# DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS (VA) MOBILE HEALTH
# FACT SHEET FINAL

## Overview

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Mobile Health activities aim to improve the health of Veteran patients by providing technologies that will expand clinical care beyond the traditional office visit. VA is using mobile health technology to support its vision of a patient-centered health care delivery model. By focusing on data mobility, there will be increased opportunities for VA's health care teams to engage with and empower Veterans and Caregivers in the management of behaviors that affect their health and well-being. As part of VA Mobile Health, the Department will release a series of secure applications (Apps), which will leverage the popularity of wireless technologies to support Veterans, Caregivers and VA care teams. This initiative underscores VA's commitment to transforming the way care is delivered and improving health care coordination between Veterans and their care teams.

VA Mobile Health will provide Apps for three distinct groups: Veterans, Caregivers and VA care teams. Each set of Apps focuses on empowering users with the set of tools they need to facilitate, manage and organize their health care information, improve data sharing and increase the value of communication between Veteran patients and VA care teams.

VA is using pilot projects to test its various mobile health activities including the VA Mobile Health Clinician Pilot, the VA Mobile Health Family Caregiver Pilot and the VA Mobile Health Browser Pilot. Rollout of VA Mobile Health Apps will occur once evaluations of the pilots are complete.

## VA Mobile Health Pilots

VA Mobile Health is driven by pilot programs to assess the technologies and evaluate how they increase the convenience of health care management and strengthen communication among Veteran patients, Caregivers and VA care teams. The pilots support a range of health care management tools, facilitate day-to-day administrative needs and expand education and communication.

**VA Mobile Health Clinician Pilot:** This pilot, conducted during the fall of 2011, focused on delivering mobile solutions to VA clinicians. It successfully provided mobile access to patient information; improved accessibility, productivity and workflow for pilot participants; and analyzed security-related issues associated with mobile devices on VA's network at the Washington, D.C. VA Medical Center. Thirty VA clinicians tested iPhone and iPad Apps that made critical information from a patient's Electronic Health Record (EHR) available in real time and on-the-go. Assessment of pilot results has formed the basis for VA to move forward with an enterprise-wide deployment of Mobile Health Apps for clinicians.

**VA Mobile Health Family Caregiver Pilot:** VA will loan iPads to 1,000 randomly selected and interested Caregivers already enrolled in VA's Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers (open to Caregivers of Veterans who served after September 11, 2001). The iPads will be pre-loaded with VA Mobile Health Apps created to support Caregivers' needs and the needs of the Veterans they assist. The pilot will feature technology that allows for the secure, two-way exchange of health-related data between VA care teams and Veteran patients and their Caregivers.

The suite of applications will support Veterans with the following functionality:
- – VA Electronic Health Record (EHR) clinical information
  - ▪ Display vitals, laboratory results, medication(s), radiology results, procedures, admissions, visits, progress notes, demographics, problem list(s) and allergies

- – Disease Management Support and Electronic Coaching
  - ▪ Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) symptom(s) reporting and pain management tools
  - ▪ Patient self-entered data tools and tracking, including blood pressure, weight, diet and other information

- – Caregiver Support
  - ▪ Caregiver training, coaching and meditation

- – Management and Coordination of Care
  - ▪ Medication refill(s), Secure Messaging (SM), VA push notifications, integration of clinical appointments into iPad personal calendar and electronic journaling

VA will conduct a research study of the pilot to determine the impact of the Apps on Caregiver burden levels and Veteran health care utilization. Based on evaluation of the pilot and research study, VA plans to make the suite of Apps available to all Veterans and Caregivers.

**VA Mobile Health Browser Pilot:** In June 2012, VA announced its Mobile Health Browser Pilot to develop Apps that run on mobile browsers and increase efficiency, convenience and accessibility of VA health care across multiple mobile platforms. Pilots in several locations will empower care teams, Caregivers and Veterans with the tools they need to better manage their health care information. In addition to increasing communication between VA care teams and patients, the Mobile Health Browser Pilot is designed to allow Veterans to export their data and make online requests for primary care and mental health appointments. At each site, 30 staff and 30 Veterans will participate in the pilot.

## Rollout of Suite of VA Mobile Health Applications

Following testing and improvements, VA will evaluate potential deployment of the Apps to interested and eligible Veterans, Caregivers and VA care teams. Once deployed, the VA Mobile Health Apps will be available through the VA App Library. The majority of the Apps will be most useful to those receiving health care from VA. The VA App Library will provide a secure environment for Veterans to obtain VA-certified Apps; new Apps will be added as they are approved. In the future, VA will release a suite of mobile Web Apps for Veteran patients, Caregivers and VA care teams that will be accessible via Web-enabled devices. However, Apps designed specifically for VA clinicians will only be available through VA's intranet and secured in a variety of other ways to ensure the privacy of patient health care information.