

SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH: NEW HSR&D RFA

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Veterans Health Administration
Office of Research & Development

Poll Question 1

What is your primary role in VA?

- A) HSR&D investigator
- B) coordinator, project manager, or analyst
- C) clinician
- D) ACOS, AO, or other research leadership
- E) operations leadership or staff
- F) other within VA
- G) not affiliated with VA

Poll Question 2

Have you previously applied for HSR&D funding?

A) yes

B) no

Why a new RFA focused on social determinants of health?

- HSR&D has a long history of funding health equity research
- Research to date has largely focused on medical care and on race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, and gender identity
- Unmet social needs remain an important driver of health disparities, especially in VA
- VA has a greater capacity than other health systems to address non-medical needs (housing, education, transportation, etc.)
- We want to expand our portfolio to explicitly address social determinants of health and to develop new approaches to mitigate unmet social needs
- We know this research will be hard and may depend on the development of new partnerships with community organizations

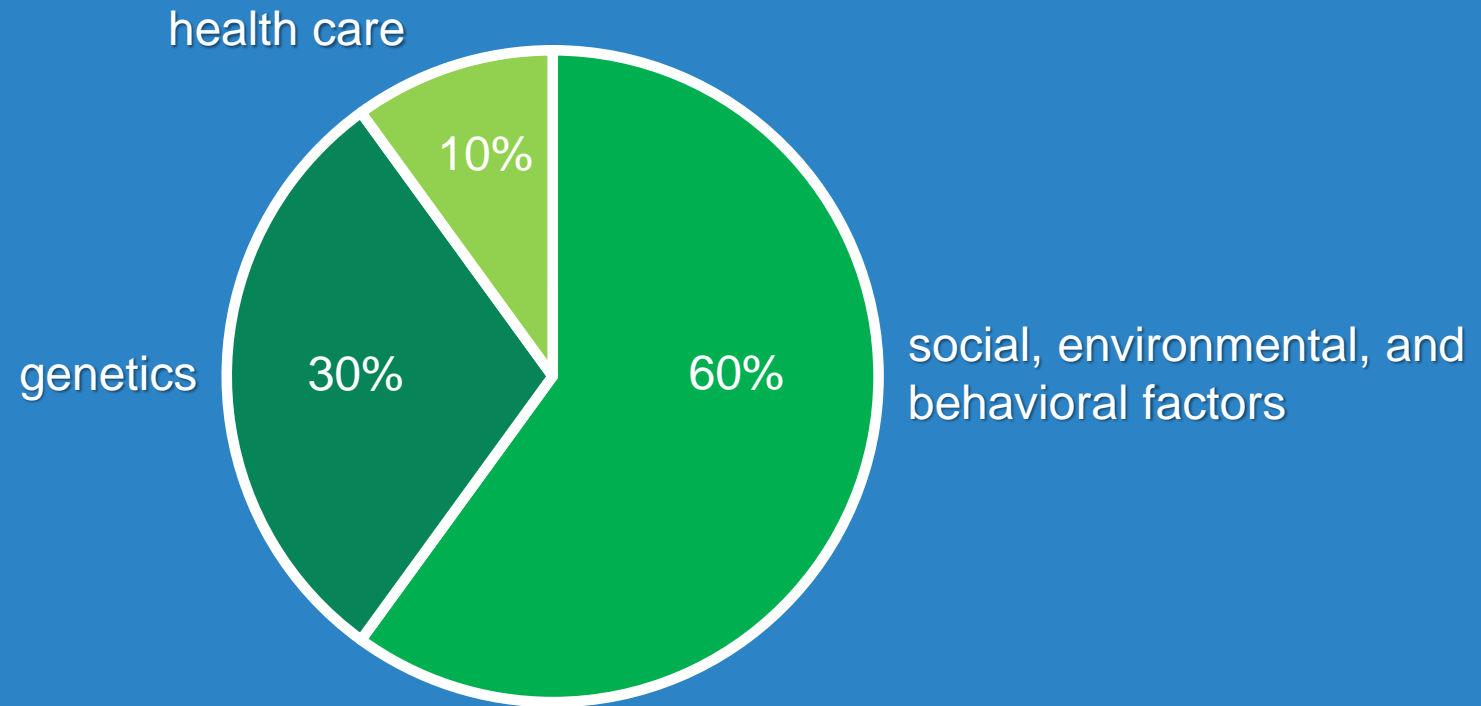
Social Determinants of Health

“conditions in the environments in which people are born, live, learn, work, play, worship, and age that affect a wide range of health, functioning, and quality-of-life outcomes and risks”

Healthy People 2020
Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion



Determinants of Health and their Contribution to Premature Death



Priority Areas

- Screening for unmet social needs
- Referral processes to link Veterans to existing social care services
- Development and evaluation of new interventions
- We welcome proposals that address social determinants of health at the individual, population, community, and health system levels

Criteria

- **Significance:** potential to mitigate unmet social needs of Veterans
- **Research Methods:** preference will be given to studies with hybrid effectiveness-implementation design if the evidence base is substantial
- **Implementation:** consider how partnerships with community organizations will be sustained beyond the funding period
- **Innovation:** potential to identify new data sources and targets for intervention, and to test new approaches in VA; we are not interested in proposals that only seek to document known disparities

Criteria

- Feasibility
- Investigator Qualifications
- Multiple PD/PI Leadership Plan (if applicable)
- Facilities and Resources
- Protection of Human Subjects
- Inclusion of Women and Minorities: beware of unintended consequences – think about how you can ensure that interventions don't leave behind those who most need them or are hardest to reach and how you can evaluate whether novel interventions exacerbate health disparities

Levels of Funding

- **SDOH Merit Review Awards**
 - Up to 4 years
 - Budget may not exceed \$1.2 million
- **SDOH Pilot Projects**
 - Up to 18 months
 - Budget may not exceed \$200,000
 - Generate data to establish feasibility of an IIR
 - Establish a new partnership with an outside organization
 - Answer a question of high value to a clinical or operations partner

Timeline

April 24-May 8, 2020	ITS window
May 15, 2020	Grants.gov opens
June 10, 2020	Down to the wire deadline
June 12, 2020	Last submission deadline
June 15, 2020	Verification deadline
August, 2020	Scientific merit review
January 1, 2021	Earliest project start date

Eligibility

- MD, PhD, or equivalent doctoral degree in a medical, biological, or behavioral science field
- VA paid appointment of at least 25 hours/week (5/8ths)
- All VA medical centers with active research programs are eligible
- A VA medical center must be registered as an applicant organization on Grants.gov and eRA Commons before any proposals can be submitted

Resubmissions

- Proposals previously submitted through the parent IIR or Pilot mechanism may be submitted in response to this RFA
- They should be coded as new submissions
- We anticipate that this mechanism will exist for at least three cycles, so proposals that do not receive fundable scores will be eligible for resubmission

Review Process

- We expect that these proposals will be reviewed by a special emphasis panel
- Proposals will be reviewed on-cycle
- Funding decisions about proposals submitted through this mechanism will be made independent of other funding decisions
- We do not have a set budget allocated for this mechanism

Questions

Please email Alexandra Neuhaus-Follini
(Alexandra.NeuhausFollini@va.gov) with questions