FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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VA Researchers Develop New Prosthetic Ankle
Nicholson: “Once Again, VA Leads in Medical Innovation”

WASHINGTON – Veterans with lower-leg amputations can look forward to having a prosthetic ankle-foot that matches their natural ease of motion, thanks to research funded by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and conducted by researchers from the Department and two of the nation’s top universities.

“Veterans are entitled to the best this nation has to offer, and at VA, we’re constantly redefining the meaning of best,” said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Jim Nicholson. “This new ankle-foot prosthetic is another example of VA’s medical innovations for veterans that will benefit all Americans.”

Researchers say the new ankle-foot prosthetic is the first in a new family of artificial limbs. It will replicate natural motion by propelling people forward using tendon-like springs powered by an electric motor.

Through VA-funded research, the Center for Restorative and Regenerative Medicine, a partnership between the Providence VA Medical Center in Rhode Island, Brown University and Massachusetts Institute of Technology, developed the new prosthesis. The center’s goal is to restore natural function to amputees.

VA expects to spend more than $1.2 billion this year on prosthetics and sensory aids, which includes glasses and hearing aids. The Department operates about 60 orthotic-prosthetic labs across the country that fabricate, fit and repair artificial limbs or oversee limbs provided by commercial vendors.

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