

NCOD Research Charter

1. NCOD Research provides response to **requests for technical data-driven services** that rely on our data handling skills and expertise, and response to requests for conceptual/scientific input and methodological input into designing, implementing, and tracking data-related aspects of all of the multiple NCOD activities as well as national initiatives, programs, and priorities.
2. NCOD Research seeks to **advance knowledge in management research and program evaluation**. Agendas for NCOD research programs are in line with VA priorities.
3. NCOD Research conducts **information dissemination, consultation and technology assessment** programs to effectively assist practitioners, users, VA senior managers and policy makers in their data-based decisions and in related analytical support needs.

NCOD Research also provides **data-driven support to broad and specific aspects of NCOD activities** that involve planning, defining, and carrying through empirically grounded tasks:

- Design of measures and survey instruments,
- Processing of the collected data,
- Analyzing and summarizing/interpreting results,
- Report production and report automation, including customized reports (a prime example is the VA All Employee Survey —but also reports for other NCOD assessments: 360, Executive Team, Change Management, Learning Organization, and others),
- Design and conduct studies (not necessarily pure research, but management studies as well, to support decision making by VA leaders and managers: a prime example is the Coaching Outcomes Study),
- Dissemination and consultation on what was learned to VA internal and external audiences,
- Internal staff training/quality control/education regarding NCOD metrics and relationships to VA performance benchmarks.

To summarize the scope of work conducted by NCOD Research, it includes services and activities throughout the organization that involve designing, coordinating, and supporting all aspects of our work that directly depend upon analyzing, understanding, interpreting and disseminating data,—and also implementation of services and activities that pertain to research and management studies.

Major Duties and Responsibilities of NCOD Research

- A. NCOD Research plans and conducts a continuing department-wide program of **technical services and research for VHA management needs**. Our focus is to identify, evaluate,

disseminate and encourage use of information about effective management techniques and programs for the most cost-effective methods of delivering quality services to Veterans.

Responsibilities include developing management assistance with data-related questions:

- Technical assistance and decision analysis support,
- Program evaluation,
- Management and organizational research on managerially-relevant questions,
- Information dissemination,
- Technology assessment,
- Contributing to formulating program plans and priorities for NCOD in these areas.

- B. NCOD Research programs include full support for processing and interpreting the **VA All Employee Survey (AES) data** (approximately 200,000 respondent records annually).

Responsibilities include:

- Scientifically checking the data to ensure validity/integrity,
- Creating/confirming the final dataset version used in the online ProClarity Data Cube to support annual action planning across VA organizations nationally,
- Conducting statistical analyses of the national, regional and local AES data,
- Creating detailed scientifically-based customized and automated reports for each VA administration, VISN, MSN, VBA Area, facility, and program office,
- Updating senior leaders and NCOD staff on the evolving empirical relationships, to inform their interactions in the field.

- C. NCOD Research programs provide coordination and support for the empirical data-based aspects of work of the **Organizational Assessment Sub-Committee (OASC) of the VHA National Leadership Council (NLC)**. Responsibilities include reviewing and evaluating national survey data requests in the system so as to balance the information needs of the requestors and the technical demands of planned projects with preserving the integrity and confidentiality of VA employee data.

- D. NCOD Research programs provide subject matter expertise and scientific consultation to design and implementation of **performance measures in VHA and across VA**, e.g. design and implementation of new Senior Executive Performance metrics, diversity and inclusion indices, employee feedback based elements for VISN/facility scorecards, and others.

- E. NCOD Research programs guide **empirical support for organizational development intervention programs at the national level**—such as executive coaching, CREW, Executive Team Assessments (ETA), National Partnership Forums, and others—by using data-based evaluation of their efficiency, general effectiveness, and specific outcomes.

- F. NCOD Research programs guide **empirical support for Veteran-centered care initiatives, Transformation, USH priorities** (e.g. Patient Centered Care Metrics Taskforce, ICARE, ODI evaluation of diversity training, Information Synchronization Project, Psychological Safety initiative, Patient Aligned Care Teams Demo Labs Organizational Function Workgroup) through a scientific/conceptual, as well as technical, involvement into developing strategic and measurement aspects of data-based working approaches to implementation of these initiatives.

A sampler of NCOD Research responsibilities and tasks

1. Formulating methods, procedures and guidelines for these listed programs.
2. Maintaining current expertise in the best practices within the technical field of data analysis software and statistical data processing and using this expertise to devise and implement optimal methods of processing the organizational data. For example, we use our skills to carry through the full scope of tasks involved in cleaning/ preserving the integrity of the AES data for all of the VA respondents, scientific analyses of the AES data, and creation of customized AES reports for all VISNs/MSNs/VBA Areas/facilities/program offices in the VA, as well as for the top VA and VHA leadership.
3. Based on the outcomes of leadership assistance with data-based decision making in the VA, we develop studies of best management practices, organizational research, program evaluation, and technology assessment projects for final approval by the Director, NCOD.
4. We participate in the Data Use Agreement (DUA) committee of the VHA OASC that is composed of VHA experts in organizational research, and charged with reviewing and evaluating national survey data requests in the system—for an optimal balance between the informational value of the request, scientific/technical demands involved, and security/protection of the sensitive data.
5. We provide support and contribution to designing and implementing empirically viable performance measures in VA and VHA (e.g. assessment and tracking of senior leadership competencies, designing and implementing senior executive performance metrics).
6. We provide scientific/methodological consultation and support for all of the data-based aspects of organizational development intervention programs at the national level (for example: data collection/measurement/empirical tracking aspects of such programs as CREW, Executive Team Assessment, National Partnership Forums), as well as for Veteran-Centered care initiatives, Transformation, and USH priorities (for example: creating new measures/conducting data collection/implementing the measurement/conducting the empirical tracking of progress for the Patient Centered Care Metrics Taskforce, ICARE initiative, ODI evaluation of diversity training, Information Synchronization Project, Psychological Safety initiative, and others).
7. We formulate plans and implement an agenda for management research program, which is then approved by the NCOD Director.
8. We provide advice, assistance, and staff support to VA senior staff in the design, conduct, and appraisal of management research proposals and program evaluation studies.
9. We provide advice, assistance, and staff support to VA senior staff in the design, conduct and appraisal of those organizational initiatives, interventions, and priorities that are partly or entirely based upon evaluating and interpreting organizational data and data trends over time.
10. We conduct collaborative program evaluation efforts, evaluations of national-level interventions and initiatives, design and implementation of national-level metrics,

collaborative and cooperative research within VA and with other federal agencies and/or national and international organizations, as well as other individual projects.

11. We provide training opportunities for VA staff in management issues, management research methodology and in technology assessment through experience in conducting management research, program evaluation and technology assessment studies.
12. We present papers at national and international research and professional meetings about NCOD activities and recent research findings.
13. We represent the NCOD in contacts with non-VA organizations active in the general area of management research, technical assistance, technology assessment and information dissemination.
14. We develop and implement information strategies and disseminate our information products, including project reports, analyses, briefing documents and newsletters as well as electronic dissemination.

Questions?

Please contact NCOD Research at vhancod@va.gov or (513) 247-4684.

