



Access Research Priorities: Perspective of the Office of Veterans Access to Care (OVAC) and the Veterans Access Research Consortium (VARC)

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OUTLINE

1. Access CORE activities to date
2. The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine:
Developing a Patient-Centered Approach to Optimizing Veterans'
Access to Health Care Services: A Workshop
3. OVAC research priorities

Access Core: Veterans Access Research Consortium (VARC) Network

- Sameer Saini, MD (Ann Arbor)
 - Portfolio review workgroup
- Peter Kaboli, MD (Iowa City)
 - Metrics workgroup
- Stephanie Shimada, PhD (Bedford)
 - Research community workgroup
- Michael Ho, MD (Denver)
 - Stakeholder engagement workgroup

DELIVERABLES FOR VARC



Formation of Access Research Consortium (ARC) Network



Needs assessment of ARC Network



Database of current access research/evaluation projects



3-5 high priority access research questions/focus areas



Report of access metric compendium



Report of access measurement guide



3-5 high priority access metric research questions/focus areas



Access research roadmap

MILESTONES (YEAR 1)

1. All 2 years: Regular communications with ARC Network
2. Month 6: Report of ARC Network needs assessment
3. Month 9: Database of current access research/evaluation projects
4. Month 12: Identification of 3-5 high priority access research questions/focus areas through expert panel process
5. Month 12: Report of access metric compendium

MILESTONES (YEAR 2)

6. Month 15: Report of access measurement guide
7. Month 21: Identification of 3-5 high priority access metric research questions/focus areas through expert panel process
8. Month 24: Report of access research roadmap



Workgroup Progress To Date

Portfolio Review

Metrics

Research Community

Stakeholder Engagement

Summary of Portfolio Review

Web-based review



211

total projects
identified

Operational Interviews

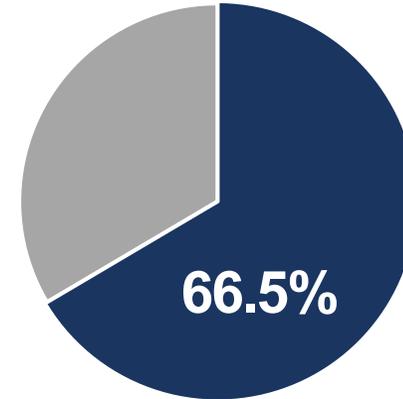


9

interviews completed

46

operational
projects identified

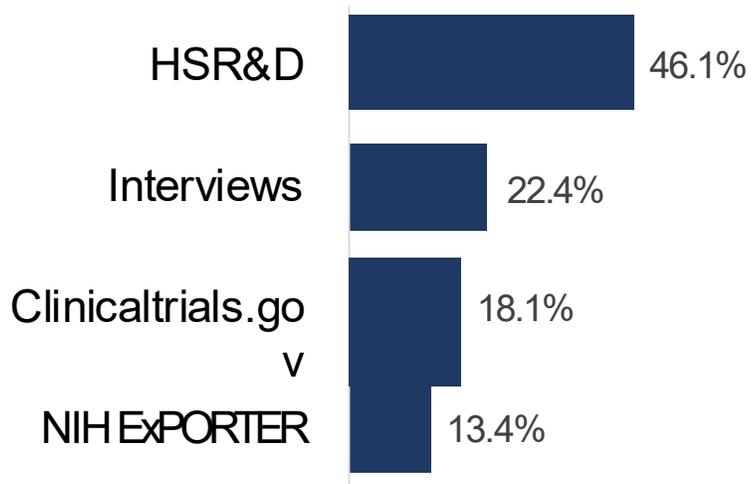


171 of 257 projects
coded with rubric thus far

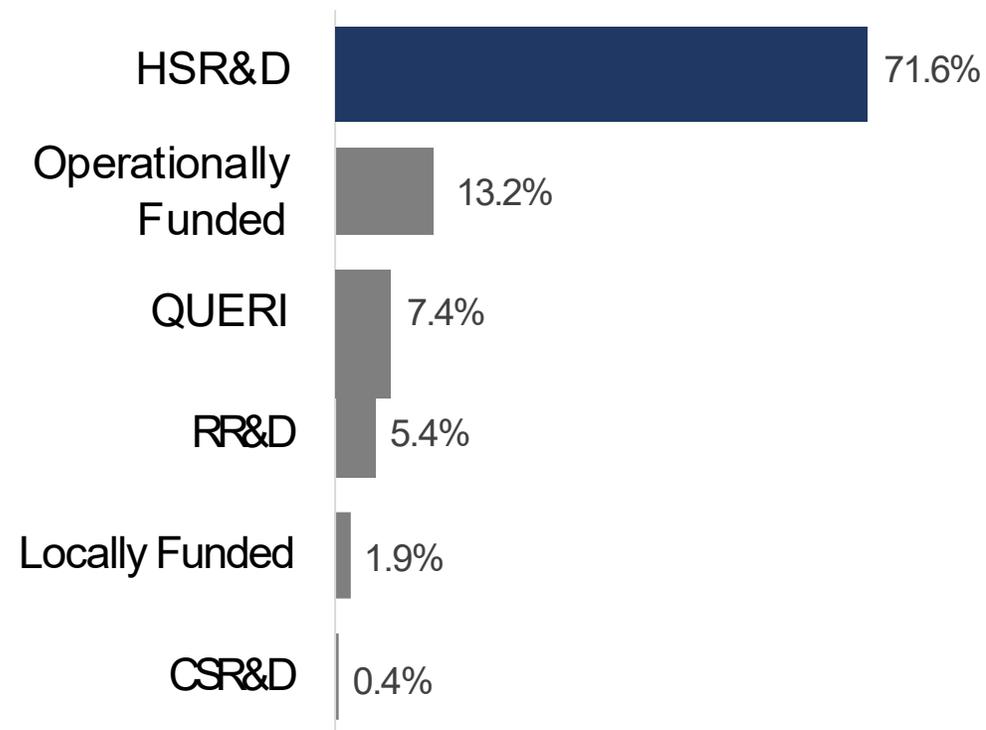
- The following results are based on the 171 projects that have been coded.

Summary of Portfolio Review

A variety of **data sources** were used to identify projects.

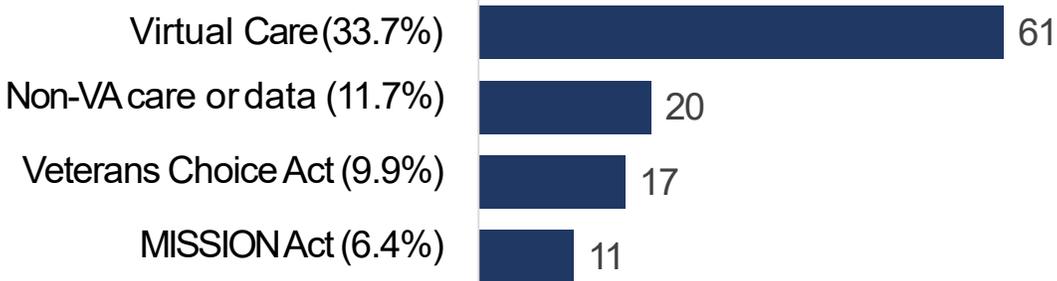


HSR&D was the most common **source of funding**.

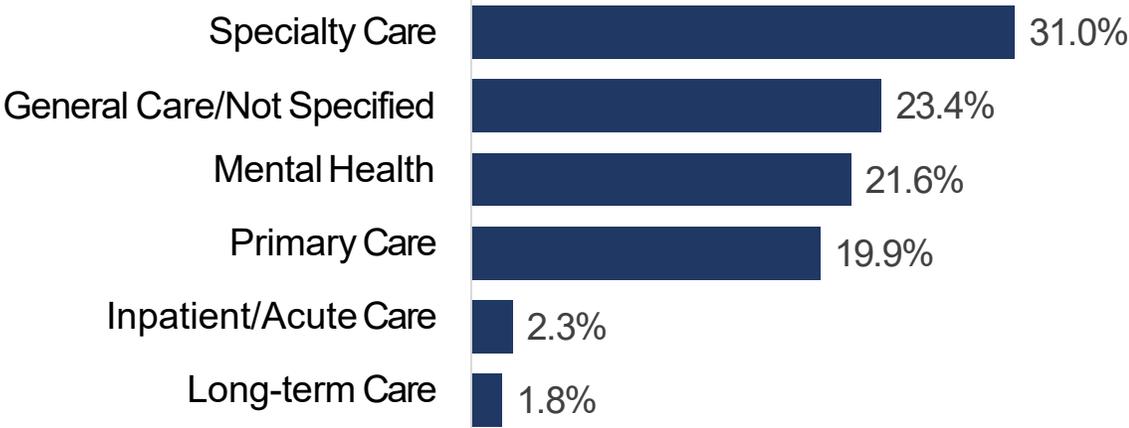


Healthcare Environment & Implementation

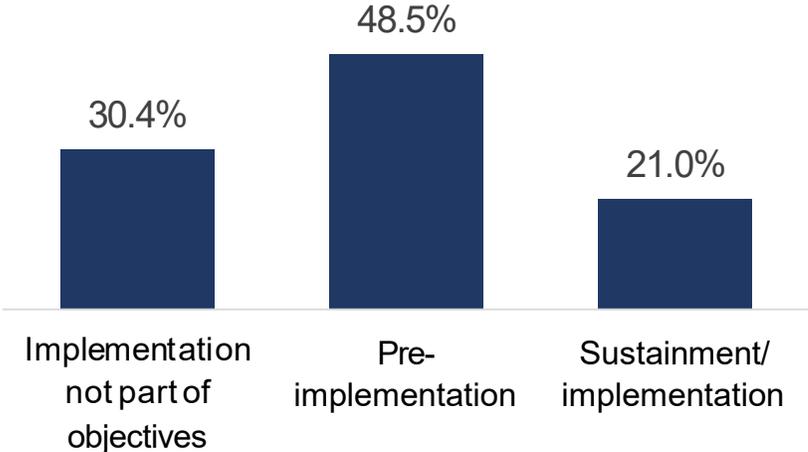
Projects related to the MISSION Act, Veterans Choice Act, or virtual care, and those that incorporated non-VA care / data



Clinical focus areas of projects



Implementation stage at end of projects



ACCESS METRIC COMPENDIUM

- **Categorize** existing measures of access (Fortney Model)
 - 5 Dimensions, 4 Determinants, 4 Characteristics
 - Clinical setting
 - Actual or perceived
- **Create compendium**, including evidence to support validity, data sources, definitions, and practical considerations. Sources include:
 - *Published and unpublished work from ORH Access Evaluation group, PEPRReC, ARC Network, and non-VA researchers*
 - *Existing metrics used by OVAC and defined by VSSC*
 - *Compendium available on-line and as manuscript appendix*
- **Propose Novel metrics** for future research and development to fill gaps
 - Engage ARC Network to propose metrics and become “stewards” (e.g., NQF Process)

FORTNEY MODEL OVERVIEW

Fortney et al.: Healthcare Access for the 21st Century

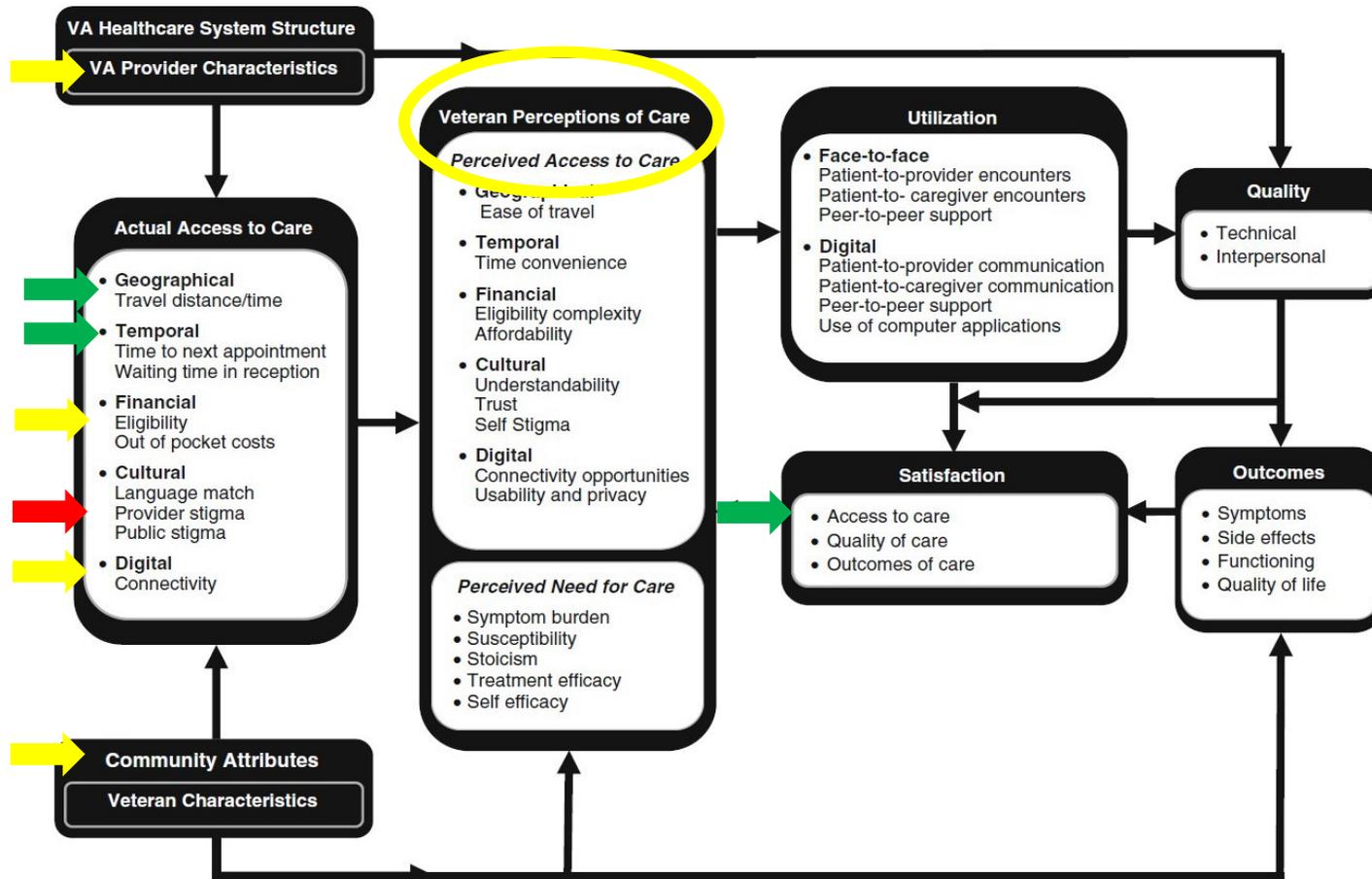


Figure 1. Conceptualization of access.

Dimensions, Determinants, Characteristics

5 Dimensions of Access

Geographical, temporal, financial, cultural, and digital

4 Determinants of Access

Patient, provider, community, health system (i.e., VA and non-VA)

4 Characteristics of Access

Utilization, quality, outcomes, and satisfaction

ACCESS METRIC “HOW TO” DATA GUIDE

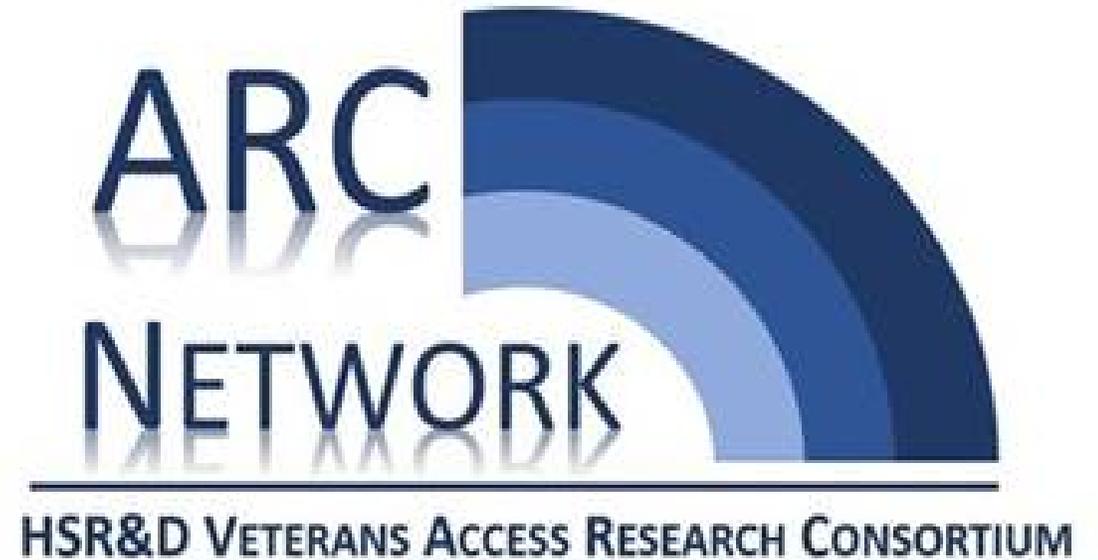
- On-line data guide that is user-friendly to meet the needs of researchers and operations who want to incorporate access measurement into their work.

1. Format: VA Phenomics Library
2. Location: VINCI
3. Structure: Wiki
4. Content: Access Metric Compendium and Guide

[https://vhacdwdwhweb100.vha.med.va.gov/phenotype/index.php/VARC \(Veterans Access Research Consortium\) Metrics Workgroup#Iowa City](https://vhacdwdwhweb100.vha.med.va.gov/phenotype/index.php/VARC%20(Veterans%20Access%20Research%20Consortium)%20Metrics%20Workgroup#Iowa%20City)

ARC NETWORK

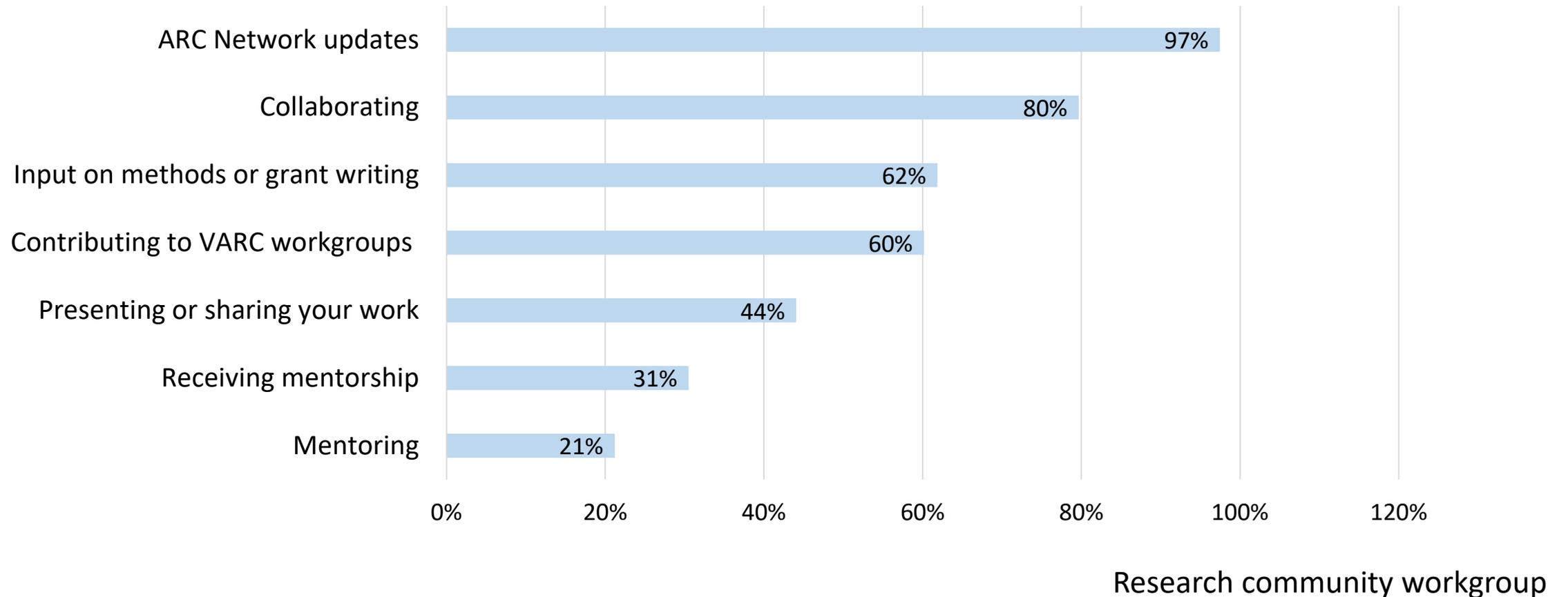
- A community of researchers interested in contributing to access-related research that will lead to measurable improvements in the care delivered to Veterans
- Currently comprised of 440+ investigators, trainees, and other staff with a breadth of methodological expertise and have significant experience leading both HSR&D studies and evaluation projects



Research community workgroup

ARC NETWORK NEEDS ASSESSMENT

In which of the following ways would you be interested in participating in the ARC Network?



Over 90% of Respondents indicated the following as extremely or somewhat important to their access-related work:

	Extremely Important	Somewhat Important
Access to data sources	78%	17%
Opportunities to network and collaborate with other investigators	71%	26%
Opportunities to network and collaborate with operational partners	71%	26%
Guidance on use of data sources	60%	37%
Opportunities to promote key findings in the field to lay audiences, VA operations, others	48%	43%
Identification of funding sources	47%	45%
Guidance on dissemination of findings to key stakeholders	43%	50%
Ease of finding current information on access-related research, evaluation and implementation	41%	54%
Access to consultation on research methods	39%	52%

Research community workgroup

CYBERSEMINARS HIGHLIGHTING ACCESS RESEARCH

- Sessions will cover
 - Ongoing work of the VARC workgroups
 - Updates from operational leaders on VA's latest access-related priorities
 - Presentations of works-in-progress and recently completed research and evaluation studies by access researchers across VA
- Sessions will be of interest to access investigators, clinicians, and operations

Research community workgroup

- Example of announcement from our first cyberseminar

Upcoming Cyberseminar

On June 12, 2020 at 12 pm ET, join us for the panel "Access Expansions through Virtual Modalities: Research-Based Insights for the COVID-19 Pandemic and Beyond", with presenters listed below.

Kyle Possemato,
PhD



Eric Kuhn,
PhD



Audrey Jones,
PhD



Cindie Slightam,
MPH



Donna Zulman,
MD, MS



The COVID-19 crisis is highlighting the potential value of virtual modalities for supporting remote access to care. The Veterans Access Research Consortium (VARC) is pleased to support this Cyberseminar that will provide an overview of three recent research projects focused on the use of technology to support access to care. Presentations will discuss the use of My HealtheVet's Secure Messaging in homeless Veterans, a mobile app for PTSD combined with clinician support, and tablets to support telehealth among Veterans who report barriers to accessing in-person care. Key lessons learned and implications for improving access and access-related research now, during COVID-19, and beyond will be discussed. Sign up [HERE](#) to attend.

UPCOMING ARC NETWORK CYBERSEMINARS

- Save the dates for VARC's upcoming Cyberseminars this Fall, as part of the upcoming COnsortia of REsearch (CORE) Cyberseminar series:
 - VARC Metrics Compendium – October 22, 2020 at 12 pm ET
 - VARC Portfolio Review – November 4th, 2020 at 11 am ET
- Email AccessResearch@VA.gov to join the ARC Network

IDENTIFY HIGH PRIORITY ACCESS RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- Use Delphi process with expert panel of researchers and operational partners
- Step 1: Panelists Identified and Recruited
 - 10 VA and 3 Non-VA researchers
 - 9 operational partners
 - Offices of Veterans Access to Care (OVAC), Community Care, Connected Care, Primary Care Operations, Specialty Care Services, Mental Health and Suicide Prevention, Rural Health, and Health Equity

ONGOING PROCESS TO REFINE PRIORITY RESEARCH

- Step 2: Round one of data collection
 - “In your opinion, what are the most important access related questions for VA to answer in the next 5-10 years?”
- Step 3: Round two of data collection
 - Rank (1 = high priority, 2 = moderate priority, 3 = low priority) and to provide rationale for rankings
- Step 4: Round three of data collection
 - Consolidate responses; drop all low priority questions
 - Send out to panelists and ask to indicate the 10 they believe to be the highest priority
- Step 5: Round four of data collection
 - Consolidate and compile final results (everyone’s top 10)
 - Send out to group top 10; ask that each come up with their final list of top 5

STEP 6: VIRTUAL MEETING

- September 24: 12-4 MT (10-2 ET)
 - All panelists will join together virtually
 - Discuss final results
 - Come to consensus for final top 5
 - Engage HSR&D and operational partners about future funding

PILOT PROJECTS AWARDED

- **Matthew Augustine, MD MSHS – James J Peters VA Medical Center, Geriatric Research Education and Clinical Center (GRECC)**
 - *Validation of a New Timely Care Metric with Self-Reported Patient Experiences and Healthcare Use among High-risk Patient Populations in the Veterans Health Administration*
- **Bryann DeBeer, PhD – Rocky Mountain VA Medical Center, Mental Illness, Research, Education and Clinical Center (MIRECC)**
 - *Improving Access to VA Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Services: A Pilot Study of Intensive Case Management between VA and Community Care*
- **Kyle Possemato, PhD – Syracuse VA Medical Center, VA Center for Integrated Healthcare (CIH)**
 - *ACT Workshops: A Novel Delivery Modality to Increase Access to Mental Health Care for Rural Veterans*
- **Leah Zullig, PhD & Karen M. Goldstein, MD, MSPH – Durham VA Health Care System, Durham Center of Innovation to Accelerate Discovery and Practice Transformation (ADAPT)**
 - *Provider and Veteran Perspectives ON Telehealth Access Disparities among Rural African-American Veterans: (RESONATE)*
- Pilot grants funded by OVAC and HSR&D

Office of Veterans Access to Care - Priorities

- Clinic Practice Management
 - Scheduling
 - Consults/referrals
- Emerging Technology
 - Kiosks
 - VEText
 - Scheduling technology –VAOS, one scheduling grid
- Field Support
 - Telehealth
 - Clinical Contact Centers
- Strategic Access Management Initiative



SAMI Roundtable

- Roundtable
 - Reviewing measures beyond wait times that indicate access to care
 - Patient trust, perceptions, satisfaction
 - Net promoter scores
 - Continuity of care
 - Transparency
- NASEM July 2020
- National Quality Forum
 - Same Day Services
- Access to Care site and measurement plan

THANK YOU
QUESTIONS?