



Annie

*Clinicians Talk to
Patients about Annie*



Meet Annie

Annie is an automated text messaging program that promotes patient self-care and can be used by Veterans with a smartphone or basic phone that offers texting. With 9 out of 10 Veterans having a cell phone, Annie can connect with patients no matter where they reside or what type of mobile phone they use.

Annie's goal is to engage patients to become more active in their health and their care. Patients who have a chronic condition can benefit from motivational messages and prompts to track their health. Using algorithms, Annie sends messages and receives replies from patients that can include blood pressure, weight and other measures. These algorithms are known as protocols within Annie, and clinicians can assign the protocols that best fit patients' care plans. Messages and patient replies are stored in the Annie system where clinicians and Veterans can view texts and readings as needed. Annie can also send broadcast messages from a VA medical facility to notify Veterans of important announcements (e.g., flu clinic dates).

NOTE: Annie is for patient self-care and not for direct texting between Veterans and staff. For full details on how to use Annie, please visit mobile.va.gov/app/annie-app-clinicians.

Annie is named after Lieutenant Annie G. Fox, the first woman to receive the Purple Heart for combat. She was Chief Nurse in the Army Nurse Corps at Hickman Field, Pearl Harbor. Annie is modeled after Flo, for Florence Nightingale, a successful National Health Service program in the U.K.





VA health care teams who use Annie need to have a conversation about consent, so that patients agree to the terms of the Annie program. Patients are enrolled using the Annie App for Clinicians, which guides the discussion.

When registering a patient and each time a new protocol is assigned, patients need to agree to participate and understand the basics of the protocol, including benefits, content of the messages (PHI, PII, condition), and that:

- Using Annie is voluntary and is designed to support patient self-care
- Annie messages are automated and not regularly monitored by the health care team
- Annie is not the right place to ask for help. Patients should call their health care teams directly with health concerns
- SMS text messages are not secure and there could be costs for sending and receiving texts
- Collection of a patient’s information by Annie is subject to federal law
- Sending Start and Stop begins and ends participation in the program

After receiving a patient’s verbal consent, please note the patient’s participation in the medical record.

With regard to Scope of Practice considerations, only licensed clinicians, such as the following, practicing within the licensure that they hold may solicit verbal consent from a patient to assign a protocol:

Licensed Clinicians	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Licensed Practical Nurses (limited)* • Nurse Practitioners • Pharmacists • Physicians • Physician Assistants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Registered Dietitians • Registered Nurses • Social Workers • Therapists

- Licensed clinicians are responsible for abiding by their relevant State Practice Act and any laws governing their profession and applicable to their location.
- *An LPN can obtain informed consent, if the protocol is ordered by a physician, registered nurse, or other appropriate clinician, and if the state in which the LPN is practicing allows it.
- A clinician need not be in the Annie system when obtaining a patient’s consent. If another team member will complete enrollment and assignment of a protocol, then the licensed clinician should create an order in CPRS (the medical record) to initiate. In most cases, the Authorizing Clinician will be the person who received the patient’s consent. The Assigner will be the person the Authorizer ordered to assign the protocol. The Authorizer should document in an appropriate manner that a protocol will be assigned and consent was received.
- All clinical team members can review responses sent to Annie from VA patients.

If you notice any technical glitches when using Annie, please report the issue to **1-844-482-6624**. Your feedback will help us improve the app.

More information and materials about Annie can be found at:

mobile.va.gov/app/annie-app-veterans
mobile.va.gov/app/annie-app-clinicians