VHA Innovation Program eBook
Quarterly Portfolio
SPECIAL EDITION
MEET VA’S NEWEST EMPLOYEE INNOVATORS
VHA Innovation Program Recent Highlights

VHA 2016 Employee Innovation Competition Summary
This quarter’s eBook is all about this year’s Employee Innovation Competition (EIC). Employees submitted ideas via Idea House from June 29 through July 20. This year's competition featured three general topic areas and eight program-specific topics.

General topics included: innovative ideas to reduce or eliminate barriers for access to care for Veterans; innovative ideas for the identification, socialization, and/or diffusion of best practices; and innovation across the organization. Program-specific topics this year included improving the Veteran experience and increasing access to care specifically in the focus areas of patient safety, pharmacy, rural health, whole health and women’s health topics.

The Innovation Advisory Group (IAG), a board of subject matter experts from across the organization, narrowed the field of more than 2,000 submitted ideas to the top 100 ideas. The innovators/submitters responsible for the top 100 ideas drafted proposals using the same template, which provided more details about idea scope, potential reach, financial estimates and a timeline. After another review by the IAG board, 17 finalists were selected and the innovators were invited to a VA Innovator Boot Camp.

This eBook features a brief description of the projects from the VHA Innovation Class of 2016. Congratulations to the newest VHA innovators!
The 2016 VA Innovator Boot Camp took place in Nashville, Tennessee on September 20 and 21. Innovators met with subject matter experts to discuss their project in a roundtable setting. They also met with their VHA Innovation Program Innovation Coordinator, who will help guide them and manage their project throughout its lifecycle. Boot Camp is a fantastic time for innovators to get up to speed on how to implement innovation throughout VA and to interact with experienced topic area experts, other innovators, innovators from previous competitions and VHA Innovation Program staff.
2016 Employee Innovation Ideas and Innovators

Short Notice List
Darryl Lasker, Little Rock VA Medical Center (VAMC), Little Rock, AR

Will work to reduce wait times by filling from SHORT NOTICE list of patient volunteers, asked at time of original appointment. The list will allow patients who are willing to come in for an appointment with very little notice to be seen when an appointment time frees-up due to a no show or late cancellation.

Text/Email Reminders
Rebecca Halioua, Charlie Norwood VAMC, Augusta, GA

Will provide scheduled reminders to Veterans and patients in the form of text and/or email alerts to reduce appointment no-show rates, maintain prescription refills and increase annual exam attendance.

Chronic Heart Failure (CHF) Application
Lois Freeman, Baltimore VAMC, Baltimore, MD

Will develop an application (app) that educates congestive heart failure (CHF) patients on their disease process and the essential components of care. The goals of the app are to reduce the severity of exacerbations and cost related to that care and enable the CHF patient to be an active participant in their routine care.

VA Medication Labeling
Caren Haney, Fayetteville VAMC, Fayetteville, NC

Will provide larger fonts for VA medication labels. If a tablet must be split, the label “one-half tablet” on the medication bottle should be highlighted in red, using a slightly larger font. This is a simple fix that could potentially prevent a potentially life-threatening medication overdose.
Prescription (Rx) Refill Application
Bryan White, G.V. (Sonny) Montgomery, Jackson, MS

Will provide Veterans with a one-tap solution for refilling their prescriptions. VA patients will be able to simply scan the barcode on their prescription bottle and the Rx Refill app will send their request to a VA pharmacy refill kiosk. If a barcode is not available, Veterans will instead manually enter the Rx number into the app.

Prescription Refill Center
Dorothy Partlowe, Philadelphia VAMC, Philadelphia, PA

Will provide a refill center where patients may access My HealtheVet via computer or kiosk at their VAMC, or use a barcode scanning pathway to order prescription refills.

Telehealth Pharmacy Consult
Julia Yarkoni, Central Western Massachusetts Health Care System (HCS), Leeds, MA

Will provide an option for a telehealth consult for new/transferring patients with a clinical pharmacist for faster medication reconciliation and continuation. The consult would be ordered by the patient’s provider after the initial visit if the provider determines that the patient meets certain criteria that determine a higher complexity of treatment.

Electronic, Collaborative Hospital Medicine Specialty Expected Practices
Nicholas Shah, Sioux Falls VAMC, Sioux Falls, SD

Will provide a collaboration platform for clinical topics to be updated by hospitalists, which may reduce unnecessary variation in care delivery. “Expected practices” would document common, important inpatient medical conditions, resulting in more effective, efficient and equitable health care.

CPRS Data Collation-Decision-Support: SupraVistA
Stephen Farrow, Gulf Coast Veterans HCS, Biloxi, MS

Will automate certain tasks for a clinician using SupraVISTA’s automated clinical intelligence to ensure important clinical issues are brought to the provider’s attention and addressed at the point of care. The system also includes a tool suite, which will include keyword search, medical calculators, progress notes, and other features help enhance patient safety and quality-of-care.
Internet Based Cognitive Rehabilitation (CR)
Donald Labbe, Providence VAMC, Providence, RI
Will develop a website to provide CR where Veterans can access information online. Patients would be able to access and print specific CR strategies based on CogSmart, an evidence-based CR program developed for Veterans. Patients could also view videos about CR strategies delivered by a clinical neuropsychologist.

Streamlining Supplies between Pharmacy and Logistics
Shawn Hogan, Asheville VAMC, Asheville, NC
Will standardize the process and venue for which supplies are provided to patients regardless of their status as an inpatient or outpatient. Additionally, it will simplify the process of ordering, and remove unnecessary steps in the process of obtaining and providing supplies to patients. The goals are to provide consistency in product selection and therapy provided, equality in access to supplies and minimization of patient safety risks.

My Life, My Story
Thor Ringler, William S. Middleton Memorial Veterans Hospital, Madison, WI
Will incorporate Veterans’ stories into their electronic health record (EHR). The My Life, My Story project will train interviewers to talk to Veterans and ask them what they would like their VA care team to know about them. Interviewers will then draft a short story based on the interview and review it with the Veteran. The story will be added to the Veteran’s EHR and available to the Veteran’s care team to learn more about the Veteran’s history and story.

Advanced-Dated Self Alerts for Patient Safety and Provider Efficiency
Douglas McKee, Viera Outpatient Center, Melbourne, FL
Will allow a provider to generate a reminder alert that shows up at a specified future date. The timely reminders will enable providers to adhere to policy while enhancing patient safety.

Aquapheresis in an Outpatient Setting
Catherine Burns and Dennis Mclain, James A. Haley Veterans’ Hospital, Tampa, FL
Will work to decrease readmissions rates and length of hospital stay while improving quality of life by instituting an outpatient therapeutic Aquapheresis/IV diuretic program. Aquapheresis is a medical technology designed to remove excess salt and water from the body safely, predictably, and effectively from patients suffering from a condition called fluid overload.
Out Patient Integrated Rehab Activity (OPIRA)
Chris White, VA Maine HCS, Augusta, ME

Will address the functional impairments of Veterans diagnosed with chronic pain structured around a Pilates “Reformer” exercise protocol. In addition to practicing pain-free movement, the program will integrate multiple functional activities available to Veterans to include recreation therapy (adaptive sports, woodshop, etc.), a therapeutic pool, music and the gym.

Whole Health Groups at YMCAs Across the Country
Tim Doherty, Office of Patient Centered Care and Cultural Transformation

Will leverage an established community partnership between VA and YMCA to optimize Veterans’ health and well-being. To effectively support Veterans outside the traditional clinical visit, Veteran volunteers will be trained on facilitation of a Whole Health Group-based approach to conduct groups at local YMCA facilities. The groups will follow an educational format focused on health and wellness enhancement.

Rational Design/Optimization: Ordering Providers & Radiology
Mark Fister, Ralph H. Johnson VAMC, Charleston, SC

Will improve the efficiency of radiology-ordering providers with a four pronged approach:

- **Re-Name**: Uniformly, clearly and specifically rename “DEXA” and “NM Bone WB” from “density” and “scan”;
- **Re-Order**: ‘Tilting’ toward correct orders, listing exams by decreasing popularity and utilizing preference lists per department;
- **Re-Design**: Optimized GUI page when breadth of exams exceeds serial lists; and
- **Reinforce**: Implement best practices-pop-ups, comparison to departments and coaching.

Congratulations again to the VHA Innovator Boot Camp Class of 2016! Look for updates on the progress of these projects in the 2017 eBook editions.

*Looking for previous eBooks? Click here*

*Link only available on an internal VA intranet. If you would like previous eBooks, please email Allison.Amrhein@va.gov.*