



Dear ACT for Veterans Stakeholders:

We are pleased to report that efforts to establish the team that will be dedicated to working with industry sponsors which we announced last month continue to move forward. While we previously referred to it as the “Partnered Studies Program”, we are revisiting this designation to avoid confusion with other activities within VA. Currently, we are finalizing position descriptions, agreements and other documents to have this staff in place. This team will not only serve as the initial point of contact for potential industry partners and shepherd stakeholders through the processes necessary for successful study start up, but will also liaise with other clinical research stakeholders within VA, its affiliated non-profit corporations and others to ensure that resources are in place to allow VA to engage in partnered clinical research activities. It will also focus on continual improvement activities to help with further improving processes as this effort becomes a more established capability within VA.

In addition to addressing staffing needs, we are also working to ensure that the tools and resources that program staff will require in order to conduct business in an efficient and effective manner are in place. Forms, checklists, document management systems, and other aids- many of which were developed by our workgroup members- are currently being reviewed and finalized.

The VA Office of Research Protections, Policy and Education has also just launched its VA Innovation and Research Review System (VAIRRS). This management system will help VA research committees with their responsibilities and ideally help with standardization of activities and more efficient processing of studies. More information can be found on their website at:

<https://www.research.va.gov/programs/orppe/vairrs/default.cfm>

While we are tremendously proud of the activities that we have been able to accomplish over the past two years, we are also keenly aware that we identified other priorities at our initial Summit that have yet to be addressed. In the upcoming weeks, the ACT Steering Committee will be convening to discuss next steps and future directions for the initiative. We look forward to finalizing these steps and will continue to keep you apprised as things take shape. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact Krissa Caroff, ACT for Veterans Program Coordinator, by email at clinicaltrials@navref.org.

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