



Using Data & Information Systems in Partnered Research

FY25 Session 1:

QUERI Advancing Diversity in Implementation Leadership (ADIL): Highlighting Two Pathways

Monday, November 25, 2024

Hosted by 



Joshua Hamer, Ph.D. (he/him)
Core Investigator

*Center for Innovations in Quality,
Effectiveness, & Safety (IQuEST)*

Michael E. DeBakey VA Medical Center



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Core Investigator

*Center for Innovation to
Implementation (Ci2i)*

VA Palo Alto Healthcare System



Using Data & Information Systems in Partnered Research Cyberseminar Series

*Presentations from the field focusing on VA data use
in quality improvement and operations-research partnerships.*

Sessions cover...

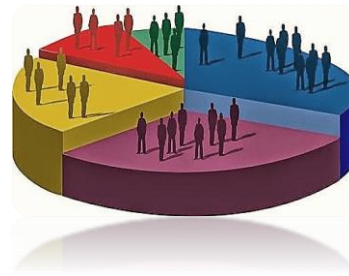
- Use of VA data and information systems in QUERI Projects and Partnered Evaluation Initiatives
- Operational data resources and QI-related data
- Challenges in using and managing multiple data sources
- VA resources to support data use
- Experiences working within operations/research partnerships



Poll #1:

*What is your primary **role** in projects using VA data?*

- Investigator, PI, Co-I
- Statistician, methodologist, biostatistician
- Data manager, analyst, or programmer
- Project coordinator
- Other – please describe via the chat function



Poll #2:

How many years of experience working with VA data?

- None – I'm brand new to this!
- One year or less
- More than 1, less than 3 years
- At least 3, less than 7 years
- At least 7, less than 10 years
- 10 years or more





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Session roadmap

A map of the Ohio River valley region, showing the border between Indiana and Ohio. A thick white line with a grey shadow highlights a route starting from Indianapolis, Indiana, and ending in Columbus, Ohio. Two yellow circular markers are placed at the start and end of the route. The map shows major cities, towns, and roads in the area.

I. Formative Work: How Did We Get Here?

II. ADIL Projects in Brief

III. Making an Implementation Science Leader

IV. Lessons Learned

V. Future Work: Where Are We Going?



Disclaimer

The contents and views of this presentation are those of the authors and do not represent the views of the Department of Veterans Affairs or the United States Government.



Session Objectives

1. Describe how the ADIL can be helpful for early career VA investigators in informing their next stage of research, including related grants and career paths
2. Discuss how the ADIL can help early career investigators build operational partnerships at the local and national levels
3. Discuss lessons learned, including potential strategies for ADIL success



I. Formative Work: How Did We Get Here?



About Me

- Inquisitive daughter of a U.S. Navy Veteran

1988
to
2007



LEFT:
My dad and his family after enlisting in the U.S. Navy



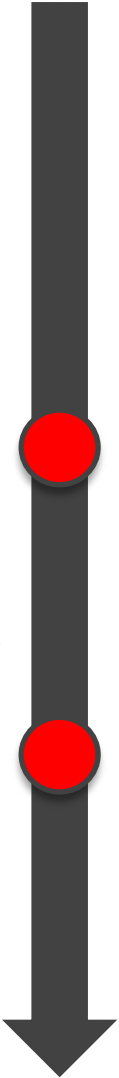
RIGHT:
Blue Angels over Pensacola Beach



About Me

- Inquisitive daughter of a U.S. Navy Veteran
- Health psychologist
 - Health equity, intervention development, qualitative methods, program evaluation

2008
to
2017



RIGHT:
Wallaby break
during a
service-learning
trip to Australia



LEFT:

1. Virginia Commonwealth University Department of Psychology;
2. Logo for VCU Center for Cultural Experiences in Prevention



About Me

- Inquisitive daughter of a U.S. Navy Veteran
- Health psychologist
 - Health equity, intervention development, qualitative methods, program evaluation
- Advocate for health equity for all

2015
to
2016



1



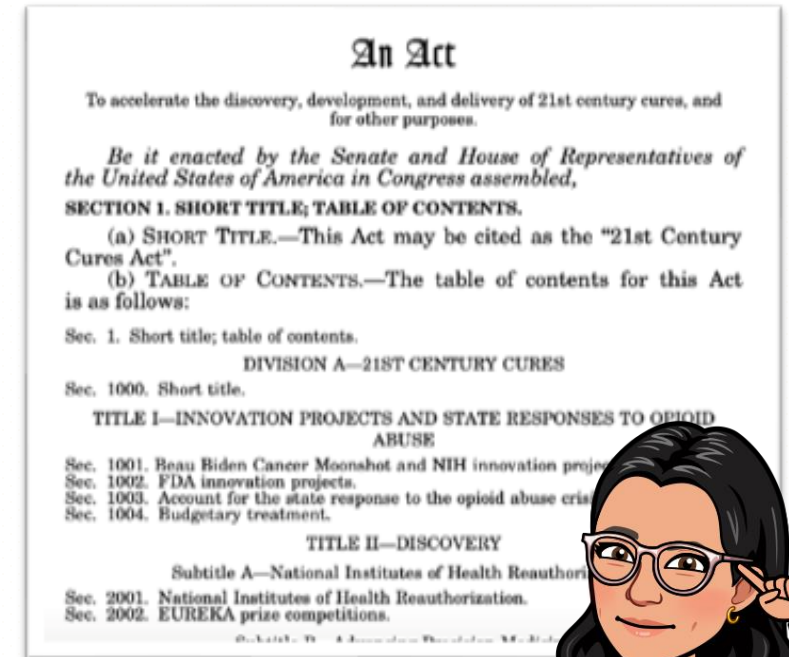
2

LEFT:

1. Logo for American Psychological Association (APA)
2. APA Public Interest Directorate

RIGHT:

Text from the
21st Century Cures Act of 2016,
which increased
mental health parity



About Me

- Inquisitive daughter of a U.S. Navy Veteran
- Health psychologist
 - Health equity, intervention development, qualitative methods, program evaluation
- Advocate for health equity for all
- Health services research fellow and VA Core Investigator
 - Three years of postdoc training in implementation science and mixed methods at Ci2i
 - HSR CDA 21-015 ("Addressing Disparities in Pain Management") awarded in 2023

2018
to
now



ABOVE:
CDA Project Branding

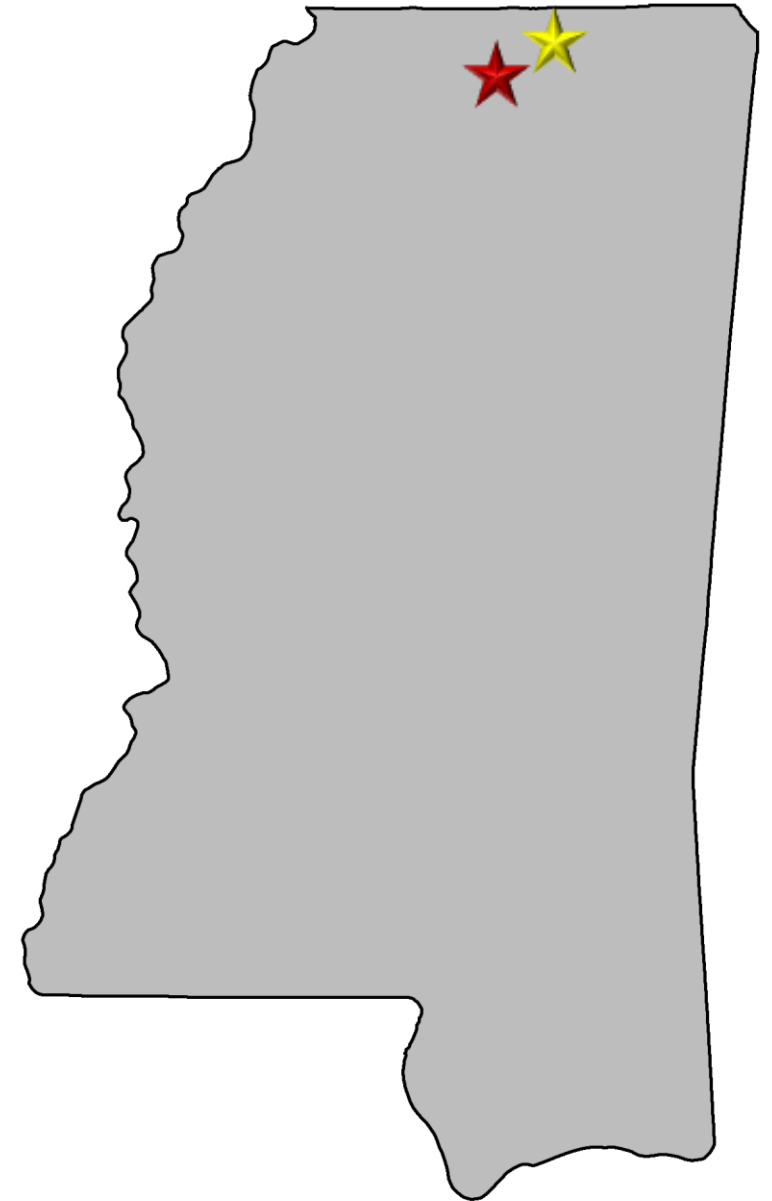


ABOVE:
Ci2i DEI Workgroup Logo



About Me

Early Experiences in Mississippi



About Me

Mental Healthcare Inequities



The
Commonwealth
Fund



About Me

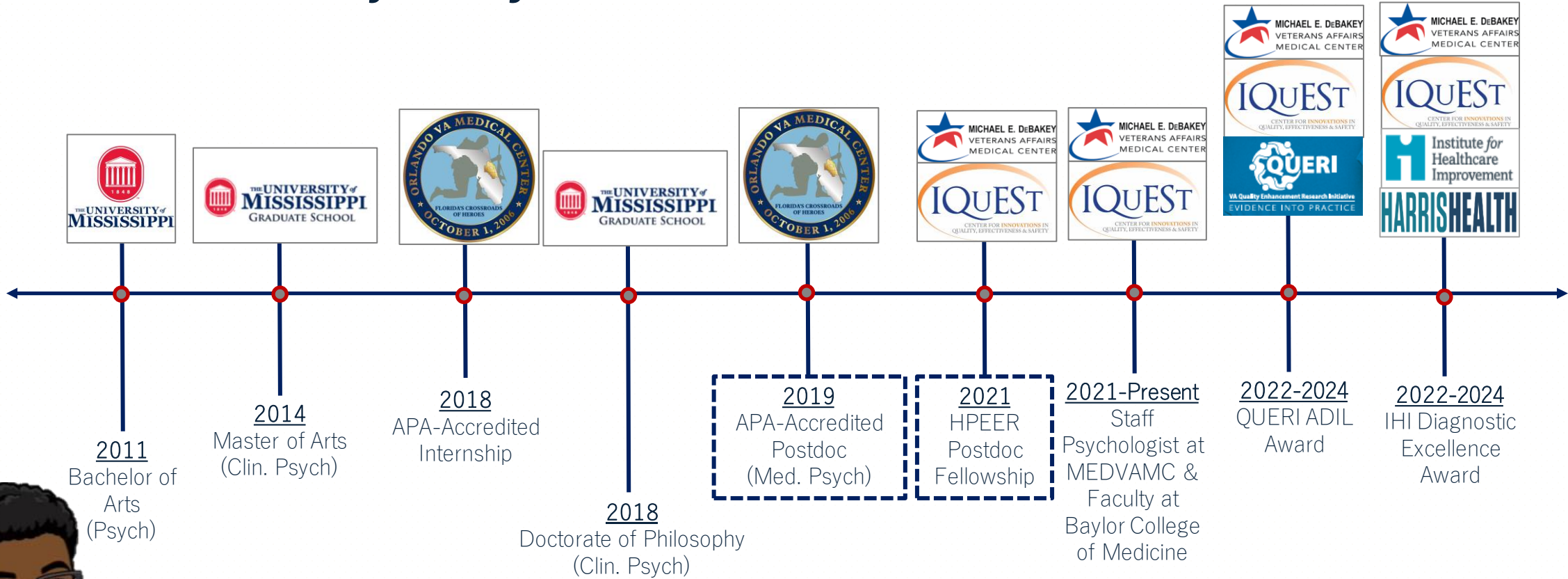
Mental Healthcare Inequities

- Depressive disorders
- Anxiety disorders
- Trauma and stress-related disorders
- Psychotic disorders
- Veteran family and community members



About Me

Professional Trajectory



II. ADIL Projects in Brief



VA Training to Evaluate and Treat (VA TREAT) Cognitive Decline

A QUERI Learning Hub Project

Joshua Hamer, PhD

Core Investigator

Center for Innovations in Quality, Effectiveness,
and Safety (IQuEST)

Michael E. DeBakey VA



Veterans Health Administration Policy: Dementia System of Care

- VHA DIRECTIVE 1140.12
 - *It is VHA policy that all VA medical facilities provide comprehensive, coordinated, person-centered care for Veterans with dementia and their caregivers.*
- Local Dementia Care Pathways bottleneck
 - 6 care pathways; 6-9 mos. waitlists
- Behavioral Neurology & Neuropsychiatry
 - <50% evidenced data to EHR support dementia diagnosis



Implement an Evidence-Based Intervention

Patient Aligned Care Team (PACT) pre-screening intervention

- Dementia Warning Signs (DWS) education
- Adapt for local Primary Care system
- Integrate Primary Care Behavioral Health

Improve local dementia outcomes

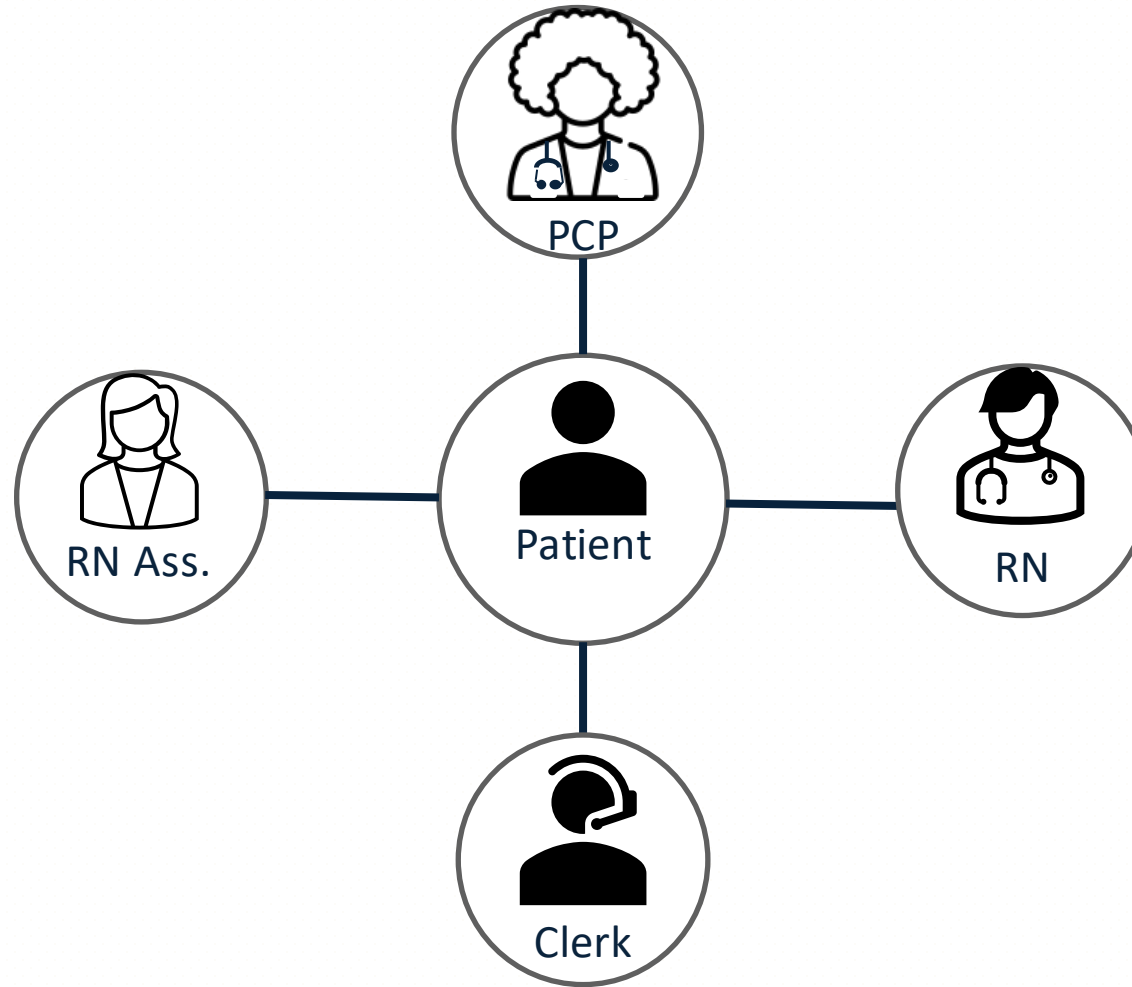
- Screening process
- Diagnosis rates in primary care

Evaluate intervention implementation to sustain improvements

- Quality Improvement needs
- Pilot data



Patient Aligned Care Teams (PACTs)



PACT Hand-off screening protocol: Diagnostic Screening tools

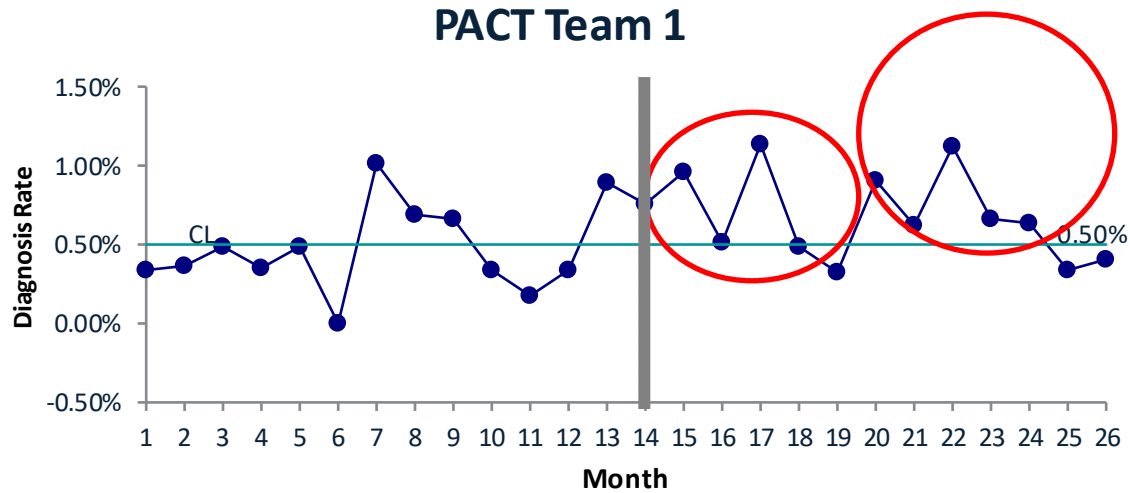
- Educational Training Intervention
 - Dementia Warning Signs
 - Electronic Health Record note template
 - Referral to Primary Care Behavioral Health
 - Negotiate closed loop communication strategies



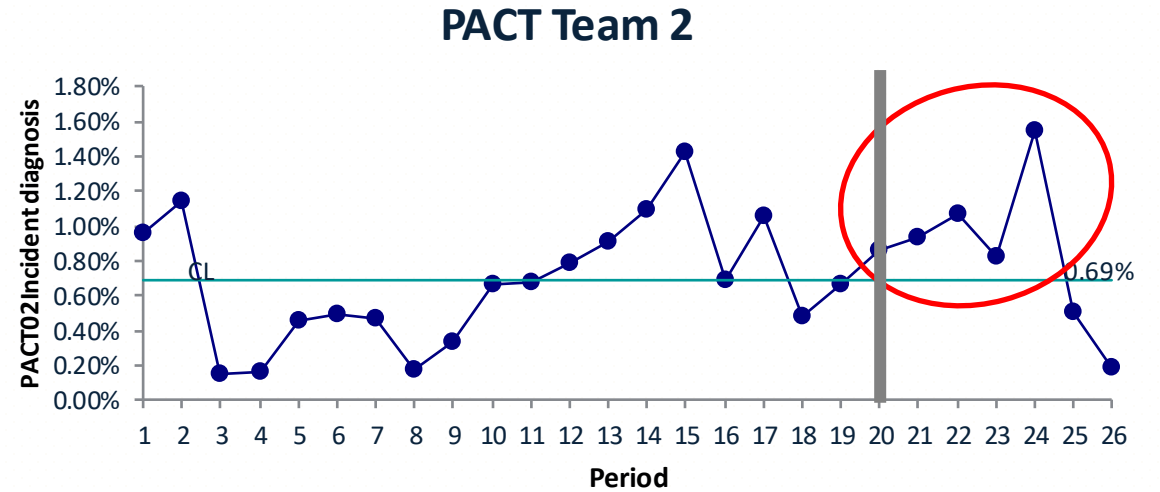
Primary Care: Screening protocol



Diagnosis Rates



N = 89



N = 114

	Baseline (12 mos.)	Post- Intervention	$\Delta \uparrow$
Team 1	.41	.70	.26
Team 2	.68	*.87	*.21

Diagnosis Rates

- 3 teams trained
 - 1 CBOC PACT
 - 2 VAMC PACTs
- All exhibited positive post-intervention trends
- 1 team reached statistical significance at 1-year
 - $X^2 < 0.01$
- Continuing to track data for remaining teams



Measuring Disparities in Opioid Overdose Education and Naloxone Distribution Among Unstably Housed Veterans

A Bridge QUERI ADIL Project
(QUE 20-017)

Sarah Javier, PhD
Core Investigator
VA Center for Innovation to Implementation
VA Palo Alto Healthcare System



Opioid Overdose Education and Naloxone Distribution (OEND)

What is it? A discrete, evidence-based, and federally sanctioned intervention for preventing opioid-related overdose



Opioid Overdose Education (OE)

- Education of individuals to prevent, recognize, and respond to an opioid overdose
- Takes 10-20 minutes per individual



Naloxone Distribution (ND)

- Provision of naloxone (trade name: Narcan) to individual
- Training of individual at risk and/or potential bystanders on naloxone use



Unsafe Opioid Use is a Persistent Issue for Unstably Housed and Unhoused Veterans

- Veterans with opioid use disorders (OUD) are **twice as likely** to die from an accidental overdose than non-veterans
- Opioid-related deaths have increased significantly among Black and Hispanic Americans in recent years, yet have decreased among White individuals
- The Opioid Safety Initiative (2013) and Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act (2016) have been helpful in curtailing the opioid epidemic in VHA...
 - ...but **certain populations are still at increased risk for overdose**



Credit: Solange_z on iStock

By Amanda M. Midboe, Thomas Byrne, David Smelson, Guneet Jasuja, Keith McInnes, and Lara K. Troszak

The Opioid Epidemic In Veterans Who Were Homeless Or Unstably Housed



Overview of 1-Year ADIL Project

Question: Are race, ethnicity, and housing instability associated with risk for opioid overdose and death?

Design: Retrospective cohort study of Veterans in VHA homelessness programs who are at risk for opioid overdose

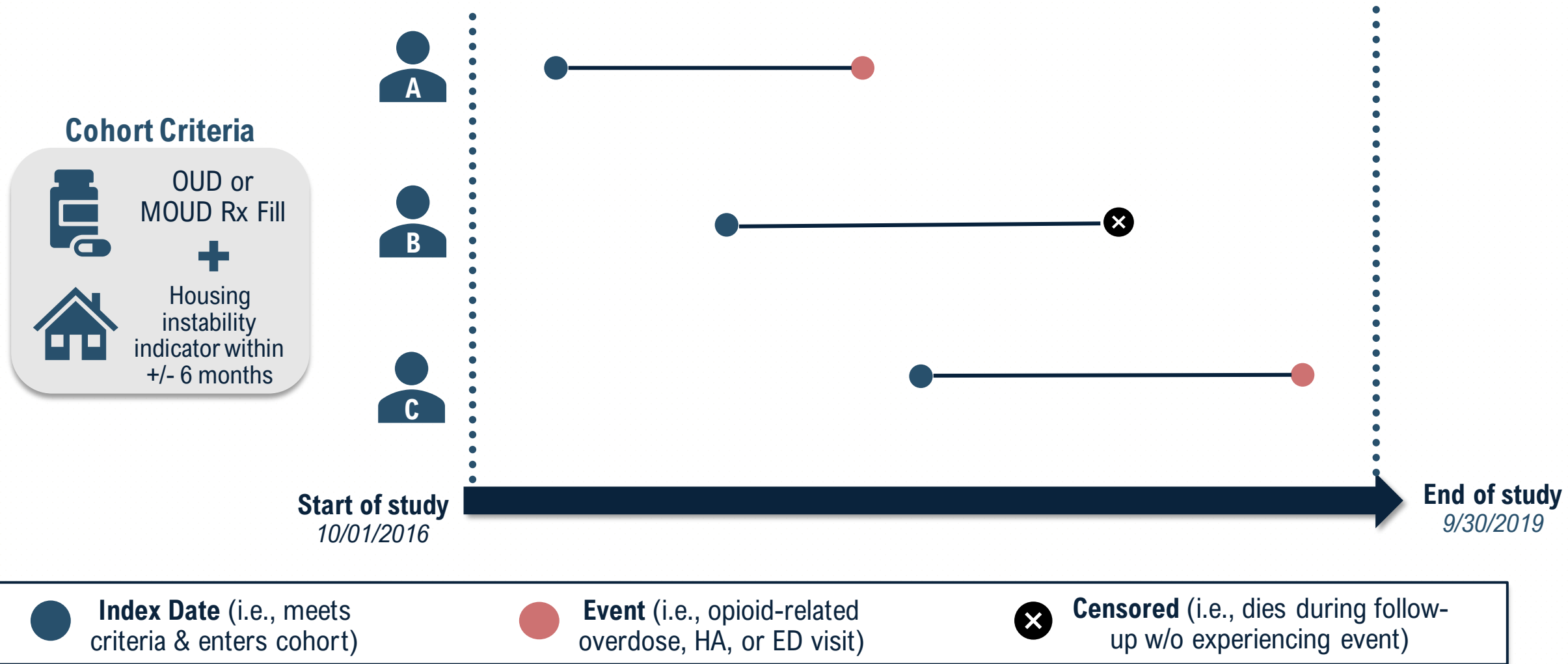
Data Sources:

- VA Corporate Data Warehouse
- Homeless Operations Management and Evaluation System (HOMES)
- Homelessness Screening Clinical Reminder

Analytic Approach: Survival Analysis using PROC PHREG on SAS



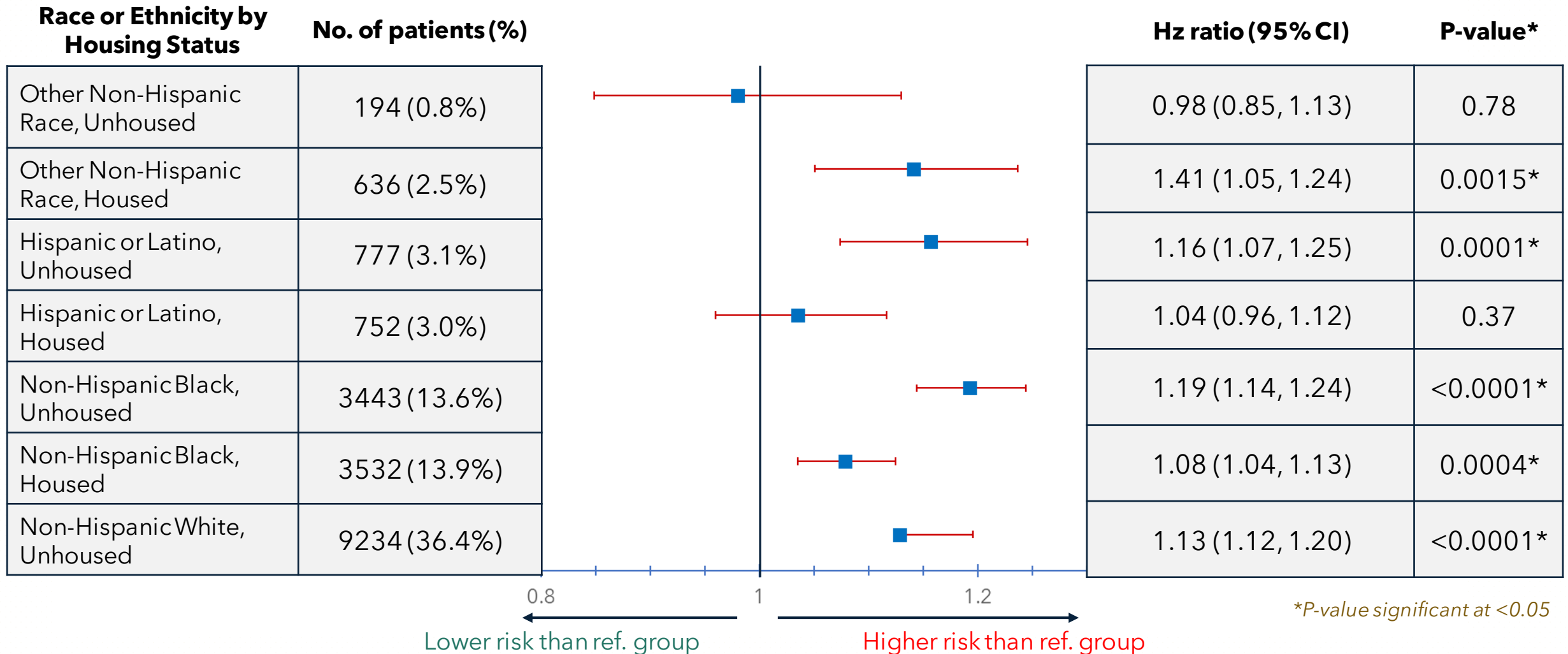
Time to opioid-related overdose, hospital admission, or emergency department visit



Impact of Race, Ethnicity, and Housing Status on Opioid Overdose Risk

Hazard Ratio and 95% CI

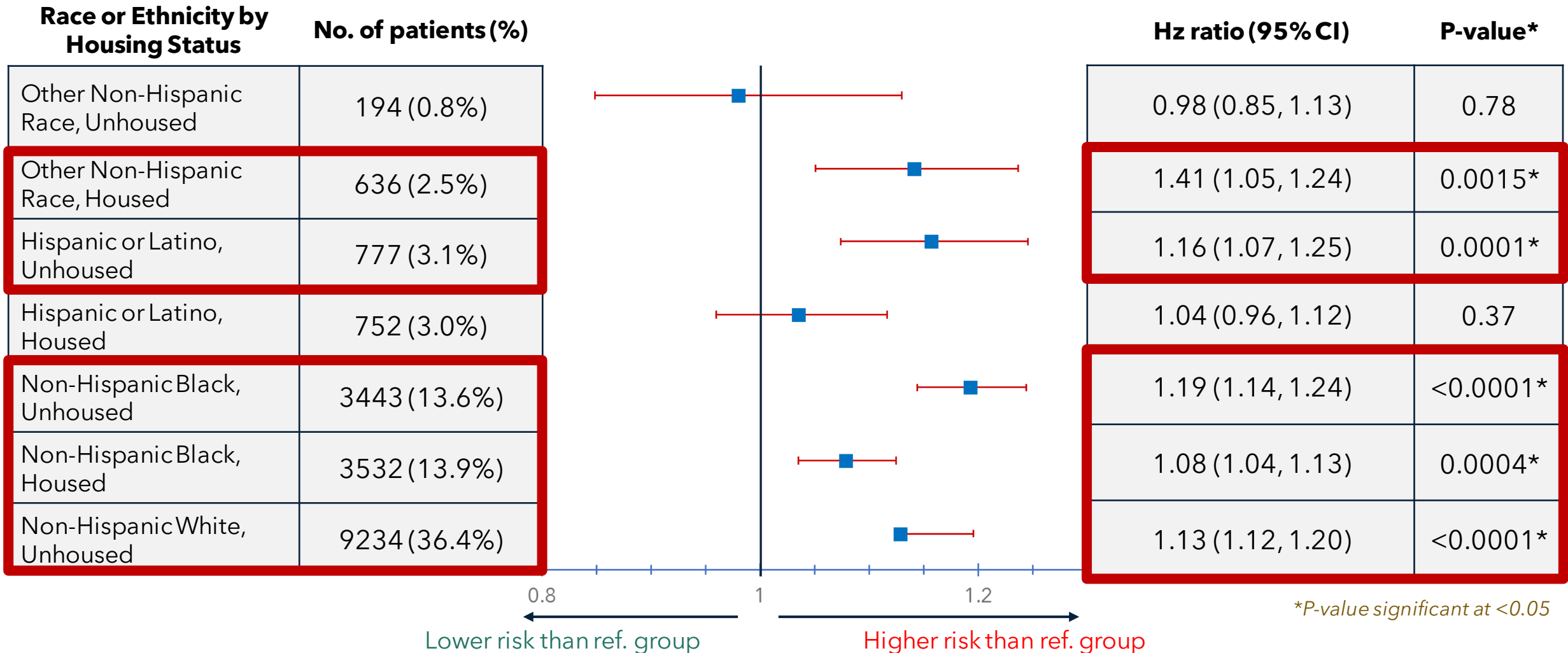
Ref. group: Non-Hispanic White, Housed during study period



Impact of Race, Ethnicity, and Housing Status on Opioid Overdose Risk

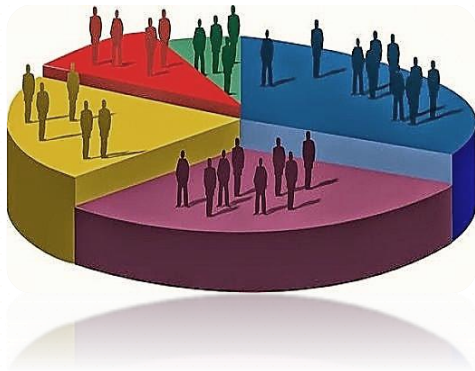
Hazard Ratio and 95% CI

Ref. group: Non-Hispanic White, Housed during study period



Poll #3:

Have you experienced contextual barriers to completing VA projects?



SELECT ALL THAT APPLY:

- a) No, I have never experienced barriers to completing VA projects.
- b) Yes, but easily overcame them with support from my mentors and/or colleagues.
- c) Yes, but easily overcame them with support from VA operational partners.
- d) Yes, but had to overcome them with little to no help from others.



III. Making an Implementation Science Leader



Key Benefit: Building Operational Partnerships

ADIL granted us protected time to:

1. Understand OP priorities
2. Work dynamically with OPs
3. Access unique VA structured data

- Local partnerships

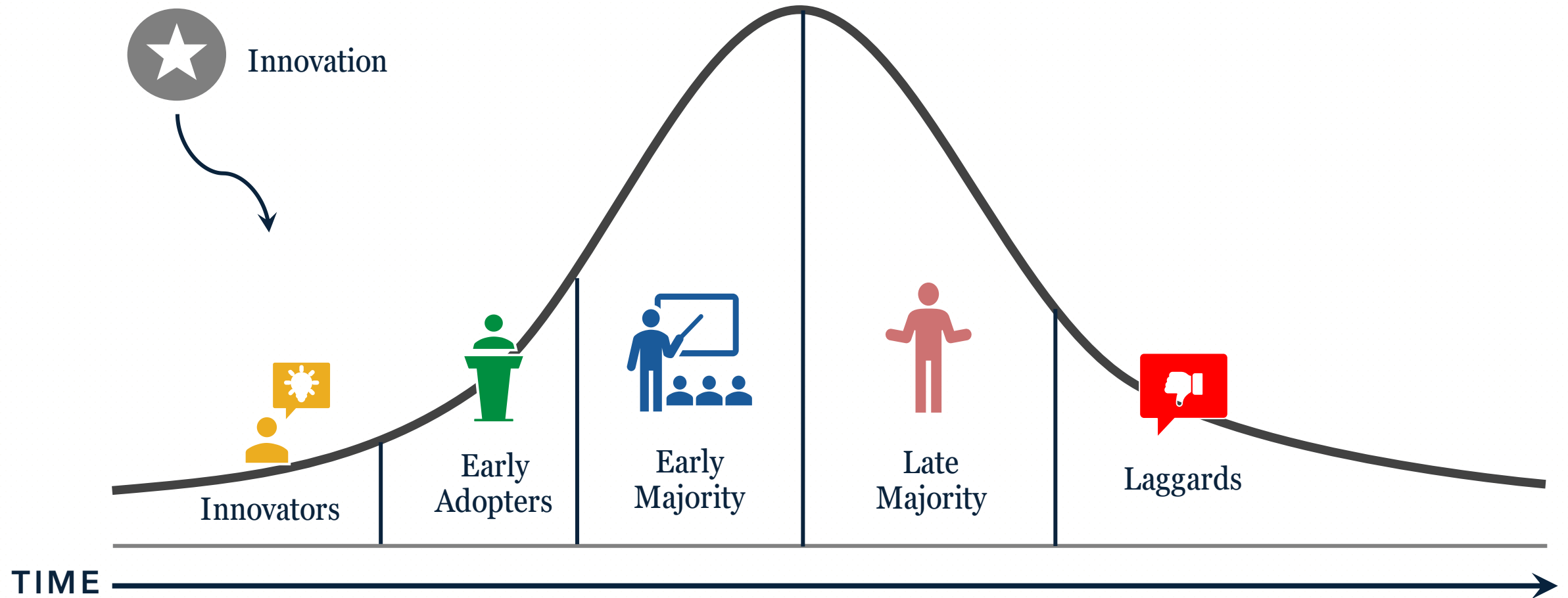
- Mental Health Care Executive
- Local PACT teams

- National partnerships

- VA Office of Health Equity
- VA Homeless Programs Office
- VISN Homeless Programs Leadership

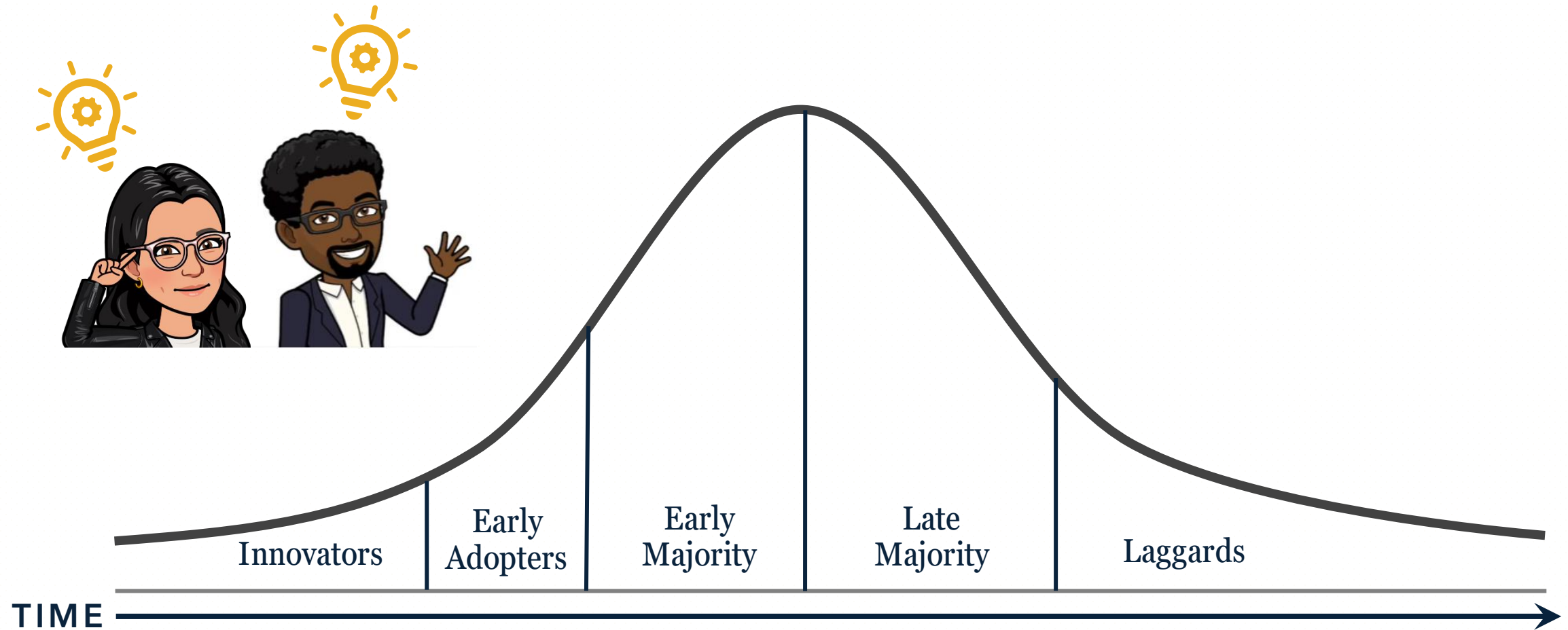


Diffusion of Innovation Theory (Rogers, 1962)



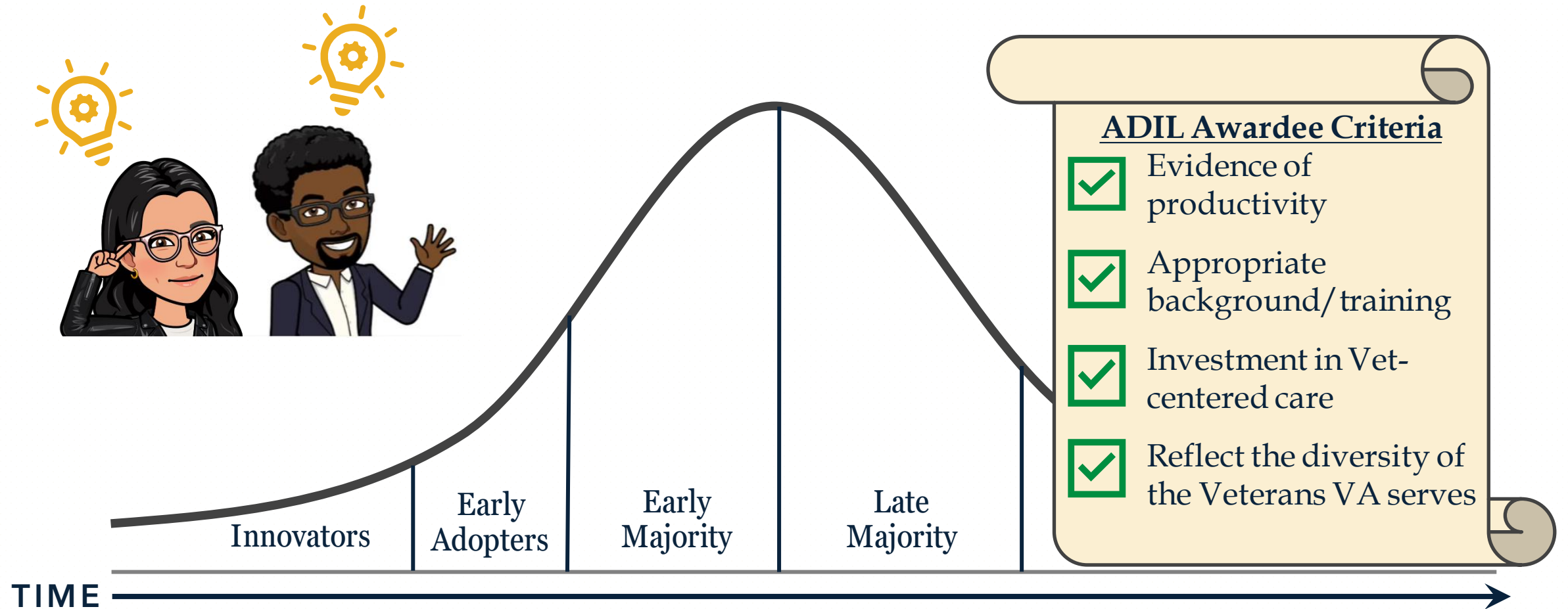
What Hypothetically Happens...

Promising, Diverse IS Leader Pipeline (n=2)



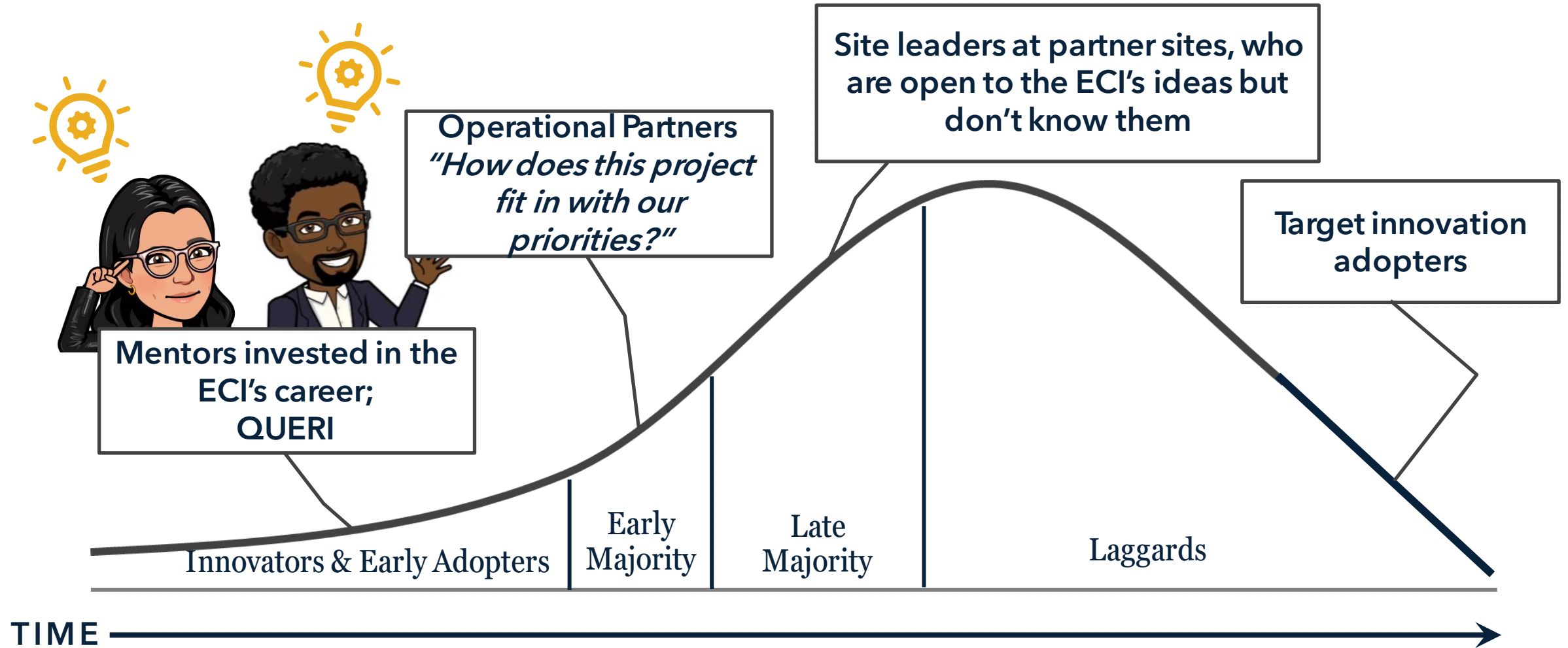
What Hypothetically Happens...

Promising, Diverse IS Leader Pipeline (n=2)



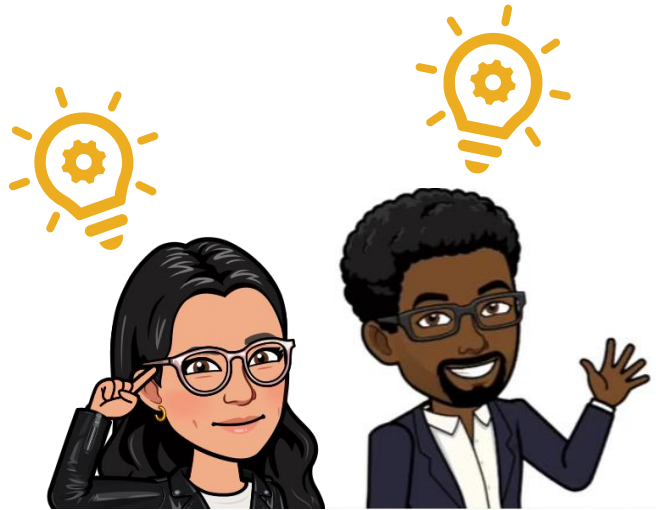
What Actually Happens...

Promising, Diverse IS Leader Pipeline (n=2)



What Actually Happens...

Promising, Diverse IS Leader Pipeline (n=2)



WHY?

- Short timeline
- Power dynamics and positionality
- Lack of resources
- Lack of incentive to change
- *"If it's broke, it's broke."*



IV. Lessons Learned

(and how prospective mentees
can learn from our experiences)



LESSON 1:

K.I.S.S. (*Keep It Simple. Seriously.*)

Key questions to consider:

- What is a feasible project that you can **complete** within 1-2 years?
- What **data** will you have access to?
 - If you don't have access to data, how will you get it and how long will that take?
- What **resources** (e.g., research assistance, analysts, coders) will you have access to during the award period?



LESSON 2:

Have a long game in mind

Key questions to consider:

- Are your **operational partners** offices you want to work with on related, future projects?
 - How about your **mentors**?
- What **skills can you build** from the ADIL that will help you on future projects?
- What **kinds of projects and/or partnerships** could your ADIL lead to?



LESSON 3:

Actionable, Incremental Change > Nebulous Innovation

Key questions to consider:

- What are the **concrete steps** that need to happen for your project to be successful?
 - Do you have these documented?
- Who are the **key players** in ensuring your project is successful?
 - What are their roles and how will you work with them?
- Do you have a **plan B**?



LESSON 4:

Develop Teams

Key questions to consider:

- Who are the “**boots-on-the-ground**” **partners** that will help refine your improvement and implementation plans?
- Does your project team charter include key players with a mixture of **positional power** and **influence**?
- Does your team wield enough influence to create coalitions for change?



LESSON 5:

Embed changes into culture

Key considerations:

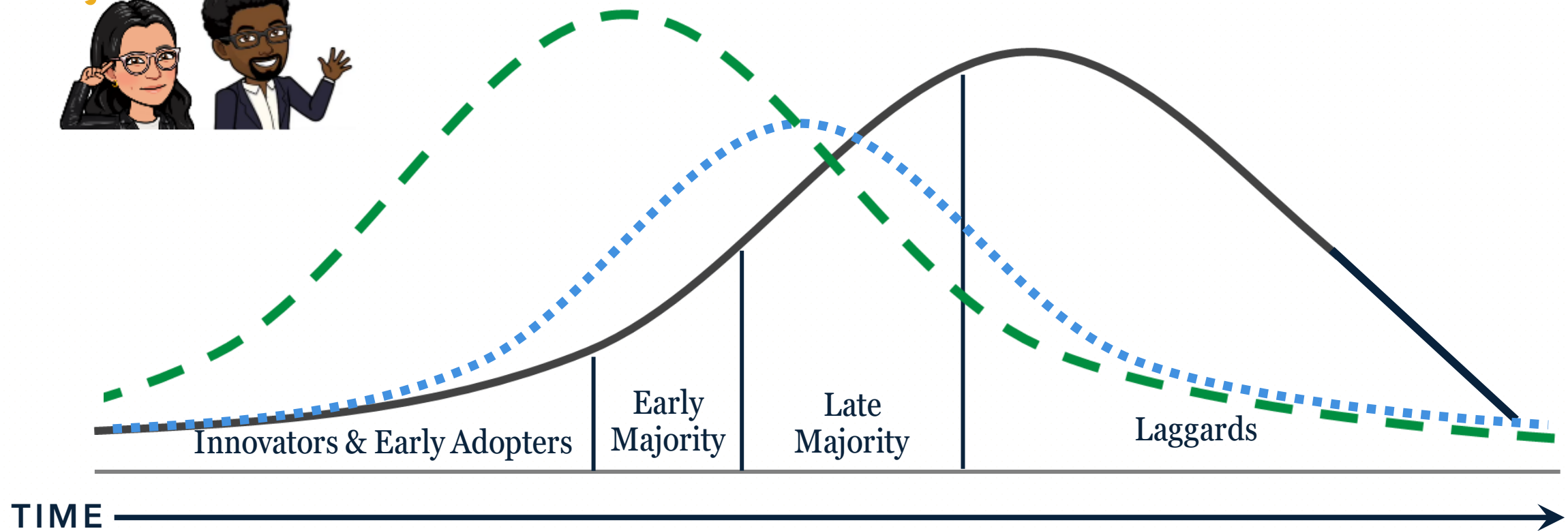
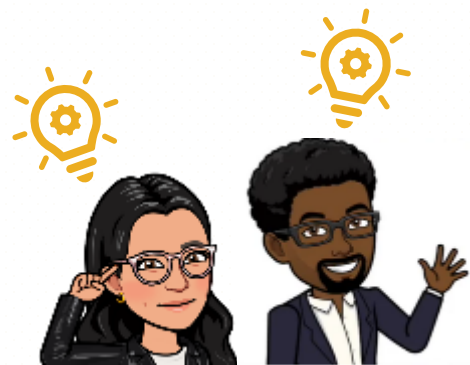
- Identify **improvement and implementation champions** early
- **Consistently communicate data** and plans to key players
- **Solicit feedback** from all key players about improvement opportunities and implementation plans



V. Future Work: Where are We Going?



Promising, Diverse IS Leader Pipeline, Revisited (n=2)



So, where are we going?

It depends.



Building on ADIL Work in Future Research



- Disseminate findings
 - Prepare and submit manuscript
- Continue adapting intervention for sustainability
 - Integrate PCMHI as intended
- Diagnostic Excellence Award, IHI
 - Complete recently awarded team grant at FQHC
- Prepare and submit NIH/NIA R03
 - February 2025



- Prepare and submit manuscripts for publication
- Develop and pilot a tailored implementation blueprint from CDA-2 work
- Prepare an HSR IIR application combining CDA and ADIL work
- Continue prioritizing health equity in all my work



Considerations for VA Mentors, HSR, and QUERI

- If you are invested in mentees' careers, continue to invest in and promote their ideas
- Connect mentees to resources, including early adopters, and follow-up with non-responsive individuals
- Listen to ADIL mentees and amplify their voices
- Acknowledge biases and that unfairness and injustice has, and will, happen
- Be prepared to address these challenges and advocate for mentees as they gain their footing

Thank you to Dr. Sarah Wilson for iterating these important lessons in a 2023 VIREC session, found at [this link](#).



Acknowledgements

Joshua Hamer would like to acknowledge the following individuals and operations partners:

- Department of Veterans Affairs, Quality Enhancement Research Initiative, Advancing Diversity in Implementation Leadership Award
 - ADIL Mentors: Kyler Godwin, PhD; Laura Marsh, MD; Mark Kunik, MD; Jennifer Gatchel, MD
- Mentors at large:
 - Ali Abass Asghar-Ali, MD
 - Jan Lindsay, PhD
 - Katherine Kanzler, PhD
 - Sylvia J. Hysong, PhD
- Operations Partners:
 - VHA National Office of Primary Care
- MEDVAMC VA TREAT Champions:
 - Christine Rizk, MD
 - Bethany Aiena, PhD
 - Asghar Ali, MD
 - Michael Davis, PA
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 - Fatima Jafri, MD
 - Sameer Phalak, MD



Acknowledgements cont'd.

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Sarah Javier would like to acknowledge the following individuals and operations partners:

Bridging the Care Continuum for Vulnerable Veterans Across VA and Community Care (QUE 20-017)

(Bridge QUERI; MPIs: Elwy (former), McInnes, Midboe, Smelson)

Mentors

Amanda Midboe, PhD

Thomas Byrne, PhD



ADIL team

Shayna Cave, MS

Hannah Cheng, MS

Operations Partners

VA Homeless Programs Office

VA Office of Health Equity

VA Office of Mental Health and Suicide Prevention

VISN Homeless Program Leadership



THANK YOU!
Questions?



CONTACT INFORMATION

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Dr. Sarah Javier

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VA Center for Innovation to Implementation (Ci2i)

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Partnered Research
BONUS SLIDES

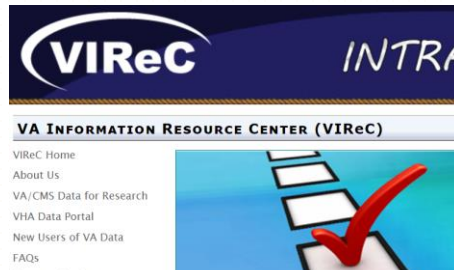


Resources for VA Data Users

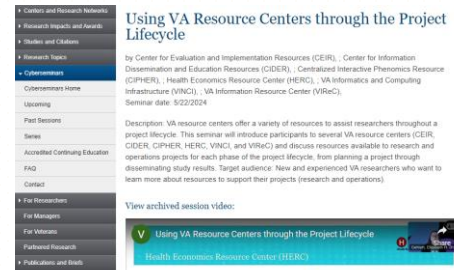
Select image to visit page



VHA Data Portal (VA Intranet)



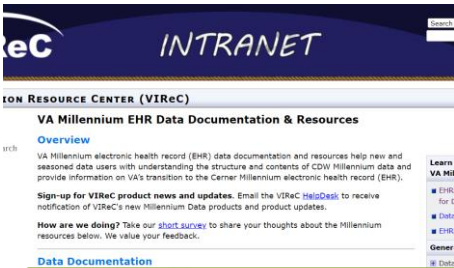
VA Information Resource Center (VIREC) (VA Intranet)



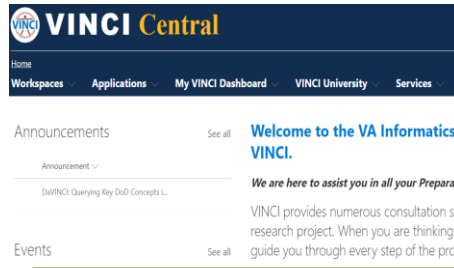
Video: Using VA Resource Centers through the Project Lifecycle



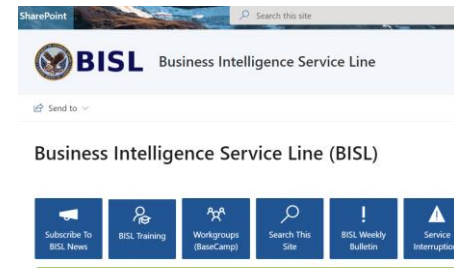
VIREC Data Issues Brief



VA Millennium EHR Data Documentation (VA Intranet)



VA Informatics and Computing Infrastructure (VINCI) (VA Intranet)



BISL/CDW (VA Intranet)



Health Economics Resource Center (HERC) (VA Intranet)

VIReC Cyberseminar Series

Select series for more information

Database & Methods



Introduces VA data sources and information systems and their use in research.

Good Data Practices



Provides practical guidance on using data throughout the research project lifecycle.

Data Access



Reviews data access request processes and provides insight on regulatory requirements.

CMS Data



Focuses on CMS and USRDS data and methods for using these data in VA research.

Research & EHR Synergy



Helps VA researchers understand VA's transition to the Federal EHR and its impacts on VA data.

Partnered Research



Explores VA data use in evaluation, implementation, and research-operations partnerships.

Interested in presenting a Cyberseminar? Contact virecseminars@va.gov





Questions about using VA Data?

HSRData Listserv

- Community knowledge sharing
- ~1,900 VA data users
- Researchers, operations, data stewards, managers
- Subscribe by visiting vaww.virec.research.va.gov/Support/HSRData-L.htm (VA Intranet)

VIReC HelpDesk

- Individualized support
- Request Form: varedcap.rcp.vaec.va.gov/redcap/surveys/?s=KXMEN77LXK (VA Intranet)

