

VAU.S. Department
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PRESS RELEASE

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Hines VA's Serwa Research Center on Aging Awards First Research Grants

HINES, Ill. – Edward Hines, Jr. VA Hospital's Serwa Research Center on Aging awarded its first series of \$50,000 research grants seeking to improve the quality of life of older Veterans and plans to award additional grants this summer.

"These grants are the first steps toward our goal of establishing a sustainable VA community of interdisciplinary providers and researchers working to expand our understanding of aging and improve the quality of life for older Veterans," said Dr. Holly Kramer, Director of Hines VA-Serwa Research Center on Aging.

The Center opened last winter thanks to a generous [\\$5 million donation by the estate of Mrs. Rose Serwa](#) of which a portion was allocated to The Chicago Association for Research and Education in Science (CARES) to support research at Hines VA that addresses the needs of aging Veterans.

Currently, grants are open to Hines VA investigators, with plans to engage other VA facilities in the future. This spring's awardees are:

- **Feasibility of designing a Veteran-centric physical activity intervention**
– Improving the quality of life of older Veterans with end-stage kidney disease by developing and implementing a Veteran-centric frailty reduction program.
 - Co-Principal Investigators: Anu Wadhwa, MD; Manpreet Samra, MD, MBA
 - Co-Investigators: Martin Gorbien, MD; Reynold Lopez-Soler, MD, PhD; Talar Markossian, MPH, PhD; Nicholas Shah, MD; Kevin Stroupe, PhD
 - Consultant: Megan Huisingh-Scheetz, MD, MPH (University of Chicago)
- **Optimizing VA's Veteran video connect capacity to engage high-risk Veterans with advanced kidney disease in goals of care conversations** – A pilot study examining the acceptability, facilitators and barriers of engaging older Veterans with advanced chronic kidney disease in goals of care conversations via VA Video Connect (VVC).
 - Principal Investigator: Seema Limaye, MD
 - Co-Investigators: Kevin Stroupe, PhD; Julia Schneider, MD; Talar Markossian, MPH, PhD
 - Consultants: Alexi Vahlkamp, LCSW; Anne Day, PhD

- **Looking at the bright side: Advancing our understanding of intrinsically photosensitive retinal ganglion cells in Parkinson's disease** — Examining the utility of intrinsically photosensitive retinal ganglion cells as a clinical biomarker of Parkinson's disease in terms of severity and cognitive function with the long term goal of developing and optimizing chromatic light therapy to improve non-motor symptoms of Veterans living with Parkinson's disease.
 - Principal Investigator: Sandra Kletzel, PhD
 - Co-Investigators: Bruce Gaynes, OD; Jasvinder Chawla, MD; Kalea Colletta, DO; Rachael Ellison, PhD; Hameeda Shaikh, MD
 - Consultants: Dulal Bhaumik, PhD; Nicolas Palanca-Castan Centro, PhD (Universidad de Valparaiso)

A second round of applications will be accepted this summer. To learn more about supporting the research mission of the Center, please visit www.cares-research.org.

About Edward Hines, Jr. VA Hospital

Edward Hines, Jr. VA Hospital, located 12 miles west of downtown Chicago on a 147-acre campus, offers primary, extended and specialty care to veteran patients in the Chicago area. We are the largest VA in the state of Illinois, where more than a million veterans reside. The hospital treats more than 44,000 veterans from World War II through the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan.

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