

Mental Health Effects of Toxic Exposures Among Veterans

Committee

Deborah A. Cory-Slechta

Co-Chair

Deborah Cory-Slechta, PhD, (co-chair) is a Professor of Environmental Medicine at the University of Rochester Medical School and served formerly as Dean for Research, Chair of Environmental Medicine and Principal Investigator of the Department's NIEHS Core Center Grant. Her research, including both animal models and human studies, is focused on the consequences of exposures to environmental chemicals on brain and their relationship to neurodegenerative and neurodevelopmental disorders. Over the past years these studies have focused on the impact of air pollution, including ambient air as well as inhaled metals in air pollution. She has received sustained funding from the NIH over the course of her career for this research. She has served on advisory panels of the NIH, FDA, EPA, the NAS and ATSDR/CDC. In February 2025, she was appointed a member of the Congressionally Directed Medical Research Program programmatic panel for the Toxic Exposures Research Program. In 2017, she received the Distinguished Neurotoxicologist Award from the Neurotoxicology Specialty Section of the Society of Toxicology, and in 2021, was the recipient of the Distinguished Toxicology Scholar Award from the Society of Toxicology. In 2022 she received the Susan B. Anthony Lifetime Achievement Award from the University of Rochester. She has served on several NASEM consensus study committees on military and veterans' health, including as chair of the Committee on Gulf War and Health, Volume 10.

Jeannette E. South-Paul

Co-Chair

Jeannette E. South-Paul, MD, (co-chair) joined Meharry Medical College (MMC) as the Executive Vice President and Provost in December 2021. Formerly she served as the Andrew W. Mathieson UPMC Professor and Chair of the Department of Family Medicine at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine from 2001 - 2020 retiring from Pitt in 2020. This position followed her 22 years on active duty in the US Army retiring in 2001 while serving as Chair of Family Medicine at the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences and also as VP for Minority Affairs. Dr. South-Paul has served in leadership positions in the Society of Teachers of Family Medicine (STFM), the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP), the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC), and the Association of Departments of Family Medicine (ADFM) to include serving as President of the Uniformed Services Academy of AAFP and the STFM. Dr. South-Paul stepped off the Meharry Board of Trustees to begin her new leadership role. She is excited to lead the deans of the four schools (Medicine, Dentistry, Graduate Studies, and Applied Computational Sciences) of this historic institution as she continues to serve in academe. She is a member of the National Academy of Medicine, the Gold Humanism Society, and the Alpha Omega Alpha Medical Honorary Society. Dr. South-Paul has served the National Academies on the Committee on Transforming Health Care to Create Whole Health, the Committee to Evaluate the Department of Veterans Affairs Mental Health Services, and on the planning committee for a workshop on Current Practices and Challenges for Identifying and Managing Suicide Risk among Veterans in Non-VA Healthcare Systems.

Carl A. Castro

Member

Carl Castro, PhD, is currently professor and director of the Military and Veteran Programs at the Suzanne Dworak-Peck School of Social Work at the University of Southern California. He also serves as director of the USC-RAND Epstein Family Foundation Center for Veterans Policy Research. Dr. Castro served in the U.S. Army for over 30 years, retiring at the rank of colonel. Dr. Castro participated in the Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo Campaigns, Operation Northern Watch, and the Iraq War. Dr. Castro has chaired numerous NATO and international research groups and he is currently Co-Chair of a NATO group exploring Military and Veteran Radicalization. He serves in an uncompensated capacity on the Cohen Veterans Network Scientific Advisory Board and as Treasurer and Secretary on the Board of Directors of the Greater Los Angeles Veterans Research and Education Foundation. Dr. Castro is a member of the NASEM Committee on Evaluating the Effects of Opioids and Benzodiazepines on All-Cause Mortality in Veterans and previously served on the Committee on Evaluation of Research Management by Department of Defense Congressionally Directed Medical Research Program (CMDRP). Dr. Castro is a Fellow of the American Psychological Association and the National Academy of Social Work and Social Welfare. His current research efforts are broad and include: (a) the exploration of the military culture that leads to acceptance and integration of diverse groups; (b) understanding and ameliorating the effects of military trauma and stress, especially combat and deployment, on service members and their family; (c) the prevention of suicides and violence such as sexual assault and bullying; and (d) evaluating the process of transitioning into the military and transitioning from military service back to civilian life.

R. Yates Coley

Member

R. Yates Coley, PhD, MS, is an Associate Investigator in the Biostatistics Division of Kaiser Permanente Washington Health Research Institute and an Affiliate Associate Professor with the University of Washington Department of Biostatistics. Dr. Coley's statistical expertise includes collection and analysis of clinical records and administrative health data. Their research program focuses on developing statistical methods that enable rapid evidence generation and synthesis from electronic health records data to inform and improve health care delivery. Their collaborate in many content areas includes mental health, aging, cancer, health services, and health equity. Dr. Coley was recently recognized with the Emerging Leader Award from the Committee of Presidents of Statistical Societies for their leadership in advancing statistical methods for learning health systems and clinical prediction models and in promoting equity, diversity, and inclusion in the profession and practice of statistics. Dr. Coley received a PhD and MS in biostatistics from the University of Washington and an AB in Environmental Science and Policy from Duke University.

Aisha S. Dickerson

Member

Aisha S. Dickerson, PhD, MSPH, an environmental neuroepidemiologist, is Associate Professor of Epidemiology at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. Dr. Dickerson's primary research focuses on joint environmental, occupational, and psychosocial exposures and risk of neuropsychiatric disorders across the life course. She previously served on the National Academies Committee to Support EPA's Development of Human Health Assessments and the Committee for the Review of EPA's Draft 2022 Formaldehyde Assessment, and has been a member of the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services Interagency Autism Coordinating Committee (IACC) since 2021. Dr. Dickerson received her MSPH from the University of Alabama at Birmingham and PhD in epidemiology from the University of Texas Health Science at Houston before completing postdoctoral training at the Environmental Protection Agency and Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health.

Lisa Dixon

Member

Lisa B. Dixon, MD, MPH, is the Edna L Edison Professor of Psychiatry at the Columbia University Vagelos College of Physicians and Surgeons and New York-Presbyterian Hospital. She directs the Division of Behavioral Health Services and Policy Research within the Department of Psychiatry. Dr. Dixon is an internationally recognized health services researcher with over 25 years of continuous funding from the National Institute of Mental Health and the VA. She oversees activities for the New York State Office of Mental Health in implementing evidenced based practices for persons diagnosed with serious mental illness. Dr. Dixon's grants have focused on improving the quality of care for individuals with serious mental disorders. Dr. Dixon's work has joined individuals engaged in self-help, outpatient psychiatric care, as well as clinicians and policy makers in collaborative research endeavors. Dr. Dixon assumed the role of editor in chief of the journal, *Psychiatric Services* in January 2017. She has published more than 390 articles in peer-reviewed journals and has received numerous awards including the 2009 American Psychiatric Association Health Services Senior Scholar Award and the Wayne Fenton Award for Exceptional Clinical Care. In 2016, the Mental Health Section of the American Public Health Association recognized her work with the Carl A. Taube Award. She recently served as a member of the Board of Directors for the National Alliance on Mental Illness. Dr. Dixon has served on two previous NASEM committees.

Jaimie L. Gradus

Member

Jaimie L. Gradus DMSc, DSc, MPH, is a Professor of Epidemiology and Director of the Center for Trauma and Mental Health at the Boston University School of Public Health. Her research interests are in the epidemiology of trauma and trauma-related disorders, with a particular focus on suicide. She also conducts research at VA on PTSD and women's health. Dr. Gradus has been the recipient of numerous grants from the National Institutes of Health, the Department of Veterans Affairs, the Department of Defense, and various foundations. She has published over 125 scientific articles within the field of psychiatric epidemiology. Dr. Gradus also has roles as a Board Member for the Boston VA Research Institute and the International Society for Traumatic Stress Studies, a Scientific Advisor to the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, and an Editor of the *American Journal of Epidemiology* and the *Journal of Traumatic Stress*. Dr. Gradus has a patent pending for a PTSD treatment. In 2022, she served as a paid consultant to perform a literature review and an expert assessment on the association between mefloquine and mental health. She received her BA in psychology from Stony Brook University, her MPH with a concentration in epidemiology and biostatistics and DSc in epidemiology from Boston University and in 2018, a Doctor of Medical Science degree from Aarhus University in Denmark. Previously, Dr. Gradus was a member of the Committee of Disabling Medical Conditions Likely to Improve with Treatment for the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine.

Patricia Janulewicz Lloyd

Member

Patricia Janulewicz Lloyd, DSc, MPH, Chair and Professor in the Department of Urban Public Health at the University of Massachusetts Boston. She is also the Director and Principal Investigator of the HRSA-funded New England Public Health Training Center. Dr. Janulewicz Lloyd combines her expertise in environmental health, neurotoxicology and teratology to examine how environmental exposures impact the nervous system. Her work spans the life-course and examines prenatal, early postnatal, childhood and adult exposures. Dr. Janulewicz Lloyd has prioritized research on veterans' health for over a decade with particular focus on Gulf War Illness. She was previously an Associate Professor of Environmental Health at the Boston University School of Public Health. She previously served on the NASEM Committee on the Review of the VA Guidance for the Health Conditions Identified by the Camp Lejeune Legislation.

Marianthi-Anna Kioumourtzoglou

Member

Marianthi-Anna Kioumourtzoglou, ScD, is an environmental engineer and epidemiologist. She is currently an Associate Professor at the Department of Environmental Health Sciences at Columbia University's Mailman School of Public Health. Her studies focus on characterizing exposure to environmental factors and investigating associations with adverse health outcomes, including neurological and mental health outcomes. She received her Doctor of Science from the Environmental Health Department at the Harvard TH Chan School of Public Health, her Master of Science in Public Health from the Department of Environmental Science and Engineering at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, and her engineering degree from the Environmental Engineering Department at the Democritus University of Thrace, Greece. She previously served on the NASEM Committee to Reassess the Department of Veterans Affairs Airborne Hazards and Open Burn Pit Registry.

Bhramar Mukherjee

Member

Bhramar Mukherjee, PhD, is the Senior Associate Dean of Public Health Data Science and Data Equity; Anna M.R. Lauder Professor of Biostatistics; Professor of Epidemiology (Chronic Diseases) and of Statistics and Data Science at the Yale School of Public Health since 2024. She holds a visiting faculty appointment at Ashoka University, India and a Visiting Honorary Senior Fellow appointment in MRC Biostatistics, University of Cambridge, UK. She is an overseas fellow at Churchill College, University of Cambridge. She was previously the John D. Kalbfleisch Distinguished University Professor, Sioban D. Harlow Collegiate Professor and Chair, Department of Biostatistics and professor in both the Department of Epidemiology and Global Public Health at the University of Michigan School of Public Health. From 2023-2024, she was Assistant Vice President for Research for Research Data Services Strategy. Her research interests include critical data studies, statistical methods for analysis of electronic health records, studies of gene-environment interaction, Bayesian methods, shrinkage estimation, analysis of multiple pollutants. Collaborative areas are mainly in cancer, cardiovascular diseases, reproductive health, exposure science and environmental epidemiology. Dr. Mukherjee and her team took an active role in modeling the SARS-CoV-2 virus trajectory in India during the COVID-19 pandemic, which has been covered by major media outlets like Reuters, BBC, NPR, NYT, WSJ, Der Spiegel, Australian National Radio, and the Times of India. She has co-authored more than 400 publications in statistics, biostatistics, medicine, and public health and is serving as PI on NSF and NIH funded methodology grants. She is the founding director of the University of Michigan's summer institute on Big Data and a new summer program at Yale. Dr. Mukherjee is a fellow of the American Statistical Association and the American Association for the Advancement of Science. Dr. Mukherjee was inducted into the National Academy of Medicine in 2023. She is the recipient of many awards for her scholarship, service, and teaching at the University of Michigan and beyond including the Janet Norwood award, the Sarah Goddard Power award, the Karl E Peace Award for statistical contribution towards betterment of society awarded by The American Statistical Association, and the Sacks Award from National Institute of Statistical Sciences and the Marvin Zelen Award from Harvard TH Chan School of Public Health. She is the President-elect of ENAR, Eastern North American Region International Biometric Society. She serves on several advisory boards, including the World Health Organization (WHO) and United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA) Technical Advisory Group on COVID-19 Mortality Assessment, Koiita Centre for Digital Health External Advisory Board at IIT Bombay and Ashoka University; Advisory Board of Khushi Baby, and HeartShare: Accelerating Medicines Partnership, Northwestern University, Observation and Safety Monitoring Board. She has received honoraria for serving on the Columbia University Northern Plains Superfund Research Program External Advisory Committee and the Fred Hutchinson/University of Washington/Seattle Children's Cancer Consortium External Advisory Board. She has served on several NASEM consensus study committees, including on the Committee on the Reassessment of the Department of Veterans Affairs Airborne Hazards and Open Burn Pit Registry.

Davin Quinn

Member

Davin K. Quinn, MD, is a Professor of Psychiatry with Tenure at the University of New Mexico School of Medicine, and is the Vice Chair for Adult Clinical Services, the Division Chief of Behavioral Health Consultation and Integration, and the director of the UNM Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation Service. He received his medical degree from Harvard Medical School in 2004, and completed residency in general psychiatry in 2008 and fellowship in consultation-liaison psychiatry at Massachusetts General Hospital/McLean Hospital. Dr. Quinn is board certified in adult psychiatry, consultation-liaison psychiatry, behavioral neurology and neuropsychiatry, and brain injury medicine, and is funded by the Department of Defense and NIH to conduct clinical trials of noninvasive brain stimulation for neuropsychiatric conditions. He previously served in an uncompensated capacity as a member of the Santa Fe Recovery Center Board of Directors.

Rajeev Ramchand

Member

Rajeev Ramchand, PhD, is codirector of the RAND Epstein Family Veterans Policy Research Institute and a senior behavioral scientist at the RAND Corporation. He studies the prevalence, prevention, and treatment of mental health and substance use disorders in adolescents, service members and veterans, and minority populations. He has conducted many studies on suicide and suicide prevention including environmental scans of suicide prevention programs, epidemiologic studies on risk factors for suicide, qualitative research with suicide loss survivors, and evaluations of suicide prevention programs. He has also developed freely available tools to help organizations to evaluate their own suicide prevention programs. He has testified on suicide prevention before the United States Senate, House of Representatives, and California State Senate and recently served on the Department of Defense Suicide Prevention and Response Independent Review Committee. Other current areas of research include military and veteran caregivers; the role of firearm availability, storage, and policies on suicide; the impact of disasters on community health; and using public health approaches to study and prevent hate and violent extremism. Dr. Ramchand serves on the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, LGBTQ+ Advisory Board for which he receives compensation. He also serves in an uncompensated capacity on the Department of Veterans Affairs National Research Advisory Council, the Face the Fight Scientific Advisory Committee, the National Action Alliance for Suicide Prevention Executive Committee, the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline Steering Committee, the MindWell Advisory Board, and the Cohen Veterans Network Scientific Advisory Board. He has a bachelor's degree in economics from the University of Chicago and a PhD in psychiatric epidemiology from the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. He was a panelist at the NASEM workshops "Health Approaches in Community-Level Strategies to Countering Violent Extremism and Radicalization" and "Approaches to Improve the Measurement of Suicide in Law Enforcement in the United States," and a planning committee member for the 2022 NASEM Virtual Symposium "Community Interventions to Prevent Veteran Suicide: The Role of Social Determinants" and "Workshop on Identifying and Managing Veteran Suicide Risk in Non-VA Healthcare Settings."

Jack Tsai

Member

Jack Tsai, PhD, MSCP, serves as Regional Dean and Professor of Public Health at the University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston, and is also Director of Research in the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Homeless Programs Office. In December 2024, he was appointed to serve in an uncompensated capacity on the Department of Veterans Affairs National Research Advisory Council. He received his MS and PhD from Purdue University and an additional master's degree in Clinical Psychopharmacology from Fairleigh Dickinson University. Dr. Tsai previously served as a professor of psychiatry at Yale University School of Medicine where he was Director of the Division of Mental Health Services Research. He has over 20 years of experience providing clinical services and conducting federally funded research on severe mental illness and trauma among various populations, including veterans. Dr. Tsai has been elected as a fellow of the American Psychological Association Divisions 18 and 56, and currently serves as Editor-in-Chief for the Journal of Social Distress and Homelessness, and npj Mental Health Research.