



Nursing Research Agenda

State of the Art Meeting

November 2023



Health Systems Research in VA

November 9, 2023

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Acting Director, HSR&D



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Health Systems Research Overall Goals

- Improve Veteran outcomes through cutting-edge health systems research
- Research goals based on VA Strategic Plan, Agency Priority Goals, VHA Performance Plan
- How we measure success: are Veterans getting better? (NAM's Quintuple Aim)
 - Increase Access
 - Ensure Equity
 - Support Workforce
 - Improve Outcomes
 - Improve Value
- Where HSR is uniquely positioned to contribute to the science:
 - Implementation Science
 - Data Science
 - Science of End-User Engagement
 - Systems Science
 - Policy



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HSR Outcomes: Quintuple Aim Framework

Quintuple Aim outcomes involve inter-disciplinary assessment of Veteran and VA outcomes, including organizational, provider, and patient care processes (e.g., access, quality), value (cost), equity, and lived experiences of end-users (e.g., Veterans, providers, communities).

Refs: Matheny M, et al: NAM 2019; Nundy S, Cooper LA, Nate KS. JAMA 2021; Cahan EM, et al, 2020





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Updated HSR Priorities (Areas of Scientific Inquiry)

1. Implementation science: Discover and optimize strategies to get effective treatments to Veterans faster and sustain their use in real-world practice
2. Data science: Design, validate, and apply data science and knowledge management tools that improve Veteran care
3. Engagement science: Create and test novel approaches for engaging end-users, e.g., Veterans, providers, communities, etc. that support improved outcomes
4. Systems science: Design and apply new systems science methods to improve Veteran provider workforce effectiveness, satisfaction, diversity, and retention
5. Policy analysis/evaluation: Develop, assess, and improve VA and national policies to improve Veteran outcomes, with a focus on underserved populations



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HSR Priorities Align with Veteran Health, VA Goals

Area of Scientific Inquiry	Benefit to Veterans	Key VA Priority Alignment
Implementation Science	Ensures “what we know is what we do” on a routine basis and that effective innovations get to Veterans more quickly	ORD Goal: Real-world Impact Congressional priority
Data Science	VA has extensive data that can be better leveraged to help improve Veteran care, outcomes, and experience in a way that ensures Veterans’ privacy and equity	ORD Goal: Making VA Data work for Veterans Evidence Act (US PL 115-435)
Science of Engagement	Involving Veterans, providers, and other partners ensures treatments, programs, and policies work for Veterans, and that their lived experiences are considered	VA Strategic Plan: Support Underserved, At-Risk, Marginalized Veteran Populations
Systems Science	Health care and health go beyond condition and disease labels; it takes a wider lens to understand the moving parts of the enterprise to improve them to ensure safe and effective care	VHA Long-Range Goals (e.g., Connect Veterans to the Soonest and Best Care; Workforce, High-reliability)
Policy Analysis	Many health problems have determinants outside the clinic walls, need to improve alignment and effectiveness of programs, benefits, and policies to ensure optimal Veteran outcomes	VA Legislative Mandates, e.g., Evidence Act MISSION Act PACT Act, Hannon Act, STRONG Act



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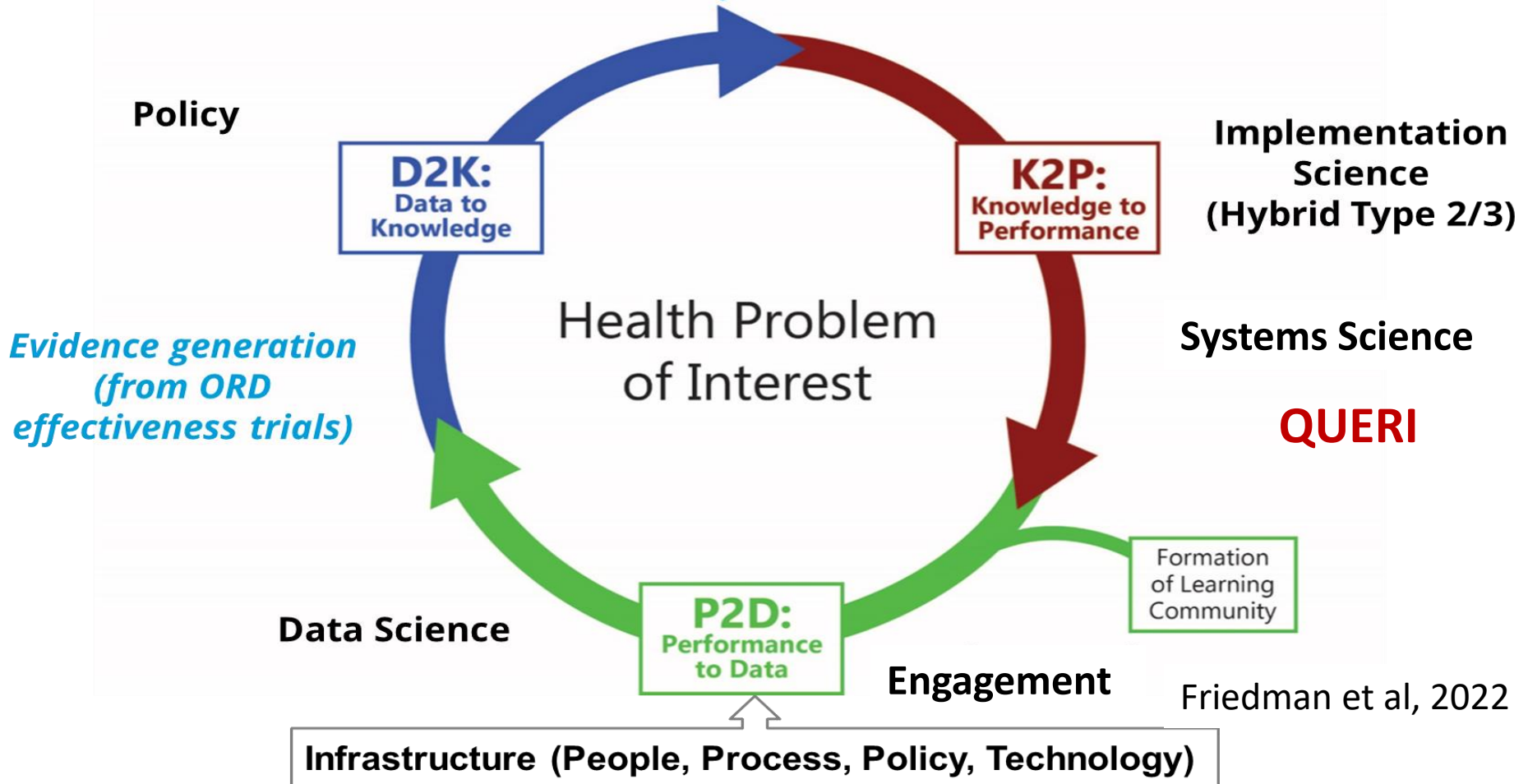
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The Learning Cycle

Priority Goals





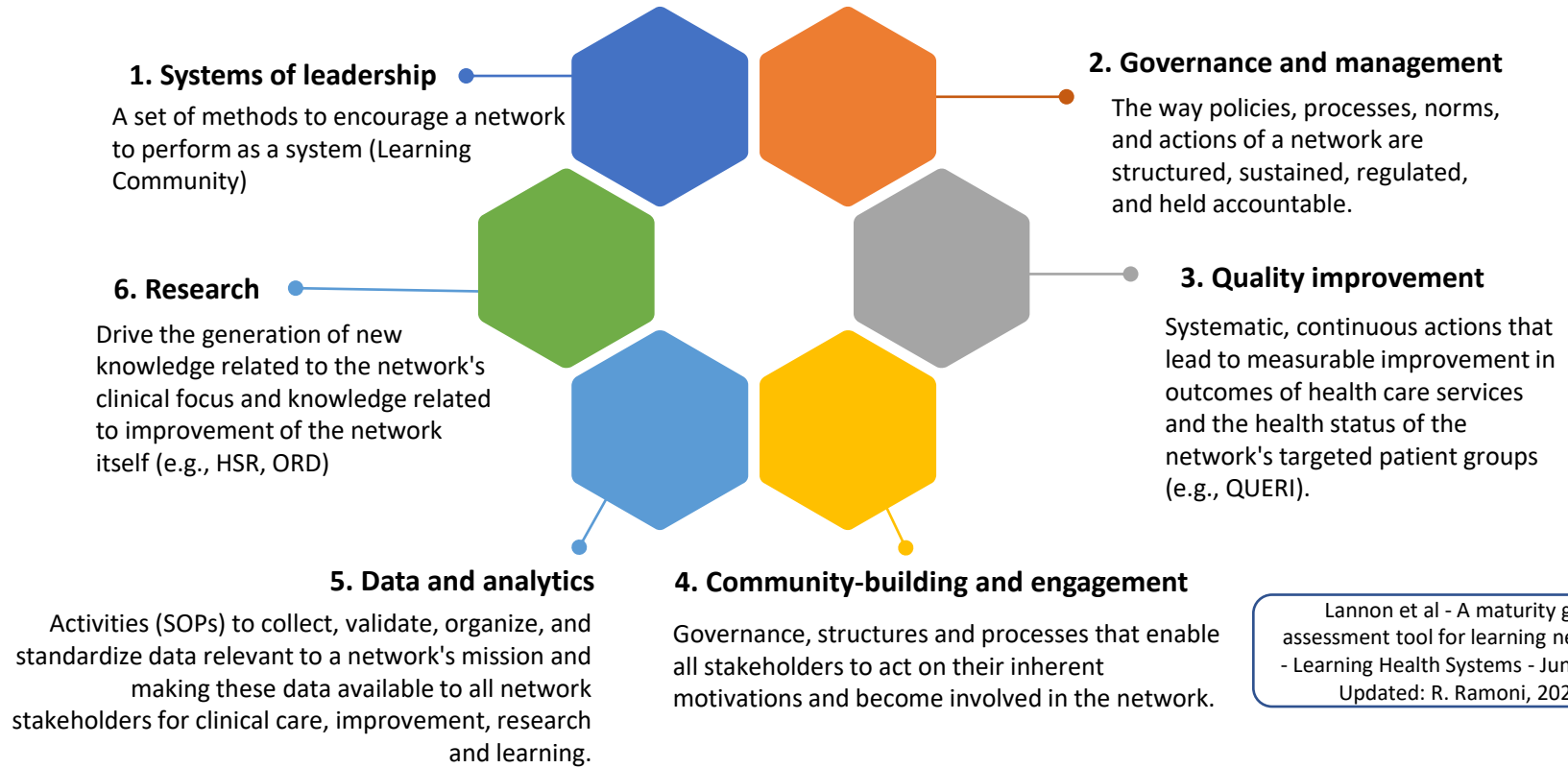
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HSR Applies ORD's Learning Health System Core Components



Lannon et al - A maturity grid assessment tool for learning networks - Learning Health Systems - June 2020; Updated: R. Ramoni, 2023



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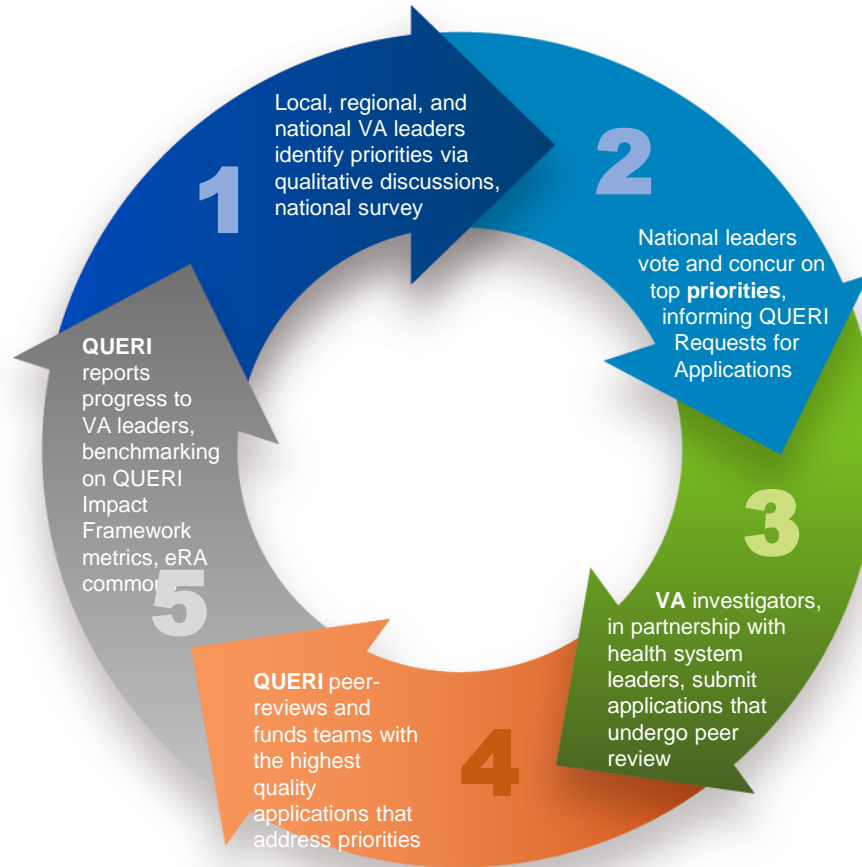
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Evidence Act is Law (US PL 115-435)

- ✓ Influences agency budgets
- ✓ Requires annual evaluation plans on top priorities that inform policies and resource allocations
- ✓ Evaluation plans made public
- ✓ Leverage other legislative mandates

Braganza, Kilbourne et al., HSR 2022



Priorities will inform HSR and QUERI Projects:

- ✓ Evidence Act Evaluation Plans (1 yr)
- ✓ Rapid Response Team time-sensitive projects (3-6 mon)
- ✓ Advancing Diversity in Implementation Leadership (ADIL) fellows (2 yrs)
- ✓ HSR Merit and QUERI Partnered Evaluation Centers: e.g., evaluations of programs and policies (3+ yrs)



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Veterans Health Administration
Office of Research & Development



HSR/QUERI Systematic Priority-Setting Process in VA Strategic Plan: Identifying Priorities, Funding Initiatives to Address Priorities, Communicating Results and Impacts



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HSR Areas Foundational to Responding to Agency-wide Priorities (Source: QUERI 2024 Priority Survey Results)

1. **Hire faster and more competitively:** improve workforce recruitment, onboarding, and retention of VA employees and trainees
2. **Connect Veterans to the soonest and best care:** reduce direct care wait times and community care appointment scheduling times by improving clinical availability and scheduling
3. **Promote a culture of safety, learning, and knowledge translation:** implement and evaluate programs focused on innovation, psychological safety, zero harm, and manager/leader training
4. **Prevent Veteran suicide:** prevent Veteran suicide using a public health approach (e.g., outside the clinic walls, partnerships with community service organizations)
5. **Serve Veterans with military and environmental exposures:** improve quality of care, including the identification and management of symptoms among Veterans with military and environmental exposures
6. **Reduce Veteran homelessness:** ensure more at-risk and underserved Veterans receive early interventions, partnerships and supportive services to avoid homelessness



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HSR Priorities- Key Reference Documents

- Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute ([PCORI](#)) [Methodology Standards](#)
- Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) [Learning Health System Core Competencies](#)
- [VA Quality Enhancement Research Initiative \(QUERI\) Roadmap](#)
- [National Academy of Medicine's Future of Health Services Research report](#)
- [VA Strategic Plan](#) (including Appendix D, highlighting HSR Priority-Setting)
- VA Agency Priority Goals
- [VHA Medical Center and Network Director Performance Plan](#)



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HSR Priorities: Bottom Line

- HSR prioritizes research that addresses at least one of the areas of scientific inquiry
 - Implementation Science
 - Data Science
 - Science of Engagement
 - Systems Science
 - Policy Analysis
- For other priority topics, research should address impacts on Quintuple Aim goals
 - Improve outcomes (including quality and safety)
 - Increase access
 - Ensure equity
 - Decrease cost (improve value)
 - Support workforce



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HSR Team

- Liza Catucci
- Eric Enone
- Bonnie BootsMiller
- Mary Walsh
- Melissa Braganza (QUERI)
- Kara Beck (QUERI)
- Stefanie Gidmark (QUERI)
- Christine Nguyen
- Veronica Gittens
- Judy McMaster
- Diane Murphy
- Amelia Schlak (AAAS)
- Maren Loe (AAAS)
- Alex Meredith (AAAS)
- Tiffin Ross-Shepard
- Cathie Plouzek
- Crystal Henderson
- Amanda Borsky
- Robert O'Brien
- Robert Small
- Amy Kilbourne



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Logistics and Next Steps

Amelia Schlak, PhD, RN

SOTA Co-Chair

AAAS Science and Technology Policy Fellow

Health Services Research and Development



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Immediate Next Steps

- Planning committee members will reconvene for the debrief from 12:30 to 2:30
- If you are not part of the planning committee, thank you for joining us!



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Long Term Next Steps

- Research agenda > Service directed RFA
 - Developed by ORD, based on findings of work groups of information gaps
- Journal supplement
- Briefing to leadership
- Cyberseminars



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THANK YOU!