



**HEROIC**  
HEALTH EQUITY AND RURAL  
OUTREACH INNOVATION CENTER  
CHARLESTON VA HSR&D COIN

## Program Overview

The Charleston Health Services Research Fellowship aims to develop the next generation of scientists who will pioneer advancements in Veteran care through innovative research and make equitable health services more accessible for Veterans from rural and minority populations.

This 2-year post-doctoral training program accepts clinician and non-clinician scientists for a rigorous fellowship centered around expanding care for targeted veteran populations.

Fellows in the program will develop independent research projects, collaborate in interprofessional teams, develop a research portfolio within health services, receive specialized training, and take on leadership roles with support from an experienced team of mentors. The close partnership between the Ralph H. Johnson VA Medical Center and its university affiliate, the Medical University of South Carolina, means that members have access to a wealth of resources within both the VA and the state's premier hospital.

# HSR&D

VA Health Services Research & Development Service

## Fellowship Objectives

**Mission:** To recruit and train future health services researchers and innovators specially equipped for operations-partnered research and evaluation to improve access to and equity in health and healthcare for all Veterans.

### Objectives:

1. Provide a supportive training environment through programmatic support, intensive mentoring, individualized learning plans, additional degrees, and targeted coursework based on learner-specified goals
2. Immerse fellows in a thoughtfully-designed, theoretically-grounded local curriculum through didactic and experiential learning opportunities focused on health equity, social determinants of health, vulnerable Veteran populations, rural health, and access to healthcare
3. Collaborate with local and regional VA operational leaders to embed fellows within clinical teams to conduct research and program evaluations



World Report perennially ranking MUSC Health the top hospital in the state and placing it among the nation's best in multiple specialty areas. MUSC Health features a 700+ bed quaternary care facility in its downtown Charleston campus in addition to over 100 outreach locations throughout South Carolina. MUSC trains more than 3,000 students and 700 residents each year across its six component colleges, ranks in the top quartile of domestic educational institutions in the number of NIH research training and education grants, stands as a top 40 Academic Medical Center, boasts an NIH-funded Clinical and Translational Research Center, and features an NCI-certified Cancer Center. The MUSC College of

## Who Can Apply

PhD-level scientists in biostatistics, epidemiology, health policy, informatics, economics, and behavioral or social sciences are strongly encouraged to apply, as are postdoctoral physicians, pharmacists, clinical and counseling psychologists, nurses, and other associated clinicians.

Note: Must be a U.S. citizen to apply to VA Advanced Fellowships

## How to Apply

Those interested should contact Fellowship Coordinator Layla Saleeby at [Hunter.Saleeby@va.gov](mailto:Hunter.Saleeby@va.gov).

## Websites

RHJVAMC Training Programs

HEROIC

## Training Sites and Affiliated Programs

### The Ralph H. Johnson VA Medical Center (RHJ-VAMC):

The RHJ-VAMC, located in Charleston, SC, serves coastal South Carolina and Georgia by providing acute medical, surgical, and psychiatric inpatient care as well as outpatient primary and mental health care to 'Low-Country' Veterans. The facility consistently ranks as one of the top VAMCs in the region in terms of combined VA and NIH research funding, and we offer a robust training environment—hosting students, residents, and fellows in all clinical and research disciplines. The Charleston VA also features additional fellowships in quality improvement (VAQS) and patient safety as well as mental illness research (MIRECC).

### The Medical University of South Carolina (MUSC):

MUSC is South Carolina's premier hospital, located in Charleston. The University is dedicated to the pursuit of changing what's possible in health care, with U.S. News &

Graduate Studies sponsors a Master of Science in Clinical Research, and the Department of Public Health Sciences sponsors PhD and MS degrees in Epidemiology, Biostatistics, and Biomedical Data Science as well as MPH degrees in Epidemiology, Biostatistics, and Health Behavior & Health Promotion.

### The Charleston Health Equity and Rural Outreach Innovation Center (HEROIC):

HEROIC is a VA Health Services Research and Development (HSR&D)-funded research center dedicated to advancing the implementation of evidence-based interventions designed to improve access and promote equity in vulnerable and/or rural Veteran populations. HEROIC is home to a multi-disciplinary team of dozens of health services researchers working in various fields including medicine, nursing, psychology, pharmacy, anthropology, biostatistics, data science, epidemiology, and public health. HEROIC provides the infrastructure, administrative support, and leadership for the Charleston HSR Fellowship.

### Program Leadership

#### Director, Kelly J. Hunt, PhD

- Senior VA Research Scientist
- Professor of Epidemiology, MUSC
- [huntke@muscedu](mailto:huntke@muscedu)

#### Co-Director, R. Neal Axon, MD, MSCR

- Director, HEROIC
- Senior Scholar, VA Quality Scholars Program
- Professor of Medicine, MUSC
- [Robert.Axon@va.gov](mailto:Robert.Axon@va.gov)

#### Layla Saleeby

- Fellowship Coordinator, HEROIC
- [Hunter.Saleeby@va.gov](mailto:Hunter.Saleeby@va.gov)



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs  
Veterans Health Administration  
Ralph H. Johnson VA Health Care System



Health Equity & Rural Outreach Innovation Center (HEROIC)  
 Ralph H. Johnson VA Healthcare System  
 109 Bee Street, MSC 151  
 Charleston, SC 29401  
 Contact: Dr. Kelly Hunt - Director



*Advanced Fellowship in Health Systems Research*

Full Name:

Address:

Citizenship/Visa Status:

Date Available to Enter Fellowship:

(Note: Fellowships typically start July 1st, but there is some flexibility in start date)

Contact Information:

Cell #: (preferred time to call)

Work #: (preferred time to call)

Email:

Undergraduate Institution:

Major: Year of Graduation:

Graduate Education:

Master's Program: Month/Year of Graduation:  
 Concentration:

Doctoral Program: Month/Year of Graduation:  
 Concentration:

Residency/  
 Internship Program: Month/Year of Completion:

Discipline: Month/Year of Completion:  
 Fellowship Program:

Discipline:

(1) **Physician Fellows:**

- (i) Did you graduate from foreign medical school?
  - If yes, do you have evidence of Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates (ECFMG) certification?
- (ii) Have you completed a residency program accredited by ACGME or The Bureau of Professional Education (BPE) of the American Osteopathic Association?



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(iii) Are you currently enrolled simultaneously in any accredited physician residency/fellowship program?

- If yes, expected completion date:

(iv) Do you have an active, unrestricted license to practice in any state in the U.S.?

(v) Are you Board Certified?

(2) **Nurse Fellows:**

(i) Have you completed an accredited PhD or Doctorate of Nursing Practice Program?

- If no, do you have current active enrollment in good standing or written acceptance in a nursing doctoral program (either Ph.D. or D.N.P) at an academic institution associated with a nursing school accredited by either NLNAC or CCNE?

(ii) Do you possess an unrestricted valid registered nurse license in a US state or territory?

(iii) Are you either credentialed or boarded with a scope of practice consistent with your licensure?

(3) **Psychology Fellows:**

(i) Is your Doctoral program accredited by APA or PCSAS?

(ii) Have you completed an APA or Canadian Psychological Association (CPA) accredited internship (or a new OAA funded, VA-based internship that is not yet accredited)?

- If no, expected completion date (month/year):

(iii) Has your Dissertation/final project been defended/completed?

- If no, expected completion date (month/year)

(iv) Do you possess an advanced degree from an accredited doctoral program?

- If no, can you demonstrate that all requirements for such a degree have been completed and award of the diploma is pending but will be completed prior to starting fellowship?

(v) Do you have an active, unrestricted license to practice in the U.S.?



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**(4) Associated Health Fellows (other than Psychology)**

(i) Do you possess a doctoral degree from an accredited program in your respective profession?

(ii) Have you completed all requirements to become a fully credentialed independent practitioner (or the equivalent for that profession) ?

(iii) Do you have an active, unrestricted license to practice in the U.S.?

(iv) Are you currently enrolled in any other accredited clinical training program?

- If yes, expected completion date:

\*Applicants who are in non-clinical associated health professions must possess a doctorate degree (e.g., Ph.D., D.P.H., Sc.D.) and have training relevant to health services research.



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**References:**

- |          |               |
|----------|---------------|
| 1) Name: | Relationship: |
| Email:   | Work #        |
| 2) Name: | Relationship: |
| Email:   | Work #        |
| 3) Name: | Relationship: |
| Email:   | Work #        |

**Application Instructions: Please include the following documents to complete your application:**

- 1) Completed [VA Form 10-2850D](#). After filling form, save and send back with this application.
- 2) Personal Statement: Please write a personal statement in support of your application (In 1500 words or less) that addresses the following questions:
  - a. Describe your background and your experiences that led you to apply for this fellowship program.
  - b. Describe your research interests and clinical experience if appropriate and how they align with the mission and focus of the Charleston Health Systems Research program.
  - c. Explain how this fellowship will enhance your future career and where you see yourself in 5 years.
- 3) 3 Letters of Recommendation. At least one letter should be provided from a program director at your terminal training program (e.g. Residency, Internship, Doctoral Program, or Fellowship Director).
- 4) A copy of your curriculum vitae (CV).

Send all materials via email to Layla Saleeby (Hunter.Saleeby@va.gov).