

INTEGRITY • COMMITMENT • ADVOCACY • RESPECT • EXCELLENCE



VA CENTER FOR INNOVATION

2010 - 2012 STAKEHOLDER REPORT



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
CENTER FOR INNOVATION

CENTER FOR INNOVATION

USING ACCESS, COST, QUALITY, AND SATISFACTION AS OUR GUIDEPOSTS, THE VETERANS AFFAIRS CENTER FOR INNOVATION LOWERS THE BARRIER OF ENTRY FOR QUALITY INNOVATIONS THAT SUPPORT AND ACCELERATE VA TRANSFORMATION.

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LETTER FROM THE SECRETARY

In early 2010, we launched the Department of Veterans Affairs Innovation Initiative (VAi2) to bring fresh thinking to Departmental challenges. I do not think anyone at that time would have predicted the response. The ingenuity and personal commitment to Veteran services quickly told us that we were on to something special. Ideas poured in from VA employees, entrepreneurs, and industry. Since the founding of VA's innovation program, we have received over 15,000 ideas from our employees and nearly 800 submissions from the private sector and academia—all focused on improving the way in which we deliver care and benefits to Veterans.

Through an open and transparent process, we identified new ways to improve the quality of the care we deliver to more than 6 million Veterans and their family members every year. Some innovations target dramatic improvements in efficiency, technology, and new business practices. Others offer promising ideas to open avenues of greater access to health care and benefits.

In this report you will see how we are establishing the VA Center for Innovation (VACI) on the foundation begun by VAi2. This move reflects my commitment to fostering a culture of creativity and determination to make life better for our Veterans, their families, and their survivors. This commitment is rooted in a belief that a large organization benefits from maintaining a disciplined process for tapping the talent and expertise of those on its front lines and innovators across the country.

This report describes the successful strategy that led to 130 investments in innovative improvements to VA benefits and health care services. You will learn about how VACI will continue to turn ideas into realities that help us meet the mission of the Department in the 21st century.

With the tools to bring the top ideas to light and put them through a rigorous evaluation process, VACI is bringing out the best in VA and redefining us as an agency of innovation.

Sincerely,

Eric K. Shinseki
Secretary of Veterans Affairs



LETTER FROM THE VACI DIRECTOR

At the Department of Veterans Affairs Center for Innovation (VACI), we have worked hard to cultivate a culture that embraces innovation from a variety of sources including federal employees, companies, entrepreneurs, and academic leaders from across the country. We have created a mechanism that brings private sector competitiveness and agility to public service. Every day we look to face challenges and solve problems, creatively and effectively, to better serve our Nation's Veterans. The result is a promising portfolio today of 130 innovations.

We measure each one by the impact it has on access, quality, and satisfaction, while reducing cost. We seek to implement innovations that deliver results and ensure that VA continues to be a responsive organization serving the needs of Veterans well into the future.

In the months and years to come, we will continue to fund innovations, test solutions, and strengthen partnerships with the private sector. Most importantly, we will work to ensure that innovation is part of the culture of VA and that we use partnerships to stay on the cusp of technological, medical, and operational advancements.

VACI delivers on a commitment to finding and fostering the very best solutions for our Veterans. I am proud to be a part of that commitment and look forward to working with all the companies, individuals, and organizations creating tomorrow's great ideas.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, stylized loop followed by a horizontal line extending to the right.

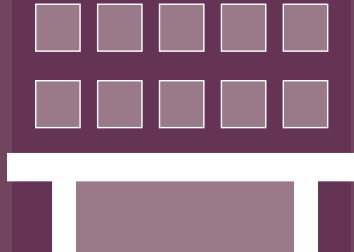
Jonah Czerwinski
Director, VA Center for Innovation

22 MILLION
VETERANS ALIVE TODAY



WITH 152 HOSPITALS

AND 817
OUTPATIENT CLINICS

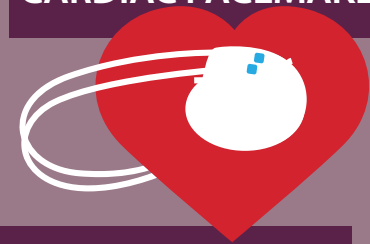


VA IS AMERICA'S LARGEST INTEGRATED HEALTHCARE SYSTEM

NICOTINE PATCH



CARDIAC PACEMAKER



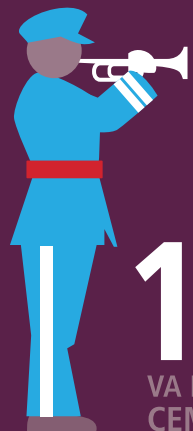
INVENTED AT THE U.S. DEPT OF
VETERANS AFFAIRS

320,000
PEOPLE WORK FOR VA

THE LARGEST CIVILIAN AGENCY



34%
OF VA EMPLOYEES ARE
VETERANS



131
VA NATIONAL
CEMETERIES

924,
000
VETERANS
RECEIVE EDUCATION BENEFITS



\$1.3
TRILLION

IN LIFE INSURANCE POLICIES
UNDERWRITTEN BY VA

6 MILLION
PATIENTS



GET CARE IN VA HOSPITALS EVERY YEAR



3.5 MILLION
VETERANS

RECEIVE DISABILITY COMPENSATION



INNOVATION AT VA

Secretary Shinseki launched the VA Innovation Initiative (VAi2) in the spring of 2010 to marshal resources to address VA's most pressing challenges.

At the onset, VAI2 used a competition-based format to gather and vet ideas for innovation. Contests and competitions were a fresh approach for the Department to access the talent and expertise of entrepreneurs, industry and non-profit leaders, and our 320,000 VA employees.

Through the use of Industry Innovation Competitions, Employee Innovation Competitions, Prize Challenges, and Special Projects, we invested in promising solutions to address the challenges VA faces in its constant pursuit of improvement. These innovations range from empowering the more than six million patients receiving VA health care with access to their own electronic health record, to breakthrough technologies in telemedicine, to developing effective models for helping Veteran entrepreneurs succeed in launching new businesses. All projects are measured by their ability to improve the quality of VA care and services; increase access to those services; reduce or control costs; and improve customer satisfaction. And these innovations are doing just that.

The transition – or rather evolution – into VA's Center for Innovation (VACI) represents an important step for VA, Veterans, and VA employees. The creation of VACI emphasizes VA's commitment to continuous innovation. And while the initial track record of innovation at VA is promising, the real work lies ahead in institutionalizing a culture of enterprise-wide innovation that supports informed risk taking, rewards results, and challenges the status quo.

We invested in promising solutions to address the challenges VA faces in its constant pursuit of improvement.

Innovation needs structure, resources, and people. By creating VACI, we are laying those foundations with a staff committed to trying new ideas and problem-solving. Along with the competitions and challenges, which remain an important part of the Center, four distinct components have been developed to further enable collaboration with innovators from across the spectrum of private sector, academia, and Federal government, bringing to bear new ways to source ideas and investigate solutions.

Portfolio

The real action, the visible evidence of innovation taking place in the real world, is found here. Representing nearly all aspects of VA's mission, the Portfolio includes more than 130 innovations. These follow a lifecycle of:



No innovation pilot lasts for more than two years, and all reach a decision point with only three possible outcomes: Go, No Go, Further Development. If a project passes the test, we work with VA leadership to deploy it further. If it needs a few tweaks, but its potential remains high, we will make the necessary adjustments or enhancements before it rolls out. If it falls short entirely, that negative result is valuable learning and we have saved the agency time and money. An organization the size of VA, with an annual budget north of \$130 billion and serving millions of Americans, needs to find those dead ends early and at a low cost. We would rather have a few test flights and bumpy landings to make sure an innovation soars once it is released to the public.

Fellows

One of our most exciting new features at VACI, the Fellows program, encompasses two subsets: Innovation Fellows, a place for innovators from the Federal government (either within VA or even from another agency); and Entrepreneurs in Residence (EIR), which will pull innovators from the private sector and academia. The Fellows and EIRs will take on roles such as developing and managing a competition and the resulting pilot program or investigating topics of high priority or special interest where new approaches, solutions, and innovations may be required.

Network

Incorporating innovation throughout the fabric of VA will be aided by our Innovators Network, an online community encouraging collaboration among VA employees and contractors. The network will provide

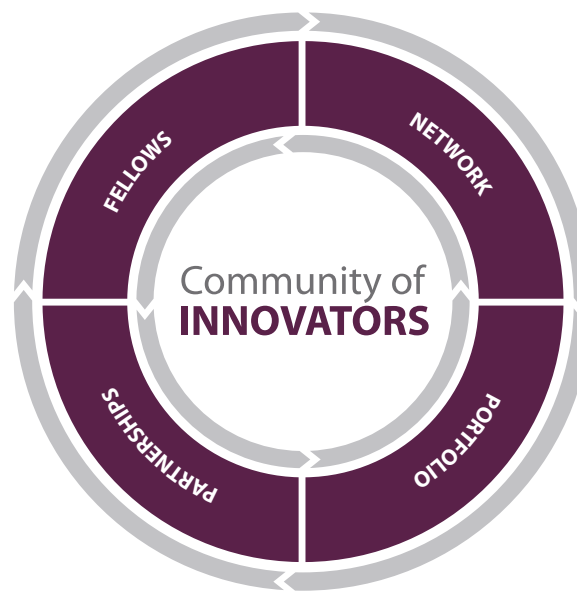
“Partnerships are the cornerstone of creativity, innovation, and progress. VA’s independent innovation research function serves to foster collaboration with the private sector.”

opportunities to test and validate best practices or other solution sets at pilot locations, and it will foster a community of interest among VA employees focused on results and organizational transformation. The Innovators Network will link creative ideas and proactive minds to deliver powerful results.

Partnerships

Partnerships are the cornerstone of creativity, innovation, and progress. VA’s independent innovation partnership function serves to foster collaboration with the private sector. Collaborating allows VA and the private sector to optimize resources, share technical expertise in a safe environment, and even share intellectual property emerging from the effort. Importantly, the partnership function provides incentives that may help speed the commercialization of federally developed technology.

VACI will be most successful when the innovators and staff from our four components and the competitions work together, sharing ideas and testing solutions. Each must bolster one another. This multi-disciplined – and interlocking – approach to solving problems and improving Veteran satisfaction is, in itself, an innovation at VA. No one person or group has the answer, and by working with innovators and sectors across the country and creating a secure base of innovation, together we are supporting a VA that builds better, stronger service to our Veterans.





TRACK RECORD AND TRAJECTORY

Mentors at VACI-funded business incubators proudly watch Veterans transform dreams into real companies and products. Developers of artificial kidneys get one step closer to making mobile dialysis a reality. Nurses at Spinal Cord Injury centers witness quadriplegics dial a phone via simple technologies and Skype with their families.

VACI's innovations are impressive advancements in themselves. But the impact these advancements have on Veterans' lives and VA's delivery of care to those Veterans is truly exciting.

VACI sees its focus on improved access, better quality, greater satisfaction, and lower costs reflected in the vendors, startups, scholars and employees who seek to make their ideas realities and whose innovations serve as thanks to our Nation's Veterans. VACI competitions are inclusive – they encourage ideas from diverse, multi-disciplinary populations and fund those with the best promise of success. VACI hosts Employee Competitions, Industry Competitions, Special Projects, and Prize Challenges to find the most current, cutting-edge ideas from across the country, be they from civilian or Veteran, academic or scientist, private sector or public servant.

These challenges attract genius and enthusiasm from every corner of the Nation, netting the most promising innovations to address both emerging and long-standing issues that impact Veterans.

These challenges attract genius and enthusiasm from every corner of the Nation, netting the most promising innovations to address both emerging and long-standing issues that impact Veterans.

Employee Competitions

As the second largest department in the Federal government, our extensive, multi-talented workforce totals nearly 320,000 employees – one-third of whom are Veterans and all of whom dedicate their lives to improving the quality of life for Veterans. Since the first employee innovation competition in 2009, employees have submitted more than 15,000 ideas. Those ideas range from new ways to streamline benefits processes to improving health care delivery and new mobile applications to increase access to services. To date, 98 employee innovations are in various stages of design and implementation.

Industry Competitions

The Industry Innovation Competitions marshal creative thinkers and companies outside of government to present new ideas, fresh perspectives, and different approaches to solving problems. Welcoming new ideas from new sources drives our Industry Competitions. We have received 850 submissions and funded 44 industry innovations, culled from the private sector, non-profits, and academia. The 2012 competition received 249 initial proposals in four categories, and 56 of these have been invited to submit further information for funding consideration.

Special Projects

At VACI, we are on assignment to target priority issues for Veterans and improvements to VA. Special Projects allow us to address high-priority challenges in an accelerated manner. VACI has undertaken four of these projects to date: Agent Orange Fast Track System, Open Source Electronic Health Record, Tech Shop Partnership, and Veteran Digital Tutor.

- The Agent Orange Fast Track system quickly processes claims related to the newly expanded presumptive conditions associated with exposure to Agent Orange during service in the Vietnam War.
- The Open Source EHR project shares the source coding and programming language for the Veterans Health Information Systems and Technology Architecture (VistA), the backbone of VA's EHR system, so that programmers can eliminate bugs and develop improved software, allowing for more efficiency, greater transparency, and lower costs.
- VA-TechShop Job Program, a partnership between TechShop and VA, is a membership-based, do-it-yourself workshop and fabrication studio. Veterans have access to machines and digital tools of design, manufacturing, and software, such as CAD/CAM drawing tools. These workspaces, communities, and tools provide the resources necessary to develop marketable job skills and fundamentals for entrepreneurship.

“
...The impact these advancements have on Veterans’ lives and VA’s delivery of care to those Veterans is truly exciting.”

- **Veteran Digital Tutor**, a partnership between VA and the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA), creates next generation education and training tools that facilitate new ways for Veterans to become immediately employable and technically advanced information technology specialists. The project incorporates a 1-year pilot program training 100 Veterans and measuring their effects on economic opportunity.

Prize Challenges

Since the President signed into law the America COMPETES Act in early 2011, we have spearheaded the use of the new prize authority the Act gave VA and other agencies. The bottom line for prize challenges is that we pay for results only. This new tool for Federal agencies taps into a motivated and dispersed community of interest wherever it may be to create novel solutions to challenges that do not readily lend themselves to traditional procurement. We have held three prize challenges so far:

- **Badges for Vets**, a nationwide competition to create digital “badges” to help Veterans translate their military skills into civilian jobs or to receive advance credit in higher education, sought ways to translate how military training corresponds with academic degrees and job experience. Winners included the Manufacturing Institute, an affiliate of the National Association of Manufacturers, TopCoder, Inc., and Western Governors University.
- **Project REACH** found new ways for mobile and/or Web applications to help homeless Veterans find resources in their area, such as health care facilities, shelters, and food banks. Five finalists received \$10,000 to develop their applications and compete for a grand prize of \$25,000 awarded to the application that proves the most beneficial for homeless Veterans and the people helping them. Project REACH (Real-time Electronic Access for Caregivers and the Homeless) was developed by VACI in cooperation with Jon Bon Jovi’s Soul Foundation, the White House, and the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).
- **Blue Button for All Americans** expands a once VA-only feature to download personal health records into an application that can be used by all Americans and their care providers. McKesson Corporation’s RelayHealth won by installing software in more than 2,000 hospitals for 200,000 physicians, allowing 17 million patients to record health histories, view lab results, track prescription information, and more.

We are innovating for one sole purpose: improving the lives of Veterans, their families and survivors.

Criteria

Ideas that reach the funding stage have been thoroughly vetted to ensure they are viable and show promise as scalable, real-world solutions. We use the following criteria to evaluate all proposals and submissions:

- The potential impact, benefits, and contributions of the solution to the VA mission areas of interest;
- The quality of the proposed solution design;
- The quality of the proposed implementation plan;
- The scalability of the proposed solution;
- The innovator’s capabilities, related expertise/experience, facilities, techniques, or unique combinations of these that are integral factors for the achievement of proposal objectives; and
- The cost-effectiveness of the solution in proportion to its potential impact/benefits.

To learn more about how the competitions are conducted, visit www.innovation.va.gov.

2010

Industry Innovation Challenge Areas

- Telemedicine/telehealth
- New models of dialysis and renal disease treatment
- Innovative housing solutions to address Veteran homelessness
- Integrated business accelerator
- Reducing adverse drug events
- Polytrauma/Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) solutions

2011

Industry Innovation Challenge Areas

- Teleaudiology
- Enhancements for VA’s Blue Button personal electronic health record
- Innovative prosthetic socket designs
- Fully automated sterilization of medical equipment
- Self-management technologies for vocational rehabilitation

2012

Industry Innovation Challenge Areas

- Enhance maternity continuity of care
- Redesign the Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) treatment experience
- Create mobile applications for benefits information and services
- Prevent pressure ulcers



ON THE HORIZON

We are innovating for one, sole purpose: to improve the quality of life for Veterans, their families, and survivors. Our innovations have raised quality while lowering the cost of VA services, but we are not done. At VACI, we are looking at what lies ahead, recruiting the best people and the strongest ideas and utilizing state-of-the-art tools to continuously improve. It is not enough just to respond to issues; we have to anticipate, plan, and meet our largest challenges head-on.

Trends in technology and health care – combined with advances in research – move at a rapid pace. Staying abreast of this information and looking for ways to incorporate cutting-edge thinking in service and care delivery is critical to VACI. As such, we are looking at ways to incorporate trends into our solutions such as big data, genomics, and advances in materials science.

Big data – or sets of information larger than the usual capacity of software tools – will be important to track in order to analyze products and services and determine how to improve quality and efficiency. These sophisticated analytics allow for informed decision-making and more tailored products and services to meet changing patient and customer needs.

VACI lowers the barrier of entry for innovation at the largest civilian government agency.

Now that we have cracked the code of the human genome, researchers are starting to study large sample populations in the effort to understand who is at risk for disease, key subgroup differences, and treatments that can be most effective. VA's Million Veteran Program (MVP) will establish one of the largest databases of genetic, military exposure, lifestyle and health information. Research findings based on MVP may improve screening, treating, and preventing of illnesses in Veterans. These results can lead to more personalized, preventive health care for all.

Another field promising big results for care is materials science. The goal is to engineer new materials with superior properties, ultimately enabling new devices altogether. For example, materials scientists are testing ways to develop synthetic material to mimic, strengthen, and support parts of our bodies that may have degenerated with age, disease, or trauma. These materials provide hope in the form of electric bandages to promote faster healing of wounds, artificial limbs that sync up with the nervous system, and muscle-powered braces that could enable paraplegics to walk and climb. VACI will look for ways to leverage advancements in materials science to create life-changing products for our Veterans.

VA is known for its size, scope, and diversity of benefits, as well as innovation, responsiveness, and the quality of care it delivers. As technologies advance, we are dedicated not only to staying current, but to setting the pace for using innovative solutions to provide greater access, improved quality, increased satisfaction, and lower costs of VA services.

CASE STUDY

VETransfer Veteran Entrepreneurial Transfer, Inc. Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Challenge Area: Integrated Business Accelerator

The Challenge: Small businesses are vital to the U.S. economy, employing more people and driving more activity than any other business type. Yet 50 percent of small businesses fail in their first year due to a number of reasons, including lack of experience, insufficient capital, and poor inventory management. The skills and experience the military provides can uniquely position Veterans for entrepreneurship.

With dedication, problem solving and management engrained into the military mind, Veterans come prepared for the intensity of owning a business. However, as with any entrepreneur, taking the next step and starting a business can require specific training and a boost of support, and many Veterans may need help adapting their military skills specifically for the business world. For Veterans on a mission to start their own businesses, where can they seek training and mentorship, and how can they learn to translate their skills to new industries?

The Solution: VETransfer, funded by VACI, provides a business accelerator for entrepreneurial-minded Veterans. VETransfer offers individualized mentorship, an educational facility and online courses, and access to resources that help Veterans become entrepreneurs. VETransfer channels the strategic thinking and perseverance of Veterans into business sense.

VETransfer provides Veterans with a process to transform their ideas into reality – one that combines business-building fundamentals with the flexibility and ingenuity to evolve with changing marketplaces. Veterans apply to VETransfer, whose seasoned executives review each applicant, the sustainability of an idea, the status of company development, and the business proficiency of the entrepreneur. Whether a Veteran approaches VETransfer with a nascent concept in need of nurturing or a pre-existing business hoping for a boost to the next level, VETransfer offers tailored guidance to accelerate each entrepreneur’s dream.

In addition, VETransfer’s virtual component, DropZone, provides Web courses, a library of resources, networking capabilities, and a digital vehicle for continued mentorship. This online element expands VETransfer’s reach to Veterans throughout the world and increases access to vital business resources.

VETransfer not only helps Veterans launch their own businesses, but continues to make sure that they stay on a trajectory to success.

Featured Businesses:

- **Illumatek** – After being struck while driving his Harley, Marine John Miller was inspired to invent illuminated windshield engravings, visible at night from up to five miles.
- **Celebritunity** – Marine A-Sun Truth began a brand management agency for celebrities, such as Judge Joe Brown, Wesley Snipes, and Magic Johnson.
- **Flexible Fuel Combined Heat and Power System (FF-CHP)** – After retiring from the Navy, Texas native Jeremy Anderson studied engineering and is helping rural communities adopt renewable energies and sustainable energy production techniques.

Next Steps: To continue its mission, VETransfer is scaling nationwide, partnering with other entrepreneurial sites to create a sole business resource and to establish other tutoring centers. “Every day we change the lives of Veterans, and that’s a great feeling,” says VETransfer CEO, Co-founder and Vietnam Veteran Ted Lasser.

CASE STUDY

Automated Wearable Artificial Kidney (AWAK) AWAK Technologies Seattle, Washington

Challenge Area: New Models of Dialysis and Renal Disease Treatment

The Challenge: More than 10,000 Veterans undergo dialysis treatment for end stage renal disease (ESRD), and approximately 3,000 additional Veterans reach ESRD every year. Dialysis is a costly treatment, in terms of dollars and time spent for the patient treatment. For Veterans who live in rural areas, treatment several times a week at a VA or VA contracted medical center can pose serious issues in terms of transportation and extended wait times at these facilities. Despite these challenges and disruptions to a patient's life, the medical necessity of dialysis for ESRD Veterans is constant – it is life saving treatment that a patient cannot go without.

The Solution: AWAK allows Veterans to receive continuous peritoneal dialysis via a small (approximately 3 lbs.) wearable device. This mechanism more accurately mimics kidney function than traditional dialysis, resulting

in enhanced care and better health. While AWAK improves the numbers in patients' charts, it also enriches quality of life, providing a dialysis treatment that is as mobile and independent as the Veterans themselves.

Instead of the traditional, periodic dialysis treatment, the AWAK continuously removes toxins and water from the blood. This round-the-clock dialysis steadies metabolic and fluid states, eliminating the peaks and plummets between episodic dialysis appointments. This equilibrium makes patients feel better, as AWAK "applies a more consistent bandage to your system and improves your prospects of life," says program manager Clint Latimer.

With need for only two 30-minute interruptions to change cartridges and remove ultrafiltrate, Veterans have more freedom to go about their daily lives. AWAK reduces the need for appointments, medications, and dietary and travel restrictions. Consequently, VA medical centers can decrease the cost of staffing and equipment maintenance. This is particularly important for regional facilities that have been designated for dialysis. Ultimately, VA Centers will have more room – both in space and schedule – for other patients. But most importantly, it can improve the quality of life significantly for a patient.

AWAK is easy to use and the portability, usability, and betterment of care that it provides foreshadows self-dialysis as a staple within the ESRD home – not just with the Veteran community, but with the more than half a million people in the U.S. with ESRD. As Margaret Hannon, Acting Director of Operations in VA's Office of Research and Development, recounts, "So many Veterans have called to inquire [about AWAK]; I think it will certainly be a life-changer for thousands."

Next Steps: Since receiving funding from VA, the artificial kidney has undergone various stages of development. Chemicals have been tested both inside and outside the apparatus, and the mechanism itself has already been refined into a smaller, lighter version. The testing at VA medical centers began in 2012 and will continue through 2013 to validate safety and efficacy, and the device will eventually need to undergo the Federal Drug Administration approval process.

CASE STUDY

Environmental Controls Memphis VA Medical Center Memphis, Tennessee

Challenge Area: Spinal Cord Injury

The Challenge: More than 42,000 Veterans live with spinal cord injuries (SCI) in the United States. In fact, roughly 16 percent of all Americans living with SCI are Veterans, and many of these Veterans receive rehabilitation at one of VA's 24 SCI centers. Although the severity of these injuries may vary, often these Veterans become quadriplegics or paraplegics and face the challenges associated with transitioning to civilian life with physical limitations.

The Solution: Environmental control beds for patients in an SCI unit grant Veterans greater control in their lives. These simple bedside technologies enable Veterans to adjust bed positions, flip on the lights, change the TV channel, or dial a phone. Patients can now perform these actions independently, without the assistance of a nurse, transforming the impossible task into an everyday motion. Each bed is equipped with an environmental control unit that has "arms," which hold a microphone, sip and puff straw, TV, and tablet interface. By using voice activation, breath and

suction, eye pupil movement, and toggle switches, these devices act as an extension to the body. As a result, patients in the SCI units can control their environments, and nurses can dedicate more time to patient care activities. Because these devices are fairly straightforward, both Veterans and nurses find them easy to learn and use.

While environmental controls empower disabled Veterans with increased self-sufficiency, it also improves their quality of life. For the first time, these technologies pair clinical needs with personal entertainment. Now disabled Veterans can surf the Internet, read eBooks, and update their Facebook pages. "One of the Veterans' favorite elements is the Skype function," reports Chief Biomedical Engineer Sheena House, whose dedicated pursuit to create these technologies was made possible largely by VACI funding. "Many of these Veterans are far away from home, and now they can communicate and see their families at the same time. Patients keep asking me if they can be the next one to test the bed."

Next Steps: After initial usability testing of two beds, 58 new beds are being installed in the Memphis SCI Center. Each bed can be personalized for the patient's abilities, and confidential data can be removed from the devices once the patient is discharged. Due to

the ease of use and amalgamation of tools, these technologies can be easily implemented into SCI centers and eventually the home. Environmental control units are improving the lives of Veterans who have been impacted.

CASE STUDY

Open Source Electronic Health Record Modernization OSEHRA Washington, DC

Challenge Area: Electronic Health Record (EHR) Modernization

The Challenge: VA manages the largest integrated health network in the country, providing care to more than 6 million Veterans, and operating more than 150 hospitals, 800 clinics and 135 skilled nursing facilities. VA's EHR, called Veterans Health Information Systems and Technology Architecture (VistA), is the electronic information service that is central to the quality of care that VA delivers on this large scale. As VA's clinicians and researchers advance and improve models of care at an increasing rate and across a spectrum of treatment, the rate of innovation in VistA to support these clinical advances is increasingly difficult to maintain.

While derivatives of VistA are used in non-VA government health care, by the Departments of Defense (DoD) and Health and Human Services, and in multiple private sector settings, there is no mechanism for sharing improvements between versions or for collaboration among VistA users and developers. This unnecessary isolation has a damping effect on the rate of EHR innovation and prevents the full potential of VistA from being reached.

The Solution: Open source models have demonstrated success in multiple applications and markets by enabling a broad range of participants to collaborate effectively. VA recognized that the creation of a robust open source community required the establishment of a custodial agent, or central governing body, to organize the community and catalyze its growth. Recognizing that no such body then existed, VACI provided the leadership and direction that resulted in the independent establishment of the Open Source Electronic Health Record Agent (OSEHRA) in late 2011.

OSEHRA provides the foundation for an open and collaborative community of developers, researchers, and users engaged in advancing EHRs and related technology, supporting the clinical advances promoted by VA and by health care providers and networks globally. In operation for less than a year, OSEHRA now has more than 1000 members representing more than 120 organizations from the public and private sectors and academia. Technical operations, including a code repository, certification tests, development tools, and collaboration aids have been established. Work groups have been launched, allowing full community participation in a number of important projects and activities:

- VistA refactoring, which reorganizes the code to make it easier to maintain and develop new applications.
- Code convergence, to establish a common core codebase and make sharing of innovations easier to achieve.

- Web services development, which provides modern programming interfaces for the rapid creation of new applications.
- The update of VA's My HealthVet platform, that supports greater exchange of patient health information.

"The open source model provides much more innovation by allowing a wide variety of people and organizations to apply their particular expertise for the common good," said Mike O'Neill, senior advisor to the VACI Director and VA liaison to OSEHRA. "And at the end of the day, these innovations directly impact the care we are able to deliver to Veterans."

Next Steps: OSEHRA is deeply engaged in working with VA and other community members to modernize VistA, establishing a common core codebase throughout VA and across industry while improving the programming interfaces that developers will use to rapidly build new VistA-based applications. As VA and DoD continue the design and development of a joint and integrated electronic health record, OSEHRA provides the means for implementing an open standards and open source software approach to the creation of a next-generation EHR. And OSEHRA will continue its support for the longer-term objective to enable a commercial market based on open source EHR software, allowing national and international health care to benefit from the outcome-improving impact of VistA and increasing the innovation pool that can provide benefit back to VA.



BY THE NUMBERS

Since the establishment of the Innovation Initiative in the spring of 2010, VA has funded 135 innovations, for just over \$100M.

 **23**
MONTHS

 **102.5**
MILLION

 **7 FULL TIME**
STAFF

< 2%
OVERHEAD RATE

 **100+**
COLLABORATORS
IN THE FIELD

 **135**
INNOVATIONS
FUNDED

 **8** COMPETITIONS

15,000
IDEAS SUBMITTED

100,000
EMPLOYEE PARTICIPANTS

600
INDUSTRY PARTICIPANTS



CONCLUSION

Our Nation's Veterans sacrificed for this country. From the moment they raise their right hand, VA supports them from that day forward. Just as we were confident in the protection they gave our country, they must be confident that the care and benefits they receive are delivered efficiently and enhance their quality of life.

At VACI, we have a special assignment in serving our Veterans, and the evolution of the organization reflects our progress to date. Establishing VACI symbolizes VA's commitment to accountability, transparency and proactive improvement of our care to Veterans. The innovations we have funded demonstrate how we are helping Veterans by providing greater access, better quality, increased satisfaction, and lower costs of VA services. By instituting VACI as a permanent organization, complete with a dynamic portfolio, fellows programs, an online network, and a partnership function, we are ensuring that VA continues its pursuit of the very best for our Veterans.

Our mission is to discover new ways that we as a Nation can keep our solemn commitment to Veterans, but we know we can not fuel such an ambitious goal without the cutting-edge creativity that lives among our employees and within the private sector. That is why VACI competitions are open to anyone – whether inside or outside the government. Veterans served all of us. Now, it is our turn to ensure that they are provided with the care and benefits they have earned. Serve your country, too, even if you never wear a uniform. Learn about our opportunities by visiting us at www.innovation.va.gov.

APPENDIX *COMPLETE LISTING OF VACI PORTFOLIO PROJECTS*

| INDUSTRY INNOVATIONS | | | | | |
|---|--|---------------------------------------|---|-------------------------------|------|
| Title | Topic | Company | Pilot City, State | Company City, State | Year |
| Mobile Blue Button | Enhancements and Novel Uses of VA's "Blue Button" Personal Health Record | Agilex | Washington, DC; Chillicothe, Ohio; Palo Alto, California; North Chicago, Illinois | Chantilly, Virginia | 2011 |
| Blue Button Extensions Medical Imaging | Enhancements and Novel Uses of VA's "Blue Button" Personal Health Record | Ray Group International | Washington, DC | Washington, DC | 2011 |
| Blue Button Authentication Field Test Proposal | Enhancements and Novel Uses of VA's "Blue Button" Personal Health Record | Northrop Grumman | Washington, DC | McLean, Virginia | 2011 |
| Pro-Active Dynamic Accommodating Prosthetic Socket | Innovative Prosthetic Socket Designs to Improve Fit and Comfort of Prosthetics | Infoscitex | Waltham, Massachusetts | Waltham, Massachusetts | 2011 |
| Synergetic Improvements for Transfemoral Prosthetic Sockets | Innovative Prosthetic Socket Designs to Improve Fit and Comfort of Prosthetics | Ohio Willow Wood Company | Cleveland, Ohio | Mt. Sterling, Ohio | 2011 |
| Quasi-Passive Prosthetic Socket Technology with Optimal | Innovative Prosthetic Socket Designs to Improve Fit and Comfort of Prosthetics | Massachusetts Institute of Technology | Boston, Massachusetts | Cambridge, Massachusetts | 2011 |
| SOCAT: Socket Optimized for Comfort with Advanced | Innovative Prosthetic Socket Designs to Improve Fit and Comfort of Prosthetics | Florida State University | Gainesville, Florida | Tallahassee, Florida | 2011 |
| Iowa Center of Veteran Excellence | Self-Management Technologies for Vocational Rehabilitation | University of Iowa | Iowa City, Iowa | Iowa City, Iowa | 2011 |
| Automated Integrated Perioperative Process | Fully Automated Sterilization of Medical Equipment | GE Global Research | Orlando, Florida | Niskayuna, New York | 2011 |
| Technical Feasibility of Smartphone Based Teleaudiology | Leveraging Telemedicine to Provide Audiology Services to Remote Veterans | Phonak | Cleveland, Ohio | Warrenville, Illinois | 2011 |
| RemotEAR | Leveraging Telemedicine to Provide Audiology Services to Remote Veterans | Otovention, LLC | Los Angeles, California | King of Prussia, Pennsylvania | 2011 |

| INDUSTRY INNOVATIONS | | | | | |
|--|--|-------------------------------------|---|------------------------|------|
| Title | Topic | Company | Pilot City, State | Company City, State | Year |
| Remote Audiometry in VA CBOCs | Leveraging Telemedicine to Provide Audiology Services to Remote Veterans | Audiology, Inc. | Nashville, Tennessee | Arden Hills, Minnesota | 2011 |
| Cochlear Implant Programming | Leveraging Telemedicine to Provide Audiology Services to Remote Veterans | Cochlear Americas | Seattle, Washington | Centennial, Colorado | 2011 |
| Business Incubator Facility | Integrated Business Accelerator | VETransfer | Milwaukee, Wisconsin | Milwaukee, Wisconsin | 2010 |
| VetSuccess Employment Accelerator (VetSEA) | Integrated Business Accelerator | Halfaker & Associates | Roanoke, Virginia | Arlington, Virginia | 2010 |
| Education for Veteran Entrepreneurs | Integrated Business Accelerator | Eadvantage | Washington, DC | Potomac, Maryland | 2010 |
| Adverse Drug Event Trigger Tool | Reducing Adverse Drug Events | Southwest Research Institute (SwRI) | Cincinnati, Ohio | Houston, Texas | 2010 |
| TheraDoc | Reducing Adverse Drug Events | DSS | Dallas, Texas; Houston, Texas; San Antonio, Texas; Kansas City, Missouri; Chicago, Illinois | Juno Beach, Florida | 2010 |
| Sentri7 | Reducing Adverse Drug Events | Pharmacy OneSource | Los Angeles, California | Seattle, Washington | 2010 |
| Dynamic Pharmacovigilance System | Reducing Adverse Drug Events | Vigilanz | Chicago, Illinois | Minneapolis, Minnesota | 2010 |
| Automated Wearable Artificial Kidney (AWAK) | New Models of Dialysis and Renal Disease Treatment | AWAAs. Technologies | Seattle, Washington | Burbank, California | 2010 |
| CKD Buddy | New Models of Dialysis and Renal Disease Treatment | Medical Education Institute | West Haven, Connecticut | Madison, Wisconsin | 2010 |
| Comprehensive National Kidney Disease Registry | New Models of Dialysis and Renal Disease Treatment | University of Michigan | Ann Arbor, Michigan | Ann Arbor, Michigan | 2010 |
| Advanced Care Management | New Models of Dialysis and Renal Disease Treatment | American TeleCare | Minneapolis, Minnesota | Minneapolis, Minnesota | 2010 |
| Gordon H. Mansfield Veterans Community | Addressing Veteran Homelessness via Innovative Housing Technology | Soldier On | Northampton, Massachusetts | Leeds, Massachusetts | 2010 |

INDUSTRY INNOVATIONS

| Title | Topic | Company | Pilot City, State | Company City, State | Year |
|--|---|--------------------------------------|---|--------------------------|------|
| Field Test of Modular Housing Solution | Addressing Veteran Homelessness via Innovative Housing Technology | Ridgewood Technology Partners | Salem, Virginia | Ashburn, Virginia | 2010 |
| TBI Toolbox | Improvement of Polytrauma Care | MedRed | Richmond, Virginia | Washington, DC | 2010 |
| Remote Blood Glucose Data Collection | Telehealth | SweetSpot Diabetes Care | Dayton, Ohio | Dayton, Ohio | 2010 |
| Cardiology Communication System | Telehealth | mVisum | Washington, DC | Camden, New Jersey | 2010 |
| Agile iHealth | Telehealth | Agilex | Washington, DC | Chantilly, Virginia | 2010 |
| Patient-Centered Collaborative Management of Chronic Pain and Depression | Telehealth | Interactive Performance Technologies | West Haven, Connecticut; Indianapolis, Indiana | Cambridge, Massachusetts | 2010 |
| IntelaCare Support for TBI | Telehealth | Affinity | Palo Alto, California | Arlington, Virginia | 2010 |
| Predictive Analytics for Mobile Telehealth | Telehealth | Venture Gain Bioinformatics (VG-Bio) | Salt Lake City, Utah | Naperville, Illinois | 2010 |
| CareConnect | Telehealth | Maggie | Portland, Oregon | Denver, Colorado | 2010 |
| Online Care | Telehealth | American Well | Minneapolis, Minnesota; Omaha, Nebraska | Boston, Massachusetts | 2010 |
| Telerehabilitation | Telehealth | Kinetic Muscles | Atlanta, Georgia | Tempe, Arizona | 2010 |
| Mobile eScreening for OEF/OIF Mental Health Assessment | Telehealth | Service Wing Healthcare | San Diego, California | San Diego, California | 2010 |

EMPLOYEE INNOVATIONS

| Title | Topic | City, State | Innovator | Year |
|--|-----------------------|----------------------------|--------------|------|
| Veteran "X" (Peer-Led Mental Health Recovery Program) | Patient Centered Care | Hampton, Virginia | VHA Employee | 2012 |
| SPD Scanners for Medical Supplies /Equipment Check out | Facilities Management | Biloxi, Louisiana | VHA Employee | 2012 |
| SCI Home Care RN's: CVT for Triage and Acute Issues Management | Access | Richmond, Virginia | VHA Employee | 2012 |
| Remote Ambulatory Management of Veterans with Sleep Apnea | Patient Centered Care | Philadelphia, Pennsylvania | VHA Employee | 2012 |

| EMPLOYEE INNOVATIONS | | | | |
|---|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------|------|
| Title | Topic | City, State | Innovator | Year |
| Preventing Missed Opportunities in the Timely Diagnosis of Lung Cancer | Patient Centered Care | San Diego, California | VHA Employee | 2012 |
| Postage Cost Through Combined Ordering and Shipping of Medications Supplies | Systems Redesign | Indianapolis, Indiana | VHA Employee | 2012 |
| Patient Test Results Reporting System | Medical and Surgical Specialty | Atlanta, Georgia | VHA Employee | 2012 |
| Patient Aligned Care Team Phone Message Manager Tool | Mental Health Specialty | Madison, Wisconsin | VHA Employee | 2012 |
| Paperless Future Technologically Savvy Veterans | Systems Redesign | Boise, Idaho | VHA Employee | 2012 |
| One VA Pharmacy | Patient Centered Care | Colorado Springs, Colorado | VHA Employee | 2012 |
| On Boarding | Medical and Surgical Specialty | Oklahoma City, Oklahoma | VHA Employee | 2012 |
| Modernized Progress Note Templates | Systems Redesign | Jacksonville, Florida | VHA Employee | 2012 |
| Mobile App for Federal Benefits Booklet | Access | Washington, DC | VHA Employee | 2012 |
| Meditation & Relaxation Program: Mental Health Primary Care Integration | Patient Centered Care | Sepulveda, California | VHA Employee | 2012 |
| Improved Veteran Access to an Innovative Treatment of TAAA | Systems Redesign | Martinez, California | VHA Employee | 2012 |
| Home Based Telemental Health | Patient Centered Care | Portland, Oregon | VHA Employee | 2012 |
| Hazardous Pharmaceutical | Systems Redesign | St. Louis, Missouri | VHA Employee | 2012 |
| Enable Schedulers to Preview Edit and Send Appointment Letters Electronically | Access | Prescott, Arizona | VHA Employee | 2012 |
| Education at the Point of Care | Medical and Surgical Specialty | Buffalo, New York | VHA Employee | 2012 |
| Digital Fax Servers | Systems Redesign | Tuscon, Arizona | VHA Employee | 2012 |
| Complementary & Alternative Mind/Body Practices for treatment of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and other Mental Health Disorders | Systems Redesign | Orlando, Florida | VHA Employee | 2012 |
| Automated Hiring Packets | Mental Health Specialty | San Antonio, Texas | VHA Employee | 2012 |
| Appointment Cancellation in MyHealtheVet | Facilities Management | Harlingen, Texas | VHA Employee | 2012 |
| Add OncoTrax Cancer Data Tables to Corp Data Warehouse | Medical and Surgical Specialty | North Little Rock, Arkansas | VHA Employee | 2012 |
| Veterans Health Education | Mental Health Specialty | Long Beach, California | VHA Employee | 2011 |
| Vet-to-Vet: A Recovery Model Meals-on-Wheels Pilot Program | Mental Health Specialty | Gainesville, Florida | VHA Employee | 2011 |
| VA-IDEA | Mental Health Specialty | Indianapolis, Indiana | VHA Employee | 2011 |
| Using Vacated or Unused Federal Buildings for Homeless Veterans | Patient Centered Care | Muskogee, Oklahoma | VHA Employee | 2011 |
| Use of Creative Arts in Mental Health Recovery | Veteran Homelessness | Tampa, Florida | VHA Employee | 2011 |

| EMPLOYEE INNOVATIONS | | | | |
|--|--|----------------------------|--------------|------|
| Title | Topic | City, State | Innovator | Year |
| Surgical Implant Tracking/Costing | Patient Aligned Care Team | Washington, DC | VHA Employee | 2011 |
| SSN Removal in VistA | Patient Aligned Care Team | Los Angeles, California | VHA Employee | 2011 |
| Special Care Units / Dementia Care Units | Mental Health Specialty | Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania | VHA Employee | 2011 |
| Radiology Order Entry Interface | Patient Aligned Care Team | Duluth, Georgia | VHA Employee | 2011 |
| Overhaul of the Travel Pay Systems | Systems Redesign | Cleveland, Ohio | VHA Employee | 2011 |
| Noise Reduction - Call Light / TV Remote Update | Systems Redesign | Los Angeles, California | VHA Employee | 2011 |
| My HealtheVet Enhancements Now! | Patient Centered Care | Loma Linda, California | VHA Employee | 2011 |
| My HealtheVet Application for Use on Mobile Devices | Access | Canandaigua, New York | VHA Employee | 2011 |
| Mentors for VetSuccess Veterans | Improvements to Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment Service | Lincoln, Nebraska | VBA Employee | 2011 |
| Mental Health First Aid | Improvements to Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment Service | Lincoln, Nebraska | VBA Employee | 2011 |
| Let's Move! The Weight Is Over | Systems Redesign | Mare Island, California | VHA Employee | 2011 |
| Insulin Pens | Systems Redesign | Fort Harrison, Montana | VHA Employee | 2011 |
| Improving Rx Safety | Patient Aligned Care Team | Charleston, South Carolina | VHA Employee | 2011 |
| HI2 Establishment of Regional Informatics Training Centers | Systems Redesign | Tucson, Arizona | VHA Employee | 2011 |
| Healing Touch + Guided Imagery for PTSD in Vet Centers | Mental Health Specialty | Oklahoma City, Oklahoma | VHA Employee | 2011 |
| Handsfree Bathrooms | Systems Redesign | Louisville, Kentucky | VHA Employee | 2011 |
| Hand Hygiene InfoPath Monitoring | Systems Redesign | Boston, Massachusetts | VHA Employee | 2011 |
| Environmental Controls | Systems Redesign | Memphis, Tennessee | VHA Employee | 2011 |
| Email Improvement - Eliminate Duplicates - Forwarding Reliance | Veteran Homelessness | Boston, Massachusetts | VHA Employee | 2011 |
| Detail Successors Prior to Retirement | Systems Redesign | Northport, New York | VHA Employee | 2011 |
| Debit Cards for Books and Supplies | Improvements to Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment Service | Boston, Massachusetts | VBA Employee | 2011 |

| EMPLOYEE INNOVATIONS | | | | |
|---|--|----------------------------|--------------|------|
| Title | Topic | City, State | Innovator | Year |
| Crisis Line Number on Prescription Bottles, Caps, Labels | Patient Centered Care | Orlando, Florida | VHA Employee | 2011 |
| CPRS Education & Training - Building Upon the Innovation Sandbox | Systems Redesign | Providence, Rhode Island | VHA Employee | 2011 |
| Companion Dogs for Veterans | Access | Orlando, Florida | VHA Employee | 2011 |
| Career Enhanced Internship Program | Improvements to Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment Service | Providence, Rhode Island | VBA Employee | 2011 |
| Better Mental Health Scheduling | Access | Chicago, Illinois | VHA Employee | 2011 |
| AutoBasicEligibility | Improvements to Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment Service | Manchester, New Hampshire | VBA Employee | 2011 |
| "VetSuccess on Campus" Services for TBI/PTSD Veterans | Systems Redesign | Albuquerque, New Mexico | VBA Employee | 2011 |
| Wireless Voice Communications with Hands-Free Options | Systems Redesign | Martinsburg, West Virginia | VHA Employee | 2010 |
| Veterans Interactive Online Assistant | Improvements to Disability Claims Processing | Hartford, Connecticut | VBA Employee | 2010 |
| Veteran Online Tracking of Mail Prescription Delivery | Access | Leavenworth, Kansas | VHA Employee | 2010 |
| Veteran Interviews and DVD | Improvements to Disability Claims Processing | Albuquerque, New Mexico | VBA Employee | 2010 |
| VA-Wide Core Collection of Knowledge Based Information Resources | Patient Centered Care | Cincinnati, Ohio | VHA Employee | 2010 |
| Touch Screen Nursing Triage of Patients | Medical and Surgical Specialty | San Diego, California | VHA Employee | 2010 |
| Suicide Hotline: Be a Hero, Save a Hero | Systems Redesign | Cincinnati, Ohio | VHA Employee | 2010 |
| SMC Calculator | Improvements to Disability Claims Processing | San Diego, California | VBA Employee | 2010 |
| Show Patient Picture in CPRS | Mental Health Specialty | Northport, New York | VHA Employee | 2010 |
| Share Verified Insurance Info via Use of the Master Patient Index | Patient Centered Care | Albany, New York | VHA Employee | 2010 |
| Search Function in CPRS | Patient Centered Care | Gainesville, Florida | VHA Employee | 2010 |
| Scan and Store Digital images | Improvements to Disability Claims Processing | St. Louis, Missouri | VBA Employee | 2010 |

| EMPLOYEE INNOVATIONS | | | | |
|--|--|-------------------------------|--------------|------|
| Title | Topic | City, State | Innovator | Year |
| Rules-Based Processing for Pension/Dependency | Improvements to Disability Claims Processing | St. Paul, Minnesota | VBA Employee | 2010 |
| Revised Performance Standards for VSRs | Improvements to Disability Claims Processing | Togus, Maine | VBA Employee | 2010 |
| Reducing Health Care Associated Infections Using Informatics | Systems Redesign | West Haven, Connecticut | VHA Employee | 2010 |
| Reduce Unnecessary/Duplicate Lab Tests by Rules-based Algorithms | Patient Centered Care | Tucson, Arizona | VHA Employee | 2010 |
| Rapid Evaluation of Claims | Improvements to Disability Claims Processing | Atlanta, Georgia | VBA Employee | 2010 |
| Physician Templates – Disability-Based Questionnaires | Improvements to Disability Claims Processing | Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania | VBA Employee | 2010 |
| Online Radiology Protocols Tool Integrated Within CPRS/VistA | Systems Redesign | Seattle, Washington | VHA Employee | 2010 |
| MAP-D Live | Improvements to Disability Claims Processing | San Diego, California | VBA Employee | 2010 |
| Integration of Behavioral Health Lab & CPRS for Mental Health Care | Systems Redesign | Philadelphia, Pennsylvania | VHA Employee | 2010 |
| Improved Access to Military Personnel Records | Systems Redesign | Orlando, Florida | VHA Employee | 2010 |
| Enhance Emergency Medical Response Team Communication | Systems Redesign | Little Rock, Arkansas | VHA Employee | 2010 |
| eDischarge Pilot Program | Mental Health Specialty | White River Junction, Vermont | VHA Employee | 2010 |
| Disability Narrative Text Tool | Improvements to Disability Claims Processing | Phoenix, Arizona | VBA Employee | 2010 |
| CPRS-Based Automated Queries and Reports | Systems Redesign | Dallas, Texas | VHA Employee | 2010 |
| CPRS Enhancement for Veteran-Centered Care | Systems Redesign | Augusta, Maine | VHA Employee | 2010 |
| Brief Resident Supervision Index | Access | Loma Linda, California | VHA Employee | 2010 |
| Augment CPRS with Standards-Based Decision Support Engine | Systems Redesign | Boston, Massachusetts | VHA Employee | 2010 |
| Accessible Contact Information for All Assigned Care Providers | Systems Redesign | Dallas, Texas | VHA Employee | 2010 |

PRIZE CHALLENGES

| Title | Winner | Year |
|-------------------------------|---|------|
| Project REACH | Unknown at the time of printing | 2012 |
| Blue Button for All Americans | Relay Health | 2011 |
| Badges for Vets | TopCoder, National Association of Manufacturers, Western Governors University | 2011 |

SPECIAL PROJECTS

| Topic Area | Company | Pilot Location | Year |
|------------------------------|----------------|---|------|
| Veteran Economic Opportunity | TechShop | Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; Detroit, Michigan; San Jose, California | 2012 |
| Veteran Economic Opportunity | Acuitus, DARPA | Palo Alto, California | 2012 |
| EHR Modernization | OSEHRA | Washington, DC | 2011 |
| Automate the Claims Process | IBM | Washington, DC | 2010 |

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