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News Release

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VEText system transforming VA's medical scheduling process

Text messaging improves access, reducing thousands of missed appointments

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) recently launched VEText, a text messaging appointment-reminder system, which to date has helped VA reduce no-show medical visits by more than 100,000.

VA introduced VEText in March and 138 VA facilities are currently using the automated interactive text-message system, which reminds Veterans of upcoming health-care appointments, allowing them easily to confirm or cancel the event.

“Every missed appointment represents a lost opportunity to provide faster access to care for a Veteran in need,” said VA’s Acting Secretary Peter O’Rourke. “VEText underscores VA’s commitment to digital modernization and represents a milestone in putting more user-friendly capabilities in the hands of Veterans and our employees.”

According to the Veterans Health Administration’s (VHA) Office of Veterans Access to Care, as of July 9, more than 3.24 million patients have received VEText messages and canceled 319,504 appointments, freeing up time slots for other Veterans to use.

Veterans who have previously used the VA health-care system — with a cell phone number listed in their electronic health records — are automatically enrolled in VEText. Veterans can update their phone numbers during the check-in or check-out process for an appointment, at any kiosk.

VEText is integrated with VA’s electronic health-records system and does not require manual action by VA staff. Appointments are automatically scheduled and canceled via text message, freeing staff to provide more personalized care to Veterans.

“VEText has changed the way we communicate with our Veteran patients,” said John Ullyot, VA Assistant Secretary for Public and Intergovernmental Affairs. “Veterans appreciate the convenient, user-friendly system and understand this technology not only helps them, but their fellow Veterans as well.”

For more information about VEText, visit: <https://www.va.gov/HEALTH/VEText.asp>.

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