

December 4, 1995

1. Transmitted is a revision of Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Manual M-3, "Research and Development in Medicine," Part II, "Medical Research Program," Chapter 14, "Middleton Award."

2. The principal changes are:

a. **Paragraph 14.01:** States purpose of the Middleton award.

b. **Paragraph 14.02:** Provides individually labeled sections for evaluation of nominees, eligibility, submission process, and review process.

c. **Paragraph 14.03:** Adds a section on responsibilities.

3. **Filing instructions:**

Remove pages

14-i
14-1 through 14-2

Insert Pages

iii through iv
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14-1 through 14-2

4. **RESCISSION:** M-3, Part II, Chapter 14, dated October 30, 1989.

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Manuals

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RESCISSIONS

The following material has been rescinded:

Manuals

M-3, Part II, Chapter 14, dated October 30, 1989.

CHAPTER 14. MIDDLETON AWARD

14.01 PURPOSE

This chapter provides the Career Development Division of Medical Research Service policy for managing the Middleton Award Program. The Middleton Award was established in 1960 to honor William S. Middleton, M.D., distinguished educator, physician-scientist, and Chief Medical Director from 1955 to 1963.

14.02 POLICY

Medical Research Service annually invites nominations for the William S. Middleton Award for Outstanding Achievement in Biomedical or Behavioral Research. The Career Development Committee annually reviews these nominations and recommends the name of one VA investigator to the Under Secretary for Health, Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), for approval. This recommendation is based on the nominee's contributions in a defined field of biomedical or behavioral science pertinent to the advancement of medical knowledge and medical care.

a. **Evaluation of Nominee's Contributions.** The Career Development Committee considers the following in evaluating the nominee's contributions:

- (1) The originality of the research;
- (2) The significance of the research to a field of science and its relationship to other major contributions in the field;
- (3) Evidence that the research has or will advance other scientific or clinical disciplines;
- (4) Evidence of recognition of the nominee's research by peers, through major invitations, lectures, awards, etc.;
- (5) Research by the nominee not directly related to the major research achievement; and
- (6) Evidence of the scientific independence of the investigator.

b. **Eligibility.** All nominees must be at least 5/8 time VA employees. Each VA medical center may nominate one investigator each year.

c. **Submission Process.** All nominations must be submitted by the medical center Director. Nominations should be addressed to Director, Medical Research Service (121C), National Headquarters. An original and 25 copies of all materials must be submitted by January 15, and must include the following items:

- (1) A brief statement from the facility Director describing the basis for the nomination;
- (2) A one-page succinct summary of the nominee's research achievements;
- (3) A complete and current curriculum vitae of the nominee;
- (4) A complete bibliography of the nominee (not to include abstracts, submitted papers, or papers in preparation).
- (5) Letters of support from the Research and Development (R& D) Committee and the Dean's Committee dealing specifically with the nominee's scientific contributions;
- (6) A letter of support, no older than 6 months, from an investigator who is not an employee of the nominee's VA medical center or a member of the faculty at the affiliated medical school; and

(7) Three reprints of the nominee's major original research publications.

d. **Review Process.** Each nomination is reviewed in depth by two members of the Career Development Committee, and by an extramural reviewer who is an expert in the nominee's field of research. The entire Committee evaluates the information and assigns a priority score. The nominee with the best priority score is selected for the award.

e. **Awards.** An authorization for a cash award of \$5,000 is sent to the awardee's medical center and a plaque depicting the scientist's accomplishments is presented at an appropriate ceremony. At that time the recipient delivers an address summarizing the research for which the award is given.

14.03 RESPONSIBILITIES

a. **R&D Committee.** The R&D committee evaluates the merits of all candidates for the Middleton Award, nominates the most outstanding candidate, and recommends the nominee to the VA medical center Director for approval.

b. **Medical Center Director.** The medical center Director, with advice from the facility's R&D Committee, recommends one outstanding scientist to receive the Middleton Award.

c. **Associate Chief of Staff (ACOS) for R&D.** The ACOS for R&D ensures that all required documentation accompanies the facility's Director's nomination letter and that it is submitted to National Headquarters by the specified deadline.

d. **Chief, Career Development.** The Chief, Career Development, ensures that all nominations for the Middleton Awards are appropriately assigned and reviewed by the Career Development Committee. The Chief submits a request for approval of the nomination for the Middleton Award and a request for a monetary award of \$5,000 (VA Form 5-4659, Recognition of High Level Performance) to the Under Secretary for Health through the Director, Medical Research Service, the R&D Officer, and the Deputy Under Secretary. After the Under Secretary approves the award, the Chief instructs the VA medical center to provide the monetary award and to request reimbursement from National Headquarters. The Chief orders plaques, and contacts the awardee's VA medical center to apprise all concerned parties of when and where the award will be presented.

e. **Career Development Committee.** The Career Development Committee evaluates all candidates recommended for the Middleton Award and selects the most qualified VA research scientist based on the evaluation criteria.

f. **Director, Medical Research Service.** The Director, Medical Research Service, reviews the selection process, and considers the decision of the Career Development Committee for approval or disapproval. If approved, the Director forwards the file to the R&D Officer for approval.

g. **R&D Officer.** The R&D Officer, or designee:

(1) Approves selection of the nominee, signs VA Form 5-4659, Recognition of High Level Performance;

(2) Submits it to the Deputy Under Secretary and the Under Secretary for approval; and

(3) Notifies the nominee's VA medical center Director in writing when the nomination is approved.

h. **Under Secretary for Health.** The Under Secretary, or designee, approves the nomination and presents plaques to the awardee and to the Director of the awardee's VA medical center at an appropriate ceremony.

i. **Administrative Officer (AO) for R&D.** The AO authorizes reimbursement of funds for the Middleton Award to the VA medical center.