

The International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF) (*International Classification of Functioning, Disability, and Health. Geneva, Switzerland: World Health Organization; 2001*) provides a helpful framework for understanding functional endpoints in RR&D research and our mission to maximize Veterans’ functional independence, quality of life and participation in their lives and community.

One of the aims of the ICF is to provide a “scientific, operational basis for describing, understanding and studying health and health-related states, outcomes, and determinants” of functioning and disability. Consistent with this framework, RR&D expects study endpoints to include measures of functioning **at the level of the Veteran** (or animal in pre-clinical studies) and in social contexts when appropriate. Studies with endpoints limited to measures of function at the body structure level only (i.e. symptoms) are usually considered outside the RR&D purview.

Detailed information on the ICF is available on the WHO (search ICF) and CDC websites [https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/icd/icfoverview\\_finalforwho10sept.pdf](https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/icd/icfoverview_finalforwho10sept.pdf) and is summarized below to describe the different perspectives of functioning and disability.

The ICF is focused on functional status rather than on health conditions or diseases which are addressed in WHO’s International Classification of Diseases (ICD). The ICF framework is complementary to the ICD because medical diagnosis alone does not accurately predict disability, and the relationship between diagnosis and disability is complex.

The ICF framework is based on a biopsychosocial model of functioning and disability, incorporates the multifaceted relationship between a health condition (disorder or disease) and the interaction among body, whole person (Veteran) and social perspectives, and considers context (environmental and personal factors) that can serve as barriers to or facilitators of functioning and disability.

<b>Perspective</b>	<b>Body</b>	<b>Whole Person</b>	<b>Social</b>
Functioning	Body Functions	Activities	Participation
Disability	Impairments	Limitations	Restrictions

The ICF defines functioning and disability from each perspective (WHO 2001):

**Body**

- Body Structures are anatomical parts of the body such as organs, limbs and their components.
- Body Functions are physiological functions of body systems (including psychological functions).
- Impairments are problems in body function or structure such as a significant deviation or loss.

**Whole Person (Veteran)**

- Activity is the execution of a task or action by an individual.
- Activity Limitations are difficulties an individual may have in executing activities.

**Social**

- Participation is involvement in a life situation.
- Participation Restrictions are problems an individual may experience in involvement in life situations.

## Context

- Environmental Factors make up the physical, social and attitudinal environment in which people live and conduct their lives [including products and technology].