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VA Secretary Announces VA Open Application Programming Interface Pledge

WASHINGTON — In a keynote speech March 9 at a Las Vegas conference that attracted more than 45,000 professionals from the health-information and technology communities, Secretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) David Shulkin encouraged health-care providers to sign a pledge to work with VA to accelerate the mapping of health data to industry standards, including the current and future versions of Fast Healthcare Interoperability Resources (FHIR).

Shulkin amplified his announcement of VA's Open [Application Programming Interface Pledge](#) (API), which commits that VA will provide API access to developers for Veteran-designated mobile and web-based apps, clinician-designated applications for those who serve them and Choice Act partners responsible for coordinating their care via "bulk" access.

As part of this commitment, VA also intends to make the "common clinical data set" available but will work on an initial roster of additional FHIR resources, including scheduling, questionnaire, clinical notes and patient encounters.

"We cannot do this alone," Shulkin told the audience at the annual [Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society \(HiMSS\) Conference in Las Vegas](#). "To be successful in this critical mission, VA will do our part, and we invite you to join us to accelerate the mapping of health data to industry standards, including the current and forthcoming versions of the argonaut spec of FHIR."

Further, Shulkin said, "We thank the health-care providers who have already signed this pledge, including University of Pittsburgh Medical Center, Mayo Clinic, Cleveland Clinic, Rush Health Systems, Geisinger Health System, Thomas Jefferson University Health, Fairview Health Services, Intermountain Healthcare and Partners HealthCare."

To join VA's Open API Pledge, visit <https://www.oit.va.gov/developer/> and click "join us."

During the weeklong HiMSS conference, VA officials also announced the launch of the "beta" version of [Lighthouse Lab](#), a computer platform offering software developers access to tools for creating mobile and web applications that will help Veterans better manage their care, services and benefits.

VA will begin building the Lighthouse Lab developer community. Participation will include helping to test APIs, building out documentation, developing governance standards and testing developer support workflows.

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