LYN SCHULTES: Hello, everyone. Welcome and thank you for attending today's VA Mobile Discussion Series. My name is Lyn Schultes and I'm going to run through just a few brief technical reminders before we begin the discussion today about using the DS Logon to access secure VA mobile apps.

Please note that during the presentation, your phone lines are muted. We will be taking questions through the chat feature found at the right-hand side of your screen. And if you're experiencing any technical difficulties at all, let us know. We'll keep this moving so that the session ends on time. Today we welcome Gerald Markowitz. If you have any questions for Gerry, please use the chat feature. We will pause briefly after the presentation for a Q & A session. And please note, if we don't get to your question during today's discussion, we will send out an email following this webinar with any relevant answers. The slides to this presentation will be made available on the VA mobile website when the session is posted online in a couple weeks. And you'll see in the chat box, the address for that website. If anyone would like the slides before they're posted, please don't hesitate to email Harold Bonds. It's Harold.bonds@va.gov. And with that, I will turn it over to our presenter. Gerry, over to you.

GERRY MARKOWITZ: Thank you, Lyn. VA is about to introduce a suite of secure mobile apps to help Veterans better manage their health care and stay in touch with their VA Care Team. In this presentation, I'm going to speak to you as if you were a Veteran, using the VA for your health care, because we're going to take this same presentation that I'm giving to you, and we're going to make it available directly to Veterans. So I'm going to speak to you as if you were a Veteran.

So some of the apps, and there's a whole suite of apps that's being developed, but I'm just going to mention a couple, so you get the idea.

Mobile Blue Button. Mobile Blue Button is a junior version of the Blue Button that can be taken from the Blue Button report from My Health*e*Vet. You can customize the report using a tablet or a cell phone and create a PDF of sections of your Electronic Health Record.

Summary of Care is another view of your medical record, but it gives you the ability to see trends. You can look at graphs of things like blood pressure and glucose readings and temperature and weight, and it also lets you look at another level of detail within your Electronic Health Record.

And then there's the Annie App. The Annie App is used for text messaging between you, the Veteran, and your provider. It also provides a way to send reminder messages to folks that maybe are not using a smartphone, but only are using a regular cell phone with text messaging.

And there's more apps than this, and we'll talk about them as we move forward. There's the Veteran Appointment Request App that I want to mention, because it's now in the process of being released throughout the country. That's where Veterans can use their smartphone or tablet to either request an appointment or directly book an appointment with their Care Team.

But the point that I want to make here is that some of the apps -- some of the apps like the ones on the right side, are information apps. They're general information. The one at the top is Ask a Pharmacist. There's the PTSD App which has been around for quite a few years, and the one at the bottom is the Move Coach [App], the one on the lower right. That app helps folks lose weight. Those are information apps, which means they don't need to log into the VA, they're not looking at personal health information.

The ones I just mentioned, Mobile Blue Button, Summary of Care, Annie and these other apps, they have little locks on them, because those require a special logon in order for you to have access to your secure medical information. That's the DoD self-service logon, known as the DS

Logon. This session introduces DS Logon, which is the logon that you see when starting one of these locked apps. And this is what it looks like.

So as soon as you open one of these secure apps, the ones with the little lock on them, this is the first screen that pops up. It's the DS Logon screen. And we're going to talk about -- more about this DS Logon screen and how you get DS Logon, because after this session, you'll be able to describe the DS Logon and its benefits, compare the DS Logon to the My Health*e*Vet DS Logon and describe how to register for a DS Logon Level 2 (Premium) [Account] which we'll also talk about and securely access new VA Apps for health care that require this level of security.

We also have a variety of resources and things that help you get your DS Logon, if you don't already have one.

So proceeding down the path, we're going to introduce more details about the DS Logon, we're going to talk about the differences with My Health*e*Vet, the different levels of logon accounts and how to register for the Premium Account and where the resources are for getting help if you have one.

There are many apps for Veterans to use without the DS Logon that I mentioned, but the ones that display your personal or protected health information, you must have the secure user ID and password. The DS Logon is the secure identity used to access various DOD and VA websites including eBenefits and mobile apps and the DS Logon must be a Level 2 (Premium) Account, which we will explain. That link that you see on the screen is the link to the page in the VA, in the mobile.va.gov app store for Veterans. And all of the apps that are currently available are shown, and in order to use them, all you have to do is click on the box and it will take you to the page with the app, information about the app, any videos that are there for the app, the training materials for the app, everything is there, plus a button that tells you where to -- how to run the app.

So the DS Logon is not a VA product. It is managed by the Department of Defense. If you were discharged from the service after 1986, you received a DS Logon upon discharge. If you don't have your DS Logon, you don't remember your DS Logon, you forgot your password, you can reapply for the DS Logon and there are ways to refresh the password. We're going to talk about all of those things.

Why can't I use My Health*e*Vet Logon? There are three million people who have logons to My Health*e*Vet. Why are you making me have another logon? Well, you have to understand a little bit about mobile applications. We now have an increased use of mobile devices for quick access throughout the world. And an increase demand for mobile apps. And VA mobile apps provide My Health*e*Vet's most used functions, in addition to a lot of other functions that are not on My Health*e*Vet, like a few that I'm going to talk about in a few minutes.

So the DS Logon is needed to access the newest VA mobile apps, and soon the DS Logon will access the My Health*e*Vet website as well.

So here's another example of mobile apps that have been designed for specific health-related issues. There's Preconception Care. Obviously, who that's for. There's a Mobile Kidney App for use between the kidney physician and the kidney patient, and the transfer [of] information between the two, and obviously that needs to be secure.

The Pressure Ulcer Resource [App] is more of an information app that talks about how to manage wound care, so this variety of apps -- there's about 50 or so apps that are being developed right now at the VA. And like I told you, some are already either released or they're in the process of being released.

There are two kinds of DS Logon accounts. The DS Logon Level 1 (Basic) Account provides limited access to features on some websites. For example, looking up VA benefits on the VA website. The DS Logon Basic Account is not needed to access VA mobile apps that offer general information the Preconception Care App that I just showed you a minute ago. But a DS Logon Level 2 (Premium) Account is required to access any VA App that connects the VA Electronic Health Record, or EHR, with a Premium Account, you can view your personal data, apply for benefits online, check claim status, update address records and access over 55 additional self-service features.

You are eligible for a DS Logon account of either level if you're enrolled in the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System, known as DEERS. If you're not enrolled in DEERS, you need to call this phone number. 800-983-0937 and select Option 2. I called that number myself. I wanted to see what kind of help these folks provide, and they do a very nice job. They know all about the issues, they know all about DS Logon, they know all about DEERS registration. All you need to know is your date of discharge and you're good to go. And they will help you through the process of getting registered in DEERS, but it doesn't end there.

To either verify your DS Logon Level 2 (Premium) Account or to register for one, the best place to start is the website, and you can see that picture in the DS Logon on the left-hand side of the screen looks a lot like the one I showed you earlier, because it's just another way to get in and start the process of registration.

This is the exact screen that comes up when one of these mobile apps that requires DS Logon is started. And as you see this little button on the left-hand side here, it says more DS Logon Options. So one option is, "I Need a DS Logon." The other option is, "Activate my DS Logon," or "Upgrade my DS Logon," you would have that if you have a Level 1 and you need to get a Level 2. But if you don't have a DS Logon or you're not sure, just use the "I need a DS Logon" button and the process begins.

We need to talk about remote proofing. Because in order to give you a secure logon, it's necessary to verify that you're you, or who you are, or to make sure that you are the Veteran that is applying for this access. And this remote -- during the remote proofing quiz, you will have four minutes to select answers to questions. If you answer incorrectly, another question will be asked. And if you're unable to answer the questions after two attempts, you will not be able to continue. You will have to wait 72 hours before you can attempt again.

The remote proofing process asks questions that may seem personal and even confusing. The information is publicly available, but, you know, take a look at this sample. This sample question says, which service company holds your mortgage with these possible answers? If you're an applicatant during a remote proofing, you may be asked what company holds your mortgage, or like this proofing question, you may be asked the name of the service company, not the mortgage company. The service company name may not be listed here. For example, if you selected the organization named on your mortgage statement, the answer you believe to be correct may actually be incorrect. We don't know -- and when I say "We," we mean all of this. We don't know exactly where they're getting this information from, so that's why the names they put for things like mortgage companies and service companies may be different than the ones you're familiar with. You just need to be aware of that.

Here's an easier question. Which cars did you own? And sometimes they ask you questions where the answers don't apply. You never owned a Ford, a Toyota or a Nissan, so it's perfectly correct to check the box "None of the above."

Remote proofing questions were designed to factor in the importance of protecting a patient's personal identification information. That's what we call [the] PII HIPAA Accountability Act, the Health Information Technology Act, those are also designed to protect your data and secure it, so you have to understand that there's a benefit to all of this, and it's all to you, although it is [a] somewhat difficult process to go through in order to have this -- in order to have this happen.

Answering remote proofing questions may take some effort, and they take patience. But understand, that it's worth it. A DS Logon Level 2 (Premium) Account will allow you to access your PII and your PHI, your Personal Health Information in the most secure way possible.

The remote proofing process conducted during the DS Logon Level 2 registration will enable VA to protect your privacy from [a] security breach and your identity from theft.

The registration wizard is -- starts this process. And it will guide you through step-by-step, the information that needs to be entered and the information that's in DEERS that we spoke about earlier. So if you select this link, myaccess.dndc.osc.nil, it will take you to this page, and there's even a Health Center button at the very top in the upper right-hand corner here. And if you click on that box right there, it takes you to a whole series of Q & A, questions and answers on the lower right here, that will answer most of the questions that you might have when you go through this process.

In addition, when you see this link up at the top, there is actually an app on the mobile.va.gov website for -- called DS Logon Education, and it actually takes you through the process, just the way I'm speaking about it now.

I'm giving you an overview on what's required. The DS Logon Education App actually walks you through the process [of] getting a DS Logon Level 2 (Premium) Account, if you don't already have one.

In addition, on the mobile.va.gov website is a DS Logon information page as well.

And it has all of these links, everything that I just spoke about, right there on that DS Logon page right inside the mobile.va.gov website. And lastly, there is an eBenefits video tutorial on YouTube that, once again, goes through this whole explanation of what you need to do in order to get a DS Logon.

So we have lots of sources of help and information, including the Mobile App Service Desk, which is the phone number 877-470-5947, which is open from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Central time. So we have the Mobile App Service Desk, we have the DEERS service desk, we have the video tutorial, we have [the] explanation of DS Logon that's on the mobile.va.gov site, and we have the DoD site that is actually used for you to register for the DS Logon Level 2 if you don't already have one.

And here is all of that information that I just mentioned, all summarized on this one page.

During this session, I hope you learned how to describe the DS Logon and its benefits, compare the DS Logon to the My Health*e*Vet Logon, describe how to register for the DS Logon Level 2 (Premium) Account and be able to access new VA mobile apps securely for access to your health care information, as well as all the variety of DS Logon help sites and resources that are available to you.

And now I'm more than happy to answer questions.

LYN SCHULTES: Okay. Great. And we're seeing a lot of good feedback about some of the points of confusion for Veterans going through the remote proofing and just general DS Logon process. So just a brief reminder for everyone who's listening in, that if we cannot answer your questions during this discussion or if it's outside of Gerry's wheelhouse, we will work on our end to get them answered and share with you at a later time, but we're seeing some great questions come in.

So we will jump into some of those that we've received, Gerry. The first one was going back to some of the apps that you mentioned, can you clarify some of the differences between the informational apps and other ones -- are they mobile websites or actual new apps with new information?

GERRY MARKOWITZ: It's a mix. Some of the information apps -- now, when I say information apps, I mean it's an app that helps you know general information. It does not access your personal information at the VA. It may be an app like the Move Coach [App]. Let's talk about the Move Coach App. The Move Coach App is an app that helps you lose weight. Well, that's an iOS app. There will soon be an Android version of that app, and you would actually download that app to your mobile device, be it a tablet or a smartphone. And you may be entering your own information into that app, because obviously an app that helps you lose weight would keep track of your weight. So you would enter your weight at different times of the day or weekly, however that app tells you to do it. And that information remains on your device, so therefore it's your responsibility to maintain that information in a secure fashion. You don't need a DS Logon to use it, because it doesn't connect to the VA.

The PTSD Coach App is designed, obviously, for people with PTSD, but it helps them cope with that problem, and it gives them suggestions and ways to relax and do things that might help them be able to cope better with that.

And there's a whole series of mental health apps which all fall into that category, none of them access the Veteran's personal information at the VA.

The other apps, like the Annie App and the Mobile Blue Button [App] that I spoke about, now you're accessing your personal information; you're connecting to the VA when you use that app. And those apps are mostly web-based, they're mostly website oriented apps but they're designed to work on any device. They're designed to work using an iPad, a mini iPad, an iPhone, an Android phone; anything that has a browser will use those apps. That's why they were developed in that fashion, so that they would work in just about anything that anybody had in the way of a mobile device.

And those are the ones that require the DS Logon, because they're accessing personal health information.

LYN SCHULTES: Great. Thanks, Gerry. So for these apps, can Veterans download them to their mobile devices so that there's an icon loaded to their desktop?

GERRY MARKOWITZ: They're pretty much on their own -- well, the ones that you download from the iTunes store or the Android store; they will do that as a matter of course. For these apps, like the Mobile Blue Button one, you know, once you've logged into it, once you go to the app store and you log into it, you can copy that link and make your own favorite out of it on your website, you can, you know, create a desktop icon for it, if you're using IE, Internet Explorer or Chrome, so, you know, it's up to the individual user to then take those things that they use frequently and make icons out of it, just like they would make an icon out of anything else.

LYN SCHULTES: Thanks, Gerry. So do all the apps work with both Android and iPhones?

GERRY MARKOWITZ: Yes, because they will -- you can access them from an iPhone, you just go to mobile.va.gov/Veteran/appstore, whatever it is, I'm not looking at it right at the moment, and you would be able to scroll to the page and click on the launch button, and the app will open up right there on your phone or your iPad or your Android device.

LYN SCHULTES: And we have a couple attendees say that they're trying to find the DS Logon App in the VA app store. Where can people find that?

GERRY MARKOWITZ: I can't -- can I go to a different screen, or not?

LYN SCHULTES: Gerry, did we lose you?

GERRY MARKOWITZ: No, my question is -- I'll put it in the chat window. Just give me a sec.

LYN SCHULTES: Okay. Great. So you'll see actually Harold put it in the chat feature, the address for the app store. It's mobile.va.gov/app store.

GERRY MARKOWITZ: And you have to go to the Veteran page. Just a minute. Go ahead. I'm here.

LYN SCHULTES: Okay. Great. And we saw some earlier conversations, Gerry, and potential confusion about Veterans who may have left the service and did not receive a DS Logon. Can you reiterate about some of those Veterans who maybe were enrolled in DEERS, how does this process work for them?

GERRY MARKOWITZ: They have to call DEERS. Step 1, they have to get registered in DEERS. And once they're registered in DEERS, the process for completing the DS Logon will function. It won't function unless -- when they start that process, it verifies in DEERS to verify their eligibility as a discharged Veteran. So step 1 is you have to call DEERS. The phone number that was provided will solve that problem and will get the Veteran registered in DEERS and they're going to ask for the Veteran's date of discharge.

LYN SCHULTES: Great. Thanks, Gerry. And in terms of the remote proofing process, there was a process about remote proofing was allowing two minutes. Has this been increased to four minutes?

GERRY MARKOWITZ: That's what I was told.

LYN SCHULTES: Okay.

GERRY MARKOWITZ: That's why it's there. That's what I was told.

LYN SCHULTES: Okay. And if Veterans are unable to remote proof, and no one at a facility is able to upgrade their DS Logon, what's the next step for them?

GERRY MARKOWITZ: Well, they should be able to go to the local center. You know, the whole problem is a lot of people don't live near those centers, those VA resource centers where they can see someone face-to-face. So then I would call that phone number. I would call that support phone number and ask them, you know, depending upon where that Veteran is located, ask them how they can get assistance in getting this DS Logon and getting this remote proofing completed.

LYN SCHULTES: Okay. So just to confirm, is there an in-person option for Veterans?

GERRY MARKOWITZ: Yes. They should be able to go to the local VAMC and see the My Health*e*Vet coordinator, and they would help them through the process.

LYN SCHULTES: Okay. Great. And we had a question about if there were any plans to give My Health*e*Vet coordinators the option to upgrade in person?

GERRY MARKOWITZ: The answer to that question is, we've discussed this with the My Health*e*Vet coordinators, and, you know, this process could take a half hour, it could take 45 minutes, it could take 10 minutes, if they know the answers to the questions right off the top of their head. So all of the My Health*e*Vet coordinators won't necessarily have the time to dedicate to every individual that would come forward to do that. It's best if they try and do it online using the resources that are available online and the telephone support resources. That's their best solution.

LYN SCHULTES: Okay. Great. And we're getting lots of feedback in the chat box.

GERRY MARKOWITZ: Okay.

LYN SCHULTES: On this, so... Yeah. It seems like some people have had some different experiences. So one question that we had, Gerry, was what do Veterans do when they get locked out of the system because they've forgotten their password or they can't answer some of those remote proofing questions?

GERRY MARKOWITZ: Well, as it says in here, you know, they've got to wait 72 hours, and they can go back and try again. That's one thing they can do. The other thing -- the only other thing that they can do is very limited in what they can do. They have to be able to call for help, and call the -- I'm coming -- I keep coming back to that same -- to the same -- because that phone number with the Option 2, that is the one that goes to eBenefits because they're the ones that are the most helpful with getting them online. I don't want to -- I want to be very specific about the My Health*e*Vet coordinator. You know, they're there to answer questions and to help, but they're not there to sit face-to-face with a Veteran and walk them through the process of getting a DS Logon. That's not -- they can't do that. The best they can do is give them this page, you know, and try and help them with their problem and direct them to the right resource for them to get whatever assistance they need.

LYN SCHULTES: Great. Thanks, Gerry. I'm seeing multiple people typing in the chat feature, so a reminder, if you do have a specific question for Gerry about this technology or the apps; please include that in the chat box.

Gerry, an additional question that came up, somebody asked if there was a way that we can identify which Veterans do have a DS Logon. I'm not sure who this question was from. Or at least the number of Veterans that might have it in the system?

GERRY MARKOWITZ: [Indiscernible] on the call, I tried to get this information and was unable to get it. It's not something that the VA has; it's something that the DoD has. And we've not been able to find that out. But we do know from experience that a lot of people who try to use these apps do not have their DS Logon. I mean, think about who they are, right? Most of the patients that would be using these functions are the older ones; they're the ones that were discharged way before 1986. So they don't even have a DS Logon, and they need to register for one.

And that's the situation that we're in. There's a need for these folks to understand what they need to do to get their DS Logon so they can use these apps. Most of them don't have one.

LYN SCHULTES: Okay. Great, and I've seen in the chat feature some feedback about making sure that all of the answers that were discussed during this presentation are included. They will be, once this is live on the VA mobile website, so you can refer back to the conversation that way.

GERRY MARKOWITZ: There are a lot of good questions here, and maybe we need to enhance this presentation and answer more of them during the presentation. And I appreciate that. This feedback is very valuable. Thank you.

LYN SCHULTES: Great. Well, we'll give folks just a couple more minutes to type in any specific questions that they have in the chat feature, and, again, if you have questions that you want to share with us that we can follow-up with you after the presentation, we're happy to. But we'll give a last call for everyone, if you've got any questions, type them now.

Okay. And just a reminder, we've gotten some questions about why it takes a little while to post this presentation. We're working through to finalize, making sure it's compliant and accessible to everyone, so that's why it takes just a little bit of extra time to ensure that, so we thank you for your patience on that point.

And I see some additional folks typing, so we welcome any final questions.

All right. I see a couple people still typing, so let us know if you have questions. Otherwise, this has been a really good discussion. We know the process can be confusing, so your feedback, as Gerry said, is extremely helpful in this process. And we'll give folks just another minute to type their last questions and then we'll wrap it up.

Okay. I think the last question.

GERRY MARKOWITZ: How can DS Logon access My Health*e*Vet? It can't right now, but it will be changed. My Health*e*Vet will -- shortly. And I don't know what exactly shortly means, but shortly be able to accept the DS Logon, but it doesn't work the other way around. The apps cannot accept the My Health*e*Vet log in. And I'll give you the technical answer, because everybody wants to know why, why, why.

The answer is My Health*e*Vet goes directly to VistA to get its answer and the mobile apps. There needs to be a relationship between the Veteran's personal ID and where it is maintained in the corporate warehouse. It's a different sort of data being used, the accepted number of folks that are going to use this variety of applications, so that's why it's a little different process, it works a little differently, and it also, by doing it this way, helps us identify those Veterans that are serviced in multiple locations, because all of that information is maintained actually in the DS Logon identity system. It's really the reason behind it, so... That's why.

LYN SCHULTES: Great. And just a reminder for everyone, if we somehow missed your question, we'll review the chat history and make sure that we post any of those additional answers with the presentation.

And with that, I think -- I'm not seeing any additional questions, so thank you all for participating today. We're going to be putting up a link shortly on the screen for you to let us know any additional feedback that you have, as well as if there are any additional topics you'd like to hear about in future sessions.

So thanks, again, everyone for your time, your thoughtful feedback, and I hope everyone has a great weekend. Thanks so much.