Health Data and Informatics
Data Quality Program Fact Sheet

Key Program Components

Data Quality Program
• Provides framework to continuously improve the integrity, reliability, and timeliness of data throughout VHA and with business partners
• Offers comprehensive data management and data governance processes

Clinical Data Quality*
• Develops clinical data quality guidance and operating policies for VHA
• Establishes and maintains mechanism to identify, resolve and monitor clinical data quality opportunities

Identity Management Stewardship
• Ensures integrity of patient identity data within the Master Patient Index (MPI) to provide the longitudinal health record
• Supports VHA site personnel and acts as primary liaison with the MPI through the IMDQ team

Data Quality Analytics*
• Performs data quality analysis on existing administrative and health care data throughout VHA
• Provides support to Data Quality Program efforts to analyze, identify, and resolve data quality issues and opportunities

Business Product Management
• Identifies data quality requirements for inclusion in business stakeholder requirements
• Ensures communication of requirements through appropriate processes
• Monitors progress of products to ensure business needs are met

Data Stewardship*
• Establishes and formalizes accountability for the characteristics and management of VHA data
• Ensures business stakeholders fully participate in decision-making regarding data essential to them

Emerging new programs within Data Quality currently being staffed and implemented

What is the Data Quality Program?

As the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) transitions to a new generation of health information systems, it is critical that we manage patient data by implementing high data quality standards and practices within patient care, health care management, education, and research.

The Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Data Quality Program—part of the Office of Information (OI) Health Data and Informatics (HDI) Office—sets a strategic direction for data management, providing VHA with operational support to improve the quality of data required to manage health care. The Program includes several key components to help formalize and establish accountability for the characteristics and management of VHA data. The components are: Clinical Data Quality, Identity Management Stewardship, Data Quality Analytics, Business Product Management, and Data Stewardship.

Data Quality Program Business Benefits
• Reduces inconsistent, inaccurate, and incomplete data, resulting in high quality data that better meets business needs
• Coordinates data quality efforts within VHA; collaborates and participates in enterprise-wide efforts to improve data quality
• Provides an authoritative and participative data governance structure with business community involvement
• Promotes common data quality principles and best practices including data resolution processes

Did you know?

The Master Patient Index (MPI)
The MPI is a database that holds over 15 million unique patient entries, populated from patient databases at VA facilities nationwide. It provides the mechanism for linking patients' information, enabling an enterprise-wide view of individual and aggregate electronic healthcare records. The Identity Management Data Quality (IMDQ) team within the Data Quality Program acts as the steward of patient identity data, performing maintenance and support activities.

Patients are matched within the MPI database through their unique Integration Control Number (ICN), assigned based on matching of key identity traits. When one or more VA sites has a patient identified by the same ICN, the MPI facilitates the sharing of information, resulting in coordinated and integrated healthcare for veterans.