



## **FOVA Recommendations for FY 2024 Department of Veterans Affairs**

### **MEDICAL AND PROSTHETIC RESEARCH PROGRAM – at least \$980 million**

The Friends of VA Medical Care and Health Research (FOVA) coalition recognizes the demands of many important programs for America's veterans in the Military Construction, VA, and Related Agencies spending bill, and urges Congress to continue its reliable and robust growth in the VA research program without recissions. FOVA's FY 2024 recommendation of \$980 million for VA research, an increase of \$64 million (7%) above the comparable FY 2023 funding level, would enhance the investment in veteran-centric research on a trajectory of meaningful growth above inflation to ensure research progress can keep pace with the increasing demands of improving health for veterans.

Sustained funding growth for research efforts is critical to building upon recent successes in precision oncology and bolstering VA's participation in the Cancer Moonshot Initiative, increasing clinical trials access, and addressing health disparities, while renewing support for groundbreaking programs like the Million Veteran Program (MVP) and research on chronic and emerging needs of our nation's veterans. Increased funding for the VA research program will also support recruitment and retention of researchers as they seek to grow research programs in toxic exposures and mental health following new authorities enacted in the 117<sup>th</sup> Congress and will also allow for additional investments to support the strained IT capacity through computational science purchases to enhance the collection and use of big data. FOVA's recommendation of \$980 million would provide sustained and predictable funding growth for VA research, which is imperative to help ensure the best return on investment in improving the health of veterans and all Americans.

### **PHYSICAL AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (IT) INFRASTRUCTURE**

State-of-the-art research requires an investment in state-of-the-art facilities, technology, and equipment. For decades, appropriations for construction, maintenance, and IT have not provided the resources VA needs to replace, maintain, or upgrade its aging research and IT infrastructure to support the research program. For FY 2024, FOVA recommends the following funding to support physical and IT research infrastructure:

#### **MAJOR AND MINOR CONSTRUCTION - at least \$100 million**

A 2012 congressionally mandated report found a clear need for systematic infrastructure improvements for VA research laboratories. VA completed a Phase II assessment in 2020 of fewer than one-third of sites inspected in Phase I. Phase II findings show that while certain projects have received funding, significant deficiencies remain. VA estimated more than \$200 million was needed to correct all deficiencies identified in the Phase II report, including \$99.5 million in Priority 1 deficiencies, representing immediate needs such as life safety hazard corrections. FOVA believes designating funds specifically for research facilities is the only way to make significant improvements. For capital infrastructure, renovations, and maintenance, FOVA recommends at least \$100 million for VA research facilities to address the most pressing repairs.

#### **OFFICE OF INFORMATION AND TECHNOLOGY – at least \$22 million**

VA's Office of Information and Technology (OIT) is responsible for IT development and maintenance for programs including clinical, health management, benefits, security, and research. To advance and modernize the VA research program, OIT funding must be designated specifically for research use on a yearly basis. For FY 2024, FOVA recommends at least \$22 million of the OIT budget to be assigned for VA research to support the purchase and maintenance of IT infrastructure, increase data storage and access capabilities, increase data security, increase interoperability with affiliated partners, and transition to more robust and functional cloud computing platforms.

**Organizations Endorsing the FOVA FY 2024 Recommendation**

AcademyHealth  
American Academy of Neurology  
American Academy of Ophthalmology  
American Association for the Study of Liver Diseases  
American Association of Colleges of Nursing  
American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine  
American Association of Director of Psychiatric Residency Training  
American Association of Veterinary Medical Colleges  
American Brain Coalition  
American College of Physicians  
American Dental Education Association  
American Gastroenterological Association  
American Geriatrics Society  
American Heart Association  
American Massage Therapy Association  
American Physiological Society  
American Psychiatric Association  
American Psychological Association  
American Society of Hematology  
American Society of Nephrology  
American Society of Pharmacology and Experimental Therapeutics  
American Thoracic Society  
American Urological Association (AUA)  
Arthritis Foundation  
Association for Clinical and Translational Science  
Association of Academic Psychiatrists  
Association of American Medical Colleges  
Association of Minority Health Professions Schools  
Association of University Professors of Neurology  
Association of University Anesthesiologists  
Blinded Veterans Association  
Catholic War Veterans of the USA  
Clinical Research Forum  
Coalition for Clinical and Translational Science  
Cohen Veterans Bioscience  
Disabled American Veterans (DAV)  
Digestive Disease National Coalition  
Dystonia Advocacy Network  
Endocrine Society  
Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology  
Interstitial Cystitis Association  
LUNGeivity Foundation  
Melanoma Research Foundation  
Morehouse School of Medicine  
National Alliance for Eye and Vision Research  
National Alliance on Mental Illness  
National Association of VA Physicians and Dentists

Friends of VA Medical Care and Health Research  
FY 2024 Recommendation  
P.3

National Association of Veterans' Research and Education Foundations  
National Scleroderma Foundation  
NephCure Kidney International  
Nurses Organization of Veterans Affairs (NOVA)  
Paralyzed Veterans of America  
Project Sleep  
Prostate Cancer Foundation  
Pulmonary Hypertension Association  
Restless Legs Syndrome Foundation  
Sleep Research Society  
Society for Neuroscience  
Tuskegee University College of Veterinary Medicine