



Call for Abstracts

Abstracts are due Wednesday, May 19, 2010

VA Equity Research: Moving the Field Forward, a Department of Veterans Affairs Health Services Research & Development (HSR&D) Small Conference, will be held on September 13 and 14, 2010 at the Boston University School of Management in Boston, Massachusetts.

The meeting will bring together approximately 100 health services and disparities researchers, VA HSR&D leadership, policy makers, and clinical managers with the goals of:

- Informing and promoting a deeper understanding of the mechanisms underlying health and healthcare disparities by race/ethnicity;
- Advancing a research agenda to inform the coupling of disparities reduction with quality improvement efforts;
- Learning from successful and unsuccessful intervention strategies to reduce disparities (or formative evaluations to describe reasons for nonsuccess); and
- Increasing knowledge and skills for implementing successful interventions and programs across the VA.

Plenary speakers will include a mix of nationally known experts in disparities, social scientists specializing in equity-related issues, and VA leaders in quality and implementation. Among them will be:

- John Dovidio, PhD, Professor of Psychology, Yale University;
- Mary-Jo DelVecchio Good, PhD, Professor of Social Medicine, Harvard University;
- Marshall Chin, MD, MPH, FACP, Director, RWJ Finding Answers Program and Professor of Medicine, University of Chicago;
- Jeroan Allison, MD, MSc, Professor and Vice Chair, Department of Quantitative Health Sciences, University of Massachusetts, Worcester;
- Joseph Francis, MD, MPH, Chief Quality and Performance Officer, VHA Office of Quality and Performance;
- David Atkins, MD, MPH, Director of QUERI;
- Brian Mittman, PhD., Director of the VA Center for Implementation Practice and Research Support.

The meeting will be hosted by:

- Department of Veterans Affairs Health Services Research & Development Service
- Boston VA Healthcare System
- VA HSR&D Center for Health Equity Research and Promotion
- VA HSR&D Center for Health Quality, Outcomes and Economic Research
- VA HSR&D Center for Disease Prevention and Health Intervention for Diverse Populations
- Boston VA Research Institute
- Health/Care Disparities Research Program, Department of Medicine, Boston University School of Medicine
- Center for Health Disparities Research, Medical University of South Carolina

MEETING ATTENDANCE APPLICATION PROCESS

Please note that abstract submission is NOT required for meeting attendance. Regardless of abstract submission status, we ask that all persons interested in participating in the meeting briefly describe their interests, experience, or plans for research focused on healthcare disparities and outcomes, and their goals for attending the conference, using the attached application form. We will use this information in conference materials to help build the community of disparities researchers. Please submit this form, together with the abstract submission form, if applicable, to mary.walsh3@va.gov, by **May 19, 2010**. Confirmation of meeting attendance, for those who do not submit abstracts, will be sent by June 15, 2010.

Support for travel expenses for this meeting will be provided for VA personnel and abstract presenters (only one presenter per abstract may receive travel funding). Because a finite amount of VA travel funding is available, and the conference size is limited, if interest in the conference exceeds capacity, priority will be given to those who are presenting abstracts and VA personnel. After that, priority will be given on a first-come, first-served basis. Non-VA investigators are welcome to attend. However, no travel funds will be available for non-VA attendees who are not making presentations.

To attend the meeting, please complete the attached application form, including a brief description of your interests, experience or plans for research focused on healthcare disparities and outcomes, and goals for attending the conference. Please submit this form to mary.walsh3@va.gov, by **May 19, 2010**.

Selection Criteria

Authors will be notified of decisions by June 15, 2010.

Each abstract will be evaluated by at least two expert reviewers, who will be blinded to authors' identities. Abstracts with the highest average scores and greatest relevance to the conference topic areas will be selected. All decisions regarding abstract acceptance/rejection will be made by the Review Committee and will be final.

Selection criteria include quality, timeliness, and relevance to the subject areas and overall VA mission.

Contact Mary Walsh, (mary.walsh3@va.gov, 412-954-5256), if you have questions or problems submitting an abstract.

CALL FOR ABSTRACTS

Investigators are invited to submit abstracts for presentation in one of the following subject areas:

- Identification of the causal mechanisms underlying disparities in care and outcomes
- Lessons learned from successful or unsuccessful attempts to develop or implement interventions to reduce disparities
- Research informing the incorporation of disparities reduction into VA quality improvement programs
- Dissemination and implementation of interventions and programs related to increasing equity

Please send the abstract submission form, along with your application form, to mary.walsh3@va.gov, by **May 19, 2010**. Abstracts will be reviewed by the conference planning committee and invitations for conference presentation will be sent by June 15, 2010.

Presentation Formats

Presentation formats at the meeting include a poster session and oral presentations. Oral presentations will consist of approximately 10-minute presentations followed by 5 minutes of question-and-answer exchange with the audience. Investigators submitting abstracts are asked to indicate their preference for presentation format, but final decisions will be made by the Review Committee.