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VA launches groundbreaking training program to fully leverage new electronic health record solution

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) recently launched an innovative new training program to support its electronic health record modernization (EHRM) effort that, as of Sept. 12, had selected 76 trainees who have begun projects that address real-world VA health care challenges.

Leveraging the experiences of the Department of Defense's (DOD) current EHR rollout, VA developed the [VA Innovative Technology Advancement Lab \(VITAL\)](#) training program, recognizing the importance of providing advanced training to selected end users who will support continuous performance improvement.

"VA established VITAL to specially train staff who can identify possible challenges and work across the entire VA organization to make improvements," said VA Secretary Robert Wilkie. "VITAL is an important component in our larger training strategy, which will help ensure efficient and timely user adoption of the modernized EHR system."

The new EHR solution will be the single source of Veteran health information. Its advancements will allow users who solve a problem at one facility to share the solution with other facilities in near real-time. The VITAL program, a 12-18-month training series, develops both the technical and supporting change management skills necessary to drive greater efficiency and effectiveness in all aspects of Veteran health care.

VA identified key clinical and frontline staff who require advanced training to ensure smooth EHR modernization implementation, enhance functionality and support continuous performance improvement.

In May 2018, VA awarded Cerner Corp. a contract to replace the department's legacy patient record systems with the commercial-off-the-shelf solution currently being deployed by DOD. A single interoperable solution across VA and DOD will facilitate the secure transfer of active-duty service members' health data as they transition to Veteran status. This modernization effort will create a lifetime of seamless care for service members and Veterans.

For more information about VA's Electronic Health Record Modernization program, visit www.ehrm.va.gov.

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