



Message from Leadership

Welcome to the fifth edition of the Department of Defense (DoD)/Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Interagency Program Office's (IPO) quarterly bulletin, *The IPO Bridge*! Inside this edition, we welcome Mr. John Short as our Acting Deputy Director, highlight our external engagements, and share progress in enhancing health data interoperability to improve the care of service members, veterans, and their families. We also showcase our recent interagency activities and accomplishments, which directly align with our current and future priorities and milestones established by the IPO Executive Committees. Lastly, please join us in congratulating Mr. Kenneth Blount, one of IPO's Project Managers, as a recipient of the 2017 DoD National Capital Area Public Service Recognition Week "Spirit of Service" Recognition.



Thank you for your continued support as we collaborate on health data sharing and interoperability. We look forward to sharing our progress in advancing interoperability among the DoD, VA, and private sector 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



John Short
Acting Deputy Director, DoD/VA IPO

2017 Future Military & Government EHR & HIT Symposium

In April, Dr. Thompson and Mr. Lance Scott, Program Manager of the Defense Medical Information Exchange Program, participated at the 2017 Future Military & Government Electronics Health Records (EHRs) & Health Information Technology (HIT) Symposium. This year's event brought together experts from the military, federal government, and industry to discuss EHRs, as well as emerging technologies to improve healthcare. During Dr. Thompson's opening keynote session, she specifically highlighted the DoD and VA's ongoing efforts to enhance interoperability between the two Departments and their private partners. Mr. Scott emphasized recent accomplishments of the Joint Legacy Viewer and the importance of the continued collaborations with the DoD to achieve world-class healthcare for our beneficiaries. Click [here](#) to learn more.



IPO's Joint Program Synchronization Workshop

This quarter, the IPO kicked off the Health Data Sharing Business Lines' (HDS BL) quarterly Joint Program Synchronization Workshop to facilitate senior level discussions on the Departments' interoperability challenges.

The first workshop, held for two days in February, featured senior leadership from the Defense Health Agency, Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology (ONC), VA, IPO, and opening remarks from Dr. Thompson and Mr. Charles Hume, HDS BL Co-Chair and Acting Assistant Deputy



Under Secretary for Health for Informatics and Analytics within the Veterans Health Administration. The workshop also featured a discussion on the synchronization of the delivery of integrated capabilities to clinicians, health data sharing activities, and outcomes of the Departments and IPO.

Highlights from the event included plans to modernize the EHR platforms, updates to the VA's EHR Modernization Plan, and progress with advancing interdepartmental health information exchange solutions and requirements.

Welcome Back!

The IPO welcomes Mr. John Short as he returns to the organization as our Acting Deputy Director, bringing a wealth of knowledge and expertise in health data interoperability. Prior to assuming this role, Mr. Short served as the Strategic Program Manager and Special Advisor to the Assistant Secretary for Information Technology and Chief Information Officer at the VA and the Program Executive for VistA Evolution. Lastly, we recognize Mr. Steven Schliesman for his efforts as Deputy Director of the IPO. We wish him the best in his future endeavors.

DoD/VA Industry Interoperability Roundtable

In May, the IPO held the DoD/VA Industry Interoperability Roundtable, "Care Anywhere: Bridging the Gap between Care and Quality." The semi-annual event featured speakers from the DoD, VA, ONC, and industry organizations. Highlights included updates from each program office of the Program Executive Office Defense Healthcare Management Systems, a panel discussion on Substitutable Medical Applications and Reusable Technology on Fast Healthcare Interoperability Resources, as well as the ongoing influence of interoperability on the delivery of quality patient care. Dr. Thompson and Mr. Short both emphasized the need for continued collaboration with the Departments and external partners to service the unique needs of our deserving beneficiaries, while Ms. Stacy Cummings, Program Executive Officer of PEO DHMS, provided closing remarks. The next DoD/VA IPO Roundtable event is scheduled for November 2017.



Town Hall: Carequality & CommonWell Alliance

In April, the IPO hosted a Town Hall meeting, focusing on the alliance between CommonWell Health Alliance (CWAHA) and the Sequoia Project's Carequality Interoperability Framework. CommonWell offers members interoperability services to enable data sharing between healthcare organizations. The Sequoia Project works to address the challenges of secure, interoperable nationwide health information exchange through their Carequality Interoperability Framework initiative, providing a technical and legal foundation to accelerate health data sharing throughout the nation. The Town Hall featured presentations from both the CWAHA and the Sequoia Project and fostered collaborative discussion across IPO, PEO DHMS, DoD, and VA.



"Take Our Daughters and Sons to Work" Day

In April, the IPO, along with other program management offices of PEO DHMS, hosted activities in honor of 2017 "Take Our Daughters and Sons To Work" Day. Originally founded by Gloria Steinem and the Ms. Foundation for Women in 1993, PEO DHMS participated in the event by allowing staff to share their daily activities as part of the organization with their children. The IPO hosted a coloring activity, an office scavenger hunt, as well as a special presentation by Dr. Norman Stone, one of IPO's Co-Chair Chief Medical Informatics Officers, who shared an x-ray and brief lesson on a fracture. Click [here](#) for more information on the event.



Calendar of Events



JUNE

- 13-14** HDS BL Joint Program Synchronization Workshop
- 19** Monthly Senior Leadership Interoperability Meeting
- 21** JEC Interoperability Update

JULY

- 17** Monthly Senior Leadership Interoperability Meeting
- 18** IPO/ONC Meet N Greet
- 25-27** DHITS Conference

AUGUST

- 27-30** MHS Research Symposium
- 31** DoD/VA IPO EXCOM Brief

HHS Cybersecurity Task Force & IPO's JET

In 2015, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) created the Healthcare Industry Cybersecurity Task Force, composed of government and industry healthcare and cybersecurity experts to study the challenges of the healthcare and public health sector and report to Congress.

With Dr. Thompson as a representative on the task force, the IPO established the Cybersecurity Best Practices Joint Exploratory Team (JET) to identify healthcare cybersecurity practices used by DoD and VA and progressive industry healthcare providers. The JET focuses on defending against cyberattacks, securing network medical devices and EHRs, and sharing best cybersecurity practices across the healthcare and public health sector. Click [here](#) for more information on the Healthcare Industry Cybersecurity Task Force.



GITEC Panel – Internet of Things

In April, CAPT Hung Trinh, co-lead and chief engineer of the IPO's Interagency Coordination Division, participated in a health IT panel discussion on the Internet of Things (IoT) in healthcare with federal representatives from HHS, the Department of Commerce and the VA, at the Government Information Technology Executive Council (GITEC) Summit in Annapolis, MD. Key topics included IoT medical device advancements, improving access to care and health outcomes, and the expansion of the next generation of Connected Care. CAPT Trinh shared progress on the "smart technologies" in mobile health security, medical device interoperability, as well as emerging trends in precision medicine and telehealth. The panel also discussed health data standards for connectivity and interoperability and cybersecurity challenges for new devices. Click [here](#) to learn more.



2017 DHS Quality Management Showcase

In May, Dr. Stone, the IPO's co-CMIO, presented at the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) 2017 Quality Management Showcase. The event included delegations from across the DHS. Attendees shared best practices and quality improvement activities within their offices, and enabled continued communication and networking among stakeholders. Dr. Stone's presentation focused on principles of health data interoperability, current activities within the DoD, VA, and IPO, as well as challenges and recent accomplishments.



Meet Our Staff – Yvonne Cole



Ms. Yvonne Cole serves as the Liaison between the IPO and ONC and the Technical Lead for IPO's Standards & Technology Division. She leads the management and technical oversight of the Health Interoperability & Exchange Alliance and its quarterly forums to promote information sharing from stakeholders across the DoD, VA, and other federal and industry partners. She also directs the IPO's Joint Exploratory Team's initiatives to identify DoD and VA interoperability challenges. In addition, Ms. Cole guides the close collaboration between IPO and ONC to facilitate knowledge sharing and to mature data, standards, and interoperability on national and international levels. *Thank you, Ms. Cole, for your hard work!*

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