



Message from Leadership

Welcome to the third edition of the Department of Defense/Department of Veterans Affairs (DoD/VA) Interagency Program Office (IPO) bulletin, *The IPO Bridge*. As we begin FY17, we look forward to building on last year's achievements, collaborating with our partners in health, and enhancing health data interoperability to ensure our beneficiaries continue to receive top quality care. Inside this edition, you will discover updates on our recent accomplishments, external engagements, and continued efforts to ensure the seamless integration of health data between the Departments and their private partners. If you have feedback or questions, please contact dha.ncr.peo-ipo.mbx.ipo@mail.mil.



Lauren C. Thompson, Ph.D.,
Director, DoD/VA IPO



Steven G. Schliesman,
Deputy Director, DoD/VA IPO

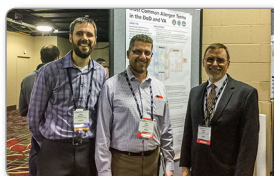
AFCEA Health IT Day 2016

In October, the IPO participated in the annual Health IT Day hosted by the Bethesda, Maryland chapter of the Armed Forces Communications and Electronics Association. This organization facilitates the collaboration of military, government, and industry to discuss initiatives in civilian and military health. This year's event, "Transformation and Innovation Fueled by Analytics, Cybersecurity and Digital Services," brought together more than 700 government and industry professionals to participate in keynote presentations, panel discussions, and breakout sessions on the initiatives, trends, and challenges related to innovation. Dr. Thompson, Director of the IPO, Mr. Schliesman, Deputy Director of the IPO, and U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps CAPT Veronica Gordon, Director of the IPO's Metrics & Analytics Division, participated in panel discussions on the DoD and VA's recent interoperability advancements, data-driven initiatives, and foreseeable challenges. Click [here](#) to learn more.



2016 AMIA Annual Symposium

In November, IPO representatives attended the 2016 American Medical Informatics Association (AMIA) Annual Symposium, presenting their research on the most common allergen terms in the DoD and VA's electronic health records. The team began their research to improve semantic interoperability (i.e., the ability of computer systems to exchange data with a shared meaning) for drug-allergen clinical decision support. The AMIA event facilitated the sharing of scientific discovery and best practices and featured abstract presentations and panel discussions, which resulted in opportunities for collaboration with informatics researchers, practitioners, and medical professionals. Click [here](#) to learn more.



IPO's Interagency Coordination Division

The IPO's Interagency Coordination Division provides configuration management for health data interoperability between the



DoD and VA. To achieve this goal, the IPO regularly schedules demonstrations of the Departments' products and systems. Most recently, the Division held several presentations including, "Improving DoD and VA Care Coordination," focusing on the collection of care services available across the Departments; "The Electronic Health Record," providing an overview of AHLTA, Essentris®, and the Joint Legacy Viewer; "The Bi-Directional Health Information Exchange,"

IPO's Innovation & Engagement Division

Destination Innovation

The IPO's Innovation & Engagement Division continues their dialogue with national health IT leaders to research emerging health data interoperability trends. In September, the team met with the University of Michigan's Institute for Healthcare Policy & Innovation staff to discuss ideas regarding medical device interoperability, mobile security, and patient engagement, as well as attend the Midwest Workshop on Big Neuroscience Data, Tools, Protocols, and Services.

The team then proceeded to California to meet with the DoD's Defense Innovation Unit Experimental (DIUx) staff, a DoD initiative to connect with technology sources outside of the U.S. military. DIUx also works with the U.S. Army's Program Executive Office Soldier on ideas related to wearable devices that could electronically interface with patient health records. "The IPO's engagement with DIUx will assist in our progress with cyber security for medical devices, wearable technology, and systems interoperability," stated U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps CAPT Hung Trinh, Director of the IPO's Innovation & Engagement Division.



focusing on the network's identification of contrasting interfaces; and "The Clinical Architecture's Symedical," demonstrating system operations that highlight the capabilities of information content, terminology mapping, and the monitoring of system updates to national standards. These demonstrations enabled the participants to understand the Departments' continued efforts to collaborate and improve patient care for our beneficiaries.

ONC Updates

Interoperability Standards Advisory

The Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology's (ONC) Interoperability Standards Advisory (ISA) outlines the ONC's coordination of interoperability standards and implementation specifications used by industry to fulfill definitive clinical health IT interoperability needs. The 2017 ISA incorporated feedback from public comments on the 2016 ISA, observations from the ISA Task Force, discussions from the Health IT Standards Committee, as well as comments from the IPO, the Defense Health Agency, and VA. The most significant updates to the 2017 ISA include the transition of the material to an interactive, web-based resource that enables constant improvements through commentary from the implementation community, though a stand-alone version of the ISA will be used for an annual review. The 2017 ISA also discontinues use of the term "best available," which formerly described a standard in widespread use or required by regulation. Click [here](#) to learn more.

IPO Welcomes New ONC Liaison

The IPO welcomes Ms. Yvonne Cole-Clingerman, the Standards & Technology Division Deputy of the IPO, as the new ONC Liaison! The IPO closely collaborates with the ONC to facilitate knowledge sharing and to mature data, standards, and interoperability on national and international levels. Ms. Cole-Clingerman serves as the intermediary between the IPO and ONC to provide cross-organizational specialized services and resources. She supports the IPO's mission to lead and coordinate the Departments' adoption of and contribution to national health data standards to ensure seamless integration of health data between the DoD, VA, and private healthcare providers.

The Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology

Calendar of Events



DECEMBER

- 12-14** HIMSS Connected Health Conference
- 12-15** Driving Quality Improvement Collaborative
- 14** Joint Executive Committee Meeting
- 14-15** HHS Healthcare Industry Cybersecurity Taskforce Meeting
- 15** HIDS Work Group

JANUARY

- 14-20** HL7 Work Group Meeting
- 17** FY17 Q2 DoD/VA IPO EXCOM
- 25** FHA Metrics Summit
- HIEA JSC Quarterly Meeting

FEBRUARY

- 16** ATARC Federal Cloud Computing Summit
- 19-23** HIMSS Annual Conference

DoD/VA Industry Interoperability Roundtable

Interoperability Opportunities

In October, the IPO and Program Executive Office, Defense Healthcare Management Systems (PEO DHMS) held the DoD/VA Industry Interoperability Roundtable, "Interoperability Opportunities." The event featured speakers from the DoD, VA, ONC, and partner organizations and highlighted interoperability from the patient's perspective and address challenges to transform healthcare delivery. Ms. Stacy Cummings, Program Executive Officer of PEO DHMS, Dr. Thompson, Director of the IPO, and Mr. Schliesman, Deputy Director of the IPO, emphasized the importance of collaboration with industry partners to serve the needs of service members, veterans, and their families.



As Mr. Frank Kendall, the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics noted, "... the DoD/VA Industry Interoperability Roundtable offers a tremendous opportunity for dialogue across the Health IT community and promotes connectivity between patient, provider, and health record." Ms. LaVerne Council, the VA's Assistant Secretary for Information and Technology and Chief Information Officer for the Office of Information and Technology stated, "... the VA's contribution in the DoD/VA Industry Interoperability Roundtable discussions is a critical component in ensuring the highest level of service across the entire continuum of care."

IPO's Metrics & Analytics Division

Proof of Concept Study: Hemoglobin A1C

In FY16, the IPO's Metrics & Analytics Division led a pilot study to develop a metric based on clinical outcomes to help quantify the benefits of interoperability between the DoD and VA healthcare systems. To achieve this goal, the enterprise data repositories of the Departments were queried for hemoglobin A1C results, diagnoses, and data regarding the measurements of the size and proportions of the human body. The availability of shared data was positively associated with fewer redundant A1C screening tests. This suggests clinicians view and use shared data to improve adherence to diabetes screening guidelines. This proof of concept showed a repeatable process for generating and testing new outcome-oriented metrics between the DoD and VA healthcare systems.



Health Interoperability and Exchange Alliance

FHIR Proving Ground Phase 2

In July, the IPO's Standards & Technology Division, along with the DoD and VA, kicked off Phase 2 of the Fast Healthcare Interoperability Resources (FHIR) Proving Ground (FPG) Joint Exploratory Team. FPG establishes a development and testing environment to coordinate the implementation of Health Level Seven International's emerging FHIR standard across the Departments. The goals of Phase 2 are to map additional data domains to FHIR resources, align the DoD and VA's implementations with guidance from the Argonaut Project, and begin open testing with the Departments and external partners. The objective of this initiative is to have consistent, semantically interoperable implementations of FHIR, positioning the Departments for efficient data integration for a seamlessly integrated electronic health record.



Meet Our Staff – Christopher Hills



Mr. Christopher Hills, IPO Engagement Lead within the Innovation & Engagement Division, is responsible for facilitating key engagements with various partners. While consistently interacting with external stakeholders, Mr. Hills displays a charismatic and professional demeanor that reflects positively on the IPO and PEO DHMS. In this quarter, Mr. Hills led three successful DoD/VA IPO Town Hall meetings and DoD/VA Industry Interoperability Roundtables, thus delivering work that exceeds normal expectations. *Great job, Mr. Hills!*



If you would like to contribute to *The IPO Bridge*, please contact dha.ncr.peo-ipo.mbx.ipo@mail.mil.