The Bar Code Resource Office champions the use of clinical business best practices for integrated technologies through technological innovation and process improvement to support the clinical bar code systems for Bar Code Medication Administration (BCMA) and Bar Code Expansion (BCE) assuring the delivery of safe, effective, and high quality patient care.

Process Improvement Grid Results

The Bar Code Medical Administration (BCMA) Process Improvement Grid Areas for Improvement are designed to assist local BCMA Coordinators and BCMA Multidisciplinary Committees in identifying *areas for performance improvement* within the medication management processes. One best practice area is distributed quarterly.

Quality & Monitoring

In the Fiscal Year 08, 1st quarter, facilities assessed best practices associated with Monitoring & Reporting. This exercise focused on staff training in BCMA enhancements, reporting mechanisms, data analysis and trending to improve processes and non-punitive culture. Of the reporting facilities, 83% felt they practiced the recommendations as suggested. There were no reports that fell below the threshold of 60%. Comments suggested *"improved reporting system, analysis of data, and staff education have consistently increased over the past 2-3 years. The appointment of a full time BCMA Coordinator (16 months) has significantly improved the process".* The results from this assessment and others are available on the Bar Code Resource Office website, Performance Measures page.

SAVE THE DATE! *2008 Bar Code Conference Expands Opportunities*
Advancing Patient Care through Bar Code Technologies

This year, the annual Bar Code Conference, sponsored by the Bar Code Resource Office, will be integrated within the Information Technology Connection (ITC) framework. This integration will provide conference attendees access to vendor fairs, Office of Information unveiling of the new virtual hospital, ITC keynote speakers, and other ITC benefits while attending sessions tailored to meet their needs as BCMA Coordinators and BCE points of contact or BCE Coordinators. ITC's general sessions run from July 8-10, 2008. The BCRO is planning pre-conference sessions on Monday, July 7th for Coordinators interested in basic performance improvement skills, tools and techniques, BCMA Parameters, and BCMA reports just to name a few targeted sessions. Participation in Monday's sessions will require Sunday travel.

- Visit the ITC website for more information on conference location, registration, and hotel reservations. *http://vaww.vehu.va.gov/itc/Default.cfm*

- When registering for ITC, select the Bar Code Track!

Managing Scanning Failures (MSF) Update

The BCMA Development Team has been tackling the MSF project in two segments. The first effort was to combine the original MSF functionality with the nationally released BCMA-HSC Phase III functionality and was completed in March. The next step is to incorporate the change requests that have been approved by the national unions which include creating additional venues for verifying the correct medication such as entering the National Drug Code (NDC) of the medication and the addition of on-screen instructions for entering the human readable information from large volume intravenous (IV) fluid bags into the IV tab of BCMA. The final MSF patch will be PSB*3*28 and the first test version is planned for delivery to test sites in June 2008.

Performance and Accountability!

Want to find out more about what the BCRO does and how they do it? The annual BCRO Performance and Accountability Report is now available from the BCRO web site, located at *http://vaww1.va.gov/bcmapmo/page.cfm?pg=23*. Find details on the progression of the office over the past year, including outreach activities to promote bar coding for patient safety at a variety of venues, current organizational chart, background of the Bar Code Expansion Project, and performance measures for which the office is responsible. The report has been labeled as a potential model for reporting performance and ensuring accountability within the VHA.

Quality Directive for Unit Dose Packaging and Bar Code Labeling

Data Summary: 1st Quarter FY08

The results of the Fiscal Year 2008, 1st quarter show continued improvement from the baseline data gathered in 2006. The most notable improvements are in the areas of the Controlled Substance and End User monitors. The Controlled Substance monitor was at 91.4% in 2006 and is currently at 98.8%, and the End User monitor has risen from 93.3% in 2006 to 98.1%. Thanks to the continued efforts of BCMA Coordinators reporting non-scanning bar codes to the BCRO and the BCRO's communication with manufacturers, we continue to see substantial strides in the Manufacturers Bar Code monitoring. Reporting is one key to the success of these monitors and to support this, Ron Schneider a Pharmacist Consultant with the BCRO recently reported this information to the Chiefs of Pharmacy on their national call. Included in the report was a reminder that the data is due to the BCRO by the second week following the end of the quarter.

Problematic Bar Codes

Non-scanning bar codes do not just occur at the point of care. They may not scan in Pharmacy as well. If you have any bar code products that do not scan into the VistA drug synonym file or in BCMA, send the bar coded item to either your BCMA Coordinator or send a sample to Ron Schneider, RPh, Pharmacy Service (119), 525 Greenway Center Drive, Suite T4, Greenbelt, MD 20770. It is very important to communicate to the suppliers, VA contracting, and the FDA any scanning issues experienced in the field so that corrective action can be taken.

Enterprise Product Support Clinical 1 Team

In the coming weeks the BCMA patch PSB*3*0*2 will be nationally released. This patch will bring changes to the format of the unit dose bar code labels. It brings new functionality for the label printers by introduction of control codes for the printer terminal type.

Until now the control codes were "hard-coded" into a print routine and were only designed for an older model Zebra printer. In order to use an Intermec or newer model Zebra printer, it would require a lot of work and possibly program changes by your local Information Resource Management (IRM) Service to get the printer to work.

Once PSB*3*0*2 is installed, there will be control codes available that work much the same as with the bar code IV labels and the outpatient laser printer labels.
Installing this patch will NOT change the way you currently print the bar code labels, but if you want to take advantage of the new label format, you will have to start using the new functionality.

When the patch is released, your IRM department should read over the release notes and patch description carefully and do extensive testing in your TEST account before converting anything in your PRODUCTION account.

VHA Project and Request Status Information

In order to keep VHA better informed about the status of IT projects and requests, VHA Office of Information has launched the VHA Project and Request Status Information web page *http://vaww1.va.gov/esm/page.cfm?pg=99*. The VHA Project and Request Status Information web page provides links to spreadsheets and databases that host information about projects and requests in various stages of their IT development process. The site also provides background information on Class III to Class I projects and the VHA Prioritization Process.

New Bar Code Resource Office (BCRO) Staff Members
Welcome new BCRO Health Systems Specialists.

Patricia (Pattie) Halliburton has had extensive experience in Pathology and Laboratory Services having held various supervisory positions and working as a Laboratory Information Manager (LIM). She has participated in a number of projects at the national level, and has been a Subject Matter Expert (SME) for several initiatives. Most recently, she was a lead Field Analyst for the Lab System Reengineering Project. Pattie is currently based at the Asheville VA Medical Center.

Lorraine Winschel, MT (ASCP) SBB has a background in laboratory services in the blood bank and as a supervisor, instructor and Automated Data Processing Applications Coordinator (APDAC). Lorraine worked as a Quality Specialist and was responsible for organizational performance improvement and measurement through the Office of Performance & Quality at the Erie VA Medical Center. She also implemented and managed a Personal Digital Assistant (PDA) data collection program used to collect patient wait time and customer satisfaction data. Lorraine is based at the Erie VA Medical Center.

BCRO Salutes…Richard Singer!

by Marla Newman, BCMA Development Team, Management Analyst

The BCMA Development team salutes BCMA Project Manager, Richard Singer, for his leadership during the challenging transition period and staff turnover caused by the new VistA Contracting Service (VCS) contracts. Richard has done a great job managing three large projects with an almost entirely new development team and some old team members in new roles. For the past six months, Richard has conducted daily team meetings to keep the new team members and these complex interrelated projects and timelines on track (BCMA, Inpatient Medications, and Ward Drug and Dispensing Equipment). He has worked hard to help our dispersed, virtual team members (from several different contract companies) work as a cohesive team—and stay on the same page. It's been quite a challenge and he's maintained a "can-do" attitude throughout all of the logistical and technical obstacles; and he manages to always stay focused on delivering the best product out to the field. Thanks, Richard!

If you wish to receive future issues of the **"MESSENGER"**, send your requests to Rhonda Boling at Rhonda.Boling@va.gov.