors and postoperative adverse events in administrative databases: results from the Department of Veterans Affairs National Surgical Quality Improvement Program.* Journal of the American College of Surgeons 2002 Mar;194(3):257-66.

Birkmeyer JD, Siewers AE, Finlayson EV, Stukel TA, Lucas FL, Batista I, Welch HG, Wennberg DE. *Hospital volume and surgical mortality in the United States.* New England Journal of Medicine 2002 Apr 11;346(15):1128-37.

Bosworth HB, Hays JC, George LK, Steffens DC. *Psychosocial and clinical predictors of unipolar depression outcome in older adults.* International Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry 2002;17(3):238-46.

Bosworth HB, Oddone EZ. *A model of psychosocial and cultural antecedents of blood pressure control.* Journal of the National Medical Association 2002 Apr;94(4):236-48.

Bradley KA, Bush KR, Davis TM, Dobie DJ, Burman ML, Rutter CM, Kivlahan DR. *Binge drinking among female Veterans Affairs patients: prevalence and associated risks.* Psychology of Addictive Behaviors 2001 Dec;15(4):297-305.

Bradley KA, Epler AJ, Bush KR, Sporleder JL, Dunn CW, Cochran NE, Braddock CH, McDonnell MB, Fihn SD. *Alcohol-related discussions during general medicine appointments of male VA patients who screen positive for at-risk drinking.* Journal of General Internal Medicine 2002 May;17(5):315-26.

Bradley KA, Kivlahan DR, Bush KR, McDonnell MB, Fihn SD. *Variations on the CAGE Alcohol Screening Questionnaire: strengths and limitations in VA general medical patients.* Alcoholism, Clinical and Experimental Research 2001 Oct;25(10):1472-78.

Bradley KA, Maynard C, Kivlahan DR, McDonnell MB, Fihn SD. *The relationship between alcohol screening questionnaires and mortality among male veteran outpatients.* Journal of Studies on Alcohol 2001 Nov;62(6):826-33.

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Cleveland JC Jr, Shroyer AL, Chen AY, Peterson E, Grover FL. *Off-pump coronary artery bypass grafting decreases risk-adjusted mortality and morbidity.* Annals of Thoracic Surgery 2001 Oct;72(4):1282-88.

Collins TC, Johnson M, Daley J, Henderson WG, Khuri SF, Gordon HS. *Preoperative risk factors for 30-day mortality after elective surgery for vascular disease in Department of Veterans Affairs hospitals: is race important?* Journal of Vascular Surgery 2001 Oct;34(4):634-40.



Curran GM, Kirchner JE, Worley M, Rookey C, Booth BM. *Depressive symptomatology and early attrition from intensive outpatient substance abuse treatment.* Journal of Behavioral Health Services & Research 2002;29(2):138-43.

Doebbeling BN, Vaughn TE, Woolson RF, Peloso PM, Ward MM, Letuchy E, BootsMiller BJ, Tripp-Reimer T, Branch LG. *Benchmarking Veterans Affairs medical centers in the delivery of preventive health services: comparison of methods.* Medical Care 2002 Jun;40(6):540-54.

Duffy SA, Terrell JE, Valenstein M, Ronis DL, Copeland LA, Connors M. *Effect of smoking, alcohol, and depression on the quality of life of head and neck cancer patients.* General Hospital Psychiatry 2002 May-Jun;24(3):140-47.

Druss BG, Rosenheck RA, Desai MM, Perlin JB. *Quality of preventive medical care for patients with mental disorders.* Medical Care 2002 Feb;40(2):129-36.

Duncan PW, Horner RD, Reker DM, Samsa GP, Hoenig H, Hamilton B, LaClair BJ, Dudley TK. *Adherence to postacute rehabilitation guidelines is associated with functional recovery in stroke.* Stroke 2002 Jan;33(1):167-77.

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Fan VS, Au D, Heagerty P, Deyo RA, McDonnell MB, Fihn SD. *Validation of case-mix measures derived from self-reports of diagnoses and health.* Journal of Clinical Epidemiology 2002 Apr;55(4):371-80.

Fischer EP, Shumway M, Owen RR. *Priorities of consumers, providers, and family members in the treatment of schizophrenia.* Psychiatric Services 2002 Jun;53(6):724-29.

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Fried TR, Bradley EH, Towle VR, Allore H. *Understanding the treatment preferences of seriously ill patients.* New England Journal of Medicine 2002 Apr 4;346(14):1061-6.

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