

## Program Overview and Mission

The VA Quality Scholars Program is a two-year fellowship in healthcare quality improvement for interprofessional clinician scholars funded by the VA Office of Academic Affiliations.

- ◇ 8 US sites; affiliate site in Toronto, Canada
- ◇ Approximately 60 doctorally-prepared fellows annually in medicine, nursing, pharmacy, and psychology
- ◇ Each US site has a partnership between a VA hospital, an academic medicine institution, and a nursing institution

The Mission of this fellowship program is to develop leaders, researchers, and educators who can:

- Apply knowledge and methods of Veteran-focused health care improvement
- Innovate and continually improve healthcare within and outside of VA
- Teach health professionals about quality improvement and patient safety
- Perform scholarly activities that contribute new knowledge of healthcare quality and value



## Examples of VAQS Impacts

- Reduction of healthcare-acquired infections and improvement of a facility's SAIL metrics
- Reduction of opioid prescribing rates by 25%
- Alumni have taken leadership positions within and outside VA, including:
  - Chief Medical Officer for a private hospital
  - VA National Leader of Medication Reconciliation
- Fellows have published over 450 manuscripts to date

## National Curriculum

The VAQS national curriculum consists of four course domains:

- QI Core and Fellows Forum
- Methods and Analysis
- Practice Change Leadership
- Career and Scholarship

Course sessions are broadcast weekly as interactive online webinars from the Houston Coordinating Center. Sessions rotate through each of the course domains throughout the year.

## Summer Institute

Every August, fellows and faculty from all 9 sites gather for face-to-face workshops and networking at a 3-day conference. The Summer Institute 2018 theme will be VA Care in the Community: Ensuring Quality and Value.



## Local Benefits

- Approved sites receive allocated fellowship positions for 6 Advanced Fellows (3 first-year and 3 second-year)
- Fellows provide 20% effort dedicated to clinical care of Veterans at the local facility
- Fellows engage in local or regional level quality improvement projects to improve Veteran care and align with facility and/or VISN partnerships
- VAQS graduates are often committed to careers in VHA
- Sites enjoy opportunities to retain promising fellows as faculty for high-priority clinical and leadership positions
- Sites serve as hubs for faculty and content experts in quality improvement, patient safety, and innovation

