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Center for Management of Complex Chronic Care



*CMC³ Soon to be Called **CINCCH***

As of October 1, 2013, VA HSR&D Centers will be transitioning to Center of Innovations (COIN). Our new Center will be called, Center for INnovation in Complex Chronic Healthcare (CINCCH). Dr. Fran Weaver will be the Director, with Dr. Saul Weiner as Deputy Director, and Drs. Kevin Stroupe and Howard Gordon as Associate Directors of the Hines and JBVA campuses respectively.

Our COIN will advance key transformational goals set forth by VA Secretary Shinseki including enhancing the provision of patient-centered care, promoting the use of new health care models for care delivery and providing evidence-based care for Veterans with long term needs. The Focused Areas for Research for CINCCH are to: 1) Improve patient-centeredness through new models of care, 2) Improve care for Veterans with neurological conditions, and 3) Optimize quality outcomes and value of care for patients with complex chronic conditions.

Building on current research, CINCCH will conduct research to improve patient centeredness of care through investigations of new health care delivery modalities (such as telehealth), through enhanced patient-provider communication (such as innovative patient and provider training), and through new models of specialty care delivery (such as alternative venues of care). The second focused area of research will target Veterans with neurological conditions such as SCI/D, traumatic brain injury, and Parkinson's disease. These Veterans often experience conditions or symptoms secondary to their neurological condition (such as SCI/D-related pressure ulcer) and/or issues of coordination of care across providers and settings of care, which will be targets for investigation by CINCCH. Our third focus area will include efforts to improve specialty care for Veterans with complex chronic care needs, and to improve value through development of economic methods and evaluation.

To achieve these goals, the COIN will partner with several VA Operations Offices including: the Office of Patient Centered Care and Cultural Transformation (OPCCCT) and with SCI/D Services. The partnership with the OPCCCT will be key in ensuring that CINCCH research advances the VA Secretary's transformational initiatives. Our partnership with SCI/D Services represents a long-standing and fruitful relationship with investigators that has developed over the past 14 years in conjunction with the SCI QUERI. SCI QUERI is also based at Hines VA and includes many of the investigators who will participate in the COIN. This partnership will ensure implementation of key findings in this vulnerable population of Veterans.

CINCCH will also continue to support career development through mentoring and formal training programs.

Overall, through innovative research and key partnerships, CINCCH will build on almost 30 years of experience and accomplishments by investigators from the VA HSR&D program at Hines VA to conduct research that will remain at the forefront of efforts to improve health care for our Veterans.

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SCI QUERI Renewal Approved

Spinal Cord Injury Quality Enhancement research Initiative (SCI QUERI) was recently approved for renewal through September 2016. SCI QUERI was initially launched in 1998 as part of a system-wide transformation aimed at improving the quality of healthcare for Veterans. Lead by Dr. Fran Weaver, SCI QUERI works closely with the Office of SCI/D Services and the SCI/D System of Care to improve the lives of Veterans with spinal cord injuries and disorders (SCI/D). The central mission of SCI QUERI is to promote health, independence, functioning, quality of life, and productivity of Veterans with spinal cord injuries and disorders (SCI/D), through the implementation of evidence-based findings.

SCI QUERI has identified three primary areas of focus for research and implementation based on a number of facts including costs, frequency, and impact on function and quality of life. These areas are: pressure ulcer prevention and treatment; infection prevention and management; and optimization of function. For more information, visit the SCI QUERI Website: <http://www.queri.research.va.gov/sci>

Dr. Charlesnika Evans Receives Rising Star Award from UIC



Dr. C. Evans

The University of Illinois, School of Public Health celebrated its 40 anniversary this year. On April 13, 2013, the alumni celebration was held at Chicago's Field Museum. At this prestigious celebration, the Annual Rising Star Award was presented, recognizing the outstanding achievements of a UIC School of Public Health (SPH) recently graduated alumni. The 2012/13 Rising Star Award was presented to Dr. Charlesnika Evans. Criteria for the award included: being an alumnus who graduated within the last ten years, highlighting the outstanding talents and contributions that young people make to their profession, to their community, and to UIC SPH.

We congratulate Dr. Evans on this well deserved honor.

Dr. Karen Saban Receives Midwest Nursing Research Society Award



Dr. K. Saban

Karen Saban, PhD, RN has received the Physiology, Behavior, Genomics & Society Research Section Early Investigator Award from the Midwest Nursing Research Society. News of this award came in February, 2013. She was nominated by her mentor, Dr. Linda Witek Janusek, Professor and Endowed Chair for Research at Loyola University's Marcella Niehoff School of Nursing. Dr. Saban recently received funding for NRI 12-413, "Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) for Women at Risk for Cardiovascular Disease (CVD)." Congratulations to Dr. Saban on receiving this award.

More Promotions, Appointments, Graduations

Dr. Bridget Smith, Senior Investigator at CMC3 and SCI QUERI, was promoted to Associate Professor, Department of Medicine, Stritch School of Medicine, Loyola University.

Carol Kostovich, PhD, RN, one of our past RN Postdoctoral Fellows, and a current Research Investigator at the Center, recently joined Loyola University's Marcella Niehoff School of Nursing as an Associate Professor.

Dr. Rachael Martinez successfully defended for her PhD in Social Psychology at Loyola University, Chicago. Her dissertation was titled, "The Impact of Team Citizenship Behaviors on Performance in Women's Sports Teams."

Keshonna Lones, one of our Research Assistants, recently received her Masters of Healthcare Administration from University of Illinois at Chicago, School of Public Health.

Monique Patton, a Research Assistant who has worked with us for many summers, recently earned her JD from Michigan State University.

Swetha Ramathan one of our current Research Assistants, recently graduated from the University of Illinois at Chicago with a Masters Degree of Public Health.

Congratulations to everyone on their accomplishments!

New Studies

SDR 12-280 “Developing a Patient Inventory to Facilitate Patient-Centered Care Delivery”

Frances Weaver, Principal Investigator, pending JIT

The expected product of this research is a patient inventory that facilitates patient-centered care delivery. The inventory would collect information on patient resources, life circumstances and preferences, and compliment other tools available to providers. With the help of our operations partners, the inventory can be adapted for use through a variety of options that are most convenient for patients, including through a kiosk, tablet computer, or through secure messaging. The Health Informatics Initiative (hi2) and the VHA Patient-Centered Care and Cultural Transformation Office are interested in prototyping patient-entered data that would add personal information to the medical record. Future steps include integrating the patient inventory into the medical record where it can be flagged, regularly updated and easily accessible to the healthcare team to provide continuous patient centered care.

RRP 12-515 “Use of Declination Forms to Improve Influenza Vaccination in Health Care Workers”

Sherri LaVela, PhD, Principal Investigator, pending JIT

This study will identify facilitators and barriers to implementing a declination form program in VA SCI care facilities, providing information about what strategies are successful to facilitate a national roll-out. Successful implementation of a declination form program is expected to increase influenza vaccination rates in HCWs providing care to Veterans with SCI/D, resulting in decreased transmission of influenza between health care workers, patients, and other workers.

RRP 12-561 “Evaluating the Implementation of the Pressure Ulcer Monitoring Tool”

Marylou Guihan, PhD, Principal Investigator, pending JIT

Persons with spinal cord injury (SCI) are at high risk for pressure ulcers (PrUs) throughout their lifetime due to decreased mobility, lack of sensation and other physiologic changes. Current SCI PrU guidelines recommend that treatment be changed if there is no progress in healing within 2-4 weeks. Long term gains in PrU treatment in Veterans with SCI will depend on successful implementation and sustained use of the SCI Pressure Ulcer Monitoring Tool (SCI-PUMT). This study will evaluate the first year of the SCI-PUMT implementation and set the stage for a future QUERI SDP focusing on longer term implementation and sustainability of the SCI-PUMT at the VA 23 SCI Centers. Successful implementation of the SCI-PUMT will allow for comparative effectiveness research of PrU treatments on healing, thus advancing research in and improving quality of PrU treatment in Veterans with SCI.

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