

Traumatic Amputation QuERI Workshop Sets Agenda For Evidence-based Best Practices and Quality Improvement

May 19-20, 2004

VA's Office of Research and Development held the Traumatic Amputation QuERI Workshop to teach VA amputee health care and other rehabilitation researchers the QuERI process and to educate existing QuERI center personnel of the need for more amputee health care research.

At the workshop, a group of health researchers and clinicians from Walter Reed Army Medical Center (WRAMC) and other VA investigators brainstormed ways in which to examine strategies that address comorbidities and other secondary issues of the amputee.

Central to the meeting was the need to address the influx of traumatic injury amputees to WRAMC and an anticipated influx of amputees into the VA healthcare system. VA is committed to enabling *every* veteran with limb loss to enjoy complete and fulfilling lives.

The workshop began with a message from Secretary of Veterans Affairs Anthony Principi that it's now time for VA and others *to serve the veterans who have served* and given so much of themselves for this country's freedom.

Dr. Robert Ruff, acting director of Rehabilitation Research and Development (R&D), stated that VA's strength lies in its integrated health care system, a system that is driven by best care practices and not insurance company constraints. With over 160 medical centers and 800 clinics, Dr. Ruff said VA is by far the largest health care system in the U.S. with the means to provide the best outcomes.

Dr. John Demakis, VA's director of Health Services R&D, noted that it is the mission of VA to study the relevant research and implement it to the bedside; in effect changing the outcomes of the veterans for the better. Those outcomes would produce better wheelchairs, orthotics and prostheses.

Dr. Mindy Aisen, acting chief of R&D, echoed those sentiments. The job of VA's researchers is to find what works and what doesn't, she said. If it doesn't work, then why not? When researchers work together, Dr. Aisen added, the processes become more flexible, thus producing critical results.

The goals of these researchers and others at the meeting were the same: to provide the best possible outcomes for the veterans who come into the system seeking prostheses. Please visit the links below for the actual presentations given by each research professional.