



Department of Defense and Department of Veterans Affairs *Good News*



Volume 2 Issue 3

Welcome to Good News. This Department of Defense (DoD) and Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) newsletter highlights the accomplishments and sharing activities at both the local and national levels.

Las Vegas Joint Venture Earns Air Force Medical Service Hospital Safety Award

The Michael O'Callaghan Federal Hospital (MOFH) in Las Vegas, NV received the 2008 Air Force (AF) Medical Service Hospital Patient Safety Award. The honor was achieved through AF and VA patient safety teamwork and initiatives. Some of the successes included revitalizing the AF/VA Patient Safety Work Group that implemented and audited compliance with the 2008 National Patient Safety Goals; conducting eight Root Cause Analyses that resulted in corrective steps that were communicated throughout AF and VA facilities; assisting with the Las Vegas Hepatitis C investigation, the largest in U.S. history, where 55,000 patients were notified and/or tested; and initiating Methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA) surveillance on admission, which decreased the MRSA infection rate by 37.5%. All 1,083 AF and VA MOFH employees benefitted from the great work of a dedicated Patient Safety Team.

Joint Success in Action: North Chicago's Integrated Healthcare Facility In-Service and Orientation Training Program

The VA/DoD Health Executive Council Continuing Education and Training Work Group has been breaking new ground in its efforts to facilitate and support a comprehensive leadership, management and staff training program for the Captain James A. Lovell Federal Health Care Center (FHCC) in North Chicago. This project will not only provide training for the leadership, management and staff of the first fully integrated VA/DoD healthcare facility, but will also be available to be deployed to VA/DoD joint venture healthcare facilities. This collaborative effort has resulted in the design and development of a three module training program that maximizes training efficiency while minimizing the use of staff resources and time away from work. The program incorporates two multi-episode distance learning training modules and an on-site face-to-face orientation program. As a result, all new employees at the FHCC will receive a suite of web based pre-arrival training to prepare them to hit the ground running upon arrival at the facility. New employees will then receive a standardized on-site face-to-face orientation program to assure familiarity with the site, its mission, vision and its operating procedures. Lastly, all new staff will receive a suite of web based distance learning training that will serve to meet training requirements and to assure that employees are fully trained to carry out their role in fulfilling the mission of the facility. This "on-going training" will be repeated as a refresher

course for all staff each year. By the third quarter of Fiscal Year 2009, it is expected that the three training modules (pre-arrival, orientation and on-going) will be fully operational at the FHCC. Once this training program is fully operational, the VA portion of the pre-arrival and on-going training modules will be offered to all VA healthcare facilities for use in training their staff. Additionally, the complete program, including DoD modules appropriately modified for each Military Department, will be offered to all of the VA/DoD joint venture sites to provide training to their staff. This project has the potential to increase the quality of staff in-service training and to reduce the use of local resources and time lost from work for training system wide within VA and at all of the VA/DoD joint venture and integrated sites.

New Interagency Program Office Off to a Successful Start

During the last year, the DoD/VA Interagency Program Office (IPO) was formed as the single point of accountability for the rapid development and implementation of electronic health record (EHR) systems and capabilities, as mandated by Section 1635 of the *National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008*. At the direction of the Wounded, Ill, and Injured Senior Oversight Committee, the IPO expanded their original focus to include electronic data sharing of personnel and benefits information. The IPO stood up in April 2008 and within just two months was delivering high-level schedules and milestones to Congress and the Government Accountability Office. For the remainder of 2008, the quick pace continued with the Joint DoD/VA Information Interoperability Plan written and delivered to Congress along with the *Joint Report to Congress, 2008 Activities of the DoD and VA IPO*. The IPO finished the year on a high note with the DoD Delegation of Authority Memorandum, *Establishment of the Department of Defense/Veterans Affairs Interagency Program Office within the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness* signed on December 30, 2008. The signing of the IPO Charter in January 2009 has begun what appears to be another fast paced year as the Departments continue toward the goal of fully interoperable EHRs for the provision of clinical care between DoD and VA by September 2009.

DoD and VA Recognize Innovative Healthcare Manufacturers for Excellence in Supply Chain Data Quality

DoD and VA have recognized seven medical/surgical manufacturers for contributing to the success of the Departments' joint internal data synchronization program. Through this program, which includes manufacturer contributions of clean, synchronized data, DoD and VA have been able to save more than \$32 million to date through product price reductions, including \$11 million in 2008 alone. The manufacturers will receive the 2008 DoD/VA Award for Healthcare Product Data Quality in two esteemed categories:

- Champion -- for manufacturers that meet the most stringent criteria. The 2008 Champions are **BD (formerly known as Becton, Dickinson and Company)** and **Sage Products, Inc.**
- Leader -- for manufacturers that meet data quality requirements at the item level – including coverage, completeness of packaging and frequency of updates. The 2008 Leaders are: **Cardinal Health, Medegen, Propper Manufacturing Company, Retractable Technologies, Inc.,** and **3M.**

Winners were selected based on multiple criteria that measure the breadth, quality and frequency of product data submitted in support of the DoD/VA internal data synchronization program and pilot DoD/VA Product Data Utility — a single source of true, synchronized product information in the federal healthcare supply chain. Data fields evaluated included those that are most needed for efficient supply chain interactions, such as packaging levels and product descriptions.

For questions please contact the appropriate point of contact below.

Mr. Curtis Kimble

Army Medical Department DoD/VA
Healthcare Resources Sharing Program
703.681.2708
Curtis.Kimble1@us.army.mil

Ms. Betty Ruschmeier

Director, VA/DoD Liaison and Sharing Office
Veterans Health Administration
202-461-6534
Elizabeth.Ruschmeier@va.gov

Ms. Tamara L. Rollins

DoD/VA Program Manager
Bureau of Medicine and Surgery
202-762-3520
Tamara.Rollins@med.navy.mil

Ms. Maura Brady

Communications, DoD/VA Program
Coordination Office
TRICARE Management Activity/Health Affairs
Department of Defense
703-681-4258
maura.brady.ctr@tma.osd.mil

Ms. Debra Irwin, DAFC

Chief, DoD/VA Resource Sharing
Deputy Director, Medical Support Panel
AFMSA/SG3S
703-558-6658
debra.irwin@pentagon.af.mil

If you have any good news stories and or accomplishments from your local teams, please send them to Maura Brady at maura.brady.ctr@tma.osd.mil and your stories may be included in a future issue of the newsletter.

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