

VA National & VISN Researchers & Evaluators in Residence (REiR) Program Opportunities – October/November 2020 Cycle

HSR&D will fund VA researchers and evaluators to spend time in clinical program or VISN offices to help with analysis and to bring research knowledge to policy and program planning. HSR&D solicited interest from VA program and VISN offices to host embedded researchers or evaluators. These offices will benefit from advanced analytic expertise and access to a network of research knowledge, while HSR&D researchers and evaluators will benefit by increasing their understanding of important policy and operations questions and the operational data available to answer them.

The timing and details of the arrangement are negotiable, but hosts have identified their preferred arrangement (timing, duration, percentage effort, and need for the person to be on site vs. virtual). **Funding commitment for this cycle (October/November 2020) varies by VA program or VISN office (see positions below) and may exceed the standard \$35,000 budget cap with sufficient justification.** Duration and support will be based on the success of the relationship and continued need of the program or VISN office.

Program and VISN offices underwent a competitive process for selection into this program. The following positions were reviewed and approved by HSR&D. Additional information on these positions can be found on subsequent pages as listed below:

- 1. Veterans Crisis Line (VCL), Office of Mental Health and Suicide Prevention (OMHSP):** *Program Evaluation for non VHA-using Veterans who Utilize VCL (page 3)*
- 2. 10X SimLEARN/Innovation Ecosystem:** *Needs Assessment & Evaluation for Model Simulation and Education Curriculum (page 4)*

Hosting offices are expected to provide a desk and computer when the resident is working at the host office. The host must also provide data access for the resident.

To help us monitor the success of the program and identify ways to improve it, both the hosting offices and the researchers/evaluators will be required to complete a brief mid-year assessment and final report which should include any products arising from this program.

Researcher/Evaluator in Residence Eligibility

The VA National & VISN Researchers & Evaluators in Residence (REiR) Program is an intramural program conducted by VA-salaried, non-clinical investigators at VA medical centers or VA-approved sites. To be eligible to submit an application to the REiR Program, the researcher or evaluator should hold an advanced degree in a relevant field to the proposed topic area. In addition, the researcher or evaluator must have at least a 5/8ths time VA appointment (if less than 5/8ths, a request for a waiver is required).

The local HSR&D Center of Innovation (COIN) Director or local Associate Chief of Staff for Research and Development (ACOS/R&D) must submit a letter of support stating that they will serve as the REiR Program Sponsor at the station to be responsible for funds sent for the REiR Program. To receive funding, an investigator profile, including the Commons ID, must be completed in ePromise for the researcher, COIN Director, or ACOS/R&D (as appropriate).

Application Requirements

1. Indicate Program or VISN Office posting for application
2. Resume/Curriculum vitae (CV)
3. Confirmation of 5/8ths time VA appointment (or request for a waiver, if less than 5/8ths).
4. Letter of endorsement from local COIN Director or ACOS/R&D, as appropriate.
5. One-page essay describing:
 - a) Prior experience working in the selected area, including any skills specifically mentioned in the posting
 - b) Long-term research interests
 - c) Applicant's objectives for the residency

Once selections are made, the researcher/evaluator and program office will develop a work plan and budget to cover their time in residence and will submit to HSR&D for review and funding.

Key Dates for this REiR Program Posting

October 19, 2020: REiR Program opportunities announced.

November 13, 2020: Applications due to REiR Program mailbox (vhacohsrdri@va.gov).

November 30, 2020: Notifications sent to applicants from HSR&D.

December 2020: Program office and Researcher/Evaluator develop work plan and budget and submit to HSR&D REiR mailbox (vhacohsrdri@va.gov).

Timing and distribution of funds will depend on work plan and budget developed by Program/VISN office and Researcher/Evaluator

PROPOSAL: *Program Evaluation for non VHA-using Veterans who Utilize VCL*

PROGRAM OFFICE: Veterans Crisis Line (VCL), Office of Mental Health and Suicide Prevention (OMHSP)

PROGRAM LEAD: Gregory Hughes, LCSW

<p><u>Summary of expected program/policy to benefit from additional analytical support:</u> The Veterans Crisis Line (VCL) is a critical component of the largest integrated suicide prevention network in the United States; VCL is linked with over 400 Suicide Prevention Coordinators (SPCs) at every VA medical center across the country. Identifiable, VHA-using Veterans comprise approximately 23% of VCL’s call volume; evaluation projects are currently ongoing for this population. However, little is known about the non-VHA using Veterans who call the VCL. Gaining a better understanding of this specific population would allow VCL to tailor interventions for those Veterans. The objective of the proposed project is to determine the extent of VHA engagement following SPC consults resulting from a VCL call from non VHA-using Veterans. The researcher will develop and execute a program evaluation plan to help VCL learn more about the target population and best ways to connect them to care.</p>
<p><u>Associated VA National Priority:</u> Suicide prevention is the top clinical priority in the VHA. The VCL supports this clinical priority through its 24/7 crisis support to Veterans.</p>
<p><u>Objectives and associated deliverables:</u> Design and conduct a program evaluation that examines:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Whether VCL is a conduit to care for non-VHA using Veterans• Extent to which an SPC consult placed during the VCL call results in care engagement/re-engagement• Outcomes for Veterans who (re)engage in VHA care following their SPC consult compared to Veterans who received a consult but were already engaged in care at the time of call/consult
<p><u>Type of analysis and/or data requested:</u> The researcher will be using CDW and Medora datasets (Medora is VCL’s electronic health record)</p>
<p><u>Requested Researcher Qualifications:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Program evaluation design• Quantitative analysis• SQL
<p><u>Preferred duration, effort, and in-person time</u> This would be a virtual position at up to 50% FTE over 12 months.</p>
<p><u>Additional support or benefits available to the researcher/evaluator in residence:</u> VCL points of contact will be available to meet with the researcher at designated intervals to collaboratively discuss and support their evaluation. The points of contact will also act as a conduit between the researcher and other VCL stakeholders. VCL staff will serve as liaison between the researcher and data team to ensure data access.</p>

PROPOSAL: Needs Assessment & Evaluation for Model Simulation and Education Curriculum

PROGRAM OFFICE: 10X SimLEARN/Innovation Ecosystem

PROGRAM LEAD: Chad Kessler, MD

Summary of expected program/policy to benefit from additional analytical support:

Over the next year, the SimLEARN/Innovation Ecosystem, under the Deputy Under Secretary for Discovery, Education and Affiliate Networks (DEAN – 10X), will be investigating simulation and education models and practices in VA, the Department of Defense (DoD), and academic and community settings. After performing a targeted needs assessment of simulation and education training across VHA, a team will visit and interview community healthcare systems, academic affiliates, and DoD colleagues to better understand different curricular models of collaborative clinical training. The researcher in residence will assist the Office in developing data collection instruments (quantitative and qualitative); collecting data (including conducting interviews at VA and non-VA sites); analyzing data; and creating educational goals and objectives for a model simulation and education curriculum.

Associated VA National Priority:

- VA as a High Reliability Organization
- VA as a Learning Organization

Objectives and associated deliverables:

- Identify and investigate novel and innovative clinical education simulation strategies
- Develop, validate, and conduct needs-assessment survey in conjunction with the Health Analytics and Informatics Group (HAIG)
- Contribute to development, evaluation, and dissemination of clinical education/simulation training programs, including formulating clear goals and objectives, aligning and implementing outcome-based training programs to meet these objectives, and designing evaluation of these programs

Type of analysis and/or data requested:

- Survey design and implementation
- Qualitative and quantitative analysis in collaboration with HAIG

Requested Researcher Qualifications:

- Background and experience in education of health professionals preferred
- Experience in qualitative and/or quantitative research methods, including survey design, strongly preferred
- Background and experience in dissemination science helpful, but not required

Preferred duration, effort, and in-person time

The Office is seeking a researcher able to commit 50% effort over 12 months (primarily virtual, with occasional travel as needed).

Additional support or benefits available to the researcher/evaluator in residence:

The host office will provide administrative support for the researcher in residence.