

FOVA Recommendations for FY 2026

Department of Veterans Affairs

MEDICAL AND PROSTHETIC RESEARCH PROGRAM – at least \$1.2 billion

The Friends of VA Medical Care and Health Research (FOVA) coalition recognizes the difficult funding decisions Congress faces in the FY 2026 Military Construction, VA, and Related Agencies spending bill. Despite these constraints, FOVA urges lawmakers to provide **\$1.2 billion** for VA research reflecting the critical role VA research plays in advancing veterans' health.

A sustained funding boost is essential to preserving VA's legacy of scientific excellence. This investment will empower VA to recruit and retain top scientific talent, fuel groundbreaking discoveries, and ensure veterans continue to benefit from cutting-edge treatments.

Increased funding will also help VA accelerate research in toxic exposures, mental health, and chronic conditions disproportionately affecting veterans—areas where VA leads the nation in innovation. With continued investment, VA can remain at the forefront of medical research, delivering breakthroughs that improve veterans' lives and strengthen America's global leadership in research and development.

PHYSICAL AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (IT) INFRASTRUCTURE

State-of-the-art research requires sustained investment in facilities, technology, and equipment. For decades, appropriations for construction, maintenance, and IT have not provided the resources VA needs to modernize its aging research and IT infrastructure. Recognizing current fiscal constraints, FOVA urges Congress to maintain dedicated funding to support these critical needs.

MAJOR AND MINOR CONSTRUCTION - at least \$100 million

VA undertook a Phase II assessment of approximately 25 R&D programs to evaluate progress and ongoing challenges. The Phase II reports (East, Central, and West regions) were completed in 2019 and, while not mandated by Congress, were submitted through the VA system. The assessment found that facilities that addressed Phase I deficiencies saw significant improvements, closing the condition gap considerably. In contrast, stations that did not take corrective action experienced further deterioration, leading to increased remediation costs.

The assessment also highlighted persistent life safety hazards, such as the lack of proper sprinkler systems, emergency showers, and eyewash stations, identified as Priority 1 deficiencies requiring immediate action. Furthermore, disparities in research space were evident, as some locations improved while others remained in poor or fair condition, which continues to impact research quality and safety. These findings underscore the importance of sustained investment of **at least \$100 million** to maintain and modernize VA research facilities, ensuring they meet the highest standards for scientific innovation and veteran care.

OFFICE OF INFORMATION AND TECHNOLOGY – at least \$25 million

VA's Office of Information and Technology (OIT) is responsible for IT development and maintenance across VA programs, including clinical care, benefits, security, and research. To ensure the VA research enterprise remains at the forefront of innovation, it is essential that OIT funding continue to include a dedicated research component. FOVA recommends maintaining **at least \$25 million** for VA research IT needs to support data storage and security, cloud computing advancements, interoperability with research affiliates, and modernized IT infrastructure for research programs.

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Organizations Endorsing the FOVA FY 2026 Recommendation:

AcademyHealth

American Academy of Neurology

American Academy of Ophthalmology

American Academy of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation

American Association for the Study of Liver Diseases

American Association of Colleges of Nursing

American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine

American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy

American Association of Directors of Psychiatric Residency Training

American Association of Neuromuscular & Electrodagnostic Medicine

American Association of Veterinary Medical Colleges

American Brain Coalition

American College of Physicians

American Dental Education Association

American Gastroenterological Association

American Geriatrics Society

American Heart Association

American Massage Therapy Association

American Orthotic and Prosthetic Association

American Physiological Society

American Podiatric Medical Association

American Psychiatric Association

American Psychological Association

American Society for Gastrointestinal Endoscopy

American Society for Hematology

American Society for Pharmacology and Experimental Therapeutics (ASPET)

American Society of Nephrology

American Urological Association

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Association of Academic Physiatrists
Association of American Medical Colleges
Association of Chairs of Departments of Physiology
Arthritis Foundation
Blinded Veterans Association
Catholic War Veterans, USA, Inc.
Cohen Veterans Bioscience
DAV (Disabled American Veterans)
Digestive Disease National Coalition (DDNC)
Endocrine Society
Epilepsy Foundation
LUNGeivity Foundation
Lymphatic Education & Research Network
Melanoma Research Foundation
National Alliance on Mental Illness
National Association for Biomedical Research
National Association of VA Physicians and Dentists (NAVAPD)
National Association of Veterans' Research and Education Foundations (NAVREF)
National Scleroderma Foundation
Nurses Organization of Veterans Affairs (NOVA)
Paralyzed Veterans of America (PVA)
Prostate Cancer Foundation
Pulmonary Hypertension Association
Research!America
Restless Legs Syndrome Foundation
Society for Neuroscience
Society of General Internal Medicine

FOVA was founded 35 years ago to ensure that America's veterans receive high-quality health care. Today, FOVA is a diverse coalition representing nearly 80 national academic, medical, and scientific societies; voluntary health and patient advocacy groups; and veteran-focused associations. FOVA works in concert with the *Independent Budget* veterans service organizations.