ELECTRONIC HEALTH RECORD TRANSITION
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)

1. PATIENT PORTAL

QUESTION 1: What is My HealtheVet, and is it changing? If so, to what?

ANSWER: My HealtheVet is a web-based patient portal that gives veterans information and tools to manage their health care and improve their health. With the new electronic health record, Columbus veterans who currently use My HealtheVet will begin using a new patient portal called My VA Health for care they receive from the VA Central Ohio Healthcare System. My VA Health will have the same functionality as My HealtheVet, including the ability to request prescription refills and to message providers.

**Note: Veterans must continue to use the My HealtheVet patient portal to request online prescription refills or renewals for medications that are still active at other VA medical facilities not using the new EHR. The prescriptions from VA Medical facilities not using the new EHR will not be transferred to the VA Central Ohio Healthcare System.

QUESTION 2: I don’t use My HealtheVet, so how is this transition going to affect me? Do I need to sign up for an account?

ANSWER: If you do not currently use My HealtheVet to manage your care online, no action is needed on your part. You can still schedule appointments, renew prescriptions, and communicate with your providers via telephone just as you do now. (We do, however, encourage Veterans to sign up for My VA Health to have easier access to information, appointments, and communication with your health care team).

QUESTION 3: I order my prescriptions and make my doctor’s appointments over the telephone? Can I keep doing this, or do I need to sign up for a My HealtheVet account?

ANSWER: Yes. You can continue to order prescriptions and make appointments using the telephone. Prescription numbers generated in our previous system will continue to be recognized by our automated refill telephone line. You do not need to sign up for an account.
QUESTION 4: I already have a premium My HealtheVet account. Do I need to do anything to change that now or just wait for the new system to take effect?

ANSWER: No. If you currently have a premium account with multifactor authentication, then there is no action needed.

Additional information on multifactor authentication with VA.gov sites, including My HealtheVet, is available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t85bt7Pmlvg.

Instructions for anyone who doesn’t have a premium account and wishes to convert their account is at https://www.myhealth.va.gov/upgrading-your-my-healthevet-account-through-in-person-or-online-authentication.

QUESTION 5: Where can we go to learn how to use this new system?

ANSWER: Help is available by calling the Columbus VA help desk, M-F, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., at 614-257-5444, or the national My VA Health help desk at 888-444-6982 or 888-444-MYVA. Veterans also can come into the Chalmers P. Wylie VA, Mon. – Fri., 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., and go to the My VA Health area on the first floor (by the Canteen Store).

2. COMMUNITY CARE

QUESTION 6: Will this new system allow outside healthcare providers the ability to communicate directly with the VA and share medical records and other patient data?

ANSWER: The new system will allow more seamless transmission of information that you approve to have shared with other providers. Your information security continues to be the priority.

QUESTION 7: Will this system be available to non-VA medical providers to share health record information in the future?

ANSWER: Yes, approved community providers who are authorized to participate in your care will be allowed to review records from this system. The system will make it easier (and less paper intensive) to send information to your approved community providers.

QUESTION 8: How will this transition to the new electronic health record impact veterans who receive care in the community through community care?

ANSWER: The system should allow for easier sharing of your records with your community providers. Other than improving communication, it should not negatively impact the care you receive from community providers.
QUESTION 9: Will this new electronic health record allow the VA to approve prescriptions from outside care providers?

ANSWER: Yes, using the new electronic health record will allow VA pharmacists to review and approve prescriptions written by community providers when VA has previously approved the episode of care. For self-directed, non-VA approved care, patients can submit prescriptions to their VA providers for review, and if appropriate, the VA can fill those prescriptions, as well.

QUESTION 10: If we currently have an existing appointment with the VA, will we have to re-schedule them as a part of this change over?

ANSWER: No, you do not need to reschedule any existing appointments. We have been using the new scheduling system for almost two years and these appointments will be honored. If any changes to your appointments need to be made, we will contact you.

3. TRANSITION

QUESTION 11: Since I’m already in the current system, will the new system automatically pull my records to this new system?

ANSWER: Some of your information will be transitioned into the new system. Some of the information will be housed in a secure system available across VA called the Joint Longitudinal Viewer. There is nothing required of you to transfer or save your information.

QUESTION 12: Will this transition affect veterans who have already transitioned out of the military and will access to our medical records through DoD be easier or the same?

ANSWER: Yes. This will make it easier, since the DoD and VA are using the same system and data.

QUESTION 13: Will veterans have to go into their personal profile to make the change, or will they receive notification when it has happened?

ANSWER: No. Profile changes are needed to access the new My VA Health patient portal. However, we recommend veterans check their profile on VA.gov to ensure their information is correct and up to date. In addition, if you are a veteran or family member who receives health care or direct benefit payments from VA and have changed your legal name, you need to update your new name in DOD’s Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS) by sending a written or faxed request to the Defense Manpower Data Center (DMDC). Information can be faxed to 800-336-4416 or mailed to the Defense Manpower Data Center Support Office, 400 Gigling Road, Seaside, CA 93955-6771.

Questions? Call the DMDC at 800-538-9552 (TTY: 866-363-2883), M – F, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. ET (closed on federal holidays).
4. ONLINE ACCESS

QUESTION 14: If I don’t have access to a computer or the internet, will I still be able to make appointments, refill and renew prescriptions, and communicate with my health care providers?

ANSWER: Yes, you can still make appointments, renew prescriptions, and communicate with your provider team via telephone and in person.

QUESTION 15: I can’t sign on to the new system because my “computer is too old.” How can I fix this to ensure I get access?

ANSWER: Help is available by calling the Columbus VA My VA Health help desk, M-F, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., at 614-257-5444, or the national My VA Health help desk at 888-444-6982. Veterans also can also get assistance at the My VA Health center located on the first floor of the Chalmers P. Wylie VA. Hours of operation are M-F, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. No appointment needed.

QUESTION 16: I don’t have access to the internet, so is this new system going to work for me?

ANSWER: The only reason you would need internet access is to communicate through the My VA Health patient portal or schedule appointments online. You can still make appointments, renew prescriptions, and communicate with your providers using the telephone.

QUESTION 17: Will this new system make it easier for veterans to get access to their healthcare records, refill and renew prescriptions and contact their doctors while they are traveling?

ANSWER: The My VA Health patient portal associated with the new electronic health record system will provide a similar level of functionality as VA’s current My Health eVet portal in giving veterans access to their health records and prescription needs. The system should allow for improved communication with veterans as more VA facilities go live with the system in the coming years.

5. INFORMATION SECURITY

QUESTION 18: Does this system implement security measures to ensure that patient healthcare records and information are not compromised?

ANSWER: VA is committed to guarding the privacy and security of veteran information, and the EHR system is no exception. VA’s online patient portals are secure. VA follows strict security policies and practices to protect personal health information. Only veterans and their VA health care team will have access to this information. VA complies with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) and the HIPAA Privacy Rule and the Privacy Act of 1974. VA and Cerner used state-of-the-art and federally compliant safety measures to
migrate veteran data into the new EHR system, and VA personnel maintained constant supervision of the data throughout. Protecting Veteran health information is a top priority for VA. Cerner and VA have established a secure transfer process between legacy EHR system VistA and the Cerner data center that is compliant with national cybersecurity standards. The joint health information exchange (HIE) platform, which connects VA and DoD with participating community health care partners, also honors patient consent, and health records of patients who opt out of sharing their records will not be included in the joint HIE.