

VA Launches New Electronic Health Record System, Reaching Milestone in Veteran Care

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In a landmark event for Veteran health care, VA began using its new electronic health record (EHR) system at select facilities in the Pacific Northwest and Las Vegas on Oct. 24.

This modern EHR will help improve the health care experience for Veterans by connecting VA medical centers and clinics with the Department of Defense (DOD), the U.S. Coast Guard and community care providers. It will allow clinicians to easily access a Veteran's full medical history in one location, without needing to track down information such as pharmacy or lab records.

"This is great news for our nation's Veterans, who deserve the best health care in the world," said John H. Windom, executive director of VA's Office of Electronic Health Record Modernization, which leads the nationwide EHR deployment effort. "This technology will help VA improve health outcomes and access to care for our Veterans."

Mann-Grandstaff VA Medical Center in Spokane, Washington, and its associated clinics in Wenatchee, Washington; Libby, Montana; and Coeur d'Alene and Sandpoint, Idaho, are the first VA medical facilities using the new EHR system. Together, these locations serve more than 24,000 Veterans. The other deployment site, the West Consolidated Patient Account Center in Las Vegas, is an administrative facility that supports Mann-Grandstaff and other VA facilities in the Pacific Northwest.

VA clinicians and administrative staff at these sites can now more easily access patient information directly within the EHR itself, rather than using multiple systems as they had before. This includes patient medications, allergies, immunizations, past medical procedures and ongoing health concerns, as well as contact information, such as addresses, phone numbers and emails.

With this information more accessible, VA care providers will be able to view patient medical histories that will support clinical decision-making and improve Veteran health results. This more complete view of a patient's records will also allow clinicians to make better connections between Veterans' time on active duty and potential medical issues they might experience later in life.

"Once it is fully implemented, VA's new EHR will transform the country's largest integrated health care system and benefit over 23.9 million Veterans, as well as their families and caregivers," Windom said. "No other health care organization in the world is attempting something of this scale and complexity, and we are committed to getting this absolutely right for our Veterans."

VA will deploy the new system at facilities across the country over a 10-year period, scheduled to end in 2028. After the implementation at Mann-Grandstaff, VA plans to roll out the EHR at sites in Alaska, Idaho, Ohio, Oregon and Washington state.

[Dr. Laura Kroupa](#) is the Office of Electronic Health Record Modernization's chief medical officer (CMO) in the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. As CMO, she represents VA and the Veterans Health Administration as a clinical leader overseeing clinical strategy and planning efforts for the EHR transformation.