



For more information about our program or studies, please visit us at:

www.csp.research.va.gov

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Department of Veterans Affairs
Veterans Health Administration
Office of Research & Development



VA Cooperative Studies Program

Advancing Healthcare for Veterans
through Collaborative Research

OVERVIEW

The Cooperative Studies Program (CSP) is a division within the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Office of Research and Development. CSP was established in its present form in 1972; however, its history dates to just after WWII when tuberculosis treatments were evaluated in veterans.

MISSION

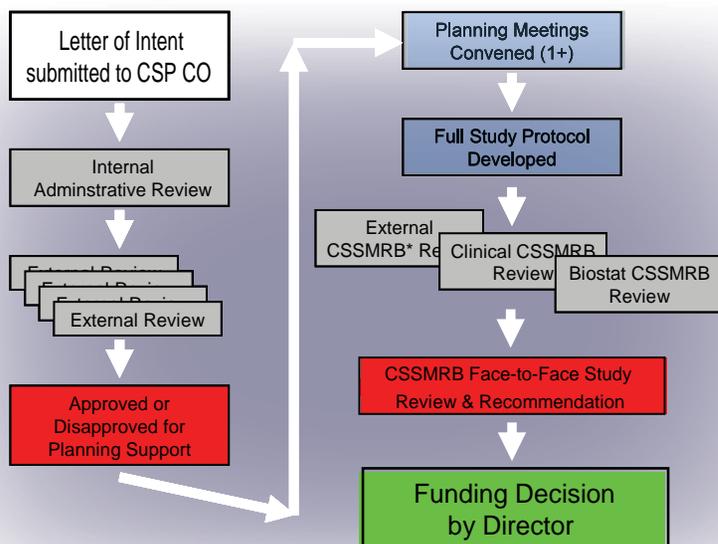
The CSP mission is to advance the health and care for veterans through collaborative research studies that produce innovative and effective solutions to national healthcare problems. This mission is accomplished through a national clinical research infrastructure comprised of:

- data/statistical coordinating centers
- epidemiological research centers
- a pharmacy coordinating center
- a health economics resource center

Additionally, CSP has a DNA bank and biorepository for examining genetic factors in disease.

PROCESS

Together with VA clinicians and clinical investigators, CSP's biostatistical, medical, pharmaceutical, economic, and administrative experts collaborate to design, conduct, and manage multi-site clinical trials and epidemiological studies. The following illustration depicts the CSP study development process:



*CSSMRB: Cooperative Studies Scientific Merit Review Board

IMPACTS

CSP research has generated findings on several diseases that impact veterans and the nation. Major publications in prominent medical journals include:

- A series of hypertension studies leading to reduced mortality
- One of the first studies to determine the long term effects of coronary artery bypass surgery
- An investigative study on the use of steroids to treat patients with septic shock
- A landmark study showing that aspirin reduces deaths and heart attacks in patients with unstable chest pain
- A study with 38,500 adults to examine a shingles vaccine

Currently, CSP supports over 30 studies across a range of topics including coronary artery revascularization, PTSD, schizophrenia, deployment health, AIDS, prostate cancer, spinal cord injury, stroke rehabilitation, Parkinson's disease, diabetes, and other prevalent diseases among veterans. Ongoing studies include collaborative research projects with the National Institutes of Health (NIH), the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, the United Kingdom's Medical Research Council, universities, and private industries.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

CSP studies have received widespread national media attention from the NY Times, Washington Post, USA Today, ABC News, among others. Its expertise in conducting and managing multi-site clinical trials has received national and international recognition. Such recognition includes being cited by an NIH Roadmap Initiative Best Practices Study for its "institutional completeness" and having demonstrated an ability to bring about change in clinical practice. A CSP group has also received the VA Secretary's Robert W. Carey Trophy for Organizational Excellence, the VA's top quality award, and International Standards Organization 9001:2000 certification.

Future directions involve expanding genomic medicine efforts and using new research methodologies that may lead to more innovative changes in clinical practice.