OI News You Can Use

Craig's Corner

You've heard by now that OI&T will soon rollout Remote Enterprise Security Compliance Update Environment, commonly known as RESCUE. The new system, offering more secure and private remote access, will replace the OneVA Virtual Private Network (VPN) with one level of connectivity for Government Furnished Equipment (GFE) and another for Non-VA Owned Other Equipment (OE). The rollout to the new RESCUE environment is scheduled to be completed by September 15, 2008.

The good news is that OneVA VPN will continue to be available to users as the VA RESCUE Team works through the connectivity and compatibility issues. Although this is a major change, we have been assured that no one will lose access during the transition. RESCUE is discussed and monitored at the weekly BRM meetings between Dr. Kussman and Mr. Howard. Mr. Howard has assured the Under Secretary that there will be no negative impacts. The bottom line is that we are all committed to providing users with the tools needed to serve and care for our veteran patients.

I am pleased to report that printing capabilities will be available when necessary for conducting official business. Users are still responsible for securing and protecting the printed materials. The extent of the responsibility is detailed in the VA National Rules of Behavior, which all users must read and sign prior to being granted access to the VA network.

Persons with a compelling business need for full access to store sensitive VA data or to perform other functions not provided by RESCUE, must request a VA Handbook 6500 waiver through their management chain. Waivers are also required for Mac GFE and OE users. Exceptions to RESCUE installation will only be made if a VA 6500 waiver, permitting other remote access service, has been granted.

Everyone involved in the RESCUE rollout is committed to maintaining a smooth work flow and transition. Most importantly, remember that users will not lose access while connectivity and compatibility issues are being worked through. There is NO cutoff date for OneVA VPN, and no one will have their access terminated until they are completely transitioned.

I encourage you to visit the important RESCUE links listed on page two for more information and installation instructions.

Be assured that we will continue to monitor this implementation and request any adverse feedback be recorded via the OI Issues Hot Link found on this page. Your feedback is important to us.

Thanks for a great summer and best wishes for continued success as we approach the end of the fiscal year!

Best Regards,
Craig B. Luigart
Chief Officer, VHA Office of Information

Upcoming Demo Showcases VA's Health Information Exchange with Private Sector

The Department of Veterans Affairs is a leader in the development of the Nationwide Health Information Network (NHIN), setting pioneering standards to lay the foundation for a "health care internet." Thanks to a new information exchange system, providers in the private sector will soon be able to join VA's charge to deliver world-class service to veterans and their families.

NHIN, a private/public collaborative effort managed by the Office of the National Coordinator of Health IT in the Department of Health and Human Services, will make health-related information more accessible to providers across the spectrum. "Its charge is to build a robust electronic, web-based system that has a foundation on standards related to messaging, security, privacy, patient identity and other interoperability specifications," says Linda Fischetti, VHA Acting Chief Health Informatics Officer. "Obviously, risks of unintended/unauthorized disclosure of veterans' health information exist, but the Office of Information views the NHIN as a risk mitigator and VA is excited to be leading the way."

The NHIN will host its debut public demonstration at the September 23rd meeting of the American Health Information Community in Washington, DC. Using protected and scrubbed data, the intent is to point the way for future breakthroughs needed to move this concept to production. The scenario details a recruit from North Carolina who enlisted at Ft. Bragg and was deployed overseas, injured and sent to a military hospital. The wounded warrior is discharged to a VAMC in Virginia, and moves to California to receive some of her care from a Kaiser Permanente medical center. During the demonstration, NHIN intends to describe how essential data will be extracted from the Department of Defense (DoD) and VA health systems to support Kaiser Permanente clinicians in her care. Additionally, it will demonstrate how VA clinicians would be able to read these data from Kaiser.

The architecture of this "health internet" is built on the work VA and DoD have already done for Bidirectional Health Information Exchange, which is now in place in all VA and many DoD healthcare settings.

Hot Links! To report IT issues, find information about project requests and status, Class III software, IDMC and more go to OI's Hot Links:

Hot Link Button with URL:
http://vaww.vhaco.va.gov/vhacio/HotLinks.asp

VA & DoD Continue to Share Electronic Health Data

An advanced partnership between VA and DoD has dramatically improved the sharing of electronic health information for service members and veterans since 2004. The team has worked to give VHA clinicians access to DoD health data in CPRS through VistA Web and Remote Data Views via Federal Health Information Exchange (FHIE) and Bi-directional Health Information Exchange (BHIE) applications.

The FHIE supports the one-way transfer of information for separated service members while the BHIE allows for a two-way exchange of health information for patients receiving care from both VA and DoD. Every VA facility can access FHIE and BHIE to view the following DoD health information:
- Historical DoD pre-separation health data
- Prescription and allergy information
- Laboratory results
- Radiology and consult reports
- Admission, discharge and transfer information
- Ambulatory diagnostic coding information

For patients receiving care in both VA and DoD facilities, additional health information can be accessed, including:
- Procedures and problem lists
- Ambulatory encounter notes
- Vital signs
- Discharge summaries from 17 DoD hospitals

The sharing of VA and DoD health data involves a complex process that's dependent on a number of variables. Look for additional insight on these applications in future newsletters.
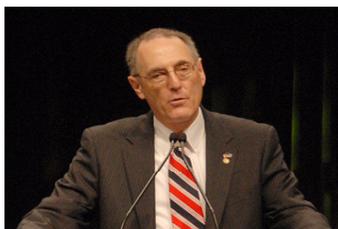
Around The Office...News You Should Know

12th Annual VeHU - Another Tremendous Success!

VeHU's 12th year was another outstanding success. The more than 1,800 attendees warmly welcomed Under Secretary for Health, Michael Kussman, MD, to his first conference. Another speaker of note was World War II veteran Albert Dunn who told of his wonderful experiences on an Honor Flight, inspiring contributions to that organization totaling over $15,000.

Podcasts from VeHU are now available at **http://www.vehu.va.gov/vehu/Podcast/2008/index.asp**

World War II Veteran Albert Dunn recounts his Honor Flight Experience at VeHU.

Under Secretary for Health Michael Kussman, MD, Addresses VeHU.

Telling the VistA Success Story

At the VHA Senior Management Conference August 26th and 27th, the Office of Information unveiled its new 10' x 10' exhibit. This professionally designed booth will help us spread the word about our award-winning health information technology that is an important tool in providing "The Best Care Anywhere."

Dr. Divya Shroff demonstrates the Shift Hand-Off Tool at the VHA Senior Management Conference.

At the conference, the exhibit was used to demonstrate three recent enhancements to VistA. The demonstrations were performed by key players with an active role in creating the new features or in bringing them from Class III to Class I status.
- The Shift Hand-Off Tool, demonstrated by Divya Shroff, MD, Associate Chief of Staff – Informatics at the Washington DC VAMC
- Medication Reconciliation, demonstrated by LuAnne T. Barron, R.Ph., Program Manager for Clinical Informatics/Pharmacy Re-engineering, Pharmacy Benefits Management
- Bidirectional Health Information Exchange (BHIE) demonstrated by Ross Fletcher, MD, Chief of Staff, Washington DC VAMC

RESCUE Updates continued

Important RESCUE Links and Contact Information

Links and contacts:
- ★ To install RESCUE on OE:
  - On the VA network: **https://vaww. admin.vpn.va.gov/one-va-vpn/home/ VPNRESCUESETUPOE.html**
  - Outside the VA network: **https:// media.vpn.va.gov/webvpn.html**
- ★ RESCUE user support:
  - VA-NSOC phone: 1-800-877-4328
  - Email: VA RESCUE Team (VARESCUETeam@va.gov)
- ★ RESCUE FAQ: **https://vaww.admin.vpn. va.gov/one-va-vpn/home/RESCUE.html**
- ★ RESCUE Waiver Process: **https://vaww. admin.vpn.va.gov/one-va-vpn/home/ RESCUEWaiverprocessv2.doc**