CINCCH Staff Presentations at HSR&D National Conference

**Podium Presentations**

**Evans CT.** Bacteria Isolated from Patients with Spinal Cord Injury Versus Other Patients: Is an SCI Unit-Specific Antibiogram Necessary? 07/09/2015.

**Etingen B, Miskevics S, Hill JN, Jordan N, Goolsby E, Diaz C, LaVela SL.** Does integrative health coaching impact health outcomes and healthcare utilization among Veterans who are homeless or at risk for homelessness? 07/10/2015.

**Gordon HS, Pugach O, Ford ME.** Experiences of Discrimination in a Prospective Cohort of Veterans with Heart Failure. 07/09/2015.

**LaVela SL, Hill JN, Smith BM, Evans CT, Goldstein B, Martinello R.** Healthcare worker influenza declination form program. 07/09/2015.

**Tarlov E, Jordan N, Burkhart E, Sohn MW, Miskevics S, LaVela SL.** Patient-Centered Care Innovations and Patient Experiences with VA Care. 07/10/2015.

**Workshops**


**Posters**


Hill JN, Balbale S, Lones K, LaVela SL. Patients’ Use of Photovoice to Define Function, Barriers and Facilitators Experienced, and Adaptations to Barriers. 07/08/2015.


LaVela SL, Locatelli SM, Kostovich CT, Gosch M. Developing and evaluating the psychometric properties of the respirator comfort, wearing experience, and function instrument (R-COMFI). 07/09/2015.


Locatelli SM, Turcios S, LaVela SL. Use of a novel method for measuring the patient experience: Results of guided tours with Veterans and employees/providers. 07/09/2015.


Dr. Abigail Silva Receives AcademyHealth Award

Abigail Silva, PhD, MPH, an epidemiologist and post-doctoral research fellow at CINCHCH, has had a very successful few months. Her paper entitled “Assessing the quality of race/ethnicity, tumor, and breast cancer treatment information in a non-SEER state registry” received the Elekta Impac Award for Journal of Registry Management: Best Paper of the Year 2014: Honorable Mention. Her study provides information that can help researchers better plan their studies and interpret their findings if they can identify which data elements are reliable and which warrant concern. AcademyHealth also awarded Dr. Silva a Diversity Scholars Network Scholarship. This afforded her the opportunity to attend the Annual Research Meeting (ARM), one pre-ARM Methods Workshop, and an Interest Group meeting of her choice. Additionally, she was provided with an AcademyHealth membership and paired with a mentor in health services research. She really enjoyed this meeting and is looking forward to capitalizing on the new connections she made. And finally, this Fall Dr. Silva will be joining the faculty at Loyola University’s Stritch School of Medicine Department of Public Health Sciences as an assistant professor. She is looking forward to maintaining her collaborations with CINCHCH researchers as she continues to develop her research agenda in the areas of cancer care and health care access.

Dr. Sara Locatelli Receives ASCIP Award

Dr. Sara M. Locatelli received a Trainee Research Award from the Academy of Spinal Cord Injury Professionals (ASCP) for a project examining weight management practices for Veterans with spinal cord injuries/disorders (SCI/D) (PI: Dr. Sherri L. LaVela; Co-PI: Dr. Locatelli). A chart review of 100 Veterans with SCI/D was conducted to examine weight management education, referrals, and treatment over a 12 month period. Drs. Locatelli and LaVela will present this research as a platform at ASCIP in September, and Dr. Locatelli will present alongside the other two Trainee Research Award winners in an interactive poster session during the meeting.

Dr. Sherri LaVela Receives UIC All Star Award

Dr. Sherri L. LaVela was the recipient of an Alumni Award from the University of Illinois at Chicago School of Public Health (UIC SPH). These awards are given to recognize the achievements of outstanding alumni. Recipients are selected based on outstanding professional and personal successes, as well as involvement in civic, cultural, or charitable activities. Dr. LaVela received the Rising Star Award in recognition of her outstanding achievements and research to improve patient-centered care and health care delivery to vulnerable populations. This award highlights the tremendous talents and contributions that she makes to her profession, community, and to UIC SPH.
Study on Evaluating Environmental Control Units (ECU) in SCI

Environmental control technologies such as lighting control and security systems allow individuals to monitor and control their environment. These systems can be integrated so that they can all be operated by a single unit or even remotely through a phone or computer. Persons with SCI/D are likely to find great value in using these technologies to independently manage their environment.

The VA Center for Innovation (VACI) Office, part of the VA Connected Health program, is overseeing the purchase and installation of the autonoME device, designed by Accessibility Services, Inc. for VA SCI beds. These units can be used through multiple input methods including voice activation, touch, sip-and-puff, head tracker, and eye gaze methods. The autonoME unit allows for control of lights, telephone, television and more; has computer functions including word documents, e-reader, email, Skype and web browser, and has communication functions such as quick chat. The first phase of roll-out began in early 2014 and includes 5 SCI Centers. Additional sites are having ECUs installed this year.

Along with the autonoME ECUs, there are additional options available such as the GetWellNetwork (GWN) system, an interactive patient care (IPC) system which enables patients to view movies, access the Internet, play games, and get health information. Recently, GWN partnered with QuadJoy to provide patients with limited mobility, the ability to access IPC functionality through assistive mouse, or sip-and-puff technology. QuadJoy is a USB mouse in the form of a straw joystick that can be controlled with the user’s mouth to navigate the GWN system and internet, as well as change the television and volume. Some SCI Centers have chosen to purchase GWN as part of their facility’s plan and are supplementing the GWN with QuadJoy for those with limited function.

The project is funded by VACI with the support of VA SCI/D Services, and is being led by Drs. Fran Weaver and Rachael Martinez at CINCCH and Drs. Balmatee Bidassie and Marissa Valette at VERC. The team will evaluate: patient independence, satisfaction, and device functionality (human factors) related to the use of ECUs; impact of ECUs on healthcare providers’ perceptions of workflow, device functionality (human factors), and satisfaction, and sustainability (including expected costs) of these units over time.

New Post-doctoral Fellow Joins CINCCH

Jason Raad PhD is our latest postdoctoral fellow at the Center of Innovation for Complex Chronic Healthcare (CINCCH) at Edward Hines Jr. VA Hospital where he conducts research related to implementation and dissemination of evidence-based practices and policies related to depression, homelessness and the assessment of outcomes after traumatic injury.

Prior to his post-doctoral training, Dr. Raad was a research associate at the Center for Rehabilitation Outcomes Research (CROR) at the Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago (RIC) where his research focused on the implementation of outcome measures and clinical assessments. In that role, Dr. Raad worked on the team that launched the Rehabilitation Measures Database (RMD), where he authored more than 70 whitepapers, five journal articles and presented work at both national and international conferences. The National Association of Rehabilitation Research and Training Centers (NARRTC) recognized the RMD’s impact on practice with its 2012 Knowledge Translation award.

Dr. Raad was the 2014 recipient of RIC’s Sarah Baskin Award for Excellence in Employee Research and is the 2015 recipient of the Craig H. Neilsen Foundation’s Psychosocial Research Fellowship. Dr. Raad and his mentors, Drs. Sherri LaVela and Allen Heinemann will use this award to enhance the understanding of current practice guidelines related to the detection, treatment and management of depressive symptoms after spinal cord injuries and disorders.
Kudos to our Chicago Blackhawks for bringing the Stanley Cup home! Rita Bendana, Carol Durczak, Cindi Fiandaca & Gay Watkins represented CINCCH at the Hines VAH celebration!

Chris Gozali started as a volunteer at Hines VAH in 2006, became a VA employee in 2010 and a CINCCH employee in 2014. He will be leaving our center soon to attend medical school at the University of New England in Biddeford, Maine. Thanks for your service and good luck Chris!

Sean Tully has worked at our center for five years, but is now leaving CINCCH to attend medical school at Marian University College of Osteopathic Medicine in Indianapolis, Indiana. Good luck Sean!

Congratulations to Rachael Martinez and her husband Ian on the birth of their daughter Carlyn Kay on June 25, 2015 weighing 7 lbs. 14 oz.

Recent CINCCH Publications


Birnbaum AD, French DD, Mirsaiedi M, Wehrli S. Sarcoidosis in the national veteran population: association of ocular inflammation and mortality. Ophthalmology. 2015 May;122(5):934-941. PMID: 25687027


