VA Research Week Spotlights 94 Years of Excellence

The Aleda E. Lutz Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Medical Center will join the entire Department in celebrating National VA Research Week 2019. This year’s event, which will be observed from May 13 through May 17, marks the 94th anniversary of VA research. The theme is “The Science of Hope,” and highlights VA Research’s history of outstanding accomplishments which have improved Veterans’ lives and advanced America’s medical knowledge.

“As we recognize more than 90 years of VA’s research program, we are proud to continuously add value to the quantity and quality of life for Veterans, and all Americans,” said the VA Chief Research and Development Officer, Rachel Ramoni, D.M.D., Sc.D.

At the Aleda E. Lutz VA, observances will include sharing information with employees and availability to review research interest or ideas with our Coordinator of Research and Development. Veterans, their families, and other community members may contact the coordinator at 989-306-3828.

“Our facility is very proud to host a VA Research program,” said Dr. Bates, Director of the Aleda E. Lutz VA Medical Center. “The innovations our researchers discover and develop advance health care not only for Northern Michigan Veterans, but also for Veterans throughout our Nation, and for all American citizens.”

At the Aleda E. Lutz VA Medical Center, local researchers have engaged in projects, including one recent completed pilot study focusing on “PTSD and Meditation.”

Nationally, VA Research has realized many accomplishments throughout the decades to include the development of the first effective therapies for tuberculosis, the implantable cardiac pacemaker, the first successful liver transplants, and the nicotine patch. Three VA researchers, Rosalyn Yalow, Ph.D., Andrew Schally, Ph.D., Sc.D., and Ferid Murad, M.D., Ph.D., have received the Nobel Prize for Physiology or Medicine, medical research’s highest honor.
Today, VA’s Office of Research and Development is a leader in conducting comparative effectiveness research, head-to-head studies which help clarify which among two or more health interventions works better for a given health condition in certain patients. VA’s Quality Enhancement Research Initiative facilitates the clinical use of treatments, tests and models of care supported by research evidence.

Personalized medical research, tailoring health care treatment programs to individual patients, is a subject of great interest to many VA researchers, as is the new science of Genomics, the study of a person’s genetic information to help tailor therapies to each person’s genetic makeup.

VA has put rehabilitation research on a true scientific footing by adding basic science to finding solutions to the needs of Veterans with disabilities. VA manages thirteen Rehabilitation Research and Development Centers of Excellence throughout the Nation, including a center for brain rehabilitation research, one for limb loss and prosthetic engineering, and a rehabilitation outcomes research center, which evaluates rehabilitation programs and interventions to result in optimal patient outcomes.

“The future of medicine is determined by the research we do today. This week honors the VA researchers and staff and Veteran research volunteers who together make pivotal contributions to the evolution of medicine,” said Dr. Ramoni. Information on Research Week events throughout the United States, and on VA Research itself, including links to historical achievements, is available at www.research.va.gov/researchweek.

The Aleda E. Lutz VAMC in Saginaw, Michigan operates an 81-bed skilled nursing and rehabilitation Community Living Center, with an additional 8-bed acute medicine and telemetry wing. It provides care to over 36,700 Veterans in a 35-county geographic area, from mid-Michigan to the Mackinac Bridge. Veterans also receive care at one of our nine VA Community Based Outpatient Clinics located throughout Michigan. More information about this VA can be found at www.saginaw.va.gov.

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