

Transforming pain care in the Veterans Health Administration: Bridges from theory and research to practice and policy.

Statement of Purpose: This single-topic issue of *Journal of Rehabilitation Research and Development (JRRD)* will present results from research focusing on pain care for Veterans. Results of research conducted by Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) scientists and non-VA scientists will be considered. The priority will be to publish results of innovative and high-impact research, and consideration of practice and policy implications is specifically encouraged. In particular, this issue will focus on research activities and practice and policy issues that speak to recommendations made in the 2011 Institute of Medicine (IOM) report “Relieving Pain in America,” in the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Pain Management Directive (VHA Directive 2009-053) and/or in the recent *JRRD* commentary titled “Opportunities in rehabilitation research” by Alex Ommaya and colleagues (<http://www.rehab.research.va.gov/jour/2013/506/pdf/ommaya506.pdf>).

Specific Objectives:

1. Educate readers about special issues faced by Veterans with pain, including issues highlighted in the recent editorial by Ommaya and colleagues published in *JRRD*.
2. Describe the range of research activities that relate to pain and pain management taking place within the VA healthcare system.
3. Educate readers about novel approaches to the assessment and treatment of pain and comorbid conditions for Veterans with pain.
4. Describe solutions to sources of inequities in pain care that may have relevance for Veterans.
5. Outline an agenda for further research addressing the management of pain among Veterans, with a special focus on incorporating the recommendations of the 2011 IOM report.

Scope of Project:

1. This single-topic issue will be composed of three guest editorials (editors of this special topic issue [Kerns and Heapy], the National Program Director of Pain Management [Gallagher], and the VA’s representative to the Interagency Pain Research Coordinating Committee [Kusiak]), followed by 14 full-text original articles. Articles will include results of empiric studies (including formal, high-quality meta-analysis), although one or two may describe an important and innovative theoretical or conceptual framework or systematic review.
2. Submissions will be solicited from VA and non-VA investigators.
3. Desired manuscript topic areas include—
 - a. Epidemiology of pain and comorbidities among Veterans.
 - b. Advances in detection, assessment, and measurement of pain among Veterans.
 - c. Treatment and rehabilitation innovations for the management of pain among Veterans.
 - d. Promising basic laboratory science and translational pain research.
 - e. Cultural and disparities issues that specifically relate to pain management among Veterans.
 - f. Advances in dissemination and implementation science related to pain management.

Timeline:

January through June 2014—Solicitation of authors and manuscripts
July 2014—Roster of potential titles and authors completed
September 2014—Submission of manuscripts for review
Summer 2015—Publication of single-topic issue

