

PROJECT#: SDR 08-405-1

TITLE: TBI Evaluation Instruments and Processes for Clinical Follow-up

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**Objectives:**

Primary aim: a description and analysis of how the TBI evaluation process relates to VA care patterns, accounting for the impact of co-occurring psychiatric conditions and other relevant factors. This addresses items c-f of the RFP. Specific aims are:

1: Measure the impact of patient and medical facility factors on rates of progression to Level 2 evaluations for veterans with a “positive” initial screening for TBI.

2: Measure the impact of patient- and medical facility factors on differential rates of clinical impression of TBI at Level 2 evaluations.

3: Measure the impact of patient and medical facility factors on differential rates of participation in follow-up care recommended at Level 2 evaluations.

**Research Design:**

We use a two-level hierarchical linear model, with patients nested within facility when the dependent variable is quantitative. For categorical dependent variables, we employ a hierarchical logistic (or polynomial) regression model. This type of model determines to what degree patient characteristics explain variability in patient outcome scores before accounting for facility-level contributions to that variability.

**Methodology:**

For all objectives, we use data on Screening & Comprehensive Evaluations available from Patient Care Services Office of Strategic Planning and Measurement to identify the study population of VA patients screened for the risk of TBI. We will also use VA utilization data to track the number and type of VA services used by those veterans who have been through the TBI screening process. The entire study population comprises over 180,000 veterans who have been screened since the spring of 2007. About 20% of this population has reportedly had a Level 2 confirmation that symptoms are consistent with TBI. A panel of 8 national TBI clinical and research experts will provide clinical and analytic oversight to this project.

**Findings:**

None at this time.

**Clinical Relationships:**

Not applicable.