



Happy 2015 to you, the *JRRD* readership. It is my pleasure to be serving as the new *Journal of Rehabilitation Research and Development* (*JRRD*) Editor. I come to this position with enthusiasm, joy, and commitment to the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and the rehabilitation community. My past research, supported by VA's Office of Research and Development (ORD), has focused on quality of life, outcomes, and technology in a variety of populations, including Veterans with spinal cord injury (SCI), traumatic brain injury (TBI), and posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD). When I was a VA field-based investigator, I assisted other researchers in methodology and statistics and mentored junior investigators as well as served on the *JRRD* Editorial Board. In 2012, I made a career move and joined ORD's Rehabilitation Research and Development Service as a Scientific Program Manager (SPM) for the Mental Health and Community Integration Panel, a position that I continue to hold. My passion for research to address the rehabilitation needs of Veterans has been a driving force in my career. My respect and enthusiasm for scientific peer review are a perfect match as SPM and *JRRD* Editor. As I have come to learn, the jobs are complementary, with goals to ensure that proposals and manuscripts meet the broader VA mission, that best possible subject matter experts review the work, and that both funded studies and published articles are scientifically strong. My *JRRD* Editor work is possible because of the skill and dedication of the excellent *JRRD* editorial team. I send a huge thank you to this team as I learn this new job.

2015 brought changes to the *JRRD* Editorial Board. We heartily thank the following former Editorial Board members for their service and contributions to *JRRD*: Brian Hafner, PhD; Stefan Hesse, DrMed; Laurie Harkness, PhD; Chester Ho, MD; Mary Jansen, PhD; Lou-Sing Kan, PhD; Harry Levitt, PhD; John McDonald III, MD, PhD; Deborah Miller, PhD; Ronald Shorr, PhD; James Toombs, MD; Gerald Weisman, MSME, ATP, RET; and Susan Waltzman, PhD. With these changes brought the opportunity for others to serve. And thus, we welcome new Editorial Board members Gina Bertocci, PhD (technology, biomechanics); Kath M. Bogie, PhD (wheelchair, SCI); Mary E. Bowen, PhD (geriatrics); M. Jason Highsmith, DPT, PhD (prosthetics); Terrence Keane, PhD (PTSD); Jonathan Lipshitz, PhD (TBI); Paul Meyer, MD (orthopedic surgery); Arthur M. Sherwood, PhD (SCI, biomedical engineering); Eva Widerstrom-Noga, PhD (pain, SCI); and Yih-Kuen Jan, PhD (SCI, pressure ulcers).

As always, *JRRD*'s online presence is strong and growing. In comparing 2014 with 2013 statistics, *JRRD* readership continues to access articles online, with over 9.9 million content downloads, a near 500,000 increase. Similarly, we had over 8.2 million PDF article downloads, an increase of 400,000. Web site hits have

skyrocketed to 26.6 million, which is a 2.3 million increase from 2013. Please revisit the newly redesigned *JRRD* Web site (www.rehab.research.va.gov/jrrd/index.html). These changes include the creation of new graphics, artwork, and navigation systems; reorganization of content; and new pages. Altogether, close to 3,000 Web pages were converted to the new template design.

This past year, the VA underwent a major change with the appointment of Robert McDonald as Secretary in July 2014. Secretary McDonald has spoken often and eloquently about the importance of research to the overall VA mission, stating that "the VA has a legacy of excellence, innovation, cutting-edge research" (Institute of Medicine's annual conference; October 20, 2014; Washington, DC).

With his release of the VA Blueprint for Excellence [1] comes the promise to improve the VA healthcare system for our nation's Veterans, ensure that results from research sponsored by the VA will be disseminated widely, and provide information on how Veterans will benefit. *JRRD* supports this goal, as our "*JRRD* At a Glance" section provides Veterans with a synopsis of the studies, who will benefit from the research, and what those benefits are. In the coming year, we will have our authors strengthen those statements to provide the readership an understanding of how the research presented will benefit Veterans, regardless of where the work was completed or the funding mechanism.

It is exciting to be part of *JRRD* as it enters its 51st year and be able to disseminate research and development findings to Veterans, VA researchers and clinicians, and the rehabilitation community as a whole.

Shirley Groer, PhD
Editor, JRRD

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1. Veterans Health Administration. Blueprint for Excellence [Internet]. Washington (DC): Department of Veterans Affairs; 2014 Sep 21. Available from: http://www.va.gov/HEALTH/docs/VHA_Blueprint_for_Excellence.pdf

