

CONNECTED CARE



Background

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) continues to look for new ways to improve services for Veterans and engage them in their own health care. As part of this effort, there has been an increased focus on developing virtual technology to improve access for Veterans and to provide health care beyond traditional doctor's office visits. The Office of Connected Care enables VA to deliver on its promise to provide personalized, proactive, patient-driven health care. Specifically, the Office of Connected Care focuses on:

- Increasing Veterans' access to continuous, coordinated VA health care services;
- Enhancing the workflow, impact and efficiency through technology for VA staff; and
- Supporting Veterans' participation in their health care.

The Office of Connected Care is comprised of VA Telehealth Services, My Health^eVet, the VHA Innovation Program and VA Mobile. For more than 15 years, VA Telehealth Services has been a pioneer in digital health care. In FY 2017 alone, VA Telehealth Services provided telehealth care to more than 727,000 patients—more than 12 percent of Veterans receiving VA health care. My Health^eVet has also been in existence for more than 15 years and boasts 4.18 million registered users. In addition, VA Mobile and the VHA Innovation Program are on the cutting edge of connected health care, delivering new and innovative technologies and services, including many mobile health apps, to both Veterans and VA staff members.

VA



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Veterans Health Administration
Office of Connected Care

VA Telehealth Services

Through VA Telehealth Services, Veterans can access VA quality care at the time and place that is most convenient for them. VA uses different telehealth technologies to build capacity in staffing and ensure that geography is not a barrier to Veterans receiving the best possible care.

VA employs telehealth through three programs:

- Clinical Video Telehealth allows real-time interaction, through videoconferencing, between patients and their VA care teams — increasingly from the Veteran's home or mobile device.
- Store-and-Forward Telehealth allows clinical staff to capture and share images, sounds or data with other specialists for help in diagnosis and delivery of care.
- VA Home Telehealth uses remote monitoring technologies, sometimes combining elements of both Store-and-Forward and Clinical Video Telehealth, to collect clinical information from Veterans for case management by their Care Coordinator.

New developments for VA's telehealth strategy include VA Video Connect (VVC), real-time telehealth technology that connects Veterans with their health care team from anywhere, and telehealth hubs, which allow VA to hire providers in urban areas to serve areas of the country with fewer specialty providers. Through telehealth hubs, VA can provide Veterans with rapid access to mental health or other services where local barriers may exist.

My HealtheVet

My HealtheVet (myhealth.va.gov) is VA's award-winning, patient-facing website. It offers Veterans, service members, their dependents and Caregivers anywhere, anytime access to VA health care information and services. My HealtheVet is a free, easy to use, private and secure online personal health record that empowers Veterans and service members to take charge of their health and well-being as active partners with their health care teams. With My HealtheVet, Veterans can use Secure Messaging to communicate about non-emergency matters with their VA care teams; review notes from their clinic visits; schedule and manage medical appointments online; refill VA prescriptions; record their diet, exercise and health history; and more.



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VHA Innovation Program

The VHA Innovation Program facilitates critical health care innovations that enable VA to provide the best possible care to Veterans. The program allows critical health care innovations to emerge from the field, evolve based on constructive and collaborative review, and be piloted in a safe harbor environment. The VHA Innovation Program works with the VA Center for Innovation (VACI) to increase VA's ability to provide the best care anywhere.

Several projects that originated within the VHA Innovation Program are now widely used in VHA.

Examples include:

- Rx Refill Tracking – A mobile app that allows Veterans to track the VA prescriptions mailed from the VA Mail Order Pharmacy through My Health^eVet.
- VA PUR (VA Pressure Ulcer Resource) – A mobile app designed to help Veterans and their Caregivers learn about preventing and taking care of existing pressure ulcers/injuries. This easy-to-use tool allows you to prevent, understand and track pressure ulcers/injuries.

VA Mobile

VA Mobile develops health apps for Veterans and VA care teams that increase access, communication and coordination of care for Veterans. The apps provide Veterans with increased opportunities to actively participate in their health care and lead healthier lives.

Some VA Mobile apps are informational and help Veterans track their own health information or manage chronic conditions, or they provide care teams with resources to address the needs of their patients.

Other apps connect to Veterans' medical records and help VA care teams and patients more easily access VA health records, share information and communicate between appointments, ultimately improving the health of Veterans by leveraging the power of mobile technology. VA's apps are available now from the VA App Store: mobile.va.gov/appstore.

For more information, visit

**connectedcare.va.gov or contact the
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