



Dear ACT for Veterans Stakeholders:

This month, we wanted to break from our regular monthly update format to recognize the significance of Veterans Day, which was observed earlier this week, on Monday, November 11th. Origins of the holiday date back to World War I, when a temporary cessation of hostilities, or an armistice between the Allied nations and Germany, went into effect on the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month. In 1938, a Congressional Act made the 11th of November of each year a legal holiday, originally known as “Armistice Day”- a day set aside to honor veterans of World War I. In 1954, after both World War II and the Korean War, the 83rd Congress, at the urging of the veterans’ service organizations, amended the Act of 1938 by striking out the word "Armistice" and inserting in its place the word "Veterans." With the approval of this legislation on June 1, 1954, November 11th became a day to honor American veterans of all wars.

There are many ways to honor our nation’s Veterans. When ACT for Veterans began, it was established as part of a larger effort to serve Veterans through research. Such an emphasis required a commitment not just to clinical trials, but to those of the highest quality. It was dedicated to enhancing access to clinical trials for Veterans, to building trust, and to recognizing that these men and women who had already served in uniform, would again be serving selflessly to advance science and healthcare. It aimed to not simply facilitate partnerships with VA for clinical trials activities, but to create opportunities by involving a number of people and groups with shared common goals focused on improving health and quality of life. So, as we continue toward the goals of this initiative, we wanted to reaffirm our dedication to these principles and the importance of them as part of a larger “noble mission” to honor and serve our Veterans through research- in keeping with the healthcare mission of VA.

As many know, the very first multi-site clinical trials in the U.S. started with our Veterans after World War II. Since then, not only have new treatments been established, but many standard practices and procedures and our overall understanding of what works best are now in place because their contributions through clinical trials. The nation has much to be appreciative of because of the voluntary participation of Veterans in clinical trials over a number of decades. As the ACT for Veterans initiative proceeds, we are grateful to our stakeholders and partners for the achievements to date and those to come. However, we are most appreciative for those who served in uniform who give us the reason for pursuing newer and higher standards in all aspects through ACT for Veterans and what it can do for the nation.

We encourage all of our readers to consider ways to honor our Veterans beyond the time set aside on November 11. As always, please don’t hesitate to contact Krissa Caroff, ACT for Veterans Program Coordinator, by email at clinicaltrials@navref.org should you have any questions.

Rick Starrs
CEO, NAVREF

Grant Huang
VA Office of Research and Development