

**U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)
Federal Advisory Committee
National Academic Affiliations Council (NAAC)
Meeting Minutes for July 12, 2022**

Attendance: See Appendix A

Welcome, Announcements and Introduction of New Members

Ms. Emory called the meeting to order at 1:00 PM.

Dr. James Hildreth, NAAC Chair, welcomed the NAAC members, VA staff, and members of the public. He also welcomed the new NAAC members, asking them to introduce themselves. New members in attendance were:

- Christopher Robinson, MS, MBA, CPO, ATC, FAAOP(D), Clinical Resource Director, The National Commission on Orthotic & Prosthetic Education, Assistant Professor of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, Northwestern University's Prosthetics Orthotics Center

Dr. Hildreth briefed on the highlights from the March 2022 face-to-face meeting, noting comments from The Honorable Denis McDonough, Secretary, Department of Veterans Affairs who attended a portion of the meeting.

VHA Chief Academic Affiliations Officer Dr. Marjorie Bowman provided a status update on the Market Area Health System Optimization (MAHSO) project. She recognized and thanked NAAC members for their input and recognized the importance of their committee work.

MISSION Act, Section 403 Update and Discussion

Paul Greenberg, MD, MPH, Deputy Chief Academic Affiliations Officer, briefed on key elements of MISSION Act Section 403 and provided an update of the pilot program approval status. The Act authorizes VA to establish a pilot program that will place no fewer than 100 resident physicians at covered facilities (sites) operated by Indian tribe or tribal organizations, Indian Health Service, Federally Qualified Health Centers and Department of Defense. He discussed selection criteria for covered facilities which include:

- need for providers in areas surrounding facilities;
- local community designated as underserved by Secretary of VA; and
- facility located in health professions shortage area or rural/remote areas.

Dr. Greenberg noted the pilot program provides for cost reimbursement and that the initiative ends August 7, 2031.

Dr. Greenberg highlighted the two proposed models: a) VA reimburses the Graduate Medical Education (GME) sponsor for salary and benefits of residents rotating at covered facilities; b) VA reimburses the covered facility GME sponsor for new program startup costs and salary and benefits of residents.

In response to Dr. Loyke's questions, Dr. Greenberg said only stipend/salary and benefits are a part of the pilot and further reimbursement (i.e., room and board) would be the responsibility of each facility.

Dr. Jackson-Triche asked if there was consideration of a hybrid of options A and B. Dr. Greenberg reiterated that the models presented represent allowed reimbursements within the statute. The statute does not specifically address a hybrid model, but this would be an option.

Dr. Jung asked about limitation to specialties that could be reimbursed and if the Request for Proposal (RFP) would be a continuous process or a one-time RFP. Dr. Greenberg confirmed that there are no specialty limits and that the RFP process has not been finalized; there may be more than one RFP.

Dr. Hildreth asked if the funding will extend beyond 2031. Dr. Greenberg said it would be possible if Congress and VA decided to extend the program. Dr. Hildreth asked if a new program starts under the program's funding, will they have to end their program because when funding stops in 2031. Dr. Greenberg stated that one of the considerations in selecting a new program to receive funding is that they have basic resources to be self-sustaining; the pilot program funding is to help get the new programs up and running -- funding will not go on in perpetuity.

Expansion of HBCU/MSI Relationships: Geomapping Project Status

Nancy Harada, PhD, PT, Management Analyst, and Kanta Velamuri, MD, M.Ed., FCCP, Associate Director, Graduate Medical and Dental Education, presented an update on the progress of the geomapping project.

Dr. Velamuri reviewed how the interactive geomapping tool allows VA facilities to identify MSIs with Health Professions Education (HPE) training programs in their geographic vicinity and target those without current affiliations to help VA build a diverse workforce that is reflective of the diversity of the Veteran population.

Dr. Velamuri briefed on the OAA one-on-one consultations with individual VA facilities, which began six months ago. Objectives of this service are to learn about the current state of MSI affiliations, barriers and facilitators; deliver geomapping data for individual VA facilities; and to develop a process map and best practices for all VA facilities to use. These consultations consist of three meetings. The initial meeting includes the VISN Director and DEO to discuss current environment (i.e., status of affiliations, thought process to increase affiliations, etc.) and provide data; two follow-up meetings are held two - six months after initial meeting.

Dr. Harada briefed on the evaluation of this effort, which is based on the RE-AIM implementation framework consisting of 5 domains—reach, effectiveness, adoption, implementation and maintenance. Quantitative and qualitative data is being collected on an ongoing basis within each of these 5 domains. Early data collected since the December 2021 launch shows high use of the program initially, which leveled off in January 2022. OAA staff have held consultation sessions with three facilities—

California, Texas, and Minnesota. Sites were selected based on their proximity to MSIs and the diversity of the geographic location.

Early effectiveness data shows high interest and acceptance in the field and that DEOs are using the tool as a starting point to explore affiliation opportunities. Also, perceptions of the data map's quality are influenced by the DEOs' own impressions of the active affiliations at their facility and not active trainees as reported in the Health Services Training Report, which is the data source used to build the geomapping application. However, geomapping alone is not sufficient and should be combined with OAA consultation to help facilities overcome some of the barriers faced. Additionally, the development of new MSI affiliations is time intensive and requires cultivation of new VA/MSI relationships.

One plan to address barriers is familiarizing VA training to MSIs through a targeted email campaign. OAA plans to link interested MSIs to a DEO within their geographic area. OAA will also expand targeted consultations with additional VA facilities.

Mr. Robinson asked if VA is doing any outreach to middle or high school students to interest them in health professions careers. Dr. Velamuri said VA has other programs (VA Healthcare Talent Academy) to interest undergraduate students and some VAMCs that involve students earlier in their education.

Dr. Hildreth asked if OAA is being contacted by VAMCs for assistance with developing affiliations with MSIs. Dr. Velamuri said OAA has initiated contact with VAMCs that have opportunities and their response has been positive.

Dr. Rios asked about the difference between Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HCBUs) and Predominately Black Institutions (PBIs). Dr. Velamuri said HCBUs were founded before the Equal Opportunity Protection Act and were, historically, meant to educate Black students. PBIs may not have been an HBCU but their current student body reflects a predominantly Black population. These are Department of Education designations.

Dr. Hildreth asked about next steps for outreach. Dr. Velamuri stated that plans are being developed for direct outreach to MSIs to gauge interest and provide a warm handoff to the local VAMC. OAA will continue with direct outreach to VAMCs.

Telesupervision Project Brief and Discussion

Erin Patel, PsyD, ABPP, Acting Chief, Health Professions Education, presented an overview of OAA's ongoing assessment and evidence-based future planning of telesupervision (TS) in HPE within VA. Dr. Patel briefed on definitions and the literature review methodology used by the VA Quality Enhancement Research Initiative (QUERI) during the review phase in Fall 2021. While the quality and scale of evaluations available during this period was limited, OAA has learned most of the literature is in mental health professions and about HPT perceptions or experiences, which are overall positive. The literature does not address more challenging questions to include TS in non-mental health professions, impacts in VA settings, competency development and patient outcomes.

Kimberly Falco, DNP, RN, Coach/Mentor Nursing Education highlighted how the significant increase in VA's utilization of telehealth (TH) during the COVID pandemic led to a subsequent increase in TS. Concerns from the field about the unknown, long-term effects on patient safety and professional competency development lead to the creation of this project. OAA's goal is to support evidence-based policy development for TS that is applicable for HPTs across all disciplines. Dr. Falco briefed on the project's guiding questions and sample site selection criteria.

Nicholas W. Bowersox, PhD, ABPP, Director, QUERI Center for Evaluation and Implementation Resources (CERI) briefed on data collection methodology that will be used to understand TS experiences and perspectives of HPTs and supervisors. Surveys are in final development stage. Once approved, HPTs and supervisors will be emailed a link to a survey within Qualtrics; both VA and non-VA email will be used to increase response rates. Sampling selections target the largest VHA HPT groups in settings with high TH utilization and site selection was based on facilities stratified by TH usage and site complexity level, estimating the assessment of approximately 2,500 HPTs.

Linda M. Kawentel, PhD, Evaluation Scientist, QUERI CEIR, outlined details about the survey instruments to include what the surveys will assess, specifically for HPTs and supervisors, including demographics and professional characteristics. Dr. Kawentel discussed the potential outcomes of the project, which include policy development for TS and identification of future HPT groups that might require further study.

Dr. Whelan stressed the importance of TS research done by VA for all healthcare and inquired if Dr. Patel has plans for publication of research findings. Dr. Patel gave the QUERI team credit for the literature review and said they will consider publication.

Dr. Elster asked if the question of TS being safe for patient care is focused on care provided through TH only. Dr. Patel said they are not separating TS for TH from TS for in-person care. Dr. Elster stated the importance of looking at context of engagement of trainees and supervisors. Dr. Patel said they will be looking at both primary care and outpatient Mental Health, so there is an outpatient focus. Dr. Elster asked if the patient encounters would be recorded for evaluation of competencies and effectiveness of TS. Dr. Patel said the project is not resourced for encounter recording at this point.

Dr. Bowman stated TS grew significantly during the pandemic, particularly in mental health, and literature to evaluate it is scarce, so this work is very important.

Dr. Greenberg stressed the need to understand the role of TS in supervision and what percentage of TS that is optimal. He added there is the issue of confidentiality around recording procedure/patient engagements. Dr. Elster replied there are ways to guard privacy that have been developed, i.e., scrubbing voice, removing personal identifiers, etc., to allow objective evaluation; the bigger question is how to formalize TS and train to be more effective across multiple scenarios.

Dr. Hildreth asked if the indication of a patient's willingness to be treated by students is affected by TS versus in-person supervision. Dr. Patel said there likely is minimal patient awareness if trainees are receiving TS or in-person supervision.

Administrative Updates and Plans for September Meeting

Ms. Emory provided an update on the upcoming face-to-face Fall 2022 meeting in Orlando, FL; the Diversity Subcommittee has been invited to attend.

Tonya Lobbestael, Public Affairs Officer (Alternate Designated Federal Officer for the NAAC), shared highlights from OAA's communication team's recent trip to the Orlando VAMC and some topics that will be on the September meeting agenda.

Dr. Jackson-Triche asked what COVID precautions will be considered. Ms. Emory said that COVID conditions in the area are being monitored and a part of ongoing planning discussions with the Orlando VAMC. Alternate meeting plans will be in place if conditions change.

Public Comments

No public comments or questions.

Closing Remarks

Dr. Hildreth reminded the members of VA's mission to train health care professionals for VA and the Nation; the NAAC is charged with assisting in carrying out that mission and the work of each member is important. The meeting adjourned at 2:41 PM.

Prepared By: Larissa Emory, Designated Federal Officer, NAAC



Certified By: James E.K. Hildreth, PhD, MD, Chairman, NAAC

Appendix A: Attendance Records

Council members present:

Susan Bakewell-Sachs, PhD, CRNP, Vice President (Nursing Affairs) and Dean, School of Nursing, Oregon Health and Science University; Marjorie A. Bowman, MD, MPA (Ex-Officio), Chief Academic Affiliations Officer, Office of Academic Affiliations; Eric Elster, MD, FACS, FRCSEng (Hon.), CAPT, MC, USN (Ret.), Dean, School of Medicine, Professor of Surgery, Uniformed Services University (Ex-Officio); David D. Henderson, MD, Associate Professor and Chair, Department of Family Medicine and Associate Dean, Multicultural and Community Affairs, Connecticut School of Medicine; James E. K. Hildreth (Chair), PhD, MD, President and Chief Executive Officer, Department of Internal Medicine, Meharry Medical College; Maga Jackson-Triche, MD, MSHS, Assistant Vice Chancellor and Health Executive Advisor for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI), University of California San Francisco; Paul Jung, MD, MPH, FACPM (Ex-Officio), Captain, United States Public Health Service (USPHS), Director, Division of Medicine and Dentistry, Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA); Meredith Wallace Kazer, PhD, CNL, APRN, A/GNP-BC, FAAN, Dean and Professor, Fairfield University School of Nursing; Irving L. Kron, MD, Professor and Chair, Department of Surgery, University of Virginia; Christopher J. Loyke, DO, FACOFP, Dean and Chief Academic Officer, Lincoln Memorial University–DeBusk College of Osteopathic Medicine (LMU-DCOM); Elena V. Rios, MD, MSPH, FACP, President and Chief Executive Officer, National Hispanic Health Association; Christopher Robinson, MS, MBA, CPO, ATC, FAAOP(D), Clinical Resource Director, The National Commission on Orthotic & Prosthetic Education, Assistant Professor of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, Northwestern University's Prosthetics Orthotics Center; and Alison J. Whelan, MD, Chief Medical Education Officer, Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC).

Council members unable to attend:

John A. Brandecker, MBA, MPH (Ex-Officio), Network Director, VA Sierra Pacific Network, VISN 21; Arthur Evans, Jr., PhD, Chief Executive Officer and Executive Vice President, American Psychological Association; Deborah German, MD, Vice President for Health Affairs, Founding Dean, University of Central Florida College of Medicine; Thomas P. O'Toole, MD, Deputy Assistant Under Secretary for Health for Clinical Services, Quality and Field Operations, VA; Kelly R. Ragucci, PharmD, FCCP, BCPS, Vice President, Professional Development, American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy (AACP); Anthony M. Stazzone, MD, MBA, FACP (Ex-Officio), Network Chief Medical Officer, VA MidSouth Healthcare Network, VISN 9;.

VHA Staff attending (all are OAA staff unless specified otherwise):

Michael Cole, Public Affairs Specialist; Larissa A. Emory, PMP, CBP, MS, Management and Program Analyst (Designated Federal Officer for the NAAC); Kimberly Falco, DNP, RN, Coach/Mentor, Nursing Education; Paul B. Greenberg, MD, MPH, Deputy Chief Academic Affiliations Officer; Nancy Harada, PhD, PT, Management Analyst; Jeannie Howard, Management Analyst; Ramona E. Joyce, Executive Officer; Tonya Lobbestael, Public Affairs Officer (Alternate Designated Federal Officer for the NAAC); Nellie Mitchell, MS, RHIA, Program Analyst; Erin Patel, PsyD, ABPP, Acting Chief, Health Professions Education; Karen M. Sanders, MD, Senior Advisor; and Kanta Velamuri, MD, M.Ed., FCCP, Associate Director, Graduate Medical and Dental Education.

Other VA Attendees:

Nicholas W. Bowersox, PhD, ABPP, Director, VA QUERI CEIR, Ann Arbor VAMC;
Jelessa M. Burney, Program Specialist, Advisory Committee Management Office; Linda
M. Kawentel, PhD, Evaluation Scientist, VA QUERI CEIR, Ann Arbor VAMC.

Members of the Public attending:

No members of the public were in attendance.