

## **Expanding our horizons: Medical Conditions and Audiology, PI: Gabrielle Saunders**

**Objectives:** This proposal requested funding for a conference titled *'Expanding our horizons: Medical Conditions and Audiology'* that was held in Portland, Oregon October 13<sup>th</sup> - 14<sup>th</sup> 2011. This was the fifth biennial conference and workshop hosted by the National Center of Rehabilitative Auditory Research (NCRAR). The aim of the NCRAR conference series is to facilitate the rehabilitation of auditory impairment through the translation of basic and applied research findings into audiological clinical practice. The objective of this particular conference was to expand knowledge and understanding of ways in which other medical conditions affect the auditory system and thus potentially impact auditory interventions and approaches to rehabilitation.

**Plan:** Eleven scientists with expertise in the topic area gave presentations at the conference. In addition to these formal presentations, practicing VA clinicians, students and other individuals participated by giving poster presentations and by joining in with scheduled and informal discussion sessions.

**Methods:** Clinical audiologists, scientists, medical personnel and students attended the meeting. Eight scholarships were awarded to a combination of practicing clinicians students enrolled in doctoral program (Au.D. or Ph.D.). The meeting was publicized via national and local audiology e-mail lists, through audiology training programs and audiological/hearing science meetings and publications. Conference proceedings will be published in *Seminars in Hearing*, video recordings of the sessions can be viewed via the VA VAKN system; DVD recordings of the meeting can be borrowed on request. The program consisted of a keynote address at the opening reception, eight conference presentations over two days, a poster session and a panel discussion.

**Findings to Date:** The conference took place as planned. There were approximately 160 attendees from around the world. Attendees rated the conference very positively, with about 90% of the attendees strongly agreeing or agreeing that the content of appropriate difficulty and reflected their professional needs, that the presenters were effective and knowledgeable and that they could apply the with the statements. The proceedings of the meeting are currently under review with *Seminars in Hearing*.

**Relevance to VA's Mission:** Audiologists in the VA must provide auditory rehabilitation to Veterans with the types of medical conditions that will be addressed by this conference. The information learned will be directly applicable to their practice.

**MESH terms:** Hearing Loss, Education, Auditory Dysfunction