

Investigator Semi-structured Interview Questions
Veteran Engagement in VA Research

The Health Services Research and Development (HSR&D) Center at the VA Portland Health Care System (VAPORHCS) has developed a Veteran Engagement Group (VEG) to improve the relevance of our research. We are conducting this study to understand more about the experience of Veteran members of this group and investigators who have consulted the VEG. You are being asked to participate because you are an HSR&D investigator who has consulted the VEG regarding a research project. We will use the information you provide during today's interview to inform and aid VA research centers in their introduction and expansion of Veteran engagement efforts in research. We may also use this information to publish about our experience with Veteran research engagement. This interview will take approximately 60 minutes and will be audio-recorded for accuracy. As explained during informed consent, all responses are confidential and you can pass on any question you prefer not to answer. Your name will not be linked to this interview; once I start recording I will only refer to you by a study ID number. Your participation is voluntary and you may choose to end the interview at any time. Do you have any questions before we get started?

Thank you for your time.

[START AUDIO RECORDER]

This is _____[NAME OF INTERVIEWER]_____, Today's date is ___[DATE]____. I am with participant ___[STUDY ID#]_____.

Are you aware you are being audio-recorded?

(Following confirmation of verbal consent of awareness that interview is being recorded)

1) Experience

A. Tell me, briefly, about your history with the VA and your role in research. What kind of research do you do?

2) Ideas

A. What are your thoughts about efforts – in VA and in research generally (e.g., PCORI) – to increase patient engagement in research?

Are there areas of research where patient engagement is more beneficial?

Any areas that you see it as being inappropriate? Other reservations?

B. Tell us about the project (or projects) you consulted the VEG about. Before you consulted, what were your ideas on how they might help you? What kinds of concerns or worries did you have about consulting the VEG?

C. What was most helpful about consulting the VEG? Least helpful? How was the experience different than what you anticipated?

D. Tell me, based on your experience, when and why you might consult the VEG in the future? If you don't anticipate you will, why not?

E. Tell me about any other ideas you have for how Veterans could be included or engaged in VA research. (Alternately: What else could we be doing?) – This is the place for your crazy idea.

F. There is particular interest in the impact of engaging Veterans in research. What do you see potential impacts (or outcomes) as being? There is no right answer to this question, it is more for brainstorming.

G. We hope to develop a toolkit for VA research centers and investigators to use when they want to introduce or increase Veteran engagement efforts. What would you hope to find in a resource like this toolkit?

What are the things that would have to be there for it to be of use to researchers?

What do toolkits that you've seen typically include that you feel is unnecessary or less useful?

3) Wrap up

A. Is there anything I haven't asked you about that you were hoping to discuss? Anything you haven't had a chance to say that is on your mind?

B. Based on your experience with the VEG how would you describe the role of Veterans working with VA research to an interested friend or family member? How about to a Veteran you think would be a good future VEG member?

If there is nothing else, thank you again for your time and thoughtful ideas.