

PRESENTATION OF RESEARCH RESULTS HANDBOOK

1. REASON FOR ISSUE. This Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Handbook establishes procedures, assigns responsibilities, and specifies authority for ensuring that the contributions of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to research are appropriately acknowledged and publicly disclosed.

2. SUMMARY OF MAJOR CHANGES. The principal change is found in paragraph 2.

a. The note at the end of Paragraph 2a states that this Handbook does not apply to research that was conducted prior to an investigator being appointed as a VA investigator, provided all aspects of the research and the development of the publication or presentation occurred prior to the VA appointment.

b. Changes have been made throughout to make it more apparent that, as specified in the Purpose and Scope, requirements apply to publications, presentations, media interviews, and professional activities pertaining to the research. Clarification has been provided on the type of publications, presentations, media interviews, and professional activities to which the requirements apply.

c. Procedural information regarding notification requirements has been removed. A web address is included where all current notification procedural information and requirements will be posted.

3. RELATED DIRECTIVE. VHA Directive 1200.

4. RESPONSIBLE OFFICE. The Office of Research and Development (12) is responsible for the contents of this VHA Handbook. Questions may be referred to 202-461-1700.

5. RESCISSION. VHA Handbook 1200.19, dated June 19, 2001, is rescinded.

6. RECERTIFICATION. This VHA Handbook is scheduled for recertification on or before the last working date of September 2013.

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PRESENTATION OF RESEARCH RESULTS

1. PURPOSE

This Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Handbook establishes procedures, assigns responsibilities, and specifies authority for ensuring that the contributions of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to research are appropriately acknowledged and publicly disclosed.

2. SCOPE

This Handbook applies to all research results where either direct or indirect support for the research emanated from VA, either in the form of research funding, or resources (e.g., facilities or patients), or as a result of the investigator's full-time, part-time, or without compensation (WOC) appointment. The policies herein extend to all forms of research results, including publications, presentations, media interviews, and other professional activities. *NOTE: This Handbook does not apply to research that was conducted prior to an investigator being appointed as a VA investigator if all aspects of the research and the development of the publication or presentation occurred prior to the VA appointment.*

a. The VA Research and Development (R&D) Program encourages free exchange of scientific, technical, and medical information both inside and outside VA. In keeping with this policy, VA investigators are encouraged to report their work at professional meetings and in scientific, technical, and medical publications, and to participate in the activities of their professional organizations.

b. The nature of medical and scientific R&D carries with it an enormous potential for media and public attention to the investigators and institutions involved. In the past, there have been occasions when VA investigators neglected to ensure proper identification of employment by VA or of the source of their research funding. Consequently, both credit and public attention were inappropriately focused on organizations other than VA. VA expects its contributions to medical and scientific research to receive due credit and places the burden of responsibility on its research investigators to comply with this policy.

c. The American public has a right and a need to know how public funds are expended. Therefore, VA and its employees have a responsibility to ensure that VA receives proper credit for VA-supported research in articles, presentations, interviews, and other professional activities in which the results of that research are publicized or recognized.

d. All investigators will initiate and document references to VA where either direct or indirect support for the research emanates from VA (see par. 7).

e. Investigators and Research Offices are responsible for observing all VA approval procedures for publications, presentations, media interviews, and professional activities, and any additional VA notification requirements, such as those administered by the Public Affairs Offices and of individual services within the Office of Research and Development (ORD).

3. PROCEDURES FOR ACKNOWLEDGING VA RESEARCH SUPPORT AND VA EMPLOYMENT

a. **Acknowledgement of VA Research Support.** All publications and presentations of VA research results must contain the following (or equivalent) acknowledgement:

(1) “This material is based upon work supported (or supported in part) by the Department of Veterans Affairs, Veterans Health Administration, Office of Research and Development” (add as applicable Biomedical Laboratory Research and Development, Clinical Sciences Research and Development including the Cooperative Studies Program, Rehabilitation Research and Development Service, and Health Services Research and Development).

(2) If VA provided no direct research funding, but the research involved the use of other VA resources (e.g., facilities or patients), the publications, or presentations must contain a similar acknowledgement. For example, “This material is the result of work supported with resources and the use of facilities at the (name and location of VA medical center).”

b. **Acknowledgement of VA Employment.** Authors of clinical and research manuscripts, abstracts, books, book chapters, and presentations must acknowledge their employment using the following format: “VA Title, VA Service, Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center, City, and State.”

(1) When the author also holds a faculty appointment, the academic title and school also may be acknowledged.

(2) When the Principal Investigator (PI) has a 5/8ths or more VA appointment, VA must be named first, regardless whether VA is the primary source of funding or where the funds are administered.

(3) Authors or presenters of research results are required to list VA employment first if any of the following conditions apply:

(a) Work was funded primarily from VA resources (50 percent or more), either directly or indirectly;

(b) The research was conducted primarily in VA facilities; or

(c) The first author was a junior scientist (e.g., resident, fellow trainee) whose salary may not have been provided by VA, but who primarily used VA funding or facilities, or whose mentor or supervisor was primarily employed or funded by VA.

c. **VA Acknowledgement in Media Reports.** News media and other individuals outside VA may not understand the contributions and roles of VA in intellectual advances, or VA’s collaborative relationships with universities and other affiliated institutions. Accordingly, investigators with VA salaries or funding support must, when presenting their work or discussing it with the news media, make a serious and good-faith effort to obtain appropriate recognition for VA. A serious and good-faith effort requires:

- (1) Securing a written agreement, or verbal agreement when a written agreement is not possible, that VA will be cited in news reports before participating in a media interview; or
- (2) Providing news media, prior to interviews, with a document on VA letterhead that:
 - (a) Contains the investigator's name, VA title, and VA medical center;
 - (b) Explains the importance to VA of citing the investigator's VA employment in any resulting feature; and
 - (c) Expresses a preference that the investigator's VA title be used when media time or space limitations permit the use of only one professional title.

NOTE: The media's failure to acknowledge VA support despite an investigator's good-faith effort to comply does not jeopardize the investigator's funding.

d. **VA Acknowledgement During Other Professional Activities.** VA support and employment, as appropriate, must be acknowledged during professional activities where research results are being discussed or recognized. Acknowledgement may be verbal, e.g. in receipt of an award, or written, e.g. as in the acceptance of an appointment to a board, in accordance with the nature of the professional activity.

e. **Disclaimer Requirement.** Publications or presentations must include a disclaimer stating that the contents do not represent the views of the Department of Veterans Affairs or the United States Government.

f. **Publications by Contractors.** The publication of research results by firms providing contracted services to VA are governed by terms of the contract. The contract terms must be consistent with the provisions of this Handbook with respect to review and acknowledgement of VA support.

4. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE FACILITY DIRECTOR

The facility Director, or designee, is responsible for:

- a. Encouraging appropriate presentation and publication of all significant research results to ensure that:
 - (1) VA support for research is publicly disclosed;
 - (2) VA receives appropriate recognition for its contribution to medical and scientific research;
 - (3) Research presentations are made in a scientifically responsible manner;
 - (4) Potential for controversy is anticipated and dealt with appropriately; and

(5) VA research policies and procedures regarding publications, presentations, media interviews, and other professional activities related to the research are followed.

b. Ensuring that manuscripts, abstracts, and other presentations are reviewed by the R&D Committee, a R&D subcommittee, or a designee, such as the Associate Chief of Staff (ACOS) for R&D, prior to presentation or publication. This ensures that:

(1) The presentation or publication satisfactorily acknowledges VA support and affiliation,

(2) The privacy of patients is protected,

(3) The welfare of human and animal subjects is protected, and

(4) The appropriate institutional review board approved all research involving human or animal subjects.

c. Developing and implementing procedures to ensure appropriate coordination with local Public Affairs officials.

d. Developing and implementing local procedures to ensure that pending publications in scientific journals, presentations involving a national venue or the media, media interviews, and other professional activities related to the research are brought to the attention of ORD's communications staff at the earliest opportunity.

(1) Generally, notification should be provided when:

(a) Research results are accepted for publication,

(b) Presentations are scheduled,

(c) Media interviews are scheduled, and

(d) Professional activities related to the research are scheduled or known.

(2) When notification is not possible in advance of the activity, notification must be provided at the earliest possible opportunity. These local procedures are to be developed in consultation with ORD's communications staff and in accordance with the procedures contained in Appendix A and on ORD's website, at:

www.research.va.gov/resources/policies/pub_notice.cfm.

e. Developing and implementing local procedures to ensure observance of any additional VHA research-related policies regarding the publication, presentation of research results, recognition of, or discussion of research results. There are specific requirements for publications by investigators funded by Health Services Research and Development (HSR&D) and Rehabilitation Research and Development (RR&D), which must be coordinated in accordance with procedures described by the ORD research service funding the research (see VHA series Handbooks listed under 1203 and 1204).

5. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE R&D COMMITTEE

The R&D Committee must perform those responsibilities delegated to it by the facility and those found in VHA Handbook 1200.1.

6. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE ACOS FOR R&D OR COORDINATOR FOR R&D

The ACOS for R&D or Coordinator for R&D must perform those responsibilities delegated by the facility Director regarding publication of research results.

7. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE INVESTIGATOR

a. All investigators must initiate and document references to VA where either direct or indirect support for the research emanating from VA, either in the form of research funding, resources (e.g., facilities or patients), or as a result of the investigator's full-time, part-time, or without compensation (woc) employment status. This policy extends to all forms of research results including publications in a scientific journal, as well as other activities resulting from the research, such as: presentations involving a national venue or the media; media interviews; and professional activities that involve a national venue or formal recognition including awards (honors), committee or organizational appointments, and editorial board appointments.

b. In addition the investigator must:

(1) Acknowledge VA support and/or employment in all publications, presentations, media interviews, or professional activity where research results are being publicized, presented, recognized, or discussed.

(2) Submit all presentations or publications to the locally-designated review groups or individuals prior to submission for publication or other public presentation.

(3) Inform either directly or through proxy, the research office at the local VA facility at least 8 weeks (or as soon as possible) prior to the expected publication, presentation, media interview, or professional activity where research results are being publicized, presented, recognized, or discussed.

8. FAILURE TO ACKNOWLEDGE VA SUPPORT OR EMPLOYMENT

Failure to acknowledge VA support or employment, as stipulated in this Handbook may, at the discretion of the Chief Research and Development Officer and the research service Director (i.e., Biomedical Laboratory Research and Development (BLR&D), Clinical Science Research and Development (CSR&D), RR&D, or HSR&D), result in discontinuation of current VA R&D funding and/or ineligibility to receive future R&D funding for up to 5 years. In extreme circumstances, it may result in the revocation of the privilege to conduct research in VA.

9. RESPONSIBILITIES OF ORD'S COMMUNICATIONS STAFF

ORD's communications staff are responsible for coordinating research acknowledgement and publicity in accordance with procedures described in Appendix A.

PROCEDURES FOR COORDINATING RESEARCH ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND PUBLICITY

| RESPONSIBILITY | ACTION |
|--|---|
| <p>Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Facility Research Office</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Notifies the Office of Research and Development (ORD)’s communications staff when: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Research results are accepted for publication in a scientific journal; b. Presentations are scheduled involving a national venue or the media; c. Media interviews are scheduled; and/or d. Professional activities are scheduled or known that involve a national venue or formal recognition. 2. When notification is not possible in advance of the activity, notification must be provided at the earliest possible opportunity. 3. Procedures for providing notification, and required elements of information, can be found on the ORD website at: http://www.research.va.gov/resources/policies/pub_notice.cfm |
| <p>ORD’s Communications Staff</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provides advice and guidance to local research offices in developing procedures for ensuring compliance with this Handbook. 2. Informs ORD, and the Director of the applicable research service within ORD, and, as applicable, Office of Under Secretary for Health of the research publication, presentation, media interview, or other professional activity. 3. Works with Office of Public Affairs and facility Public Affairs Officers and makes appropriate news media arrangements in concert with the Principal Investigator and appropriate Research Service Director. |