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VA announces reset of Electronic Health Record project

WASHINGTON — Today, the Department of Veterans Affairs announced that future deployments of the new Electronic Health Record (EHR) will be halted while we prioritize improvements at the five sites that currently use the new EHR, as part of a larger program reset.

During this reset, VA will fix the issues with the EHR that were identified during the recent "assess and address" period, continue to listen to Veterans and clinicians about their experience with the EHR, and redirect resources to focus on optimizing the EHR at the sites where it is currently in use: Spokane VA Health Care System, VA Walla Walla Health Care, Roseburg VA Health Care System, VA Southern Oregon Health Care, and VA Central Ohio Health Care System.

Additional deployments will not be scheduled until VA is confident that the new EHR is highly functioning at current sites and ready to deliver for Veterans and VA clinicians at future sites. This readiness will be demonstrated by clear improvements in the clinician and Veteran experience; sustained high performance and high reliability of the system itself; improved levels of productivity at the sites where the EHR is in use; and more. When these criteria have been met and the reset period concludes, VA will release a new deployment schedule and re-start deployment activities.

This new, modernized EHR will meaningfully improve Veterans' health outcomes and benefits decisions, and VA remains committed to successfully implementing it across America.

"We've heard from Veterans and VA clinicians that the new electronic health record is not meeting expectations – and we're holding Oracle Cerner and ourselves accountable to get this right," said **VA Secretary Denis McDonough**. "This reset period will allow us to focus on fixing what's wrong, listening to those we serve, and laying the foundation for a modern electronic health record that delivers for Veterans and clinicians."

"For the past few years, we've tried to fix this plane while flying it – and that hasn't delivered the results that Veterans or our staff deserve," said **Dr. Neil Evans, Acting Program Executive Director, Electronic Health Record Modernization Integration Office.** "This reset changes that. We are going to take the time necessary to get this right for Veterans and VA clinicians alike, and that means focusing our resources solely on improving the EHR at the sites where it is currently in use, and improving its fit for VA more broadly. In doing so, we will enhance the EHR for both current and future users, paving the way for successful future deployments."

This reset follows an extended pause in deployments that began in July 2022, culminating in an "assess and address" period that identified a lengthy list of necessary fixes. VA has already begun to work through these and other issues and will work closely with Oracle Cerner to address all remaining issues.

VA and Oracle Cerner are currently working toward an amended contract that will increase Oracle Cerner's accountability to deliver a high-functioning, high-reliability, world-class EHR system. Also, as part of the re-set, VA will work with Congress on resource requirements. VA estimates FY 2023 costs will be reduced by $400 million.

The only exception to the full-stop on deployment activities is the Captain James A. Lovell Federal Health Care Center in Chicago – which is the only fully-integrated VA and Department of Defense health care system – where the new EHR is scheduled to go-live in March 2024. To ensure that all Veterans and service members who visit this facility are covered by one EHR system, deployment activities for this facility, in partnership with DoD and the Federal Electronic Health Record Modernization Office, will continue as planned and leverage the improvements made during the reset.

The modernized EHR will replace VA's current Veterans Health Information Systems and Technology Architecture (VistA) to document and support all aspects of Veteran health care. For more information about VA's overall EHR modernization effort, visit https://www.ehrm.va.gov/.

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