



## NEWS RELEASE

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### **My Health<sub>e</sub>Vet available at your local VA medical center**

Story and photo by Raymond P. Aalbue, PAO

The Deputy Under Secretary for Health had a vision in 1997 of patients “owning” his/her medical record by the year 2010.

The My Health<sub>e</sub>Vet (MHV) Personal Health Record (PHR) made its debut in 2002 and demonstrated the VA can store patient information on the web securely. In 2003 the My Health<sub>e</sub>Vet portal was released nationally, creating an online environment where veterans, their family members, and clinicians may come together to optimize a veteran’s health. Initial capabilities included a single source of trusted health information, one stop shopping for VA benefits and a health calendar.

Over the next few years, the veterans PHR started to take shape and made filling prescriptions on line a reality.

Today VA operates more than 1,300 sites of care, treats more than 5.3 million people, and has over 1,000,000,000 vital signs electronically available. Highlighting the programs ongoing successes, MHV has over 300,000 registrants, 8,000,000 visits, and has processed over 1,600,000 Rx refills.

John J. Donnellan, Jr., director of the VA Harbor Healthcare System, is enthusiastic about MHV. “It brings us into the 21<sup>st</sup> century,” he said, “someone’s vision in 1997 has become a reality in 2007 and with the way modern technology grows, it will only get better.”

My Health<sub>e</sub>Vet (MHV) is a web-based application that optimizes health care information for veterans, family members, and clinicians.

To enhance communications between veterans and providers, MHV is constantly adding new features and information in the Healthy Living Centers (Eating Healthy, Movement & Exercise, and Smoking Cessation) and Condition Centers (Diabetes, Heart Disease, Hypertension, and Stroke). In these two areas, veterans will find easy to use information tools designed to improve their knowledge of health conditions and foster collaboration with their healthcare providers.

The repercussions from My Health<sub>e</sub>Vet are far-reaching. Clinicians will find it easier to communicate and collaborate with veterans about their health care, improve existing clinical business practices, and enhance the way care is delivered and managed. As veterans build their PHR they will be able to share all or part of the information with their health care provider, inside and outside the VA.

Participation in this new system is voluntary and all personal health information is guaranteed to be private and secure. The veteran will be able to grant access to all or some of his or her health information to others, such as family members or veteran advocates, and VA and non-VA health care providers.

In order to take full advantage of all MHV has to offer, after registering on line at <https://www.myhealth.va.gov> veterans have to stop by the VA NY Harbor Healthcare System in Brooklyn and get an In Person Authentication which would give them access to online health records. The MHV coordinators at the Brooklyn campus are Maryann Ferrante-LaSasso at 718-836-6600, extension 1844, and Russell Dolecal at 718-836-6600, ext. 3700.

Don’t have a computer? There is a computer at the medical center that is dedicated to the MHV program. And there is someone there to give you instruction and help along the way.

Increasingly, veterans are requesting access to their health information, and the ability to play a more active role in managing their health care. With My Health<sub>e</sub>Vet, veterans will be able to do just that.



Voluntary Services Specialist Russell Dolecal working on the My Health<sub>e</sub>Vet web site at the VA New York Harbor Healthcare system in Brooklyn.