



Are you a VA investigator who is planning to submit a proposal to VA HSR&D in December 2012?

Can we help you meet requirements to include women in your study?

If so, you are invited to learn more about how to get help from:

The VA Women's Health Research Consortium, for technical consultation regarding grants proposing to examine gender issues

The VA Women's Health Practice-Based Research Network (PBRN), to draw on a network of 37 sites nationally, facilitating recruitment of women Veterans in multi-site grant proposals

With VA HSR&D's Intent to Submit deadline rapidly approaching, investigators should review the information below if they are interested in applying to use the PBRN, or interested in receiving technical consultation from the Consortium.

Background:

In response to rapid growth of the women Veteran population, the need to broaden the VA women's health evidence base, and the need for investigators to comply with federal requirements regarding inclusion of women in research, VA HSR&D has recently funded the development of the VA Women's Health Research Network. The Network is composed of two partnered components, the Women's Health Research Consortium and the Women's Health Practice Based Research Network (PBRN).

Who should consider applying to use the PBRN:

Grant proposals with the following characteristics may be good candidates for the PBRN:

- *Sampling frame:* Multi-site study is needed, either to address the research question, to achieve representativeness, or to recruit sufficient numbers of women.
- *Methodology:* Study approach requires direct contact with subjects, e.g., recruitment of women patients (or their providers) from clinic settings, a clinic-based intervention, in-person interviews, focus groups, etc.
- *Topic:* Study examines women's health issues, or compares women to men. Note that the PBRN accepts studies for which gender is not a primary focus, if women will be over-sampled in sufficient numbers to permit gender comparison analyses as a sub-aim.
- *Budget:* The funding mechanism's budgetary limits are high enough to make a multi-site study feasible. (Investigators applying for grants with smaller budget limits, such as QUERI Rapid Response Projects, can explore options with PBRN staff.)

How to apply to use the PBRN:

- Contact the PBRN Coordinating Center: send an email with an explanation of the *type of grant* you are submitting (e.g., VA HSR&D IIR), *deadline* for your grant submission, a brief *description* of your study (one paragraph), and your *CV* to both of the following: susan.frayne@va.gov and diane.carney@va.gov
- The Coordinating Center will schedule a brief exploratory phone call with the PI to discuss the grant topic (including plans for gender analyses), number and types of sites needed, proposed level of involvement of the Coordinating Center, of PBRN site research staff and of PBRN site clinical staff
- If it appears appropriate to move to the next step, the investigator will complete a brief application form summarizing study needs; using information provided by the Coordinating Center, the investigator will decide which PBRN sites he/she wishes to approach regarding possible participation
- Coordinating Center staff will approach selected sites regarding their potential participation
- Investigator, Coordinating Center staff and selected Site Leads will have discussions to work out logistics, such as specifics of site roles, budget, etc.
- For studies that the PBRN accepts, the PBRN Director will write a letter of support, to accompany the grant proposal submission

Because several steps are involved, the process should start *at least two months* prior to the planned grant submission deadline.

How to obtain technical help through the VA Women's Health Research Consortium:

Contact ruth.klap@va.gov

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

Consortium:

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