

Role: Research Assistant / Clinical Research Coordinator – AI and Veteran Mental Health Research

Location: Onsite at the James J. Peters VA Medical Center; 130 W Kingsbridge Rd, Bronx, NY

Start date: Fall 2026

Duration: 2-year minimum

The **Mental Illness Research, Education and Clinical Center (MIRECC)** at the James J. Peters VA Medical Center in the Bronx is an internationally recognized leader in understanding, treating, and improving outcomes for Veterans with serious mental illness (see <https://www.mirecc.va.gov/MIRECC/vsn2/index.asp>). Our discovery-to-recovery approach emphasizes uncovering the root causes of mental illness, identifying risk factors, and developing innovative treatments, particularly for schizophrenia and suicide. Our research spans the full spectrum from basic science to applied clinical services, and we partner with Mount Sinai Medical Center, and VA sites including the Denver VA, East Orange VA, and the VISN 17 Waco Texas Center for Excellence.

Dr. Yosef Sokol, PhD, a clinical psychologist and investigator at the MIRECC, is seeking a full-time Research Assistant / Clinical Research Coordinator to support his program of research applying artificial intelligence to Veteran mental health. Dr. Sokol's current work centers on developing and validating AI and natural language processing methods for suicide risk detection and clinical assessment, including large language model analysis of Veterans' speech and interview transcripts, AI-generated clinical summaries, and privacy-preserving local models for use within VA systems. This computational work builds on his earlier research on identity and recovery after a suicidal crisis. His publications can be found on Google Scholar: <https://scholar.google.com/citations?user=SAiYA4EAAAAJ>.

This position is a good fit for someone planning to apply to graduate school in clinical psychology or a related field who wants hands-on experience with both traditional clinical research and newer AI-based methods. The position will support ongoing and upcoming AI studies and preparation for a planned AI center focused on Veteran mental health. No AI or programming background is required; a willingness to learn is.

Primary Duties and Responsibilities include:

- Record, prepare, and organize interview audio and transcripts for analysis, including de-identification and data quality checks.
- Support AI/NLP analyses under the PI's guidance, such as organizing datasets, running established analysis pipelines, helping evaluate model outputs, and assisting with clinician rating studies of AI-generated materials. Training will be provided; no AI background is required.
- Coordinate and implement clinical research activities, including screening participants for eligibility, tracking referrals and progress, administering questionnaires and structured interviews, and maintaining follow-up with active participants.
- Obtain informed consent from participants and educate participants regarding study requirements.
- Conduct in-person and remote study visits in a structured manner, ensuring adherence to the protocol, HIPAA, and IRB guidelines.
- Create and manage study databases (e.g., REDCap) and support data entry, extraction, and cleaning.
- Prepare IRB submissions, amendments, and renewals, and assist with grant applications (e.g., literature reviews and drafting with the support of the PI).
- Support recruitment efforts and build relationships with JJPVA staff and complete the VA's annual research training.
- Perform other related duties for the research program of PI Yosef Sokol.

Requirements:

- A bachelor's degree in psychology, public health, or a related field.
- Strong interpersonal skills with the ability to interact compassionately and effectively with Veterans, including individuals at elevated suicide risk.
- Strong oral and written communication skills, high attention to detail, and good organizational and time-management abilities.
- Proficiency in Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, PowerPoint).
- US Citizenship
- Preferred, but not required: prior research or direct care experience; familiarity with REDCap, Qualtrics, R, or Python; interest or coursework in AI/computational methods.

Contact: Interested candidates should send the following materials to Dr. Yosef Sokol:
Yosef.Sokol@va.gov

1. Resume
2. Cover letter
3. Contact information for two professional references