

Health Services Research and Development Service (HSR&D) Project Final Reports

NOTE: The following instructions apply to projects with a project end date of 1/1/2011 or later.

1. PURPOSE. HSR&D has an ongoing interest in the progress and accomplishments of the research activities it sponsors. HSR&D-funded investigators are expected to provide information to Central Office that will allow HSR&D staff to monitor progress and outcomes of funded research activities. The HSR&D project Final Report serves to identify important research findings and appropriate audiences for dissemination of research results.

2. RESPONSIBILITY. The Principal Investigator (PI) of each research project funded by HSR&D is responsible for submitting the project Final Report. HSR&D will neither review proposals from nor release new HSR&D funding to a PI who has an overdue Final Report until the Final Report(s) is(are) received.

3 DUE DATE. Final Reports are due within 90 days of the project's official end date. In rare circumstances, an extension of the due date can be requested. Requests for additional time to prepare the Final Report must be submitted to the assigned Scientific Program Manager (SPM) through the Associate Chief of Staff (ACOS) for R&D.

4. DETAILED INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING THE FINAL REPORT

A. Procedures.

- (1) The Final Report must be submitted using the ART web site (<http://art.puget-sound.med.va.gov>). Instructions for submitting the Final Report using the ART web site are also available in the ART documentation.
- (2) ART sends the PI email reminders before the Final Report is due. Center AOs and ART Coordinators are copied on the email reminders. The email includes a link to the instructions on the HSR&D Website (Internet) and to the ART Website (Intranet).
- (3) Once the deadline for the Final Report has passed, no additional reminders are sent from ART. The PI will be contacted by the SPM until the Final Report is submitted. HSR&D will neither review proposals from nor release new HSR&D funding to a PI who has an overdue Final Report until the Final Report(s) is(are) received.
- (4) The Findings, Status and Impact sections of the Final Report must be updated before the Final Report can be submitted to Central Office (CO) for approval.
- (5) The approved Final Report will be available to HSR&D, the PI, and the Center Administrative Officer (AO) in ART and (unless otherwise noted in these instructions) will be posted on the HSR&D internet (public) Website (www.hsrd.research.va.gov/research/completed.cfm).

B. Format.

- (1) The Final Report should provide HSR&D with a brief summary of research progress, findings and activities for a completed project.
- (2) The Final Report should not exceed approximately 1000 words. The maximum length does not include the project title, section headers, additional information and comments section, or reported citations.
- (3) The Final Report should be submitted using plain text only in Arial 11 point font. Any special formatting (e.g., italics, bold text, bullets, tables, tabs) will be lost once submitted.
- (4) References should not be cited in or listed at the end of the abstract.
- (5) The appropriate tense should be used (e.g., past tense to describe the methods of the completed study).

C. Content.

The Final Report provides a brief summary of the research findings and conclusions for a completed project. The Final Report should serve as a stand-alone summary suitable for dissemination to both scientific and lay audiences.

All Final Reports must include the following sections:

- (1) Background/Rationale
- (2) Objective(s)
- (3) Methods
- (4) Findings/Results
- (5) Status
- (6) Impact

- (1) **Background/Rationale:** This section should describe the background or rationale for the study. Include a description of the problem being addressed and its relevance to VA (e.g., impact on veterans or the VA health care system). In addition, briefly describe what is unique or original about the project.
- (2) **Objective(s):** In this section, explain the major goals and specific aims of the study. Detail the research questions and any hypotheses.
- (3) **Methods:** This section should describe the study design, intervention (if any), study population (e.g., inclusion/exclusion criteria, major characteristics), settings, and intervention or exposures (if any). Define the study variables and identify the source(s) of the data. Include sample size and response rates, as appropriate. Methods of analyses should be clearly and concisely articulated. Indicate if non-VA sites are included.
- (4) **Findings/Results:** This section should describe any of the main findings of the completed study. It should address the specific outcomes outlined in the primary aims and should include quantitative and qualitative information, and both negative and positive findings, as appropriate to the project.

(5) **Status:** This section should describe the stage of the project (e.g., completed) and the major activities and accomplishments completed during the reporting period (e.g., within the funding period of the project).

(6) **Impact:** This section should describe the perceived impact of the project (anticipated or observed) on Veterans (e.g., improved quality of care, better outcomes), the VA health care system (e.g., improved management, lower costs) or the general public. Also, describe implications for other areas of research or practice such as clinical applications or policy.

D. Additional Information and Comments for Central Office Review.

This is a required section in which the PI should include any additional information or comments about the project that are to be shared with the SPM and not the general public. The information contained in this section is only available to HSR&D CO, the PI, and the Center Administrative Officer (AO) in ART; this section is NOT posted on the HSR&D internet (public) Website (www.hsrdr.research.va.gov/research/completed.cfm) as part of the Final Report. Examples of the kind of information or comments to be included are: how the findings contribute to knowledge in veteran-centric terms; directions for future research in the topic area and any follow-on studies that have been submitted or funded; any results that may be controversial; findings that may receive media attention; potential audiences for the study results and any contact with them about results; any emerging impacts already underway in the health system; any implications for QUERI program as a vehicle for implementing findings; any dissemination efforts already undertaken, or suggested strategies to disseminate information.

E. Publications/Citations.

- (1) Center Administrative Officers (AO) or ART Coordinators are responsible for entering citation information in ART and should be notified of any publications or other dissemination activities (e.g., presentations, posters) related to a funded HSR&D project. Refer to the ART documentation on the ART web site (<http://art.puget-sound.med.va.gov>) for instructions on reporting publications and citations.
- (2) The Final Report will automatically include a list of publications/citations attributable to the project that have been reported to the Center's ART Coordinator(s) and included in the ART Citation Manager (ACM).
- (3) The PI should review the current list of publications linked to the project to ensure accuracy. Errors should be reported to the Center's ART Coordinator(s) to address.
- (4) Subsequent to submission of the project Final Report, PIs are required to report all future dissemination activities to Central Office as soon as they receive notification of acceptance, for either publication or presentation, of any information related to the project. The PI must also notify their ART Coordinator(s) at the same time.

5. SUBMISSION. The Final Report must be submitted electronically via the ART Website (<http://art.puget-sound.med.va.gov>) by the due date. All specified components must be included. Please refer to the ART Documentation for instructions for using the ART Website.

6. INQUIRIES. The PI's local R&D Office is the appropriate initial contact for inquiries about Final Reports. Other questions about submission and review of HSR&D Final Reports may be directed to the assigned Scientific Program Manager.

7. RESPONSIBILITIES OF HSR&D. HSR&D is responsible for approving or disapproving the Final Report.

A. HSR&D conducts administrative and content reviews of each Final Report. HSR&D may disseminate Final Report results to VA leadership. In addition, the Final Report may be sent to one or more external reviewer(s) to help assess the validity, significance, and implications of the findings, and to identify appropriate audiences for dissemination. If reviewers have any significant concerns about the Final Report, HSR&D will communicate with the PI, and revisions may be required.

B. HSR&D notifies the PI and ACOS for R&D when review of the Final Report is complete and shares with the PI any written critiques or recommendations. Prior to notification of approval by HSR&D, the Final Report is not to be distributed except to individuals who served on the research team.

C. The approved Final Report is available to HSR&D CO, the PI, and the Center Administrative Officer (AO) in ART and is posted on the HSR&D internet (public) Website (www.hsr.d.research.va.gov/research/completed.cfm).

D. If, subsequent to approval of the Final Report by HSR&D, the PI materially changes any conclusions or recommendations, an amended report must be submitted promptly to CO.