

**THE UNDER SECRETARY FOR HEALTH'S AWARDS PROGRAM  
FOR EXCELLENCE IN CLINICAL SIMULATION TRAINING,  
EDUCATION AND RESEARCH**

- 1. REASON FOR ISSUE:** This Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Directive establishes national policy for the Awards Program for Excellence in Clinical Simulation Training, Education, and Research.
- 2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS:** The Awards Program for Excellence in Clinical Simulation Training, Education, and Research is established to recognize and honor clinical and executive leaders in VHA's Clinical Simulation. The awards criteria, nomination process, and selection criteria for each of the four awards is described.
- 3. RELATED ISSUES:** None.
- 4. RESPONSIBLE OFFICE:** The Chief Learning Officer, Employee Education System (10A2B), VHA Central Office, Washington, DC, is responsible for the content of this Directive. Questions may be addressed to the SimLEARN National Program Manager at 407-531-6102.
- 5. RESCISSIONS:** None.
- 6. RECERTIFICATION:** This VHA Directive is due for recertification on or before the last working day of July 2020.

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FOR EXCELLENCE IN CLINICAL SIMULATION TRAINING,  
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**1. PURPOSE:** This Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Directive announces the Under Secretary for Health's Awards Program for Excellence in Clinical Simulation Training, Education, and Research, consisting of four annual honor award categories listed below.

- a. Excellence in Clinical Simulation Training, Education and Research Practice Award;
- b. Clinical Simulation Training, Education and Research Champion Award;
- c. Clinical Simulation Training, Education and Research Champion Award for the Resuscitation Education Initiative (REdI); and
- d. Clinical Simulation Training, Education and Research Executive Leadership Award. **AUTHORITY:** 5 U.S.C. 4503, 38 U.S.C. 7601(b), 5 CFR part 451 subpart A.

**2. BACKGROUND:** The Awards Program for Excellence in Clinical Simulation Training, Education, and Research is established to recognize and honor clinical and executive leaders in VHA's Clinical Simulation who have supported and advanced VHA's strategic plan for clinical simulation.

a. The awards program is established as a means of promoting and advancing system-wide progress of VHA goals, objectives, and strategies for the deployment of clinical simulation to improve the quality of health care for Veterans. Veterans Integrated Service Network (VISN) or medical center leadership may nominate their employees for this award.

b. The National Simulation Learning Education and Research Network (SimLEARN) Program Office will solicit and accept nominations during the months of October and November annually. The award nomination covers the preceding fiscal year. All submissions must be received by November 30 to be considered for an award. Award recipients will be recognized annually with a plaque or other non-monetary award.

**3. CRITERIA FOR EACH AWARD CATEGORY:**

a. **Excellence in Clinical Simulation Training, Education and Research Practice Award.** This award honors one individual who has been actively engaged in the direct provision of clinical simulation training, education, and research at a VA medical facility and whose simulation-based practice has had national impact through dissemination of best practices. The recipient's contribution to system-wide improvements in learners' competencies and proficiencies demonstrate such excellence as to merit recognition from peers. **NOTE:** *An individual may receive each award only once in the individual's career.* The nomination must include evidence of:

(1) The practitioner's significant innovations and contributions to clinical simulation training, education, and research.

(2) The practitioner's simulation-based contributions that have improved learners' competencies and proficiencies locally and have been disseminated system-wide. The practitioner's contributions in training, research, and systems probing, that have improved Veterans' health outcomes locally and have been disseminated system-wide.

(3) The practitioner's advancement of communication regarding VHA clinical simulation training, education, and research through presentations for VHA and non-VHA audiences and publications easily accessible to VHA clinicians and leaders.

b. **Excellence in Clinical Simulation Training, Education and Research Champion Award.** This award honors one individual for the successful implementation of simulation-based training and systems testing at a VA medical facility, within a VISN, or across VHA. This champion diligently briefs staff and leadership of the benefits of clinical simulation, integrates simulation into daily clinical operations where appropriate, obtains resources, develops plans, and encourages, recruits, and schedules staff or instructors to engage in simulation-based clinical training. **NOTE:** *An individual may receive each award only once in the individual's career.* The nomination must include evidence that:

(1) The champion's contributions that have significantly influenced VHA's adoption and use of clinical simulation strategies at their facility, within their VISN, or nationally.

(2) The champion's contributions that have significantly improved Veterans' health outcomes locally and have been disseminated system-wide.

(3) The champion's advancement of communication regarding VHA clinical simulation training, education, and research through presentations for VHA and non-VHA audiences and publications easily accessible to VHA clinicians and leaders.

c. **Excellence in Clinical Simulation Training, Education and Research Champion Award for the Resuscitation Education Initiative (REdI).** This award honors one individual for the successful implementation of the Resuscitation Education Initiative (REdI) at a VA medical facility, within a VISN, or across VHA. This champion diligently briefs staff and leadership of the benefits of focused resuscitation training, integrates simulation-based resuscitation training into daily operations where appropriate, manages resources, develops plans, and encourages, recruits, and schedules staff or instructors to engage in resuscitation training. **NOTE:** *An individual may receive each award only once in the individual's career.* The nomination must include evidence that:

(1) The champion's contributions have significantly influenced VHA's adoption and use of REdI training strategies at their facility, within their VISN, or nationally.

(2) The champion's contributions have significantly enhanced staffs' access and compliance with and reporting of resuscitation training at a VA medical facility, within a VISN, or across VHA.

(3) The champion's contributions have led to the integration of Basic Life Support and/or Advanced Cardiac Life Support training into day to day clinical operations, which in turn have led to improved Veterans' health outcomes locally and have been disseminated system-wide.

(4) The champion's advancement of communication regarding VHA Resuscitation Education Initiatives through presentations for VA and non-VA audiences and publications are easily accessible to VA clinicians and leaders.

d. **Excellence in Clinical Simulation Training, Education and Research Executive Leadership Award.** This award recognizes one VA medical facility Executive Leader (Director, Chief of Staff, Chief Nurse Executive or equivalent) or VISN Executive Leader (Network Director, Deputy Network Director, Chief Medical Officer) who has achieved distinction in promoting a significant component of VHA's clinical simulation training, education, and research strategic plan. The actions, skills, attitudes, and values of VA medical facility or VISN leadership significantly influence the success of clinical simulation training, education, and research programs. **NOTE:** *An individual may receive each award only once in the individual's career.* The nomination must include evidence that:

(1) The actions, skills, attitudes, and values of medical center or VISN leadership have significantly influenced the success of VHA's clinical simulation training, education, and research programs.

(2) The nominee has been successful in supporting the creation of a VA medical facility and/or VISN-based simulation training infrastructure (e.g. dedicated simulation center staff, simulation center space, protected time for learners, simulation equipment) that has allowed the dissemination of simulation-based training activities to improve the quality of health care for Veterans.

(3) The nominee has advanced communication about VHA's clinical simulation training, education, and research program by hosting VISN or facility simulation events and/or delivering public presentations to VA and non-VA audiences about their facility or health system's simulation best practices.

#### **4. NOMINATION PACKAGE:**

a. All nominations must include general information about the nominee and provide information relevant to each of the criteria, as applicable to the specific award. All unfamiliar abbreviations or acronyms used in the nomination must be defined. A short biography, curriculum vitae, and VA Form 0235, Security Check for Candidate Requiring Approval of the Secretary, are to accompany the nomination package. Narrative information that addresses the criteria is to be no longer than two pages.

b. All nominations must be forwarded through local administrative channels and contain the endorsement of the VA medical facility Director and the VISN Director. Endorsed nominations are to be emailed (encrypted) to: [VHASimExcellenceAwards@va.gov](mailto:VHASimExcellenceAwards@va.gov). All submissions must be received by November 30 to be considered for an award in the previous fiscal year.

**5. SELECTION PROCESS:**

a. The SimLEARN National Medical Director, National Director of Nursing Programs, and National Program Manager are jointly responsible for coordinating the selection process.

b. **Selection Committee.** An ad hoc selection committee will be established, comprised of at least three members from the SimLEARN Steering Committee, and may not include SimLEARN program employees. This Committee is responsible for:

- (1) Screening all nominations received for compliance with the nominating procedure;
- (2) Evaluating the nominations based on the criteria provided; and
- (3) Recommending and forwarding one candidate for each award to the Under Secretary for Health for consideration and approval.