



## Core, Affiliate & Collaborative Research Investigator Policy

### I. INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the South Central MIRECC! MIRECC (pronounced “my rec”) stands for Mental Illness Research, Education and Clinical Center, and the SC MIRECC is one of 10 nationwide. We are research and education centers formed by the Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA), Veterans Health Administration (VHA), to more fully address research into mental health care diagnosis, treatment and delivery. The SC MIRECC is located in the South Central VA Health Care Network, one of the largest and most innovative VHA health care delivery networks in the country.

MIRECCs are charged with generating new knowledge about the sources of mental illness and the effective delivery of services to mentally ill veterans, and providing educational programs relevant to mental illness and its treatment. Ultimately, the MIRECCs aim to improve the quality of mental health care for veterans. The mission of the SC MIRECC is to provide evidence-based treatments to rural and other underserved populations, especially returning war veterans, veterans experiencing natural disasters, and vulnerable elderly veterans. We have literally grown rural mental health research in VISN 16, and we have played a leadership role in assuring that education on evidenced-based mental health care interventions is provided to MH providers through out our network. Our close working relationship with the SCVAHCN Mental Health Product Line and the clear support of our Network Office have enabled these roles.

This document describes three categories of affiliation offered to research investigators under the MIRECC: Core, Affiliate, and Collaborative. The eligibility requirements, benefits, and obligations for each are listed below.

## **II. MIRECC CORE RESEARCH INVESTIGATORS**

The essential distinction between Core Investigators and other investigators is that Core investigators receive direct salary support from the MIRECC. Core investigators are also entitled to apply for MIRECC intramural pilot funding.

### **A. Eligibility Requirements (Junior and Senior levels)**

- 1) Receive salary support from the VISN 16 MIRECC.
- 2) Demonstration of appropriate degree (M.D., Ph.D., Ed.D., etc.) and current academic faculty appointment:
  - a) Senior MIRECC Core Investigators are required to be Associate or Full professors.
  - b) Junior MIRECC Core Investigators are required to be Instructors or Assistant Professors.
- 3) Demonstration of VA affiliation (salary support, consultant status, Without Compensation (WOC) Appointment, Inter-Personnel Agreement).
- 4) Willingness to collaborate with other MIRECC investigators.
- 5) Senior MIRECC Core Investigators must be willing to provide mentoring assistance to other MIRECC Research Investigators.

### **B. Obligations**

In return for salary support from the MIRECC, Core investigators are expected to:

- 1) Submit an annual performance contract using the format specified in Attachment A.
- 2) Review annual performance with MIRECC Director.
- 3) Provide information for biannual MIRECC productivity report describing research and educational activities.
- 4) Acknowledge the MIRECC on CV; and on abstracts, publications and presentations.

### **C. Benefits**

- 1) MIRECC Core Investigators may request and receive assistance from other MIRECC investigators and MIRECC consultants regarding:
  - a) Mentoring (help with grant preparation, career development, manuscript review)
  - b) Statistics and data analysis
- 2) VA research proposals that are MIRECC-affiliated receive priority for funding by law (P.L. 104-262). MIRECC Core Investigators will be entitled to designate proposals

as “MIRECC Affiliated” or “MIRECC Supported”, as long as these proposals are related to the themes of the VISN 16 MIRECC.

- 3) The VISN 16 MIRECC will offer pilot funding intramurally on a competitive basis. MIRECC Core Investigators are entitled to apply for MIRECC pilot funds.
- 4) The MIRECC will routinely provide the following information to Core Investigators:
  - a) Information about funding sources (VA and Non-VA).
  - b) Information about research collaboration opportunities across the VISN with other clinical, services and basic science researchers.
  - c) Information about current research projects and other mental health researchers in VISN 16.

### **III. MIRECC AFFILIATE RESEARCH INVESTIGATORS**

While MIRECC Affiliate Research Investigators do not receive direct salary support, they have a VA affiliation and are entitled to apply for pilot funding under the MIRECC.

#### **A. Eligibility Requirements (Junior and Senior levels)**

- 1) Demonstration of appropriate degree (M.D., Ph.D., Ed.D., etc.) and current academic faculty appointment:
  - a) Senior MIRECC Affiliate Investigators are required to be Associate or Full professors.
  - b) Junior MIRECC Affiliate Investigators are required to be Instructors or Assistant Professors.
- 2) Demonstration of VA affiliation (salary support, consultant status, Without Compensation (WOC) Appointment, Inter-Personnel Agreement).
- 3) Willingness to collaborate with other MIRECC investigators.
- 4) Senior MIRECC Affiliate Investigators must be willing to provide mentoring assistance to Junior MIRECC Investigators.

#### **B. Obligations**

- 1) Provide information for biannual MIRECC productivity report describing research and educational activities.
- 2) Acknowledge the MIRECC on CV; and on abstracts, publications and presentations.
- 3) Sign an Affiliate Investigator Agreement (See Attachment B).

### **C. Benefits**

- 1) VA research proposals that are MIRECC-affiliated receive priority for funding by law (P.L. 104-262). MIRECC Affiliate Investigators will be entitled to designate proposals as “MIRECC Affiliated” or “MIRECC Supported”, as long as these proposals are related to the themes of the VISN 16 MIRECC.
- 2) The VISN 16 MIRECC will offer pilot funding intramurally on a competitive basis. MIRECC Affiliate Investigators will be entitled to apply for MIRECC pilot funds.
- 3) The MIRECC will routinely provide the following information to Affiliate Investigators:
  - a) Information about funding sources (VA and Non-VA).
  - b) Information about research collaboration opportunities across the VISN with other clinical, services and basic science researchers.
  - c) Information about current research projects and other mental health researchers in VISN 16.
- 4) MIRECC Affiliate Investigators may request and receive assistance from other MIRECC investigators and MIRECC consultants regarding:
  - a) Mentoring (help with grant preparation, career development, manuscript review)
  - b) Statistics and data analysis

### **IV. COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH INVESTIGATORS**

MIRECC Collaborative Investigators can collaborate with MIRECC-supported projects but need not have a formal VA affiliation.

#### **A. Eligibility Requirements (Junior and Senior levels)**

1. Demonstration of appropriate degree (M.D., Ph.D., Ed.D., etc.) and current academic faculty appointment
2. Willingness to collaborate with other MIRECC investigators.

#### **B. Obligations**

- 1) Provide information for biannual MIRECC productivity report describing research and educational activities.
- 2) Acknowledge the MIRECC on CV; and on abstracts, publications and presentations generated through MIRECC collaborations, when appropriate.

## **C. Benefits**

- 1) The MIRECC will routinely provide the following information to Collaborative Investigators:
  - a) Information about funding sources (VA and Non-VA).
  - b) Information about research collaboration opportunities with other clinical, services and basic science researchers across the VISN.
  - c) Information about current research projects and other mental health researchers in VISN 16.

## **V. PROCESS – MIRECC AFFILIATE AND COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH INVESTIGATORS**

Research investigators interested in becoming associated with the VISN 16 MIRECC are encouraged to contact the appropriate MIRECC Associate Director(s):

**Co-Director for Education:** Michael Kauth, PhD, VAMC Houston, [michael.kauth@va.gov](mailto:michael.kauth@va.gov), Phone: 713-794-8637

**Associate Director for Research:** John Fortney, PhD, VAMC Little Rock, [FortneyJohnC@uams.edu](mailto:FortneyJohnC@uams.edu), Phone: 501-257-1726

**Associate Director for Research Training:** Mark E. Kunik, MD, MPH, VAMC Houston, [mkunik@bcm.tmc.edu](mailto:mkunik@bcm.tmc.edu), Phone: 713-794-8639

**Associate Director for Improving Clinical Care:** Pat Dubbert, PhD, VAMC Little Rock, [patricia.dubbert@va.gov](mailto:patricia.dubbert@va.gov) Phone: 501-257-1937

Generally, investigators focus their efforts in one particular team/area, although becoming active in more than one is possible.

VISN 16 MIRECC Performance and Mentoring Contract

Investigator Name:

Date:

**I. List Your MIRECC related Research Goals for the Year:**

*Note: Not limited to this space, attach additional sheets if necessary*

**II. Describe your plan to collaborate with other MIRECC Investigators in the next year:** *Note: Not limited to this space, attach additional sheets if necessary*

**III. List skills you will develop in the next year:**

*Note: Not limited to this space, attach additional sheets if necessary*

**III. Do you plan to collect any data directly from research subjects in the next year?**

*Circle Response*                      Yes                      No

**IV. Resource Inventory**

1) % Time Protected for Research                      \_\_\_\_\_%

2) Do you have access to any research assistance?

*Circle Response*                      Yes                      No

3) Where will you obtain assistance in data management and analysis?  
Describe.

4) What are your plans for increasing research resources (time and assistance) beyond those currently available? Describe.

**VI. Performance Measures for fiscal year 20\_\_/20\_\_**

**Estimated number of first authored manuscripts:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Estimated number of other authored manuscripts:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Estimated number of grant proposals to be submitted:**

**As PI** \_\_\_\_\_

**As Co-PI** \_\_\_\_\_

**As Key Investigator** \_\_\_\_\_

**VII. Mentoring**

**Please list investigators that you are currently mentoring and indicate whether or not each is associated with the MIRECC:**

Check if associated  
With MIRECC

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

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***Investigator Signature***

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***Mentor Signature (if Investigator is at Instructor or Assistant Professor level)***

**VISN 16 MIRECC Research Investigator Agreement**  
**Core/Affiliate (please circle one)**

The undersigned agrees to the obligations articulated in the Core/Affiliate Research Investigator Policy, in exchange for the benefits outlined in the same policy. These obligations include the completion of a performance contract (Core Investigators, only), biannual activity report, and acknowledgement of the *VISN 16 MIRECC* on C.V., abstracts and in presentations. Benefits include the right to use *MIRECC Affiliated* or *MIRECC Supported* in grant proposals, access to information regarding funding opportunities, assistance in mentoring, statistics and data analysis. Failure to comply with this agreement may result in losing the status as MIRECC investigator. Such a loss in status will be at the discretion of the MIRECC Executive Panel.

Printed Name:

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Signed:

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Date 

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