MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE AND THE VETERANS ADMINISTRATION

SUBJECT: Department of Defense/Veterans Administration Medical Information Resource Sharing

I. PURPOSE: In furtherance of Public Law 97-174 this memorandum is intended to encourage sharing by establishing a structured forum to jointly consider and implement medical information resources management and information sharing interagency agreements between the Department of Defense (DoD) and the Veterans Administration (VA) in the areas of data exchange/sharing, system architecture/planning, technology/innovation evaluation, system interoperability, and data communications. Agreements will be negotiated and monitored pursuant to the "VA/DoD Health Care Resources Sharing Guidelines" and the provisions of this memorandum, and will pertain to agency-wide and system-wide technical and administrative policies, as well as to individual system or site activities.

II. BACKGROUND: The VA and DoD medical facilities have executed numerous local medical resource sharing agreements under P.L. 97-174 and the "VA/DoD Health Care Resources Sharing Guidelines." The VA and DoD agree that the VA/DoD Health Care Resources Sharing Committee is in need of an operational council to direct medical information resource management agreements. At present these agreements are initiated and implemented by different organizational elements. A single point of contact is needed in both agencies to serve as a focal point for coordination of all agreements to ensure that the sharing of information resources will be managed in an efficient and cost effective manner.

III. POLICY: An Information Resources Sharing Executive Coordinating Council will meet quarterly to address information resource sharing initiatives and issues. The Council will include representatives from the Office of the Director, Defense Medical Systems Support Center (DMSSC) and the Office of the Director, Medical Information Resources Management Office (MIRMO), as well as other attendees appropriate to the issues to be discussed. The Council may create working groups as necessary to pursue specific topics and initiatives. The Director, DMSSC and Director, MIRMO will oversee the Council, approve specific information resource sharing initiatives and agreements, and serve as the principal points of contact on medical information resource management and information sharing for activities within

the purview of this memorandum of understanding. They will advise the VA/DoD Health Care Resources Sharing Committee Chairpersons, the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Health Affairs) and the Chief Medical Director of the VA on the status of actions proposed and taken.

IV. AUTHORITY: This memorandum of understanding is entered into pursuant to Section 3 of Public Law 97-174 (1982) (codified at 38 United States Code 5011), and the memorandum of understanding between the VA and the DoD entitled the "VA/DoD Health Care Resource Sharing Guidelines."

V. DURATION: This agreement will remain in force unless terminated at the request of either party after 30 days notice in writing.

VI. RESPONSIBILITIES: The Chief Medical Director of the VA and the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Health Affairs) will make personnel available to serve on the Council and any working groups as necessary. The Director, MIRMO and the Director, DMSSC or their designees will oversee the activities of the Council, ensure adherence to the "VA/DoD Health Care Resources Sharing Guidelines," and approve resource commitments to specific initiatives prior to implementation. Members of the Council will be responsible for ensuring adherence to established schedules, resolving problems, and ensuring coordination of plans with both DoD and VA.

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