

FACA: A Brief Introduction

Kimberly “Max” Brown, PhD



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The Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA)

- ❖ Allows federal officials to obtain advice from the Public about how to conduct federal business
 - » There are multiple restrictions and requirements under this law



The Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA)

- ❖ For CHERP to remain lawfully exempt from FACA:
 - » The federal agency does not exercise “actual management or control” over the committee or group
 - » The federal agency cannot select all of the group’s members
 - » The federal agency cannot set the group’s agenda
 - » The federal agency cannot determine the group’s meeting dates
 - » The federal agency cannot give the group its formal structure



The Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA)

- ❖ Under the law, CHERP may:
 - » Support creation of the group's mission, charter and by-laws
 - » Obtain non-consensus advice or guidance from “representative members” of a group
 - ✓ **Member experiences and opinions of VA are welcome!**

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CHERP

CHERP 101

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VHA Research Program

- ❖ 1925 VA research program began
- ❖ 1947 Congress mandated VA research program
- ❖ Examples of historical VA research innovations
 - Electronic Medical Record
 - The CT scanner
 - Nicotine Patch
 - Implantable cardiac pacemaker
 - The first successful liver transplants



What is Unique about VA Research?

- ❖ Focused entirely on Veterans' needs
- ❖ Intramural research program (i.e., only VA employees are eligible to receive funding & conduct research)



VHA Research Service Lines Nationally

- ❖ Provide funding to VA investigators in 4 areas:
 - » BLR&D: Biomedical Laboratory Research & Development
 - » CSR&D: Clinical Science Research & Development
 - » RR&D: Rehabilitation Research & Development
 - » HSR&D: Health Services Research & Development



BLR&D

Basic Science Research

- ❖ Support **pre-clinical** studies of disorders & diseases important to Veteran health
- ❖ Use tissue cultures, animal models, or human biological samples (mostly in the laboratory)
- ❖ Special areas of interest
 - Million Veteran Program (genetics)
 - ALS/Lou Gehrig's Disease, Parkinson's, Alzheimer's
 - Gulf War illness, traumatic brain injury (TBI), PTSD, and suicide prevention



CSR&D

Clinical Trials Research

- ❖ Supports **applied clinical, behavioral, and epidemiological** research on disorders & diseases important to Veteran health
- ❖ Use survey instruments, collection of medical histories, performing medical procedures, evaluation of treatment
- ❖ Special areas of interest
 - Same as BLR&D



RR&D

Rehabilitation Research

- ❖ Goal is to **maximize functional recovery** (motor, sensory & psychological) through preclinical, clinical, or applied rehabilitation research
- ❖ Special areas of interest
 - ALS/Lou Gehrig's Disease, Parkinson's, Alzheimer's
 - Traumatic Brain Injury
 - Prosthetic needs of Women Veteran amputees



HSR&D

Health Services Research

- ❖ Evaluations of the **structure, processes, and outcomes** of health care
- ❖ Use large administrative & clinical data and evaluate established interventions to translate clinical knowledge into practice
- ❖ Specials areas of interest (examples)
 - Access
 - Aging, Long-term Care, and Caregiving
 - Mental and Behavioral Health
 - Healthcare Equity and Health Disparities



CMCVAMC Research Program

- ❖ Independent Investigators
- ❖ Clinical Centers of Excellence
 - PADRECC: Geriatric Research, Education, and Clinical Center
 - MIRECC: VISN4 Mental Illness Research, Education and Clinical Center; PRimE Care
- ❖ Research Centers of Innovation
 - CHERP: Center for Health Equity Research and Promotion



CHERP

Health Services

- ❖ Established (2001) as an HSR&D Center of Excellence focused on promoting equity in health and health care among vulnerable Veteran populations
- ❖ Funded (2013) as 1 of 20 HSR&D Centers of Innovation (COINs) with a primary focus on health equity and a secondary focus on the effectiveness, safety, and value of clinical therapeutics
- ❖ Director, Michael J. Fine, MD, MSc
- ❖ Co-Director, Said Ibrahim, MD, MPH, MBA



Disparity: What is it??

- ❖ A Health Disparity is a significant difference in health care or health status between distinct populations linked with social, economic or environmental disadvantage along with greater burden of poor health or premature death. Factors often associated are:
 - » Patient level.
 - » Provider level.
 - » System level.



Disparity: What is it??

❖ Differences are key factors

- » Differences in prevalence, mortality, burden of disease and adverse health conditions that exist among specific population groups.
- » Differences in access, process, and structure of healthcare among specific population groups.
- » The Affordable Care Act a.k.a “Obamacare” was an attempt at Equity
- » Baseball watching is a great example!



Vulnerable Populations

❖ What are vulnerable populations?

» People who could face discrimination based on:

- Race
- Gender
- Social or economic status
- Sexual orientation
- Other physical and/or mental conditions
 - Obesity
 - Terminal illness
 - Mental incapacity
 - Disease diagnosis



Equity Research

- ❖ Three generations of equity research:
 1. Detection of disparities in health and health care
 2. Understanding the causes and mechanisms of these disparities
 3. Developing and testing of interventions to reduce or eliminate disparities

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Equity Research

- ❖ Three generations of equity research:
 - » 1st gen: Detection of disparities in health and health care
 - » 2nd gen: Understanding the causes and mechanisms of these disparities
 - » 3rd gen: Developing and testing of interventions to reduce or eliminate disparities

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The End



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