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Health IT Publisher Recognizes 11 Innovative VA Programs

WASHINGTON — Federal Health IT, a print and digital publication, will recognize 11 innovative, health-information technology (IT) programs within the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) at a June 6 award ceremony in Washington, D.C.

"When you think of life-changing innovations, you don't always think of VA first, but you should," said VA Secretary Dr. David J. Shulkin. "VA researchers and scientists are working behind the scenes to make life better for the nation's Veterans, knowing that the impact of their work is far-reaching. They don't do their work for recognition, but it gives us all great pride when their work is noticed."

Federal Health IT saluted VA for the following innovations:

Video Connect: With online medical appointment visits estimated to increase tenfold by 2018, VA's Veterans Health Administration (VHA) recently expanded its video telehealth capability, virtually connecting caregivers and patients in this successful program.

Annie: VA's Annie app provides short message service (SMS) text-messaging capability, which allows patients to receive appointment reminders, messages from the patient's local VA Medical Center, as well as health-monitoring prompts.

VA Mobile's Veteran Appointment Request App (VAR): VA is rolling out the VAR, which allows Veterans to self-schedule primary-care appointments and request assistance in booking primary care and mental health appointments at VA facilities.

Health Hub: Aimed at boosting the health and well-being of America's Veterans, Health Hub is a one-stop shop for all VA programs, with guides to programs that may complement Veterans' care or help them better manage chronic illnesses.

Emerging Health Technology Advancement Center (EHTAC): EHTAC is a lab environment used to conduct investigations of emerging technologies or trends that are expected to mature within the next five years. Currently, the efforts focus on leading VA interoperability trials and demonstrations.

Innovators Network, Veterans Affairs Center for Innovation: The VA Innovators Network program began in early 2015 and was shaped by and built in response to VA employees' desire for a more networked organization to accelerate the department's ability to serve Veterans and their families through innovation. The VA Innovators Network provides a mechanism for employees to see and solve problems at the facility level.

Continuous Readiness in Information Security Program (CRISP): CRISP focuses on maintaining a strong cybersecurity posture across all of VA, including protecting over 50,000 medical devices connected to VA networks via the Internet of Things (IoT) at over 1,400 locations.

MyVA Performance Management Dashboard: The MyVA Task Force led an effort to implement a new performance management structure to improve VA programs and strategic initiatives.

Enterprise Veterans Operations: VA has built a customer relationship management system (CRM) system that allows care providers to create a 360-degree view of a Veteran, integrating information from nine systems in real time.

VistA Intake: VistA Intake leverages software solutions created by developers outside VA's Office of Information & Technology (OI&T). Over 20 local, field and open-source innovations have been deployed in VA Medical Centers across the country to improve services to Veterans.

Veterans Benefits Management System: Veterans Benefits Management System is a multi-year technology solutions project to transition the Veterans Benefits Administration from a paper-intensive claims processing environment to a paperless-based one.

For information about VA innovations, visit https://www.research.va.gov/about/history.cfm.

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