

CSRD September Newsletter

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Clinical Science Research and Development



Terri Talks

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Message from the Director

In this month, we have seen significant strides in research related to understanding and treating COVID-19. CSRD investigators have been starting new studies focused on bringing forth solutions to the pandemic. We are particularly excited about the opportunity to bring investigators together in a Community of Science effort, described below. And the launch of a large multi-site clinical trial of convalescent plasma is poised to start. All of these activities are continuing to contribute to making a significant impact. We in CSRD are highly focused on two particular research challenges: to understand the overall impact on funded work through national data calls and surveys, especially for budget planning, and to understand how effectively we can stand up sites for enrolling in critical clinical trials. We appreciate as staff reach out for updates and our investigators provide a full picture of their challenges so we can answer questions for everyone. With the start of the next fiscal year on our doorstep as of October 1 (Happy Fiscal New Year!), we'll look forward to working with you to ensure all resources are utilized and funding is executed despite the current budget scenario (e.g., continuing resolution from Congress, new budget year, etc.). Please stay safe,

Terri Gleason

Community of Science COVID meeting

In an effort to bring together CSRD COVID-19 awardees, a virtual meeting is being organized from 1 to 3 p.m. Monday, October 26. BLRD COVID-19 awardees will be listening in to the meeting as well. This is our first time to bring all investigators working on COVID research funded by CSRD together. We will be sharing information such as resources including phenotype library and biorepository, as well as breaking into smaller groups focused on specific topics. Anyone interested in materials from the meeting should contact us. We look forward to launching this new scientific community.

Important Data Now Available

Great news for researchers interested in Veterans' military service information and social determinants of health information. There will be a VA Office of Enterprise Integration to include

their USVETS dataset as a data source on DART. We believe the data will be transformed SQL tables with linking variables added and provided as cohort data views or extracts For DART approved research projects by VINCI, the data will be made available. Many researchers have been asking for the types of data included in the USVETS dataset. Within a short time the files should be added to DART and available for research use.

Staff Highlights:

Farewell to Jarrod Collier

After 5 years with ORD, Jarrod is moving on to his next chapter. He has accepted a position with the Food and Drug Administration's Center for Biologics Evaluation and Research where he will serve as a Health Science Administrator. His last day in ORD was September 25. During his tenure with us, he served as JIT manager for BLRD and CSRD and program support for the Career Development Program (e.g., CDA-1, CDA-2, CDTA, CDEA, letter of Intent process, progress report management, and the annual CADE Symposium). Congratulations, Jarrod! You and your many talents will be greatly missed!



Welcome back, Eric Schwinder

Eric joined the VHA Office of Research and Development as a Health Science Specialist in May of 2012 and has worked on a variety of projects supporting BLRD and CSRD, including Point of Care Research and the PTSD Psychopharmacology Initiative. Eric has also been a member of the Air National Guard since 2002. In December of 2018, he took a leave of absence from VA while he was activated to work in the National Guard

Bureau Office of the Joint Surgeon. Over the past 22 months, he has served as the Training Manager supporting 27 medical units across the United States that stand ready to respond to domestic emergencies, providing emergency medical triage, stabilization, and treatment, for patients, evacuees, and support personnel. Upon his return to ORD in October, Eric will be supporting the BLRD and CSRD Career Development Award program, among other projects. He will continue to serve in the Air National Guard on a part-time basis. Eric and his wife Amanda live in Rockville, Maryland, with their daughter Eleanor, who will turn 2 this fall. Eleanor loves to read, sing, dance, help prepare meals, and play in the rain.

Master Sergeant Eric Schwinder (right) is pictured with National Guard Bureau Joint Surgeon Major General Jerry Fenwick

Letter of Intent Deadline Approaches

For investigators interested in submitting a clinical trial application for the Spring 2021 review round, an approved letter of intent (LOI) is required. The LOI deadline is November 1, 2020. They must be submitted by the local research office to clin-review@va.gov. Instructions and template for clinical trial LOIs are located here: https://www.research.va.gov/services/shared_docs/resources.cfm#4 (Section IV, #3)

Please Meet and Greet Us

Until we are able to travel, CSRD staff members will be attending virtual meetings:

- Bibliometrics and Research Assessment Symposium, October 7-10
 - International Society for Traumatic Stress Studies Annual Meeting, November 4-14
 - American College of Neuropsychopharmacology Annual Meeting December 8 (NIH Institute Director's session including focus on VA's diversity and inclusion efforts with Q&A and an update on VA COVID activity with Q&A, followed by a networking session for additional questions)
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