**Veteran Consultant Network Orientation**
**April 28, 2018**

# What will we talk about today?

- Introductions

- Center for Healthcare Outcomes and Implementation Research (CHOIR)

- What is our goal for engaging Veterans in Research?

- Why is Veteran Engagement Important?

- Veteran Roles and Responsibilities
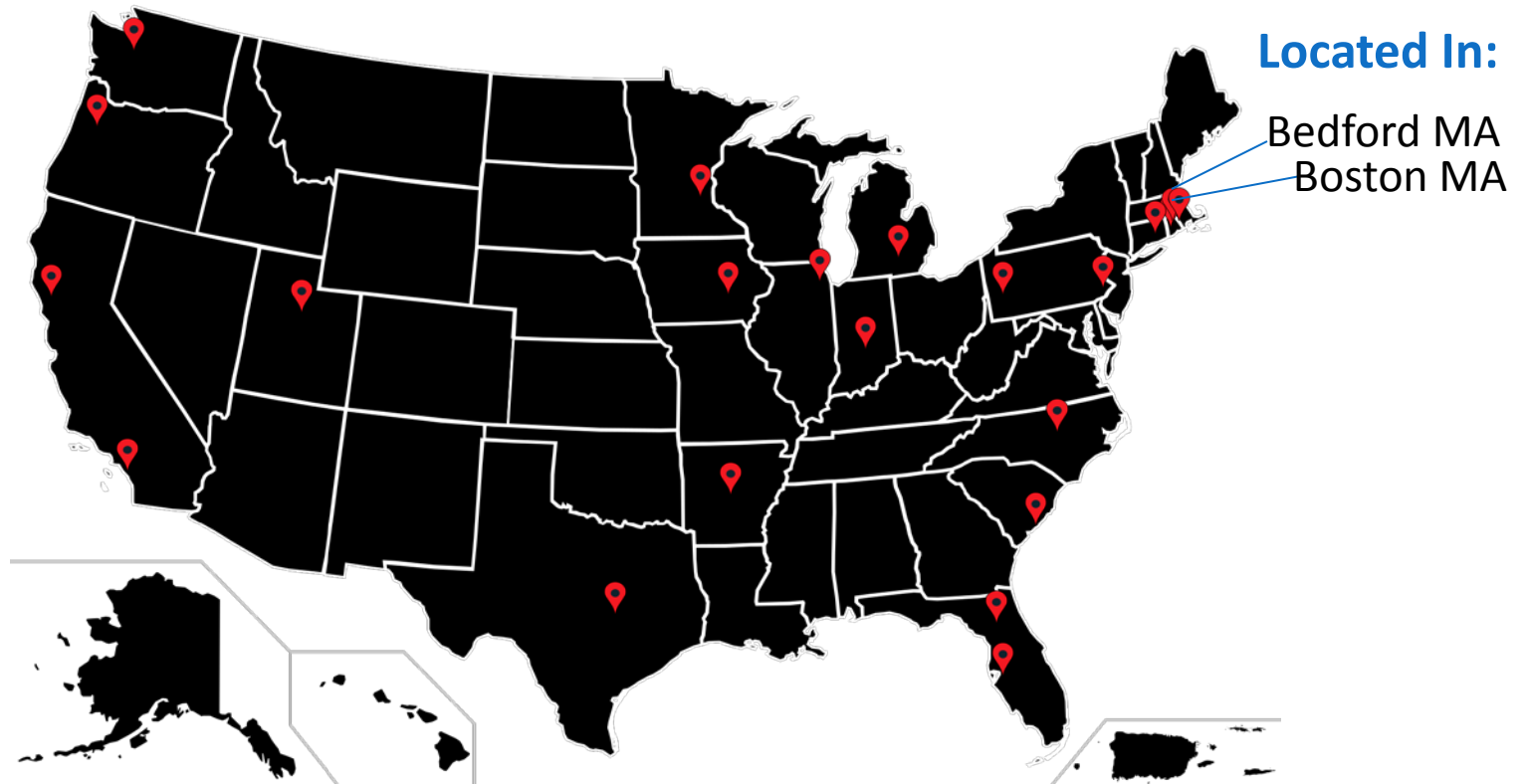
- Questions

# Introductions

- What is your name?

- How are you connected to the VA? (e.g., military service, job, etc)

- What brings you to this meeting today? (Or what experience do you have with research?)

# Center for Healthcare Organization and Implementation Research (CHOIR)

Our mission is to improve Veterans' health and well-being by developing, studying, and applying evidence-based practices that are used across VA and community settings.

# **CHOIR** is the largest of 19 VA Centers of Innovation in the country



**Located In:**

Bedford MA
Boston MA

# CHOIR's Focus:

Conducting *health services research* to improve the responsiveness of the VA to those we serve, by:

- Examining the organization, delivery, and financing of health care
- Gathering perspectives of patients, caregivers, providers, and managers
- Improving the quality and economy of care and health outcomes

# CHOIR's Focus Areas:

## Medication Optimization

Prescribing practices and trends

Best use of medications

## Recovery

Best approaches for social and behavioral vulnerabilities

Interventions to support community reintegration

## Health Communications

Patient-provider communication practices

Best ways to communicate health information

## Other Areas of Interest

Long-term care

Patient safety

How health technologies can improve Veteran's lives

# **Medication Optimization**

1.  Examine **how & why certain medications are used** throughout VA

2.  Estimate **benefits and harms** of medications as used in VA

3.  Develop and study strategies to **promote higher-quality use of medications to improve health** for Veterans
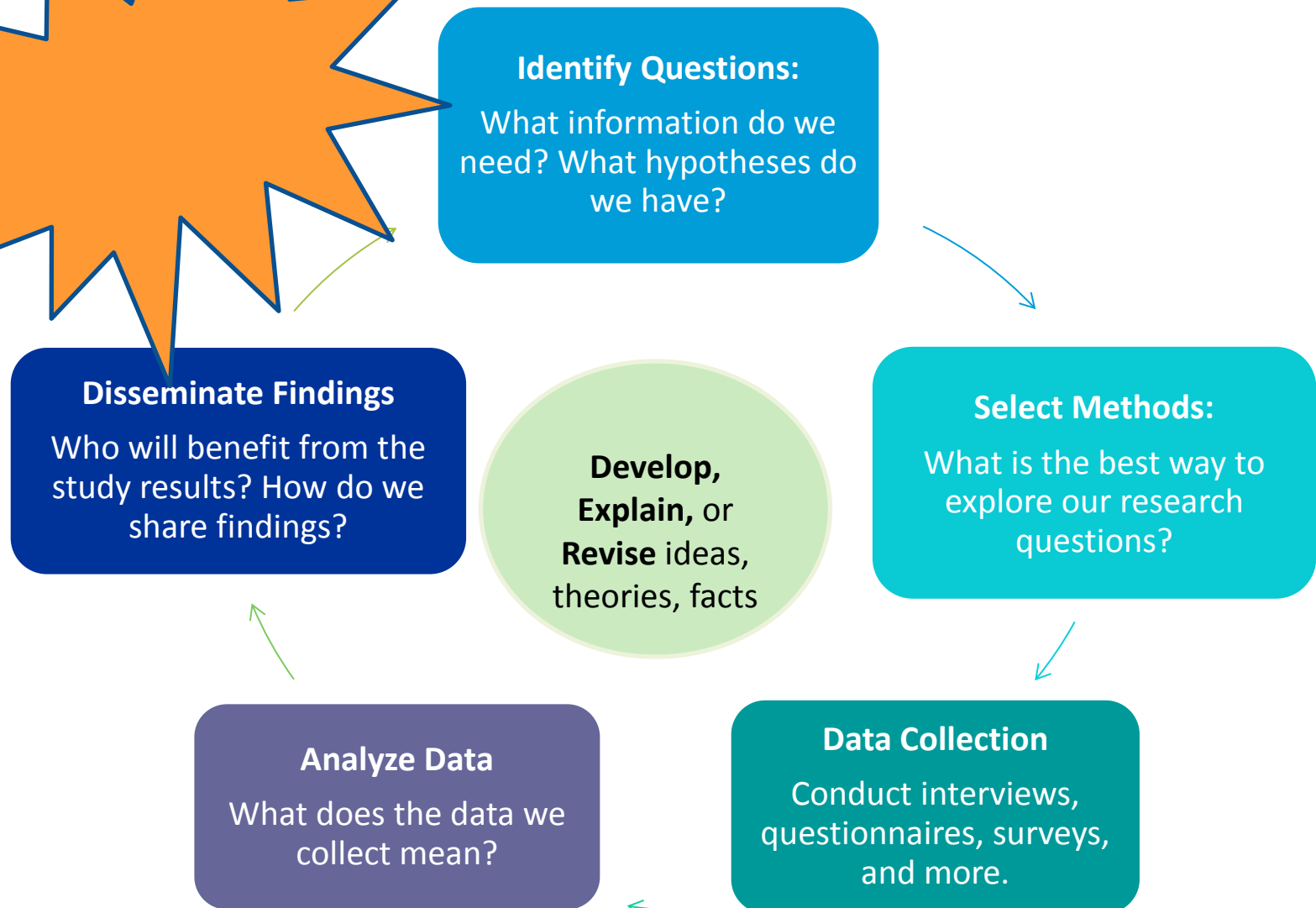
# Recovery

1. Define recovery**, develop  a common approach, and measure** recovery orientation of programs

2. Develop interventions **to support vulnerable Veterans** with mental health and substance use concerns

3.  Examine how **to improve the delivery of recovery-oriented care** in mental health and substance use treatment clinics and community settings

# Health Communication

1. Identify, test, and implement strategies for **better provider-patient communication**

2. Develop and spread **innovative technology that supports communication** between providers and Veterans

3. Inform and motivate Veterans to **change harmful health behaviors** and exchange information about health priorities

# Basic Research Process

**Identify Questions:**

What information do we need? What hypotheses do we have?

**Select Methods:**

What is the best way to explore our research questions?

**Data Collection**

Conduct interviews, questionnaires, surveys, and more.

**Analyze Data**

What does the data we collect mean?

**Disseminate Findings**

Who will benefit from the study results? How do we share findings?

**Develop, Explain,** or **Revise** ideas, theories, facts

# A Typical Research Team



**LEAD RESEARCHERS**

- "Principal Investigators" "Co-Investigators", "Special Consultants"
- Trained in various fields (medicine, public health, anthropology, psychology)

**PRE- and POST-DOCTORAL**

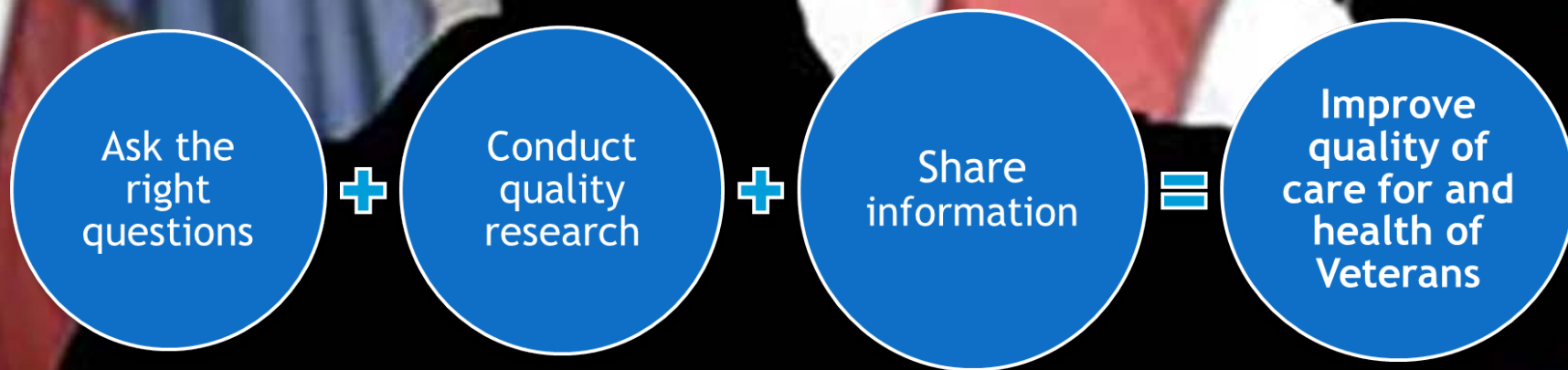- Training program for PhD and MD researchers

**RESEARCH STAFF**

- "Project Manager", "Analysts", "Research Assistants"
- Professionally trained

# Important Contributors

| Funders | Review boards | Other Oversight Agencies |
|---|---|---|
| Veterans Health Administration<br><br>National Institutes of Health<br><br>Foundations<br><br>Non-Profit Organizations<br><br> | <u>Grant Reviewers</u>: Review & score based on importance and quality of research<br><br><u>Institutional Review Board (IRB)</u>: An ethics committee that oversees efforts to protect privacy, confidentiality and safety of research participants | Center for Disease Control<br><br>Department of Defense<br><br>Food & Drug Administration |

# Engaging Veterans In Our Research

Veterans **strengthen the value & quality** of research by:

- their ability to inform our strategic priorities
- providing consultation on specific research projects
- informing our practice through their consideration of all Veteran's points of view.

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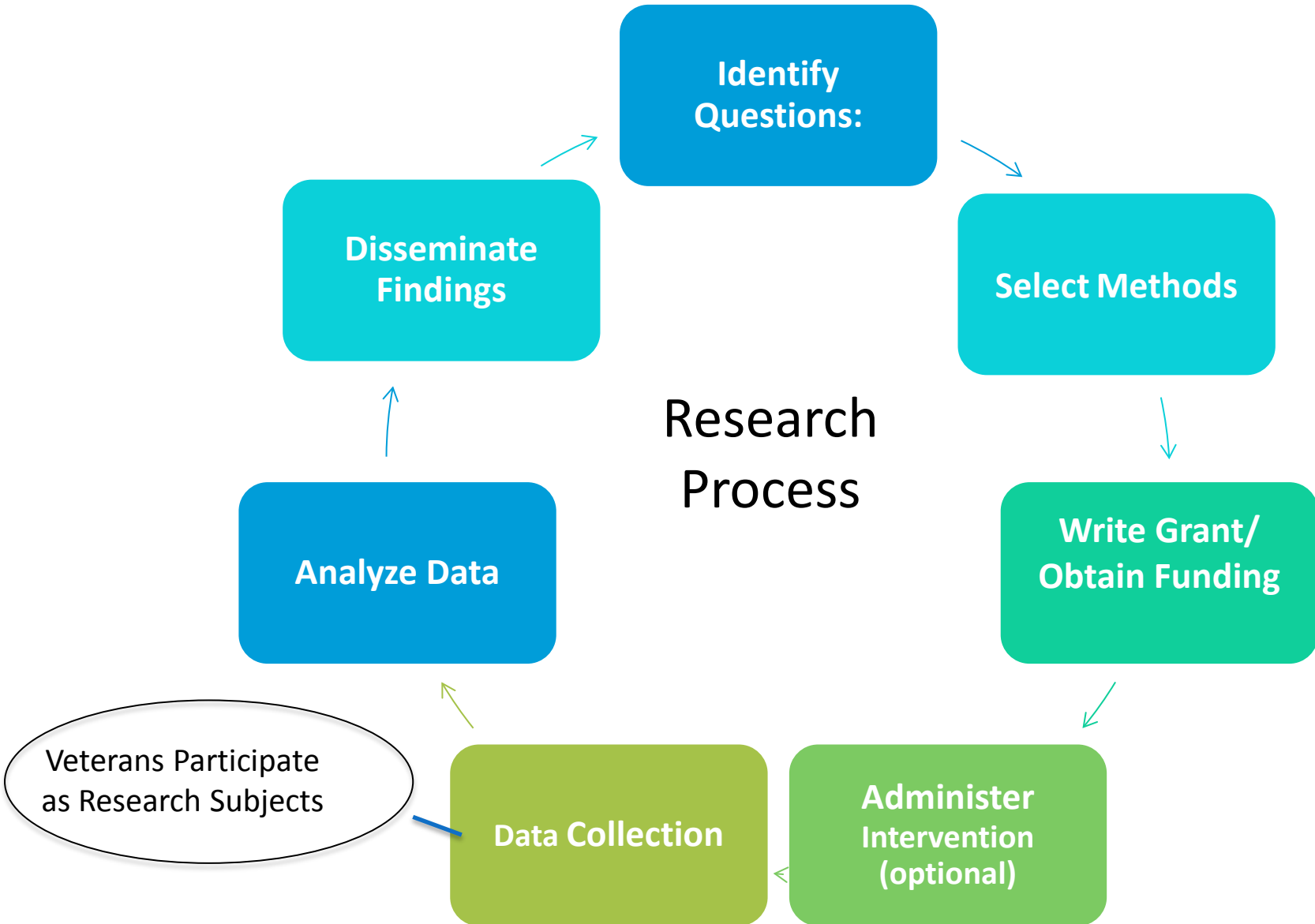# Our hope is that involving Veterans in research will help:

- Expand our capacity to develop useful, relevant, patient-centered research

- Share research results with Veterans, caregivers, and others

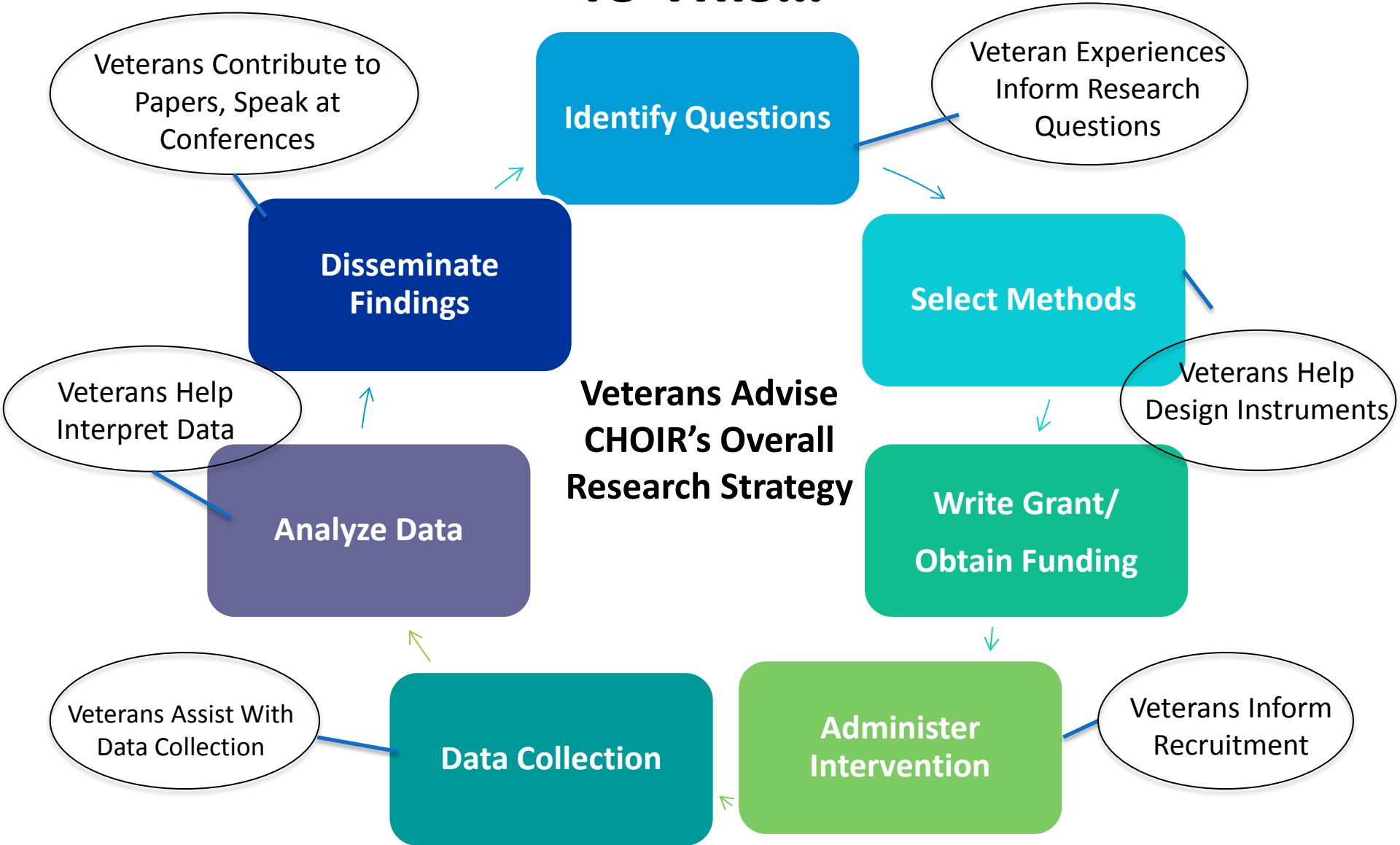- Improve the VA's healthcare system through research

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# …HOW?

➢ **Stakeholder Council:** A council of Veterans who guide overall research, with special concentration on CHOIR's focus areas.

➢ **Veteran Consultant Network:** Veterans and other stakeholders (providers, family and informal caregivers, etc.) who are available to consult on and/or be partners on specific grants and programs

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# Our goal is to move from:



Research Process

- Identify Questions:
- Select Methods
- Write Grant/ Obtain Funding
- Administer Intervention (optional)
- Data Collection
- Analyze Data
- Disseminate Findings

Veterans Participate as Research Subjects

# To This...



Veteran Experiences Inform Research Questions

Identify Questions

Veterans Contribute to Papers, Speak at Conferences

Disseminate Findings

Select Methods

Veterans Help Design Instruments

Veterans Advise CHOIR's Overall Research Strategy

Analyze Data

Veterans Help Interpret Data

Write Grant/ Obtain Funding

Data Collection

Administer Intervention

Veterans Inform Recruitment

Veterans Assist With Data Collection
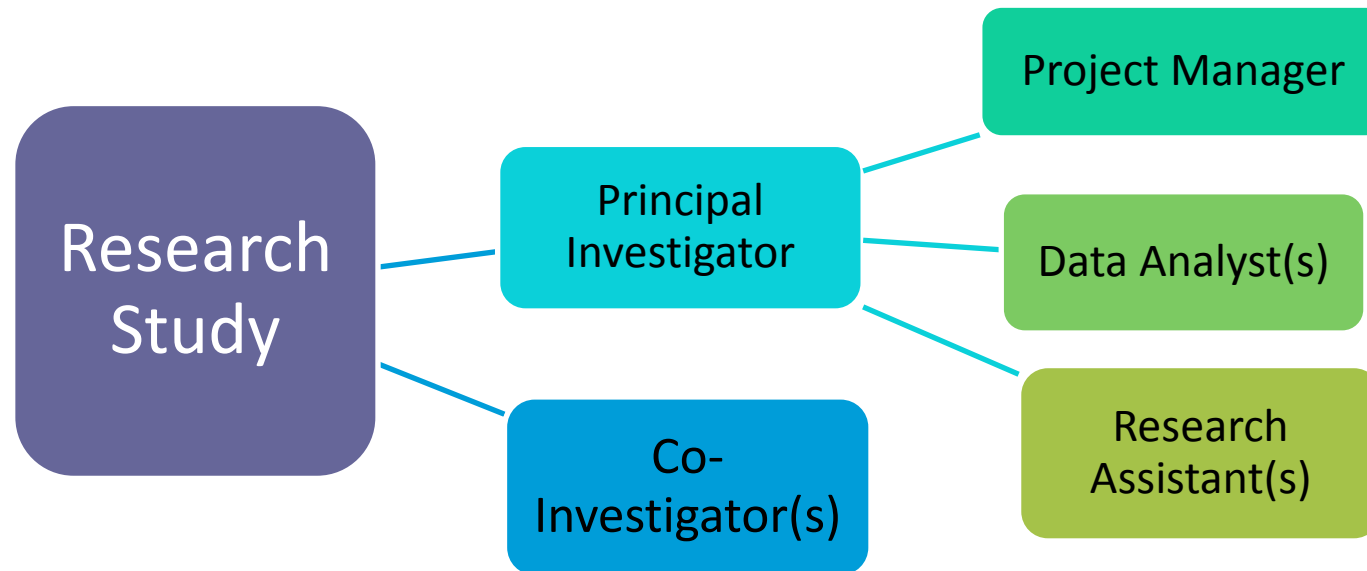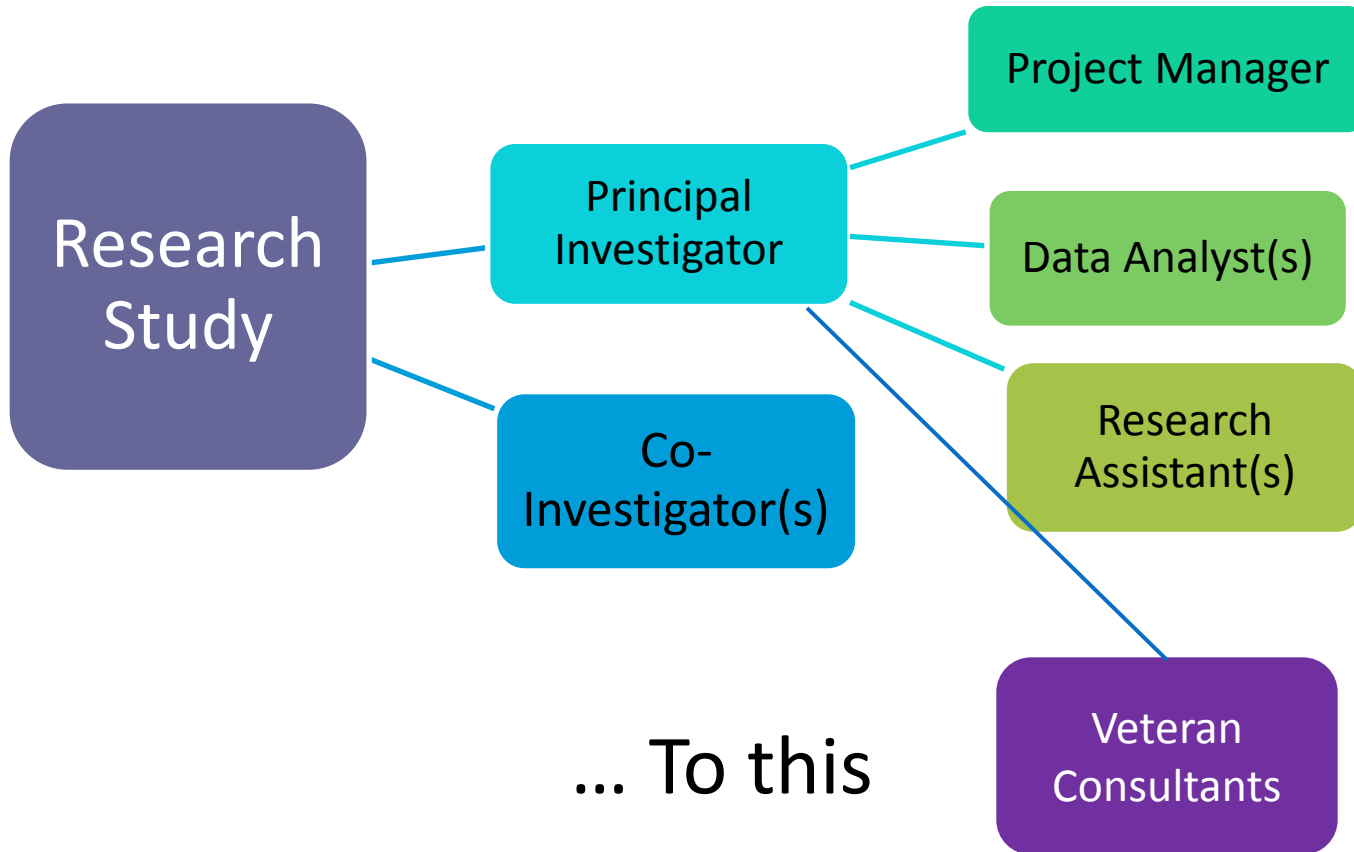
# With the Veterans Consultant Network

We want our research teams to move from this:

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... To this

# Join the Veteran Consultant Network

We will match your interests with our researchers and invite you to:

- ✓ Provide input on VA CHOIR research projects
- ✓ Review research project materials created for Veterans and their families
- ✓ Help make sure the research speaks to Veterans' interests
- ✓ Help find ways to improve the spread and use of health information

**VERG** | Veteran Engagement in Research Group

# **What To Expect**

- Meet with lead researcher (PI) and study team
- Timelines vary for each project
- Training may be required but will likely be minimal
- Compensation will be provided for your time
- There will be paperwork to fill out

# Want to Join the VERG Team?

**Sign up with VCN Coordinator, Scott!**

Scott.Reece@va.gov

(781)687-3500 (*leave a message*)

Tell your friends!

Attend regular meetings!

VERG | Veteran Engagement in Research Group

# Do You Have Questions?

- About CHOIR?

- Research?

- Your role as a consultant?

- Others?

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Center for Healthcare Organization
and Implementation Research

**What do you think about the idea of being a part of a research team?**

**What can we do to help support your participation?**