



RESEARCH SPOTLIGHT ON

# Veterans Health

An estimated 20 million veterans live in the United States. These individuals can face challenging and complex health issues. Addressing these concerns more effectively through patient-centered research will not only benefit those directly affected but their families as well.

The Veterans Health Administration spent  
**\$69 BILLION**  
in fiscal year 2017

More than  
**9 MILLION**  
veterans are enrolled in the VA health care program

Source: Congressional Budget Office

## PCORI Answers Critical Questions

Mental health issues, pain management and traumatic brain injury are among the conditions veterans can face. PCORI is funding studies focusing on the conditions that affect them to help answer questions they and those who care for them might have about their treatment options, such as:



### PATIENT

I suffer from posttraumatic stress disorder, but my current treatments don't seem to be helping with all my symptoms. Are there different medications or other treatments that might work better for me?



### VA CLINICIAN

One of my patients suffers from chronic pain but is concerned about the risks of relying on opioids. What strategies would offer the best options to help her manage her pain while reducing the risks she might face from long-term opioid use?

## STUDY SPOTLIGHTS

### Helping Veterans Manage Chronic Pain and Reduce Opioid Use

Many doctors prescribe opioids for people living with chronic pain, including veterans. But these drugs might not work as well as other pain management approaches and can have serious side effects and long-term risks. PCORI-funded researchers in Minnesota are working with patients who go to VA health facilities and have chronic pain even though they use opioids. The researchers are comparing different treatment options to see if they can help these patients control their pain while reducing their use of opioids. Further details about this project are at [www.pcori.org/Krebs192](http://www.pcori.org/Krebs192).

### Comparing Risks and Benefits of Second-Line Medicines for PTSD

Posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is the most common mental illness among veterans. People with PTSD have a higher risk of long-term physical illness, problems in social situations, and even death compared to those without PTSD. PCORI-funded researchers in California are reviewing the medical records of veterans with PTSD to gauge the benefits and risks of "second-line" medicines for PTSD – those that clinicians prescribe when drugs known to work best for most people are not effective. Further details about this project are at [www.pcori.org/reviews-PTSD](http://www.pcori.org/reviews-PTSD).

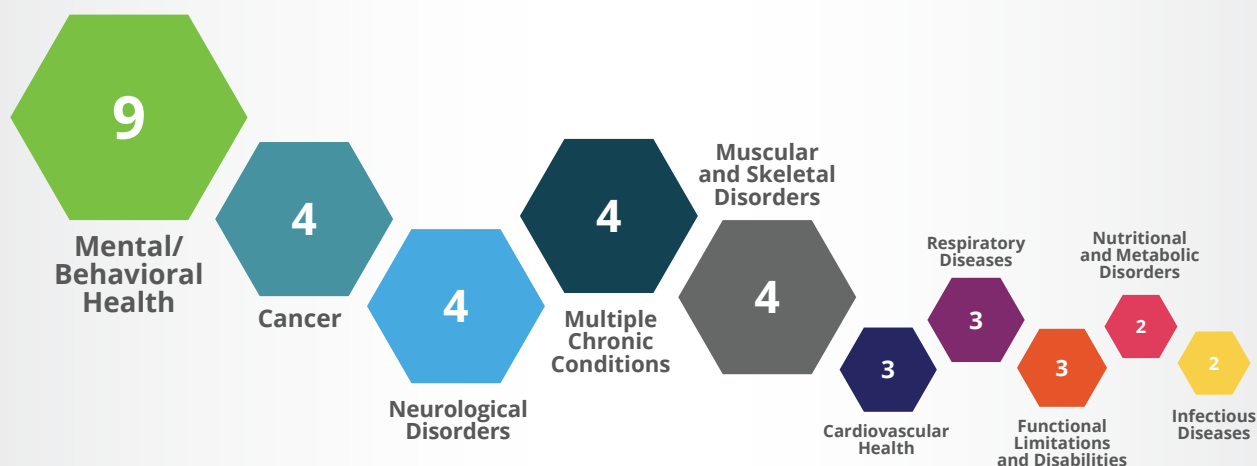
As of December 2018, PCORI has awarded  
**\$98 MILLION TO FUND 19**

comparative clinical effectiveness research studies that either involve veterans or focus on conditions highly relevant to them.

## BY THE NUMBER OF PROJECTS

### Top Condition Categories

*\*By number of projects. A project may study more than one condition.*



### Most Studied Populations of Interest

*\*By number of projects. A project may study more than one population.*

