



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Veterans Health Administration
Geriatric Research, Education, and Clinical Centers

VA New England GRECC Fellowship Programs

New England GRECC is directed by Jonathan Bean, MD and located at the Boston and Bedford VA. We have 3 areas of research: (1) The aging brain; (2) Technology in the care of older veterans; (3) Function and frailty. In addition, we have a host of clinical and educational evaluation projects.

What is a GRECC?

The Veterans Health Administration developed Geriatric Research Education and Clinical Centers (GRECCs) to attract scientists and health professionals to the field of geriatrics to help increase the knowledge of aging, transmit this knowledge to health care providers, and improve the quality of care delivered to older adults. Each of the 20 national GRECCs contains a research, education, and clinical component. The clinical component focuses on developing and evaluating innovations in care.
va.gov/grecc

Advanced Fellowship in Geriatrics

http://www.va.gov/oaa/specialfellows/programs/SF_AdvGeriatric.asp.

The focus of this fellowship is the development of leadership in health care of older adults. This **two year** fellowship allows for more traditional research as well as clinical innovation, quality improvement and medical education with at least approximately 75% time in scholarly pursuit of geriatrics (coursework and research) under the direction of a research mentor and approximately 25% in clinical care. Fellows are required to make substantive, independent, and identifiable contributions to a research or evaluation project. For this fellowship there is a local and national application process. If selected locally, additional materials will need to be completed for review at a national level. The Advanced Fellowship is intended for clinicians with a doctoral degree and is open to any discipline. For more information contact Jennifer.moye@va.gov.

Second Year Geriatric Medicine Fellowship

First year Geriatric medicine fellows in VA-affiliated programs have the opportunity to apply to continue their training a second year through a stipend paid by VA Boston Healthcare System "disbursement" payment. The number of available positions are contingent on funding. This **one year** fellowship allows fellows to: (1) Complete a research, education, or clinical demonstration project; (2) Attend and precept residents in a VA geriatrics clinic. In this fellowship trainees continue their affiliation with their academic fellowship program, and may complete a project at the affiliate, but spend the majority of their time at the VA. The Second Year Fellowship in Geriatric medicine is open only to physicians who have completed their geriatric fellowship. For more information contact Andrea.Schwartz@va.gov.

For both of these fellowships the candidate will develop a letter of interest that describes their learning plan including project(s) and didactic study, working with their mentor and Drs. Moye or Schwartz. The deadline for submitting a formal letter of interest plus CV is **January 15, 2020** or until filled.

Citizenship: Citizenship is required for the Advanced Fellowship. Non- U.S. Citizens interested in an Advanced Fellowship may be considered with appropriate visa/residency status if no qualified US Citizen has applied. The Second Year Fellowship in Geriatric Medicine is not restricted by Citizenship.

Current Clinical Evaluation Projects

- The Coordinated Transitions of Care (C-TraC)** - (Boston) - is a collaboration with Amy Kind MD, PhD and Laury Jensen, RN from VA Madison in which a nurse identifies and enrolls veterans at high risk for readmission while they are inpatients and then provides proactive follow up and support for 30 days after discharge. One C-TraC program focuses on decreasing readmissions and the other on meeting the needs of veterans with serious illness. Contact Jenny Driver for more information.
- Hospital in Home** – (Boston) – is a collaboration with the Department of Medicine in which a mobile team including a physician, nurses, pharmacist and social worker provide acute care in the home. Contact Jenny Driver for more information.
- The Geri-Renal Clinic** – (Boston) - is collaboration with the Department of Medicine and Division of Nephrology. A NE-GRECC trained geriatrician and pharmacist are embedded in the outpatient renal clinic. Innovations include gait speed as a vital sign; and deprescribing. Contact Julie Paik for more information
- The Geriatric Cardiology Clinic** – (Boston) - is collaboration with the Department of Medicine and Division of Cardiology. A NE-GRECC geriatrician trained in preventive cardiology is embedded in the preventive cardiology and electrophysiology clinics. Innovations include gait speed as a vital sign. Contact Ariela Orkaby for more information.
- Tele-Health in the Home Dementia care** –(Bedford) brings dementia specialty care into the homes of Veteran’s with dementia and/or their immediate caregivers using clinical video Tele-Health (CVT) Technologies. New innovations focus on tele-neuropsychology. Contact Lauren Moo for more information
- Live Long Walk Strong** (Boston) – is an intervention intended to enhance gait and balance stability for those at risk of falling. Contact Jonathan Bean for more information.
- GeroFit** (Boston) – is an exercise program being replicated from the Durham GRECC in which veterans complete a tailored exercise prescription. Contact Jonathan Bean for more information.

Current Educational Evaluation Projects

- Development and Evaluation of Conferences and Webinars.** We plan and evaluate every educational activity including dementia education to rural providers (GRECC Connect); conferences on interprofessional education and other topics. Contact Lauren Moo or Jenny Moyer for more information.
- PTSD in Late Life and End of Life.** We are completing needs assessment and developing educational materials including videos and podcasts for rural hospice and palliative care providers. Contact Jenny Moyer for more information.
- Harvard Medical School Arts and Humanities Initiative.** Aimed at improving professionalism, reflection, empathy, and reducing burnout, activities include lectures, concert performances, visits to museums, open mic nights, and painting workshops all directed towards medical education. Contact Andrea Schwartz for more information.
- Harvard Medical School Curriculum in Geriatrics.** NE-GRECC core staff Dr. Schwartz co-leads the longitudinal curriculum on geriatrics and palliative care at Harvard Medical School. Projects include evaluating curricular elements, developing and evaluating new elements. Contact Andrea Schwartz for more information.
- My Life, My Story.** NE-GRECC Affiliate Susan Nathan, a palliative care physician, has launched the “My Life, My Story” project from Madison VA at VA Boston using trainees. Contact Susan Nathan for more information.

Your primary mentor for your scholarly project will be a GRECC Investigator. Mentors who are GRECC Affiliates may be considered as secondary project mentors. Potential research mentors/ projects include:

Jonathan Bean, MD (Boston and Bedford locations). Fellows may join Dr. Bean's research that addresses both risk factor identification and the efficacy of treatments, especially rehabilitative care, that address the prevention of functional decline and frailty. This work has been seminal in identifying important risk factors that underlie mobility skills among older adults, simple clinical tests that can be utilized within the context of primary care, and treatment paradigms that can be disseminated across the care continuum. This research takes a multidisciplinary approach to the optimizing of care for aging veterans.

Jane (Jenny) Driver, MD (Boston). There are opportunities to work with Dr. Driver in areas of research and clinical evaluation in the following areas.

- (1) Development and evaluation of clinical innovation projects
- (2) Quality improvement
- (3) Geriatric oncology focusing on the benefits of geriatric evaluation for prognostic information.
- (4) Improving transitions of care
- (5) Assessment of frailty and function

Gina McGlinchey, PhD (Boston). Fellows may collaborate with Dr. McGlinchey on

- (1) Studies using the VA RR&D Traumatic Brain Injury National Research Center, TRACTS. TRACTS data set. TRACTS conducts multidisciplinary clinical research that aims to characterize the long-term effects of deployment trauma. Studies most relevant to NE-GRECC include neuroimaging studies to examine the effects of remote (military-related) brain injury in older veterans using MRI and PET. We are also examining aging trajectories in younger veterans exposed to blast munitions.
- (2) Impact of adolescent binge drinking on the development of frontal lobe function across the lifespan.
- (3) Studies of hemispatial neglect and memory systems using magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), diffusion tensor imaging (DTI), and positron emission tomography (PET)) to relate learning and memory function to functional and structural brain changes associated with alcohol use disorders.

James Meisel, MD (Bedford). Fellows may collaborate with Dr. Meisel to help create a new graduate medical education rotation on the CLC. The fellow will learn how to take a systems perspective on resource acquisition and allocation, including ACGME and VA regulatory requirements and funding. The trainee will use a curriculum design approach to assess learner and institutional needs, identify goals and learning objectives, assess what evidence would constitute successful completion of the learning objectives, create educational resources that ensure learner success, and then iteratively improve learners' experience. The fellow will teach in the rotation that he or she develops. This scholarly demonstration project will be mentored by ACOS-Education Jim Meisel, MD, MHPE, and colleagues, at the end of which the fellow will publish an abstract or present a poster documenting the rotation's effectiveness.

By way of background, Bedford VAMC is a VA New England GRECC partner that hosts the largest long term care geriatric facility in the VA system. In addition to 200 community living center (CLC) nursing home beds, the Geriatrics service line includes new geropsychiatry and hospice units; an inpatient Memory Special Care Unit; a Memory Disorders Clinic, and a 24-bed Geriatric Evaluation and Management inpatient unit. Bedford is actively developing its academic training programs. Affiliates from the Boston University Geriatric Fellowship and the BU Family Medicine Residency currently rotate through nine rotations across the above interprofessional units. Dr. Meisel won't be accepting advanced fellows in geriatrics in 2020.

William Milberg, PhD (Boston). Opportunities with Dr. Milberg include collaboration on TRACTS as described above. In addition, he studies the effects of cerebrovascular disease (CVD) risk factors on brain health and cognition in older adults. There are several lines of research that this area encompasses, including the identification of neuroimaging biomarkers of metabolic syndrome in middle aged and older adults, as well as the effect of CVD on neuropsychological function.

Lauren Moo, MD (Bedford). Fellows have the opportunity to work across at least to diverse projects with Dr. Moo.

- (1) Telemedicine. Video-telemedicine program development, evaluation, and implementation projects are available for interested trainees. Programs include Dementia Management using clinical video telehealth (CVT) into the homes of veterans with dementia, Neuropsychological assessment via CVT for veterans at rural CBOCs, and Dementia-specific Home Safety Evaluations via CVT. Trainees could potentially be involved in data collection, analysis, literature review, and manuscript preparation, depending on their training and interests.
- (2) Technology. Collaborative research with robotics and technology companies primarily using qualitative or mixed methods approaches to measure geriatric veteran, family caregiver and clinician attitudes toward various approaches and future devices. Trainees could potentially be involved in all aspects of the projects including data collection, analysis, literature review and manuscript preparation.

Jennifer Moye, PhD (Boston and Bedford locations). Fellows may collaborate with Dr. Moye on projects spanning clinical and educational research.

- (1) Decision making and guardianship for unrepresented adults who lack decision making capacity and surrogates.
- (2) Educational research/ evaluation.
- (3) Cancer survivorship.
- (4) Late Life PTSD under “SPARCC”. SPARCC (Stress, PTSD, Aging, Resilience Clinical Collaborative) is a collaboration of New England GRECC and the National Center for PTSD Behavioral Sciences Division. We have a variety of projects including evaluation of interventions; development of fact sheets and other educational materials.

Anica Pless Kaiser, Ph.D. Dr. Pless Kaiser is a clinical research psychologist in the Behavioral Science Division of the National Center for PTSD and a Research Assistant Professor of Psychiatry at Boston University School of Medicine. She is broadly interested in the effects of stress and trauma over the lifespan and the relationship between PTSD, health, and aging. Current projects include assessment of PTSD and related disorders and the development, implementation and evaluation of psychosocial and physical interventions for older Veterans.

Opportunities for collaboration include:

- (1) Participant screening and recruitment
- (2) Telephone-based assessment of Veterans and Informants
- (3) Co-facilitation of groups for older Veterans with late-onset stress and/or PTSD
- (4) Co-facilitation of Wellness Education groups
- (5) Co-authorship of conference presentations or manuscripts
- (6) Grant writing

Andrea Wershof Schwartz, MD MPH. (Boston location). Dr. Schwartz is a clinician educator at VA Boston. Awarded the 2018 American Geriatrics Society award for Outstanding Junior Clinician Educator, Dr. Schwartz serves as Associate Program Director for Medical Education for Harvard Multicampus Geriatrics Fellowship, and leads the geriatrics education expansion for the Harvard Medical Students in the Pathways curriculum as an HMS Academy Medical Education fellow. She also sees patients in the VA’s multidisciplinary Geriatrics consult clinics.

Trainees may collaborate with Dr. Schwartz on:

- (1) Quality and Process improvement projects and educational projects in the VA Boston Geriatrics Consult clinic, a multidisciplinary teaching clinic that serves frail older veterans, often referred for cognitive or functional decline, polypharmacy or falls. Our clinic is a sought-after teaching site for trainees in geriatrics, internal medicine, geriatric pharmacy, neuropsychology, audiology and the National VA geriatrics scholars program. Opportunities also exist in the Tele-Geriatrics clinic at VA Boston, which serves veterans in rural areas without access to geriatrics. Projects include assessing the impact of Telegeriatrics, improving clinical processes, educational sessions for trainees in the clinic, developing patient education materials.
- (2) Geriatrics educational projects at VA Boston. Previous fellows developed geriatrics curricula for the home based primary care team and for internal medicine residents in Primary Care. Other educational opportunities include working with the medicine residents in the inpatient or outpatient settings, teaching subspecialists, and allied-health professionals.
- (3) HMS Geriatrics education: trainees can work with Dr. Schwartz in development and assessment of geriatrics educational modules for Harvard Medical school students, including pre-clinical geriatric clinical reasoning, geriatric home visits, development of new course content, and faculty development in geriatrics.
- (4) Geriatrics Fellowship Medical education curriculum: Dr. Schwartz leads the medical education curriculum for the Harvard geriatrics fellow. Trainees could participate in curriculum/session design, evaluation/assessment of the curriculum.

Weiming Xia, MD (Bedford). Dr. Xia is a basic scientist and Principal Investigator of a BLRD Pilot study demonstrating a novel platform for generating induced pluripotent stem cells (iPSC) for preclinical studies of neurodegenerative disorders. He also established a well-equipped biomarker laboratory that was supported by multiple VA ShEEP awards and created an analytic platform using Mass Spectrometers and ELISA. He is a co-investigator of two VA MERIT studies and a NIH RO1 sponsored project, and principal investigator of a foundation grant. He is a 5/8 investigator at the Bedford VA division of the NE-GRECC.

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Fellows, in particular (but not limited to) MD fellows may pursue research projects with our affiliates as long as the majority of time is spent at the VA. Affiliate investigators include those from the BUMC Geriatric Fellowship Program and the Harvard Medical School Multi-Campus Geriatric Fellowship. Investigators include:

Sarah Berry, MD, MPH (HMS / Beth Israel). Dr. Berry is a geriatrician whose primary research focus has been on outcomes following hip fractures, both in the community and nursing home settings. Given the strong link between falls and fracture, she is also interested in studying novel and modifiable risk factors for falls.

Hollis Day, MD, MS. Dr. Day is the Chief of Geriatrics at BMC/BUSM. Her research interests include integrating geriatrics into the internal medicine curriculum at the student, resident, and faculty development level; interdisciplinary team teaching; and inter-professional communication. Her clinical focus areas include dementia and delirium in geriatric patients, cognitive assessment in the primary care geriatric setting, and helping patients.

Ryan Chippendale, MD. Dr. Chippendale is the Geriatrics Fellowship Program Director at BMC/BUSM. Her scholarly interests include advanced communication skills training for all levels of learners, advance care planning, interprofessional education, simulation, wellness/resiliency and preparedness for transitions in medical education from UME to GME. Her clinical focus areas include home-based primary care and comprehensive geriatrics assessments.

To read about additional research opportunities at BMC/BUSM go to:
<http://www.bumc.bu.edu/geriatrics/research/>

To read about additional research opportunities at HMS go to:
<https://www.instituteforagingresearch.org/scientists/team-profiles-and-bios>