

Pain / Opioid CORE News

Updates from the CORE

Greetings from the Pain/ Opioid CORE!

The HSR&D funded Pain/Opioid Consortium for Research (CORE) has a mission of enhancing collaboration and accelerating research and dissemination within the broad area of pain and opioid research. Our strategic plan contains four main activities that will help us to fulfill our mission:

- **Identifying priority areas of research and setting a research agenda**
- **Developing and further cultivating partnerships with operations partners, pain/opioid researchers and Veterans**
- **Enhancing the research network in the area of pain and opioids**
- **Disseminating research findings**

CORE PIs

Alicia Heapy, PhD; Pain Research, Informatics, Multimorbidities, and Education (PRIME) Center of Innovation, VA Connecticut

William Becker, MD; Pain Research, Informatics, Multimorbidities, and Education (PRIME) Center of Innovation, VA Connecticut

Erin Krebs, MD, MPH; Center for Care Delivery and Outcomes Research (CCDOR) Center of Innovation, Minneapolis VA

If you are interested in being added to our email list or would like additional information about the CORE, please contact Ray Van Cleve, PhD at raymond.vancleve@va.gov

Coming up:

1

DELPHI

We will be conducting a Delphi study to build consensus for the diagnostic criteria for iatrogenic opioid dependence

2

NETWORK BUILDING

See below for results of a survey to learn more about the needs of investigators interested in pain and opioid research

3

VET ENGAGEMENT PANEL

We are actively recruiting Veterans who can advise our research

4

PORTFOLIO REVIEW

We are finalizing a review of all active federally-funded pain and opioid studies and will make a searchable repository available on our website.

Funding Opportunity

The Pain/Opioid CORE has released a request for proposals for our Rapid Start funding opportunity. Projects should fall into one of the priority areas for funding identified in the announcement in the domain of pain and/or opioid research. These projects should be focused on improving the state of practice, research, or implementation of pain management and opioid use. The due date for proposals is July 1st, 2020. Please contact Raymond Van Cleve (raymond.vancleve@va.gov) with any questions or requests for the funding announcement.

Veteran Engagement Panel

The Pain/Opioid CORE team has been actively recruiting a 10-12-member Veteran Engagement Panel. These Veterans will work with us as colleagues (not research subjects) to provide guidance and feedback on VA research from their perspective as both Veterans and health care consumers. The VEP will meet for the first time in June 2020 (in person once, then virtually each month). We have selected some great members - but we need your help! We are still looking for Veterans, *particularly those age 40 and under*, for our panel. VEP members must have personal experience with chronic pain, opioid pain medication use, and/or opioid addiction. A successful VEP partner will share perspectives and insights in constructive ways, respect differing opinions, and speak comfortably in a group. They will be paid \$50/hour (approximately 2-4-hour monthly

Delphi Study

Our CORE is currently conducting a Delphi study to further delineate different conditions (previously undefined) related to opioid use and misuse. At the September 2019 SOTA conference, a number of participants acknowledged that Opioid Use Disorder is not always the most appropriate label to give to patients for whom the benefits of their opioid centric therapy no longer outweighs the potential harm of the therapy. Given the discussion around this topic at the SOTA, we decided to formally investigate this notion using the Delphi Method. The Delphi Method is a process where many different experts seek to gain consensus around a specific question. The consensus building is done by first submitting responses to open ended questions around the topic and then voting on the themes identified by the open ended responses. This method is useful for this question because we can survey many experts from both clinical and research backgrounds and build a consensus across a broad range of perspectives. If you are interested in being a part of the Delphi please contact Raymond Van Cleve (raymond.vancleve@va.gov)

What will the Pain/Opioid CORE VEP be working on?

The VEP will assist the Pain/Opioid CORE in strategic planning and system-wide initiatives, but they are also here for you! A Veteran engagement panel can provide keen insight on recruitment strategies, patient-facing materials, or dissemination plans. Stay tuned for future information on how you and your team can virtually meet with the Pain/Opioid CORE VEP to discuss your study!

Needs Assessment Survey

In January 2020 the Pain/Opioid CORE emailed a needs assessment survey to approximately 1,500+ VA employees in clinical, administrative, and research roles. Recipients included HSR&D COIN Directors, Associate Chiefs of Staff for Research, prior attendees of Spotlight on Pain Management Cyberseminars, and individuals who had expressed an interest in the CORE. The survey was distributed using VHA's REDCap and could only be accessed by respondents with a VA login. The survey were based on a similar needs assessment survey by the SPRINT CORE and included questions concerning respondents' interests and expertise in pain and opioid research, funding sources, barriers to conducting research, and what type of pain and opioid information they would like to receive from the CORE.

The survey was active for six weeks and was completed by 111 participants. Respondents had a primary reported affiliation of VA (n= 96), University (n= 51), or DOD (n=3). Among respondents who were funded through federal grants, the most common funding agencies or offices were VA ORD (HSR&D, RR&D, CSR&D, and BLR&D) and NIH (NIDA = 6, NICCH = 7). Selected results are below. For more questions please contact Raymond Van Cleve: Raymond.vancleve@va.gov.



