

## **VHIE Program Engagement (Implementation) Training Success at VA San Diego Healthcare System**

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The Veterans Health Information Exchange (VHIE) products, VA Direct and VA Exchange, are bi-directional systems that electronically exchange Veterans Affairs (VA) patient health information with non-VA community providers. Both systems are part of the Department of Defense-VA Joint Health Information Exchange (Joint HIE) and are available for clinicians and staff at VA medical facilities across the country.

A key to the VHIE program's success is the many training opportunities offered to VA staff by the VHIE Program Engagement (Implementation) Coordinator team. Instruction for VA Exchange focuses on using the Community Health Summaries and Documents (CHS&D) feature in the Joint Longitudinal Viewer (JLV) to retrieve VA patient health information from participating provider organizations.

A recent example of a successful VHIE training occurred over a six-month period for VA staff at the VA San Diego Healthcare System. Veterans Integrated Services Network (VISN) 22 VHIE Program Engagement (Implementation) Coordinator, Ms. Jessica Barnett, led the campaign in collaboration with Mr. Bill Miller, the site's Clinical Applications Coordinator and VHIE Lead. They identified several departments as potential candidates for VHIE education, and then trained staff, resulting in over 340 clinicians, nurses, and other providers who learned to use VHIE systems.

Dr. Derek Juang, Chief of Hospital Medicine and Acting Chief Health Informatics Officer (CHIO) at the VA San Diego Healthcare System echoed the benefits of the training. In July 2022, Dr. Juang needed records for a VA patient receiving treatment at the Scripps Mercy Hospital in San Diego and was able to retrieve their health information through JLV.

The data retrieved by Dr. Juang contained a health summary document with progress and discharge summary notes, proving to be helpful with the patient's care. Dr. Juang was so pleased he emailed Ms. Barnett about the excellent data quality, stating that there was, "no need to waste time faxing," and that he "could get real notes/documentation." "This is the best connection I've seen so far," Juang said. To help ensure more end users have experiences like Dr. Juang, the VHIE Program Engagement (Implementation) team focuses on continuous improvement of the VHIE product and system education. This year, the VHIE Program

Engagement (Implementation) team added roles for three Systems Analysts and a Data Quality Analyst.

The Systems Analysts provide troubleshooting support for VHIE end users and elevate issues more quickly to technical teams for resolution. The Data Quality Analyst reviews the information retrieved through VA Direct and VA Exchange, and reports results to the VHIE Clinical Data Quality team for review with participating provider organizations. These new positions support the VHIE Program Engagement (Implementation) Coordinators' efforts and allow them to concentrate on offering VHIE Program education and assistance to VA clinical staff.

"It's been great to work with Dr. Juang and Mr. Miller," Barnett said. By having regular monthly VHIE Engagement (Implementation) meetings, we were able to make quick progress in identifying training opportunities. It's perfect timing to make sure VA staff are familiar with how to find patient health information from community providers in JLV, and we are seeing these great examples, such as with Scripps Health."

To learn more about VHIE and the benefits to VA patients, clinicians and staff, please email [VHIECoordinators@VA.gov](mailto:VHIECoordinators@VA.gov).