

# VA Pain/Opioid CORE

Updates from the CORE

## Greetings from the Pain/Opioid CORE!

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If you are interested in being added to our email list or would like additional information about the CORE, please contact Brian C. Coleman, DC at [Brian.Coleman2@va.gov](mailto:Brian.Coleman2@va.gov).

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## About the CORE

### What is an HSR&D CORE?

VA Health Services Research & Development sponsors Consortia of Research (CORE) to accelerate research leading to measurable improvement in care delivery for Veterans in multiple high priority areas of clinical care. These COREs aim to establish a network of researchers, collaborators, and partners to facilitate high quality research, disseminate findings and impacts, and influence best practices and inform policy making to improve the health care delivered to Veterans.

[Click here](#) for a summary about VA HSR&D COREs (provided by the Access CORE). As described in this summary, while they contribute to the VA's research enterprise, HSR&D COREs do **NOT**:

- Determine VA's research or operational funding priorities (though HSR&D or partners may choose to be informed by CORE recommendations).
- Act as gatekeepers to HSR&D or operational funding, or to program offices.
- Write letters of support for IIRs/CDAs/grants.
- Directly conduct evaluation work for operational partners (though COREs may help facilitate the formation of partnerships with operations to complete this work, including the administration of funds for projects that reflect the evaluation needs of operational partners).

### What is the Pain/Opioid CORE?

The goal of the Pain/Opioid CORE is to foster high-quality, high-impact, and Veteran-centered research focused on improving pain care and reducing opioid harms by building a network of researchers and promoting multidisciplinary, cross-institutional research collaborations. The Pain/Opioid CORE supports strategic and collaborative efforts to identify and address high-priority areas for pain-related and opioid-related research while working closely with key Operations partners to facilitate the translation of this research into clinical practice.

### What areas of research do we focus on?

There are multiple themes of research across the CORE related to interventions for pain (including complementary and integrative health approaches), pain care delivery models, pain-related practice and policy initiatives, opioid therapy, and management of opioid use disorder.

### How can I be involved in the Pain/Opioid CORE?

The Pain/Opioid CORE offers multiple work groups that promote scientific collaboration across shared interests. We are interested in expanding and building new domain-relevant work groups. The CORE is continuously growing, and we are looking to work with everyone involved in pain and opioid research. Email communications and quarterly newsletter will help keep you up-to-date on CORE activities. If you are interested in being added to our email list or would like additional information, please contact Brian C. Coleman, DC at [Brian.Coleman2@va.gov](mailto:Brian.Coleman2@va.gov).

## 2 Veteran Engagement Panel (VEP)

Our VEP consists of 12 Veterans with personal experience with chronic pain and/or opioids. Veteran members are a diverse group of men and women across a wide age range and include students, retirees, current workers with varied military, volunteer, and professional experiences.

Our hope is that this panel will enhance patient-centered research. We've had several research teams meet with the VEP already; the panel is eager to provide feedback on any aspect of the research process. The VEP members can give an authentic perspective to give your research greater impact.

Interested in meeting with the VEP? We are looking for study teams to meet with the panel from February through June 2021. Limited PI prep work is required, and meetings are led by CORE staff. Please contact Agnes Jensen at [agnes.jensen2@va.gov](mailto:agnes.jensen2@va.gov) to learn more!

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## Rapid Start Funding Opportunity

The purpose of the Pain/Opioid CORE Rapid Start Funding (RSF) program is to support research projects in priority areas related to pain or opioids with **awards of up to \$30,000**. We will fund projects of up to one year that are consistent with CORE priorities and are likely to meaningfully inform future applications for VA funding (e.g., IIR, Service-Directed Research, QUERI project) or answer priority questions (secondary analysis). Priority will be given to projects of high relevance to Pain/Opioid CORE priorities that have a high likelihood of future HSR&D funding.

### Important RSF Opportunity Details:

- The RSF program will fund projects of up to \$30,000 for one year.
- Relevance is defined by CORE partners and research priorities established by two recent HSR&D State-of-the-Art Conferences:
  - [A Research Agenda for Advancing Strategies to Improve Opioid Safety: Findings from a VHA State of the Art Conference | SpringerLink](#)
  - [A Research Agenda for Advancing Non-pharmacological Management of Chronic Musculoskeletal Pain: Findings from a VHA State-of-the-art Conference | SpringerLink](#)
- Preference points will be given to early career investigators and investigators not located at HSR&D Centers of Innovation (COINs).
- In 2020, 80% of awarded projects included an awardee who is early-career or located at a VA without a COIN.

The 2021 RFA will be released in January, 2021. Join our mailing list to stay up-to-date on the announcement and additional information.

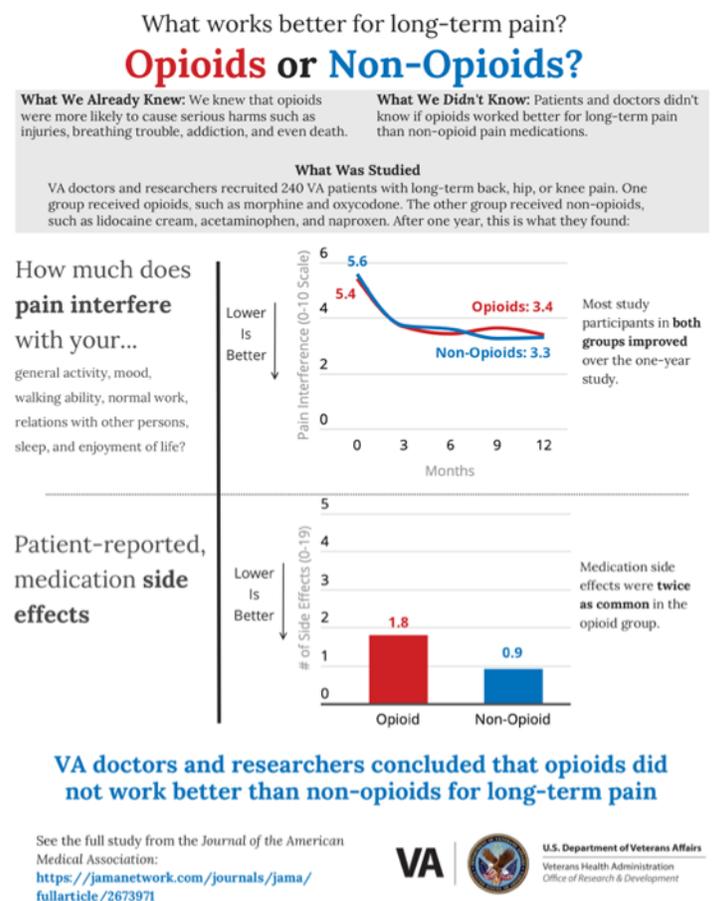
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## Infographics

Interested in sharing your research findings through an innovative, easy-to-understand approach? Consider using an infographic.

The purpose of infographics is to enhance dissemination of research findings, especially to patients and families. Infographics are a one-page, printable visual summary of key results targeting lay audiences, analogous to one page summaries created by the VA Office of Research and Development (ORD).

Pain/Opioid CORE infographics are created via an iterative process between designers and study authors. They can be linked to the CORE website or study publication or posted or shared through social media and other digital media platforms.



[Click here](#) to see an example of one of our infographics from the SPACE randomized clinical trial.

## Additional Resources:

### Join our Work Groups

The Pain/Opioid CORE includes multiple domain-based work groups to help promote scientific study in pain-related and/or opioid-related research.

#### CORE Work Groups:

- Medication for Opioid Use Disorder (MOUD) Implementation (Chair: Adam Gordon, MD). The focus of this work group is to identify and promote effective implementation strategies for MOUD.
- MOUD Use in Perioperative Care (Chair: William Becker, MD). This work group has focused on surveying evidence related to buprenorphine in perioperative settings and publishing expert recommendations.
- Mentorship of Junior Researchers Studying Pain and/or Opioids (Chair: Matthew Bair, MD). This work group supports professional networking and mentorship that connects early-career and junior researchers with senior researchers to support collaboration and professional development in pain- and opioid-related research.
- **NEW!** Heterogeneity of Treatment Effects in Pain- and Opioid-Related Research (Chair: Kelli Allen, PhD). The focus of this work group will be understanding factors that predict patients' response to pain treatment using state-of-the art statistical methods.

For more information on getting involved in our Work Groups, contact Brian C. Coleman, DC at [Brian.Coleman2@va.gov](mailto:Brian.Coleman2@va.gov).

### For more information and updates on the Pain/Opioid CORE

To be added to our email list to receive our newsletter and research updates, please contact Brian C. Coleman, DC at [Brian.Coleman2@va.gov](mailto:Brian.Coleman2@va.gov).

### Coming Soon!

January, 2021 Research Update

2021 Rapid Start Funding Opportunity RFA

### VA HSR&D COREs

Suicide Prevention CORE

Pain/Opioid CORE

Access CORE

Virtual Care CORE

[Click here](#) for more information about VA HSR&D COREs