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VA adopts new artificial intelligence strategy to ensure trustworthy use of technology for Veteran care

WASHINGTON — As part of the Department of Veterans Affairs' efforts to explore the use of artificial intelligence in the delivery of health care and benefits, VA implemented a new AI strategy late September, to serve as a guideline for ethical use of the technology throughout its enterprise.

While AI can offer advantages over traditional analytics and clinical decision-making techniques to help improve Veteran care, the department wants to ensure any implementation of the technology is trustworthy and protects Veteran information.

"VA understands the significance of creating a balance between innovation, safety and trust," said VA National Artificial Intelligence Institute Director Gil Alterovitz, Ph.D. "To this end, VA leadership, practitioners and relevant end-users will be trained to ensure all AI-related activities and processes are ethical, legal and meet or exceed standards."

Aligned with the mission of serving Veterans and benefiting from VA's unique data infrastructure, the strategy is designed to deliver on four major strategic objectives:

- Use existing AI to improve outcomes and experiences for Veterans.
- Increase VA AI capacity and capabilities.
- Increase Veteran and stakeholder trust in AI.
- Build upon VA's existing partnerships across agencies and industry.

"AI has the capability to transform how our Veterans access the critical care they need," said National AI Initiative Office Director Lynne Parker, Ph. D., with the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy. "VA's new roadmap will help realize AI's full potential building trust in future technology and creating more effective, efficient systems for patients."

The development of the comprehensive AI strategy was designed in support of executive orders on AI, National AI Research and Development Strategic Plan and aligns with the National Artificial Intelligence Initiative Act of 2020 that launched the NAIIO.

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