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## **VA Mobile Discussion Series: Preconception Care and Caring4Women Veterans Apps**

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Women's Health Services, VHA  
Friday, June 26<sup>th</sup> 2015**



**VA  
HEALTH  
CARE**

Defining  
**EXCELLENCE**  
in the 21st Century

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- Introduction to the VA Mobile Health Provider Program
- About the Preconception Care and Caring4Women Veterans Apps
- Accessing the Apps
- Upcoming Women's Health Apps
- Lessons Learned
- Additional Resources

# What is the VA Mobile Health Provider Program?

**Phase 1:  
2014**



**Phase 2:  
2015**



**Phase 3:  
2015**

**Begin to deliver  
devices to up  
to 11,000 VA  
care teams  
members**

**Release VA-developed  
apps for VA care  
teams**



**Transition device  
procurement decisions  
to the field**



# Feedback from VA care team members indicates the tablets are already enhancing their care delivery

## VA Medical Centers with Mobile Devices (2014)



Read program Success Stories to learn more about how mobile devices are enhancing care delivery:

<https://mobile.va.gov/providers/successstories>

**“A Mobile Device is “Worth a Thousand Words” in Patient Education”**

-Dr. Leslee Davis

Women's Clinic Medical Director  
Orlando VA Medical Center

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# WHS Mobile Applications

WHS App Name	Target Audience	Estimated Completion
Preconception Care	Providers	Summer 2015
Caring4WomenVeterans	Providers, fellows, residents new to VA or new to treating women	Summer 2015
Maternity Care Coordinator Support (MCC Support)	Maternity Care Coordinators, providers	Fall/Winter 2015
VA Moms	Women Veterans	Fall/Winter 2015
SafeWomenRx	Providers	Fall/Winter 2015



# Preconception Care

**WHY?** To optimize women Veterans health *before* pregnancy. Support providers with a national tool for preconception care.

**AUDIENCE:** VA and non-VA Providers

**GOAL:** Support integration of preconception care in all health care interactions.

**FUNCTIONALITY:** Informational

**COLLABORATORS:** WHS, Mental health



# How can the Preconception Care app help care team members?

- The app is intended for use by both VA and non-VA care team members to:
  - Review a healthy lifestyle checklist with patients that addresses topics such as alcohol, drug and tobacco use.
  - Find talking points to guide discussions on medical and mental health issues, general health concerns and risk factors specific to pre-pregnancy and pregnancy decisions.
  - Share resources and evidence-based information with patients about services and programs from VA and other key organizations.



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Topics

Reproductive Life Plan

Reproductive History

Birth Control Methods

Concurrent Health Issues

Family/Genetic History & Risk

Lifestyle Factors Checklist

Medication Use & Risk Mitigation

Men & Preconception Health

Vaccinations

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Topics

Reproductive Life Plan

Planning for pregnancy (or to prevent pregnancy) reduces adverse pregnancy outcomes and improves the health of women and their families. Other parts of well-woman care, such as taking a complete sexual history, also inform this discussion. The CDC suggests using the following open-ended questions to encourage patients to consider their reproductive wishes and plans. Discussion of your patient's answers also provides opportunities for education about contraception and other health issues that can impact her well being during pregnancy.

**Would you like to have any (more) children at any time in your future?**

Yes, I would like to have (more) children in the future

No, I do not wish to have (more) children in the future


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## Reproductive History

The goal of taking a thorough reproductive history is to identify factors that may increase risk during a future pregnancy and actions that may mitigate these risks.

## Questions to ask:

- History of recurrent pregnancy loss

[click to expand contents](#) 

- History of ectopic pregnancy

[click to expand contents](#) 


- History of preterm birth

[click to expand contents](#) 

- History of second-trimester pregnancy loss

[click to expand contents](#) 

- History of cervical surgery (LEEP/Cone Biopsy)

[click to expand contents](#) 

- Known uterine anomaly (fibroids, septum or

## Reproductive History

## Questions to ask:

- History of recurrent pregnancy loss

[click to collapse contents](#) 

- Recurrent pregnancy loss is the occurrence of 3 or more consecutive losses of a clinically recognized pregnancy prior to the 20th week of gestation
- Try to identify underlying cause of losses:
  - Start with a thorough history including pregnancy history as well as medical history and physical
  - Evaluate for parent karyotype abnormalities
  - Assess for presence of uterine anomalies (sonohysterogram)
  - Consider assessing for antiphospholipid syndrome
  - Assess thyroid function

## Birth Control Methods

## Contraceptive Methods from Most Effective to Least Effective

Extremely Effective

Highly Effective

Very Effective

Effective and Less Effective

Emergency Contraception

## Additional Contraceptive Information

Relative Risks of Contraceptive Use

Where to Order Contraceptives

## Extremely Effective

IUD –  
levonorgestrel  
(e.g. Mirena,  
Skyla)

&lt;1

Use up to 5 years. May have lighter, infrequent, or absent menses. Rapid return of fertility after removal.

IUD – Copper T  
(e.g. ParaGard)

&lt;1

Use up to 10 years. May have heavier, more painful menses initially. Rapid return of fertility after removal.

Tubal sterilization

&lt;1

Permanent. Requires surgical procedure.

Partner's  
vasectomy

&lt;1

Permanent with that partner. Ineffective with other partners.

Lactational  
amenorrhea for  
first 6 months after  
birth

1-2

Requires exclusive breastfeeding during first 6 months after delivery. Effectiveness declines thereafter.

\*PPY = pregnancies per year that occur among 100 women with typical use of the method.

## Concurrent Health Issues

Asthma	➤
Chronic Pain/Narcotic Dependence	➤
Diabetes	➤
HIV	➤
Hypercoaguable Conditions & Thrombophilia	➤
Hypertension	➤
Lupus	➤
Obesity	➤
Renal Disease	➤
Seizure Disorders	➤
Sexually Transmitted Infections	➤

## Hypertension

- Counsel on Increased Risk with Pregnancy  
click to expand contents +
- Management  
click to expand contents +
- Contraception Counseling  
click to expand contents +

[Expand / Collapse All Content](#)



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Preconception Tools & Resources

- Preconception Tools & Resources
  - For Providers
  - For Patients

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Provider Preconception Resources

- Before, Between & Beyond Pregnancy- National Preconception Curriculum and Resources Guide for Clinicians  
click to expand contents
- CDC Reproductive Life Plan Tool for Health Professionals  
click to expand contents
- CDC Contraceptive Medical Eligibility Criteria  
click to expand contents
- Genetic considerations for a woman's pre-conception evaluation - National Guidelines Clearinghouse, AHRQ  
click to expand contents
- Intimate Partner Violence Resources  
click to expand contents

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# Caring4WomenVeterans

**AUDIENCE:** VA and non-VA Providers

**GOAL:** Provide education on the unique needs of women Veterans

**FUNCTIONALITY:** Informational only

**COLLABORATORS:** WHS, Primary Care, Mental Health, Homelessness



*Caring4WomenVeterans*

ABOUT  
THIS APP

About Women Veterans



What To Ask



Common Veteran Issues



Transition to Civilian Life



Additional Resources




# How will the Caring4Women Veterans app help care team members?

- The app is intended for use by both VA and non-VA care team members to:
  - Learn which particular health issues and conditions are common to a specific era of service.
  - View screening and treatment guidelines for women Veterans who have experienced Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and Military Sexual Trauma (MST).
  - Share helpful, relevant resources with women Veterans who are transitioning to civilian life.


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## About Women Veterans


### Facts About Women Veterans



### Women Veteran Population Growth



### Snapshot History of Women in the U.S. Military



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## Facts About Women Veterans

male counterparts.

- A greater proportion of women Veterans are Black or Hispanic than their male counterparts.
- Women Veterans are less likely to be married than their male counterparts.
- In FY 2009 and FY 2010 PTSD, hypertension, and depression were the top three diagnostic categories for women Veterans treated by VHA.
- About 1 in 5 women seen in VHA respond "yes" when screened for Military Sexual Trauma (MST).

### Women Veterans of Operation Enduring Freedom, Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation New Dawn (OEF/OIF/OND)

- Women make up nearly 11.6 percent of OEF/OIF/OND Veterans.
- 57% of women OEF/OIF/OND Veterans have received VA health care; of these, 89.8 percent have used VA health care more than once.
- Nearly 51% of female OEF/OIF/OND Veterans who used VA care during FY 2002-2011 were born in or after 1970 (aged 43 or younger) compared to nearly 48 percent of male OEF/OIF/OND Veterans.

### Women in the Military

- Women who have served in the military don't always identify themselves as Veterans.

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What To Ask


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# Have you ever served in the military?

Why Ask?



Questions to Ask



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Questions To Ask

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## Have you ever served in the military?

### Location and Role

- What branch and what was your rank?
- When did you serve?
- What were your duties in the service?
- Were you deployed?
- Where were you deployed?

### Experiences

- Did you see combat, enemy fire, or casualties?
- Did you ever become ill while you were in the service?
- Did you seek help?
- What were you exposed to?  
*Examples: Chemical (pollution, solvents, etc.), Biological (infectious disease), Physical (radiation, heat, vibration, noise, etc.).*
- Were you a prisoner of war?
- Ask about symptoms of PTSD, depression, or exposure to Military Sexual Trauma (MST). See this app's sections on PTSD and MST for more info.

### VA Care

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Common Veteran Issues

Physical Health Issues By Era

Women Veterans and Suicide

Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

Military Sexual Trauma (MST)

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Military Sexual Trauma (MST)

VA website with information and resources on Military Sexual Trauma

What is MST?

What Can Providers Do?

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### Iraq War and Afghanistan War

Iraq War (OIF/OND) – (2003 – 2011) and  
Afghanistan War (OEF) – (2001 - present)

### Gulf War

(1990 –1991)

### Vietnam War

(1965- 1975)

### Cold War

(1945-1991)

### Korean War

(1950- 1953)

### World War II

(1939- 1945)

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### Gulf War 1990 – 1991

#### Burns

#### Chemical & Biological Weapons during the Gulf War

#### Depleted Uranium (DU)

#### Embedded Fragments (shrapnel)

#### Heat Injury

#### Immunizations & Medications

#### Infectious Diseases

#### Nerve Agents

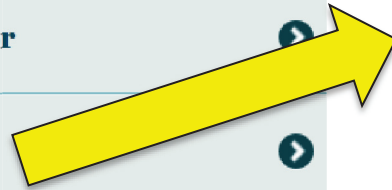
#### Oil Well Fires/Smoke

#### Particulate Matter

#### Pesticides

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# Accessing the Apps

- Once the apps are released (tentatively mid-July) the direct download link for Apple/Android stores, and training materials such as a User Manual, Slideshow and FAQs will be available at:
  - Preconception Care:  
<https://mobile.va.gov/training/preconception-care>.
  - Caring4Women Veterans:  
<https://mobile.va.gov/training/caring-4-women-veterans>.

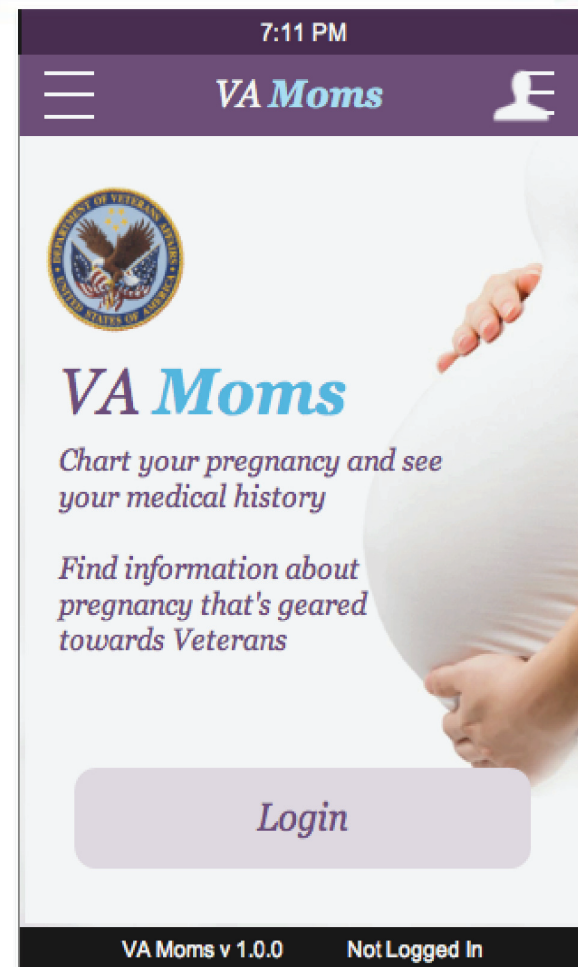
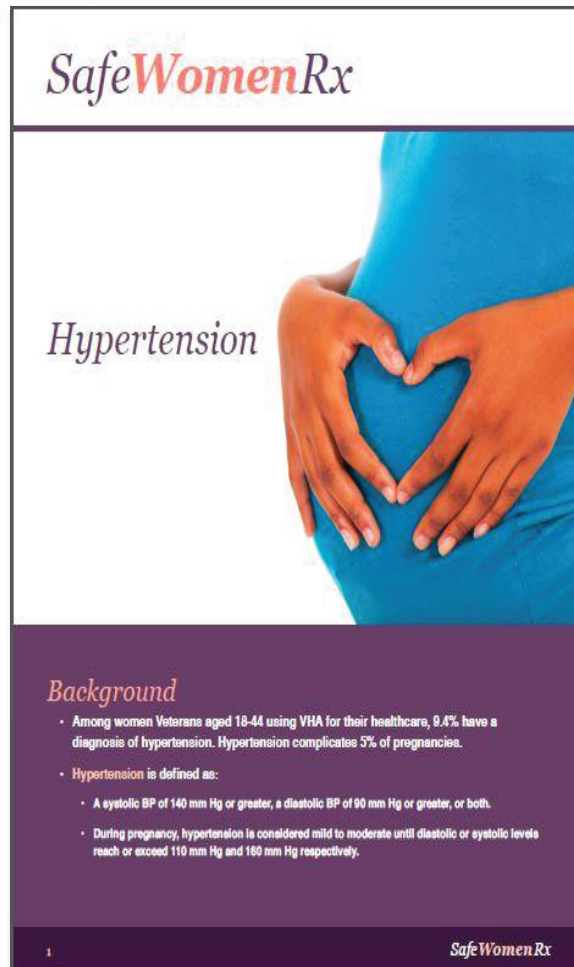


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# Upcoming Women's Health Apps



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# Lessons Learned

1. Understanding roles and expectations
2. Realistic expectations (Business Owners)
3. Know the key players and involve them early
4. Sprint review and agile process not always agile
5. IT developers responsible for functionality development – not medical editing
6. Defects vs. Bugs vs. Enhancements
7. Timelines
8. Be ready to hit the ground running
9. Making changes

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# Additional Resources

- Explore and access additional apps developed by VA Mobile, free for both care team members and patients on the VA App Store: <https://mobile.va.gov/appstore>.
- For more information about the VHA's office of Women's Health Services and to view additional resources available for care team members working with women Veterans, visit: <http://www.womenshealth.va.gov/>.



# Contact Information

- For questions about the VHA's office of Women's Health Services apps, or to report content issues or suggested revisions, please contact the VA Mobile help desk at (877) 470-5947 (available weekdays 7 a.m.-7 p.m. CT).

# Questions?



# Thank you!

What future topics would you like to discuss?  
Let us know by providing feedback below:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/QM8ZJHN>

Join us for next month's presentation July 24  
on the new 311VET App

