

**U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs  
Office of Research and Development (ORD)  
Quarterly Meeting of the National Research Advisory Council (NRAC)  
December 8, 2021**

**Minutes**

**Committee Members Present**

Dr. Geoffrey Ling, Chair  
Dr. Ronald Poropatich  
Dr. Sanjay Doddamani  
Dr. Steven Dubinett  
Dr. Carrie Farmer  
Mr. Matthew Kuntz  
Dr. Jerry Lee  
Dr. James Lillard  
Dr. Maria Lima  
Dr. Ross McKinney  
Dr. Paula Schnurr  
Ms. Catherine Wicklund

**Committee Members Excused**

NA

**Speakers**

Dr. Rachel Ramoni  
Dr. Carolyn Clancy  
Dr. George Lathrop  
Dr. Mark Roltsch  
Dr. Cendrine Robinson  
Dr. Wendy Tenhula

**Attendees**

Liza Catucci, DFO  
Rashelle Robinson, Alternate DFO

The virtual meeting of the VA's National Research Advisory Council (NRAC) took place on December 8, 2021.

Dr. Geoffrey Ling, Chair, invited Ms. Liza Catucci, Designated Federal Officer (DFO), to make opening comments. Dr. Ling then called the meeting to order. Following that he made announcements about departing members whose appointments will expire before the next meeting and thanked them for their support of the NRAC.

Dr. Rachel Ramoni, Chief Research and Development Officer (CRADO) welcomed NRAC members, VA ORD personnel and members of the public to the meeting.

Dr. Carolyn Clancy, Assistant Undersecretary for Health (AUSH) for Discovery, Education and Affiliate Networks (DEAN), acknowledged the service provided to the NRAC by all members and expressed her thanks to those members whose appointments will expire in advance of the next NRAC meeting scheduled for March of 2023. Dr. Clancy spoke about exciting developments in ORD and the fact that what makes ORD different is that it is a part of the nation's largest integrated healthcare system. Dr. Clancy mentioned her support for ORD's plan to better integrate its operations into the broader VHA Enterprise which focuses on collaboration with VA Program partners and non-VA entities as essential for success. She confirmed that collaboration has been one of her office's core pillars since its inception and the most effective way to ensure that the VHA and ORD are delivering research that matters is by ensuring our research is being conducted in concert with our clinicians rather than in a silo.

Dr. George Lathrop, VA Chief Veterinary Officer, presented an update on Sensitive Species Subcommittee activities since their last report to the NRAC. He reminded the NRAC about Congressional mandates regarding research with sensitive species that the VA must meet and ORD's progress. To date the subcommittee has developed program objectives based on the plan submitted to Congress; identified resources needed including budget; identified the key results for each quarter needed to complete the objectives including specific tasks and deadlines; and provided progress assessments on key results that will be reviewed at quarterly meetings of the NRAC.

Drs. Mark Roltsch and Cendrine Robinson co-lead a presentation about accomplishments of the ORD work group on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DE&I). A budget of \$2.5 million was approved for FY22 DE&I activities. Initiatives include continuing DE&I Supplement Program; developing a RFA "Research Supplements to Promote Collaborations at MSIs"; a proposal writing workshop; a "Special Collection" Supplement to the Journal *Health Equity*; Team members to attend conferences to promote ORD DEI programs; Field-based meeting on LGBTQ+ Veteran Health; and summer Research Experiences

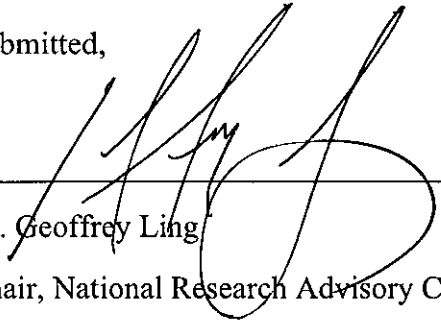
Dr. Rachel Ramoni, Chief Research and Development Officer (CRADO), presented an overview on plans to establish a subcommittee on Veteran Royalty Sharing. The purpose of the subcommittee would be to submit recommendations to the VA Secretary around a plan to implement a policy enabling ORD Technology Transfer to reserve a portion of royalties from investigator inventions to veterans who would decide on how to utilize those funds.

Dr. Wendy Tenhula, Deputy CRADO, presented an overview of the ORD Annual Report to the NRAC. The report described ORD's priorities and accomplishments for Fiscal Year (FY) 2021 along with their requested budget and goals for FY22. At the conclusion of Dr. Tenhula's presentation, the NRAC Chair Dr. Ling invited public comments. Neither the public nor NRAC members had any comments to share.

The next NRAC meeting will be held on May 4, 2022, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. ET. Ms. Catucci reminded the invitees that the NRAC meets three to four times per year on the first Wednesday of the month in March, June, September and/or December each year.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:55 p.m. ET.

Submitted,



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Dr. Geoffrey Ling

Chair, National Research Advisory Council