



Message From Our Leadership

Welcome to the seventh edition of the Department of Defense (DoD)/Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Interagency Program Office's (IPO) quarterly bulletin, *The IPO Bridge*! In this issue, we highlight the deployment of MHS GENESIS at the last Initial Operational Capability site, Madigan Army Medical Center, exciting modernization news from the VA, and our recent activities and engagements to support the enhancement of health data interoperability. We express our gratitude for your continued support as we work with the Departments as they move forward with their own modernization strategies. We wish you a happy holiday season and happy new year! If you have any feedback or questions, please contact dha.ncr.peo-ipo.mbx.ipo@mail.mil.

In addition, we recognize Dr. Steven Kator following his retirement after 30 years of service with the federal government. As the IPO's co-Chief Medical Informatics Officer (CMIO), Dr. Kator provided clinical expertise on the necessary legacy systems to fulfill the mission of the IPO. His efforts supported the highest level of interoperability in healthcare records belonging to the DoD, VA, and private partners, improving healthcare for service members, veterans, and their families. We wish him the best with his future endeavors.



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



John Short
Acting Deputy Director, DoD/VA IPO

VA EHR Modernization News

The VA is close to awarding its contract to Cerner Corporation for its new electronic health record (EHR). These initiatives are the result of the VA's recent announcement that it will adopt the same EHR as the DoD, with its core consisting of Cerner Millennium, an industry-leading EHR, as well as Henry Schein's Dentrax, a best of breed dental module. During a recent Senate Veterans Affairs Committee hearing, VA Secretary, Mr. David Shulkin, stated, "We released to Congress, to you, a 30-day notice of award of a contract. We are keeping on the timeline that we talked about. We're marching forward. We have the principles. I have some updates to share with you on the strategic IT plan, because I think we are making a lot of progress with that." These continued efforts will undoubtedly result in enhanced patient care and safety. This quarter, the IPO hosted two DoD/VA EHR Modernization (EHRM) Update meetings to facilitate MHS GENESIS and VA EHRM interaction and discuss program updates, as well as joint functional and technical governance activities. The next DoD/VA EHRM Coordination #3 Offsite is scheduled for January 2018. Click [here](#) for more information on the VA's ongoing modernization efforts.



MHS GENESIS Deploys at Madigan Army Medical Center

This year, the Program Executive Office, Defense Healthcare Management Systems (PEO DHMS) continues their deployment cycle of MHS GENESIS, the DoD's single, integrated inpatient and outpatient EHR. The application will transform the delivery of healthcare and advance data sharing through a modernized EHR for our service members, veterans, and their families. Madigan Army Medical Center is the last Initial Operational Capability site to launch the application in the Pacific Northwest, with previous deployments at Fairchild Air Force Base, Naval Health Clinic Oak Harbor, and Naval Hospital Bremerton. The DoD's full implementation of MHS GENESIS across all facilities globally is targeted for 2022, serving more than nine million beneficiaries. Click [here](#) for more information.



IEEE's Women In Engineering

This month, Dr. Thompson attended the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers' Women in Engineering Forum USA East, an event to inspire and empower women as leaders in the engineering and technology fields. During the event, Dr. Thompson participated in the panel discussion, "Cyber Security: Why It's Everyone's Business" along with Ms. Leah MacMillian, Senior Vice President of Global Marketing at Trend Micro and Ms. Angel Grant, Director of the Security Division at RSA Security. Dr. Thompson highlighted risks to patient safety and cybersecurity vulnerabilities through connected medical devices as well as the importance of securing healthcare data, protecting patients and providing them with the highest level of care. For more information on the Women in Engineering Forum, click [here](#).



IPO's Strategic Offsite

This month, the IPO held its semi-annual Strategic Offsite to celebrate our FY17 accomplishments and assess our strategy to build on our successes this year as the Departments continue their modernization efforts. Guest speakers included Vice Admiral Raquel Bono, Director of the Defense Health Agency and Mr. Scott Blackburn, Executive in Charge and Chief Information Officer of VA's Office of Information and Technology (OIT). The event highlighted synchronization efforts by the DoD, VA, and IPO to enable health information exchange between the Departments' EHR systems and the private sector, which serves as the foundation for a patient-centric health care experience, seamless care transitions, and improved care for our service members, veterans, and their families.



Dr. Thompson On the Go

Congratulations to Ms. Stacy Cummings, Program Executive Officer of PEO DHMS, Mr. John Windom III (USN, Retired), Program Executive Officer of VA EHRM, Dr. Thompson, and Mr. Short as recipients of the 2018 FedHealthIT 100 Award, in recognition of their efforts to advance the federal health information technology community. Recipients of the award are featured in the Winter 2017 issue of FedHealthIT Magazine, a bi-annual publication providing federal health industry news and insights. In addition, she is featured in an article titled "Enhancing Health Data Interoperability," where she discusses the value of health data interoperability and the importance of collaboration with the DoD, VA, and private sector partners. For this year's list of top 100 FedHealthIT leaders, please click [here](#).

Furthermore, Dr. Thompson served as the keynote speaker at the Association of Military Surgeons of the United States' 126th Continuing Education Annual Meeting, "Force Health Protection: From Battlefield to Homefront," bringing together federal healthcare professionals to discuss the latest advances in healthcare. Dr. Thompson's keynote session featured an overview of the IPO and updates on current data sharing initiatives as the Departments pursue their respective modernization efforts.

ONC Annual Meeting

In November, the IPO attended ONC's Annual Meeting, "Tackling Barriers to Interoperability and Usability." The event featured guest speakers, panel discussions, and breakout sessions focused on ways to improve the usability and interoperability of health IT. In addition, IPO staff members participated in the event by showcasing our HIE Onboarding poster in an exhibit booth, while Dr. Thompson participated in a panel discussion titled "Federal Commitment to Health IT," regarding health IT efforts across the federal government and the future of health IT. Click [here](#) for more information on ONC's Annual Meeting.

Calendar of Events

DECEMBER

22 HL7 Ballot Cycle begins

JANUARY

11 DoD/VA EHRM Coordination #3
16 ONC Meet 'N Greet
16 Joint Steering Committee Quarterly Meeting
27 HL7 Work Group Meeting

FEBRUARY

20 DoD/VA IPO EXCOM

MARCH

4-7 IEEE International Biomedical & Health Informatics Conference
5-9 HIMSS 2018
12-15 AMIA 2018 Informatics Summit



2017 AMIA Symposium

In November, the IPO's CMIOs attended the 2017 American Medical Informatics Association Annual Symposium in Washington, D.C., and presented a study of health data exchange between the DoD, VA, and civilian health partners. The poster demonstrated the joint DoD/VA approach to identification, evaluation, and connection to civilian health information exchange (HIE) partners. The study found the Departments purchase a substantial amount of health services from civilian institutions and exchange more than 500,000 documents per month with 124 HIE partners. Both Departments established processes for identifying and engaging civilian health partners and plan to increase the number of connections in the coming years. Click [here](#) for more information.



Spotlight on Mr. Short



Congratulations to Mr. Short on his recent Senior Executive Service promotion, who also serves as the IPO's Acting Deputy Director, in close collaboration with Dr. Thompson, leading the DoD and VA's efforts to implement national health data standards for interoperability. He served as the Director of Interoperability and Enterprise Shared Services for the VA's OI since January 2014. As the VA embarks on their modernization pursuits, he represents OIT on the EHRM PEO, along with Mr. Windom (USN, Retired) and Veterans Health Administration's Chief Medical Officer, Dr. Ashwini Zenooz, to lead the operation and implementation of the VA's next-generation EHR. Mr. Short notes, "Our team continues to drive advancements in health data sharing among the DoD, VA, and private sector partners, allowing for healthcare continuity, active engagement care, accurate benefit decisions, and continuous healthcare improvements for our service members, veterans, and their families."



DoD/VA Industry Interoperability Roundtable

In November, the IPO hosted 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. The event included a discussion on the current and future state of healthcare information technology and the importance of ensuring our EHR capabilities serve the unique needs of our military heroes. The session also included updates on the Departments' EHR modernizations, interoperability progress, and evolving standards to enable HIE. Ms. Cummings and Dr. Thompson both delivered remarks, emphasizing the importance of expanding these collaborative relationships to advance the interoperability capabilities of today and solve the technological challenges of tomorrow.



Meet Our Staff – Mr. Anthony Gilyard



Mr. Anthony Gilyard serves as the Director of the Interagency Coordination Division of the IPO and leads his team to provide guidance and oversight as the DoD and VA enhance their interoperability and modernization efforts. In addition to this role, Mr. Gilyard serves as the Supervisory Program Manager assigned to the IPO for the Veterans Health Administration. His technical background, information systems prowess, and leadership have improved health IT processes at numerous joint facilities resulting in better delivery of healthcare to our beneficiaries. *Well done, Mr. Gilyard!*



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