

Rehabilitation Outcomes Research Center

VA HSR&D/RR&D Research Enhancement Award Program



RORC MISSION

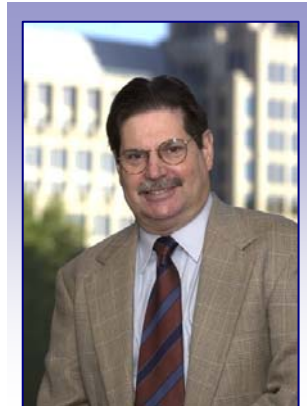
The mission of the Rehabilitation Outcomes Research Center (RORC) Research Enhancement Award Program (REAP) is to conduct interdisciplinary research to improve the health, function, and community reintegration of post-deployed veterans and veterans with neurological impairments.

Post-Deployment Neurological Health, Rehabilitation Outcomes Focus of Gainesville REAP

A neurological impairment is a condition not easily recognizable, but it can affect almost every part of a person's life, including their speech, motor skills, vision, memory, muscle actions and learning abilities. On October 1, 2007, the Rehabilitation Outcomes Research Center for Veterans with Neurological Impairments (RORC) became the first Department of Veterans Affairs Research Enhancement Award Program (REAP) to include Operation Enduring Freedom/Operation Iraqi Freedom (OEF/OIF) veterans in its research focus. Located at the North Florida/South Georgia Veterans Health System (NF/SGVHS) in Gainesville, Florida, the RORC REAP will evaluate rehabilitation programs and interventions that result in optimal outcomes for veteran patients with neurological impairments. Center projects will be addressing

veterans' rehabilitation outcomes and their health, function, independence, quality of life, and cost of rehabilitation care. With its new focus on returning OEF/OIF veterans, RORC research will be investigating rehabilitation outcomes specific to traumatic brain injury (TBI) and blast injuries, as well as post-deployment health issues such as post-traumatic stress disorder, transition/readjustment to civilian life, independent living, and caregiving. The RORC will also continue its studies on the rehabilitation of veterans with chronically disabling conditions such as stroke, Parkinson's disease and Multiple Sclerosis.

Paul M. Hoffman, MD, the new RORC Director, is a neurologist and the Associate Chief of Staff for Program Development at the NF/SGVHS. Dr. Hoffman previously held positions with the Department of Veterans Affairs at the head-



Paul M. Hoffman, MD
RORC REAP Director

quarters level, including Assistant Chief Research and Development Officer for Neuroscience Research (2003-2006), a position in which he undertook a two-year pilot study to improve the research potential of the VA clinical Centers of Excellence focusing on neurological and psychiatric diseases and disorders; and Director, Medical Research Service, Office of Research and Development (1996-2003). In that role he managed the review, funding, and administration of a more than \$200 million appropriation that supported the bio-

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Gainesville REAP *(continued from Page 1)*



U.S. Air Force photo by
Tech. Sgt. Scott T. Sturkol

“We are very excited about the addition of post-deployment health to our focus and the opportunity to serve the newest generation of veterans,” said Dr. Hoffman.

medical and behavioral research of more than 2000 VA scientists studying a broad range of diseases and medical disorders affecting veterans. Dr. Hoffman implemented several new research programs aimed at training both clinician and non-clinician investigators, including the Medical Research Merit Review Entry Program (MREP) and the Research Enhancement Award Program (REAP). Dr. Hoffman was also recognized by the VA Under Secretary for Health for the prominent role that he played as Director, Medical Research Service in the revitalization of the VA Career Development Program.


Since relocating to Gainesville in 2005, a key role for Dr. Hoffman has been development of a clinical neuroscience research platform for clinical trials in neurological disorders among several sites within

NF/SGVHS (the Gainesville and Lake City VA Medical Centers, and the Outpatient Clinic (OPC) in Jacksonville), as well as two campuses of the University of Florida College of Medicine (Gainesville and Jacksonville). As part of this ongoing initiative, an outpatient clinic for neurodegenerative disease has been established at the Lake City VAMC that offers evaluation, treatment, and clinical research opportunities in speech and swallowing, exercise physiology, and gait. Additional initiatives, including the establishment of an inpatient rehabilitation unit and a free standing open MRI unit in Lake City are planned.

“We are very excited about the addition of post-deployment health to our focus and the opportunity to serve the newest generation of veterans,” said Dr. Hoffman. “Although the

VA has been treating Gulf War veterans since the early 1990s, this is a new era. As technology has changed in both warfare and medicine, the injuries and trauma we are seeing in today’s veterans are different than those of previous generations.



Our group here in Gainesville will be researching state-of-the-art rehabilitation therapies and interventions, and their outcomes, and work to implement the very best of those in the VHA healthcare system.” 



Visit us on the Web @ www.va.gov/rorc

Learn more about the research conducted at the Rehabilitation Outcomes Research Center and the researchers who are working to improve the lives of our veterans.

Meet the RORC REAP Steering Committee

Terry M. Keane, PhD (Steering Committee Chair), is the ACOS for Research at the Jamaica Plain Campus at the VA Boston Healthcare System. He is also the Director of the Behavioral Science Division at the VA National Center for PTSD. Dr. Keane is a professor and vice-chair of the Department of Psychiatry at Boston University School of Medicine, and is also recognized as a world leader in the field of traumatic stress. He developed many of the most widely used PTSD assessment measures and is considered an authority on the cognitive behavioral treatment of PTSD.

STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Alfonso R. Batres, PhD, MSSW, is the Chief Readjustment Counseling Officer, Veterans Health Administration. He has direct oversight of the 206 Vet Centers providing readjustment counseling service to war zone veterans nationally to include centers in Puerto Rico, Alaska, Hawaii, and Guam, and assists the Under Secretary for Health in policy issues effecting readjustment of veterans and their health care.


Dan Berlowitz, MD, MPH, is Director of the HSR&D Center for Health Quality, Outcomes and Economic Research (CHQOER). His research interests center on assessing and improving the quality of medical care, with particular emphasis on ambulatory and long-term care settings. His work focuses on examining outcome measures in these settings, developing case-mix adjustment models for these outcomes, and evaluating how measures of the structure and process of care relate to these outcomes. He also maintains an active practice in geriatric medicine and undertakes numerous studies examining medical practices in the nursing homes.

Jack Feussner, MD, MPH, is Professor and Chair of Medicine at the Medical University of South Carolina in Charleston. Dr. Feussner also served as the VHA Chief Research and Development Officer in VA Central Office for six years where he managed a nearly \$1 billion dollar-per-year budget for the VA Research Program and participated in other interests in geriatric medicine. Overall, he has dedicated more than 28 years working with the VA.

David C. Good, MD, is Chairman, Department of Neurology and Neurorehabilitation at the Milton S. Hershey School of Medicine, Penn State University. Dr. Good's major research interest is in recovery following stroke and brain injury. He currently is the Chairman for the Steering Committee of the NIH Traumatic Brain Injury Clinical Trials Network, which will be launching a large multicenter trial of cdp-choline to enhance cognitive outcomes in acute TBI.

Capt. Jonathan Pruden (retired), is an advocate for wounded veterans. Seriously wounded in Iraq in 2003, Captain Pruden has personally experienced a recovery process that required 20 surgeries. Through his own experience, and from what he has learned through his volunteer work with other veterans, he provides a unique perspective on the DoD-VA rehabilitation process. He currently works in the Director's Office at the NF/SG Veterans Health System to aid in transitioning soldiers into the VA health care system.

Barbara Sigford, MD, PhD, is the National Program Director of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation Service and serves as the Director, Extended Care and Rehabilitation Service Line and Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation and the Director of the Traumatic Brain Injury Program and Comprehensive Inpatient Rehabilitation Program at the Minneapolis VA. She is also an investigator at the HSR&D Center for Chronic Disease Outcomes Research (CCDOR) located at the Minneapolis VAMC and co-Clinical Director of the Polytrauma and Blast-Related Injury QUERI.

Margaret Stineman, MD, is currently Professor of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania, where she focuses on measurement issues in evaluating functional independence and health related quality of life for persons with disabilities as well as the effectiveness of rehabilitation services. She is currently directing an NIH funded study examining the effectiveness of more intensive versus less intensive rehabilitation interventions for lower extremity amputees. 


Featured Publication

The Road to Empowerment: A Historical Perspective on the Medicalization of Disability

Jeanne Hayes, PhD, Kansas City VA Medical Center

Elizabeth "Lisa" M Hannold, PhD, RORC REAP, North Florida/South Georgia Veterans Health System

Journal of Health and Human Services Administration, Vol. 30, No. 3, Winter 2007, pp. 352-377

ABSTRACT: The aims of this paper are to analyze the role of medical and health professions in creating and establishing the disability category. We also explore how the diagnosis, measurement, and treatment of disability have contributed to stigmatization and promoted social, political and economic inequality. Theories from a variety of disciplines are used to examine the ways that medicine and the health-related professions have contributed to the oppression of people with disability, including the maintenance of a 'medical/knowledge power differential,' reinforcement of the 'sick role,' and objectification of people with disabilities. We also explore opportunities for empowerment versus 'sick role' status. The medical and health professions are uniquely positioned to promote the empowerment of people with disabilities as active partners in their own health care. Replacing the biomedical model of disability with a socio-political model that prioritizes disease/health care management, wellness and prevention of further disability as opposed to treatments aimed at curing disability could facilitate the empowerment process. 

Accolades and Achievements



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Research Enhancement Award Program
(RORC REAP)

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Congratulations to RORC Investigator Dr. L. Douglas Ried on his recent appointment to the Editorial Board of The Annals of Pharmacotherapy.

Recognized as an expert in pharmacotherapy, Dr. Ried has been invited to serve on the Psychiatry Panel of the Journal. Dr. Ried is also a Professor of Pharmacy Health Care Administration, and Associate Dean Curricular Affairs and Accreditation with the University of Florida College of Pharmacy.

Congratulations to the following RORC staff who will be presenting at the VA Health Services Research and Development Annual Meeting, to be held in Baltimore, MD, February 14-15, 2008.

Neale R. Chumbler, PhD

The Impact of a Care Coordination/Home-Telehealth Program on Mortality [Oral]
Use of Telehealth in VHA for Chronic Disease Management and Depression Care [Poster]

Diane Cowper Ripley, PhD

Geographic Access to VHA Rehabilitation Services by OEF/OIF Veterans [Oral]

Bruce Vogel, PhD

Rehabilitation Costs for VA Stroke Patients: Is Subacute Care Really Less Costly? [Oral]

Elizabeth M. Hannold, PhD

Identifying Veteran-Centered Outcomes Using Qualitative Methods [Oral]

Grace Chuang, MS

Factors Related to Preventable Hospitalization Among VHA Stroke Patients [Poster]

Maude R. Rittman, PhD, RN

Relationship Between Stroke Caregiver Sleep Patterns and Caregiver Burden, Health, and Depression [Poster]

Kristen Wing, BA, MOS

Increasing Stroke Risk Factor and Prevention Awareness Through Health Marketing [Poster]

Congratulations to Wendi Spisak, RORC REAP Administrative Officer, who will be graduating Magna Cum Laude in May, 2008, with degrees in Psychology and Organizational Management. Wendi's scholastic performance is on par with her professional performance. She has been on the Dean's List for the past year with a Grade Point Average of 3.76. Way to go, Wendi!