

## Research Team

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## Resources

[www.ClinicalTrials.gov](http://www.ClinicalTrials.gov)



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**Executive Dysfunction  
and Suicide in  
Psychiatric Inpatients  
and Outpatients**

**COMIRB # 10-0050**



**CURRENT RESEARCH**  
**Executive Dysfunction and Suicide**

Veterans Integrated Service Network  
(VISN) 19 Mental Illness Research,  
Education, and Clinical Center (MIRECC)

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## Background and Study Description

Research indicates that individuals with traumatic brain injury (TBI) are at increased risk for suicidal behavior.

Existing research also suggests an association between suicidality and executive dysfunction. To date a clearly defined study has not been conducted to explore the relationship between executive dysfunction as a multi-dimensional construct (e.g., decision making, impulsivity, concept formation, and aggression) and suicidal behavior in those with a history of moderate to severe TBI.

Increased understanding regarding this at-risk population is necessary to facilitate the creation of appropriate assessment strategies and interventions.

This study will assess decision making in the context of an interaction between suicide and TBI. Findings will also allow for exploratory analyses aimed at identifying associations between performance on other measures of executive functioning and psychological distress.

Toward this end, the present study seeks to compare test performance among four well-defined groups of Veterans:

**1:** Moderate/Severe TBI and history of suicidal behavior

**2:** Moderate/Severe TBI and no history of suicidal behavior

**3:** No TBI and a history of suicidal behavior

**4:** No TBI and no history of suicidal behavior

## Aims

Examine the effect of suicidality on decision making within the context of history of moderate/severe TBI or no history of TBI

Examine the effect of suicidality on impulsivity, aggression, and concept formation within the context of TBI history

Exploratory Aims:

- 1) Model scores for each of the four groups to assess patterns of decision making
- 2) Assess the relationship between performance on measures of executive functioning and psychological distress

## Progress Report

We are currently recruiting and enrolling participants into this research study.

## Long-term Goals: Putting Research into Practice

Findings from this research protocol may provide clinically relevant information aimed at identification of Veterans with TBI who are at risk for suicidal behavior, and create foundation on which to base further research regarding the relationship between cognition, emotional distress, and suicidality in TBI survivors.

Highlighting potential vulnerabilities would also allow for the design of evaluation tools and interventions aimed at addressing the needs of both Veterans Affairs (VA) clinicians and Veterans with a history of TBI.

