

[Learn more](#) about the CHOIR Veteran Engagement in Research Group (VERG) initiative.

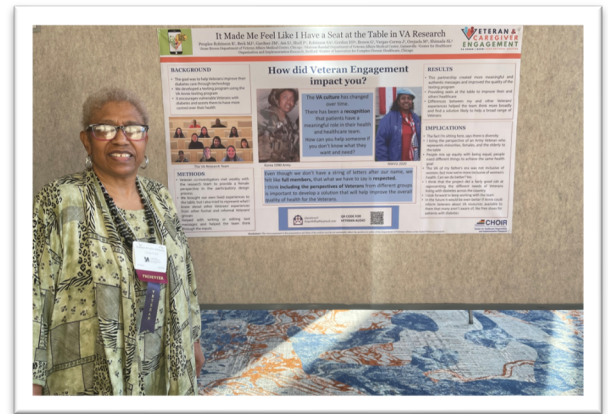
Questions? Comments? Suggestions? Please email Hannah Bailey (Hannah.Bailey2@va.gov)

Veteran Engagement at VA HSR&D/QUERI 2023 National Meeting

At the recent VA Health Services Research & Development (HSR&D)/Quality Enhancement Research Initiative (QUERI) 2023 National Meeting, Veteran consultants currently serving on the VA Annie Texting Study for Diabetes (Diabetes Disparities: Texting to Extend Treatment - ANNIE-DM) presented posters highlighting their experiences as Veteran researchers.

“It Made Me Feel Like I Have a Seat at the Table in VA Research”

Ms. Kathryn (Kaye) Peoples-Robinson is a United States Army Veteran. As a Veteran Consultant, she provides an invaluable perspective as a female minority Veteran. In addition to her own lived experiences, Ms. Peoples-Robinson is a voice for other Veterans’ lived experiences which she uniquely understands from her service. Her insights have galvanized the research team to find creative solutions to assist a wider range of Veterans. In her reflections as a Veteran researcher, Ms. Peoples-Robinson expressed, **“Even though we don’t have a string of letters after our name - we felt like full members, that what we have to say is respected.”**



Ms. Peoples-Robinson standing with her poster. [Click here to see the full poster online.](#)

“This Partnership Made Me Feel Like I Have Value Left in Me Still”



Mr. Michael (Mike) Beck is United States Air Force Veteran. As a Veteran Consultant, he is an instrumental member of the research team. In meetings, he shares personal stories of his experience managing diabetes, struggles with mobility as an amputee, and other health conditions. As a former combat medic, Mr. Beck highlights, **“in the military, we were trained to be a team; to look past differences and have each other’s backs . . . This collaboration is important because as a disabled Vet, it’s important for me to focus on what I can do, rather than what I can’t do.”**

Texting can support chronic health conditions such as diabetes through the promotion of positive health behavior change. As consultants on ANNIE-DM, Ms. Peoples-Robinson and Mr. Beck provided feedback to develop and refine text message content, participated in planning prior to participant recruitment, and completed a test run of the Annie texting system. Together, their contributions facilitated the design of more meaningful, and authentic messages that ultimately improved the quality of the texting program.

Both Ms. Peoples-Robinson and Mr. Beck look forward to continuing their engagement as part of the research team and being a voice on behalf of their fellow Veterans.

[Click here to see Mr. Beck’s full poster online.](#)

Spotlight on March 2023 VCN Research Conference

VCN Research Conference

Veterans provided input on several CHOIR grants and projects during the March 30th VCN Research Conference.

Dr. Hillary Mull received input on two upcoming grant proposals. Veterans discussed their experiences and preferred guidance for receiving information about risks associated with lung biopsies. Additionally, Veterans provided input about diabetes care at VA, including one Veteran who spoke positively about the level of information shared as he receives care at the VA.

Dr. Justeen Hyde was joined by Dr. Benjamin Kligler of the Office of Patient Centered Care and Cultural Transformation for a discussion on what well-being means to Veterans. Participants connected well-being with the physical and mental ability to do things that are meaningful in their lives. Veterans were excited to hear about the scope and purpose of Whole Health at VA and the goal of connecting body and mind.



VA Bedford Healthcare System presents the 2023 Women Veterans' Health & Wellness Fair

FEATURING:

- Health & Wellness demonstrations
- VA healthcare enrollment
- VA services & program information
- Toxic exposure screenings
- Give-a-ways and more

Saturday, June 10, 2023

10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

200 Springs Road
The Oval
Bedford, MA 01730

Save time and pre-register now
using the QR code below



For more information call:
Yvette Chance
781-687-3670



VERG Subcommittee updates

Evaluation Subcommittee

The Evaluation Committee is currently planning analysis of our data on Veteran engagement in CHOIR research grants and considering various next steps for our committee. If you are interested in joining the Evaluation Committee or have questions, please contact Eileen Dryden (Eileen.Dryden@va.gov).

Stakeholder Council

The next Stakeholder Council Meeting is planned for June 14, 2023. Please contact Katelyn Marchany (Katelyn.Marchany@va.gov) with any future meeting agenda ideas.

Best Practices Subcommittee

We wish to welcome our new lead for the Best Practices Committee, Alexandra Howard! The committee is organizing some small events to share what we have learned about Veteran engagement in research (both pragmatic and conceptual). If you'd like to join the team or share topic ideas, please contact Alexandra (Alexandra.Howard@va.gov).

Veteran Consultant Network (VCN)

The 8th and 9th VCN Research Conferences were held on March 30th and April 11th, where investigators Hillary Mull, Terri Pogoda, and Kelly Harrington presented research ideas for input from Veteran consultants. The VCN is actively recruiting for Veteran consultants! Please contact Shawn Dunlap (Shawn.Dunlap@va.gov) if you are or know a Veteran who would like to learn more.

Women Veterans' Health & Wellness Fair

VA Bedford Healthcare System is happy to announce the Women Veterans' Health & Wellness Fair will be held Saturday, June 10, 2023, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Edith Nourse Rogers Memorial Veterans' Hospital. Children are welcome!

The day's activities will include:

- Reiki, Aromatherapy, Zumba
- Health Teaching Kitchen demonstrations
- Toxic Exposure Screenings
- VA healthcare enrollment
- Education and employment information
- Giveaways, and more!

Save time and pre-register here.

For more information or questions call Yvette Chance at 781-687-3670.