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VA improves information sharing with community care providers

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) will implement new procedures by January 2020, for sharing medical information for Veterans accessing [health care in the community](#).

The department is changing its procedures for electronic health information sharing in accordance with Section 132 of the VA Maintaining Internal Systems and Strengthening Integrated Outside Networks Act of 2018 ([MISSION Act](#)).

“The MISSION Act gives Veterans greater access to care, whether at VA facilities or in the community,” said VA Secretary Robert Wilkie. “We are providing seamless access to care, improving efficiency and helping to ensure Veterans get the care they need, where and when they need it.”

The change moves VA from an ‘opt-in’ to an ‘opt-out’ model of electronic health information sharing. Veterans will no longer be required to provide signed, written authorization for VA to release electronic health information to community providers for the purposes of receiving medical treatment.

VA shares health information with community providers using a secure and safe electronic system called the [Veterans Health Information Exchange](#). This electronic exchange of information improves patient safety — particularly during emergency situations — and allows for improved care coordination for Veterans receiving care in the community.

Veterans who do not want their health information shared electronically can opt out by submitting [VA Form 10-10164](#) (opt out of sharing) to the Release of Information Office at the nearest VA medical center now or at any time going forward. Veterans who previously opted out on VA Form 10-0484 prior to Sept. 30, do not need to submit new forms. However, Veterans who restricted what information VA shared by submitting [VA Form 10-0525](#) (restriction request) will need to opt out entirely by submitting Form 10-10164.

VA is committed to protecting Veteran privacy. Only community health care providers and organizations that have partnership agreements with VA and are part of VA’s approved, trusted network may receive VA health information.

For information about VA’s health information exchange visit www.va.gov/vler.

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