

HSR&D/QUERI National Meeting 2022

Advancing Health Equity through Research, Implementation Science, Diversity, and Inclusion

Special Call for Veteran & Caregiver Posters

Veterans and Caregivers are invited to submit abstracts for poster presentations that highlight research projects, Veteran Engagement Groups (VEGs), or other research-related activities. Poster sessions provide an opportunity to meet researchers, other Veterans, and Caregivers from all over the United States. Accepted posters will be displayed during a poster session, in which you, as the Veteran/Caregiver will stand by your poster and fellow conference attendees will view your poster and ask questions.

Who do we mean by Veterans and Caregivers?

For the purposes of this document:

- **Veterans** are those who served in the U.S. Armed Forces, regardless of discharge status.
- **Caregivers** are the primary caregivers who speak on behalf of a Veteran under their care.

Who can submit an abstract?

U.S. Military Veterans or Caregivers *who are actively engaged in a VA research, evaluation, or implementation project(s)*, including, but not limited to one of the following:

- Current member of a VA-funded Veteran Engagement Group
- Current partner with a VA-funded study (including peer specialists, mentors, or consultants)
- Member of a Veteran community organization that partners with a current VA-funded research study

Veterans who are employed by VA are encouraged to submit abstracts, but **if the individual is funded as a *Principal Investigator in research*, they should submit their work via the regular call for abstracts.** If you have any questions about this, please contact hsrdweb.boston@va.gov.

What topic(s) should my abstract/poster address?

Your abstract should describe the work you are doing as a partner in research, and how it relates to the theme of the 2022 HSR&D/QUERI National Meeting: Advancing Health Equity through Research, Implementation Science, Diversity, and Inclusion. “Diversity is the practice of including people from different backgrounds including race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, social class, physical ability or attributes, religious beliefs, national origin, and political beliefs. Equity is not the same as equality. Equity recognizes that each person has different circumstances and allocates resources and opportunities needed to reach equal outcomes, including their best health. Inclusion is a culture in which every person in a group or organization feels a sense of belonging, is valued for their uniqueness, and can contribute meaningfully to decisions that impact them.” (Williams, 2021)

*Citation: Williams, J.C. Bias Interrupted: creating inclusion for real and for good. Harvard Business Review Press, Boston. 2021.

How is this special poster session different from the regular call for posters?

This special poster session was designed to help HSR&D decide on who to invite to the national meeting, and more importantly, to show the many different contributions that Veterans and Caregivers make to VA research. In 2019, 25 Veterans and Caregivers were invited to the national meeting to join forums and give feedback, but they were nominated by the investigators they worked with. This special call for abstracts is meant to ensure that all Veterans and Caregivers who are engaged in research have an opportunity to attend. Submissions for the regular poster session go through a different process - investigators submit their abstracts and they are reviewed by a committee of peers, who decide if the study should be presented in a scheduled presentation, forum, panel discussion, or a poster presentation. A regular academic poster is generally designed to show research in a concise way, with the use of pictures or graphics, and a relatively small amount of writing. The special poster, in this case, has been semi-structured to showcase the author’s engagement in research.

What information does an abstract include?

Your abstract is like a preview of your final poster. It should contain enough detail to give an overview of the content but does not need to include specifics. The abstract should be 500 words (total, not per question) or less. Your abstract should address the following:

1. **Objective:** In one or two sentences, describe the purpose or mission of your project or Veteran Engagement Group.
2. **Background:** Briefly summarize your Veteran Engagement Group(s) or Project(s).
3. **Methods:** What is your role in the project or VEG? Describe the ways that you engage with other team members.
4. **Results:** What has come out of this partnership?
5. **Conclusion:** Why is this project/collaboration important? What does the future of this project or group look like? Do you see any needs for improvement?
6. **Implications:** Do you feel your project or VEG equitably represents the diversity within your Veteran community? If not, what are your recommendations?

(Cont’d)

VA Health Services Research & Development Service

Will there be other activities specifically for invited Veterans and Caregivers?

The national meeting will include events to welcome Veterans and Caregivers, provision of space to network and connect with other Veteran/Caregiver presenters, and access to an exclusive concierge table with resources and optional activities for poster presenters.

May others help me design the poster? May I have co-authors?

Yes! Posters are often a team effort. We highly recommend that you collaborate with your research team, liaison, or others to create your submission. Other coauthors can be from your group or others you work with on your project. Please note: to ensure a maximum amount of diversity among the conference attendees, only the “first author” of the poster will be invited to the conference (no coauthors, including partnering researchers). If your abstract is accepted, HSR&D will cover the expenses of travel and lodging for the conference.

There are multiple Veterans/Caregivers in my group or team, can more than one of us submit an abstract?

Yes. Your poster should focus on how you personally engage in research and how your collaboration impacts the group or project you work with. If another team member is submitting an abstract, you should communicate with them to ensure your submissions are not too similar. The reviewers will do their best to ensure there are a wide variety of perspectives and projects represented at the conference.

If it is accepted, how do I print my poster?

Please reach out to your project lead (principal investigator, project manager or VEG liaison) for printing information. Often this expense is paid through the grant and the poster printed through the associated VA or university. If your project team does not have funds or resources to pay for printing, please contact hsrdweb.boston@va.gov

How will my abstract be evaluated?

Abstract submissions will be evaluated by an expert Review Committee of Veterans and researchers. The committee will be blinded to the authors' identities and VA facility. Submissions with the highest scores and greatest relevance to the meeting theme will be selected to receive an invitation to the national HSR&D conference. All decisions will be made by the Review Committee in collaboration with the meeting co-chairs and will be final.

What happens after I submit an abstract?

The review committee will notify you if your abstract is accepted no later than August 31, 2022. Upon acceptance of the abstract, you will be contacted with travel details, instructions, and a deadline for submitting your completed poster. You will be given instructions for your poster submission, an optional template, and some completed examples to help you design and print your final posters. Your poster should be a more detailed version of your abstract and should focus on the theme: Advancing Health Equity through Research, Implementation Science, Diversity, and Inclusion.

More questions?

- For questions regarding the Veteran & Caregiver Poster Session, contact both raymond.facundo@va.gov and susan.zickmund@va.gov
- For general questions about the submission portal, the conference, travel, lodging, etc., please contact hsrdweb.boston@va.gov



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