

Pain/Opioid CORE

VA HSR&D

Pain/Opioid Consortium of Research

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U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

FUNDING ANNOUNCEMENT

2023 Pain/Opioid CORE Rapid Start Funding Opportunity

The 2023 Pain/Opioid CORE Rapid Start Funding opportunity is now open for submissions. The purpose of the program is to support [health services research](#) projects of up to \$30,000 for one year in priority areas within pain and/or opioid research. Priority will be given to projects of high relevance to pain and/or opioid research as defined by recent HSR&D State of the Art Conferences on [nonpharmacologic treatment](#) and on [opioids](#) and to our Pain/Opioid CORE partner priorities. Projects likely to meaningfully inform future HSR&D or other VA funding will also be prioritized.

Early career investigators and investigators not located at HSR&D Centers of Innovation are encouraged to apply, with preference points awarded to these applicants during the review period. Early career investigators should include a senior mentor/co-investigator in an appropriate role who can provide guidance on the proposed project.

Additional information, including eligibility, submission requirements, and expectations of awardees, can be found on [the Pain/Opioid CORE website](#).

The deadline for proposal submissions is **February 28, 2023 at 11:59PM PST**. Proposals must be emailed as a single PDF document to the Pain/Opioid CORE at PainOpioidCORE@va.gov. Proposals not submitted as a single PDF will not be accepted.

For questions about the 2022 Rapid Start Funding Opportunity, or to be added to the Pain/Opioid CORE mailing list, please contact Kathryn LaChappelle at Kathryn.LaChappelle@va.gov.

Infographics Available on CORE Website - Nominate a Study!

The Pain/Opioid CORE [infographics initiative](#) is producing a series of “infographics” to communicate select health services research study findings to patients with chronic pain, opioid use, or opioid use disorder and to their caregivers.

Visual communication professionals work with study authors, CORE staff, and, most importantly, Veterans to produce each infographic. We are looking for a study to feature in the next infographic! See below for how to nominate a study.

Completed infographics are now available via the [CORE Website](#) and will be disseminated more broadly via multiple VA communication channels to reach Veterans, their families, and caregivers over the coming months – stay tuned for more details.

Let us know what you think of the infographics. We’d love to hear from you.

Nominate a study! Send an email to Tracy Sides (Tracy.Sides@va.gov), Pain/Opioid CORE Coordinator, with a study you think would make a meaningful patient-facing infographic – be sure to include a sentence about why you think the results are important to patients’ health care or self-care decisions. CORE leadership, with input from our VEP, select the studies that become infographics.



INVITATION TO ATTEND JANUARY MEETING

January 23rd CORE Career Development Workshop: Overcoming Scientific Writing Myths

Workgroup Chair: Matthew Bair, MD, MS

A high priority of the Pain/Opioid CORE is facilitating career development of early career investigators and investigators new to pain or opioid-related research through collaboration and professional development activities. The Career Development (CD) workgroup meets monthly with meeting topics rotating among career development topics, presentations by early career researchers, and CORE Rapid Start Funding awardees.

New this season! The CD workgroup occasionally invites expert speakers to present on general career development topics. The first expert speaker is [Joli Jensen](#), author of the highly acclaimed book, *Write No Matter What: Advice for Academics*. During this workshop-style presentation, Joli will help participants recognize and overcome their writing myths, introduce them to three “taming” techniques, and provide a road map to start their own writing accountability system.

This career development topic is relevant to all investigators, at any stage of their career, so **the January 23rd meeting to other investigators who would like to come learn with us.**

Overcoming Scientific Writing Myths Workshop: Monday, January 23rd at 4:00 – 5:30 pm ET

If you'd like to join this session on scientific writing, please email Mallore Argust (Mallore.Argust@va.gov) to request an invitation to the meeting.

RESOURCE FOR VA INVESTIGATORS**Methods Advisory Sessions Available to Address Heterogeneity of Treatment Effects**

The Heterogeneity of Treatment Effects (HTE) Workgroup supports scientific study related to the differential effectiveness of treatments, or combinations of treatments, aimed at reducing pain and/or opioid use. Studying treatment effect heterogeneity involves the application of rigorous and innovative statistical and data science methods to clinical trial data, electronic health record data, and other sources of patient data.

The HTE Workgroup now offers methods advisory sessions to chronic pain- and opioid-focused investigators who seek expert input on methodological approaches to examining treatment effect heterogeneity. Advisory sessions are offered as a complimentary resource to VA pain/opioid investigators. The objectives of these sessions are to enable investigators to rigorously examine HTE in their existing pain and opioid focused data, help design HTE analysis plans for funding proposals, and provide a learning environment for HTE methods through involvement of leading methodologists.

Who is involved in an HTE methods advisory session?

- **Pain/Opioid Researcher(s):** VA Pain/Opioid investigators, including early-career investigators and trainees, are eligible to present at the advisory sessions, whether seeking guidance on HTE analyses of existing data or refining methods and aims related to HTE in future grant submissions. Interested investigators can contact the workgroup with questions or to schedule a session using the contact information below.

- **HTE Methodology Experts:** The HTE Workgroup has organized a group of expert statisticians and methodologists related to HTE-focused analyses who will be invited to participate in specific sessions. Advisory session facilitators will aim to match the expertise of methodologists with the specific research questions to be discussed during the session.
- **Other Attendees:** While discussants will typically be limited to members of the research team, methodology experts, and advisory session facilitators, other investigators are welcome to attend advisory sessions as an active learning opportunity to observe practical examples of HTE analysis plans.

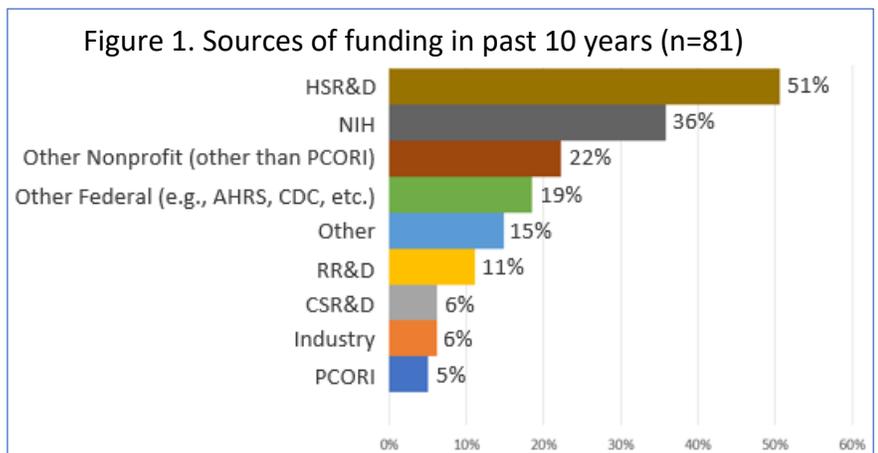
Advisory sessions for interested research teams are now available. To apply for a complimentary HTE advisory session, submit to the contacts listed below a brief description of your study, research question(s), and anticipated next steps after participating in the advisory session (e.g., grant submission, analyses, manuscript). Research teams invited for an advisory session will participate in a brief planning call with the advisory session facilitators in advance of their scheduled session to prepare materials.

Contact HTE Workgroup Chair, Kelli Allen (Kelli.Allen@va.gov), and Pain/Opioid CORE Coordinator, Kathryn LaChappelle (Kathryn.LaChappelle@va.gov), with questions or to apply for an HTE methods advisory session.

Results from the 2022 Pain/Opioid CORE User Survey

Late last summer, the CORE conducted a user survey to better understand the make-up of the CORE network, how members engage with the CORE, and to solicit feedback on the CORE's future activities. Below are highlights from the survey results. We sincerely appreciate the time and feedback shared by our network.

Network of researchers: A majority of respondents (72%, 81/112) reported having at least a 10% FTE research appointment in VA. Of those 81 respondents, almost half (48%, 39/81) reported being affiliated with a *non-COIN* VAMC. Other respondents (n = 31) included VACO leaders, clinicians, and other stakeholders. Among those who reported having at least a 10% FTE research appointment (n = 81), they reported receiving funds from a wide variety of sources in the past 10 years, indicating that our CORE network extends beyond only HSR&D-funded investigators (*Fig. 1*).



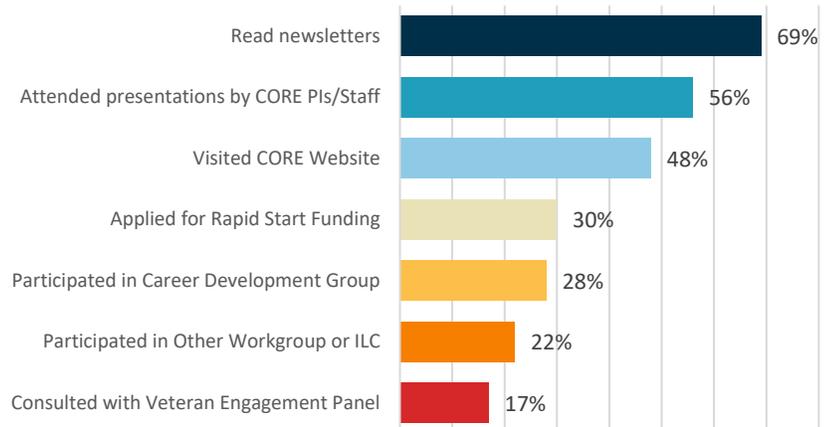
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Engagement with CORE: Respondents reported a variety of engagement with the Pain/Opioid CORE (Fig. 2).

While this was not intended to be a robust, scientific survey, the number and breadth of respondents are reassuring that we are reaching and engaging with a wide network of VA-related pain/opioid investigators and program leaders.

We will review specific suggestions for new resources or activities with the CORE's Internal Leadership Committee in the coming months and share updates in a future newsletter.

Figure 2. Top ways of engaging with the Pain/Opioid CORE (n=81)



Featured Pain/Opioid Related Events

SAVE-THE-DATE: 2023 Annual Scientific Meeting for the United States Association for the Study of Pain (USASP) - April 11-14, 2023

The Annual USASP Meeting will be held April 11 – 14 at the Washington Duke Inn in Durham, North Carolina. This year's theme is *From Bench to Bedside to Population: Transitional Pain Science Approaches for the Whole Person*. Stay up-to-date and learn more information about the upcoming conference by visiting the [USASP annual meeting website](#).



[More information and updates on the Pain/Opioid CORE >>](#)

To be added to our email list to receive our newsletter and research updates, please [visit our website to subscribe](#).

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Access CORE

Pain/Opioid CORE

Suicide Prevention CORE

Virtual Care CORE

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

Contact us: PainOpioidCORE@va.gov