U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Connected Care: A Year in review

Presenter:
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Presenter

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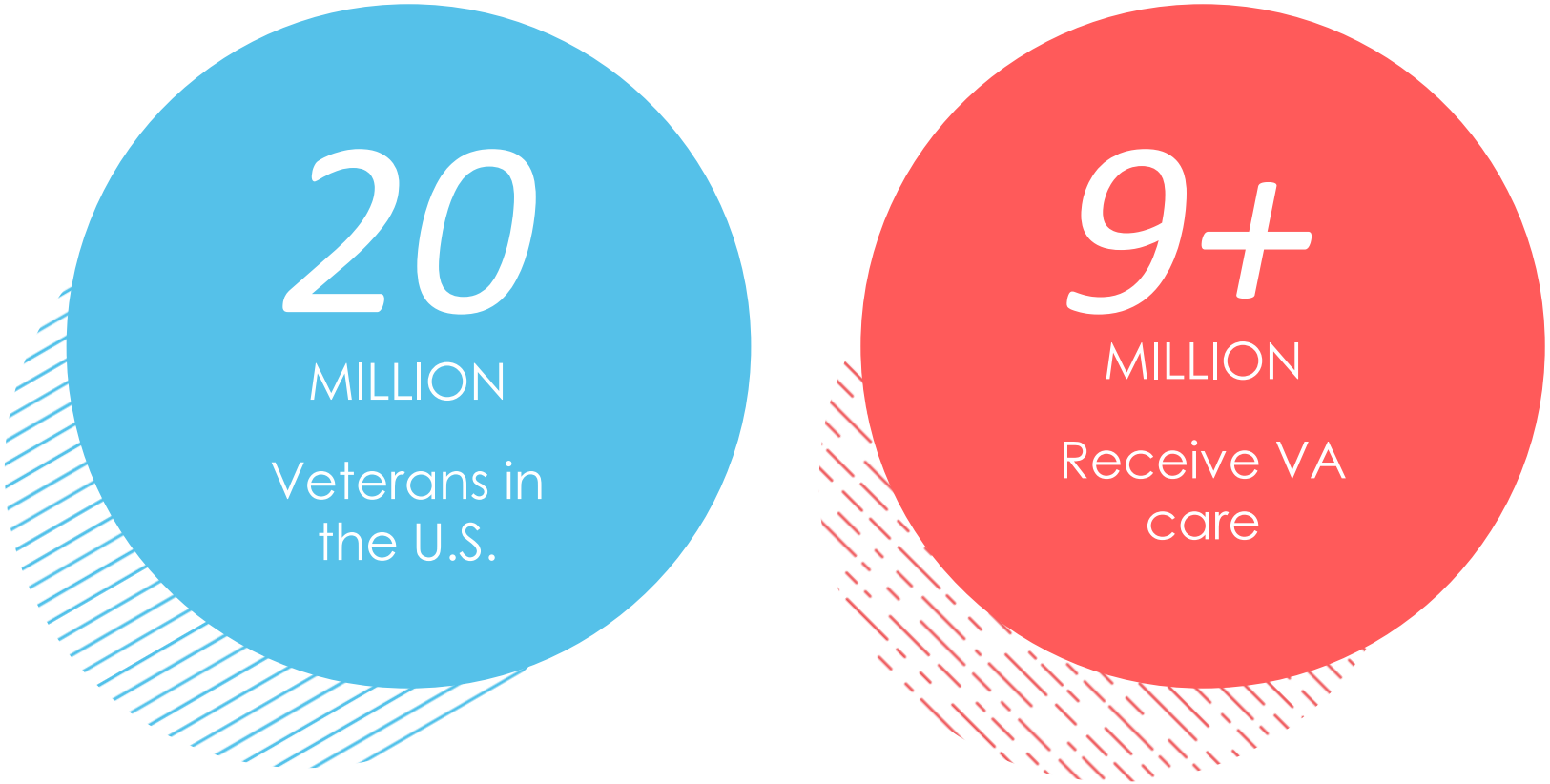
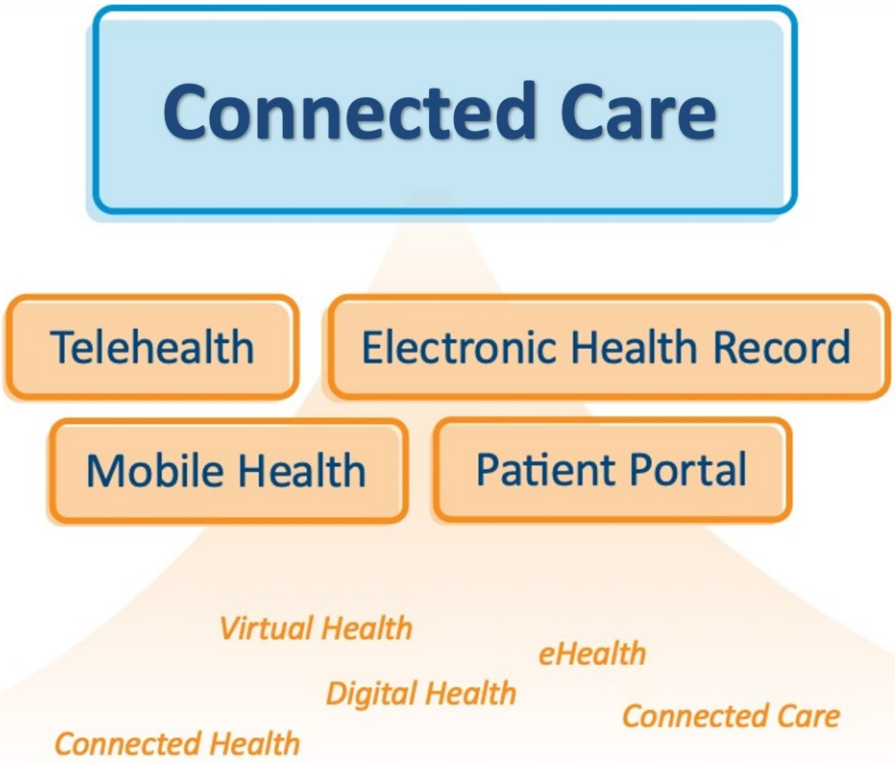
Patient Care Services, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

VA Overview



Virtual Care



VA Connected Care

VA Connected Care – Our Priorities

Bringing care to the Veteran

Accessibility

- Video care, secure email, telephone care – available in all ambulatory services for Veterans and caregivers to access from their preferred location
- Asynchronous modalities of care that can be used between scheduled visits
- Enhanced Veteran communication channels with their care teams (e.g. clinical chat, secure messaging, text)

Matching clinical supply and demand

Capacity

- Resource hubs for primary care, mental health, and other high- volume specialty services, accessible as a shared telehealth service, delivered across VA facilities.
- Increased clinic efficiency, resulting from more efficient just-in-time resolution of simple health issues or transactions through virtual modalities.

Providing the right care at the right time

Quality

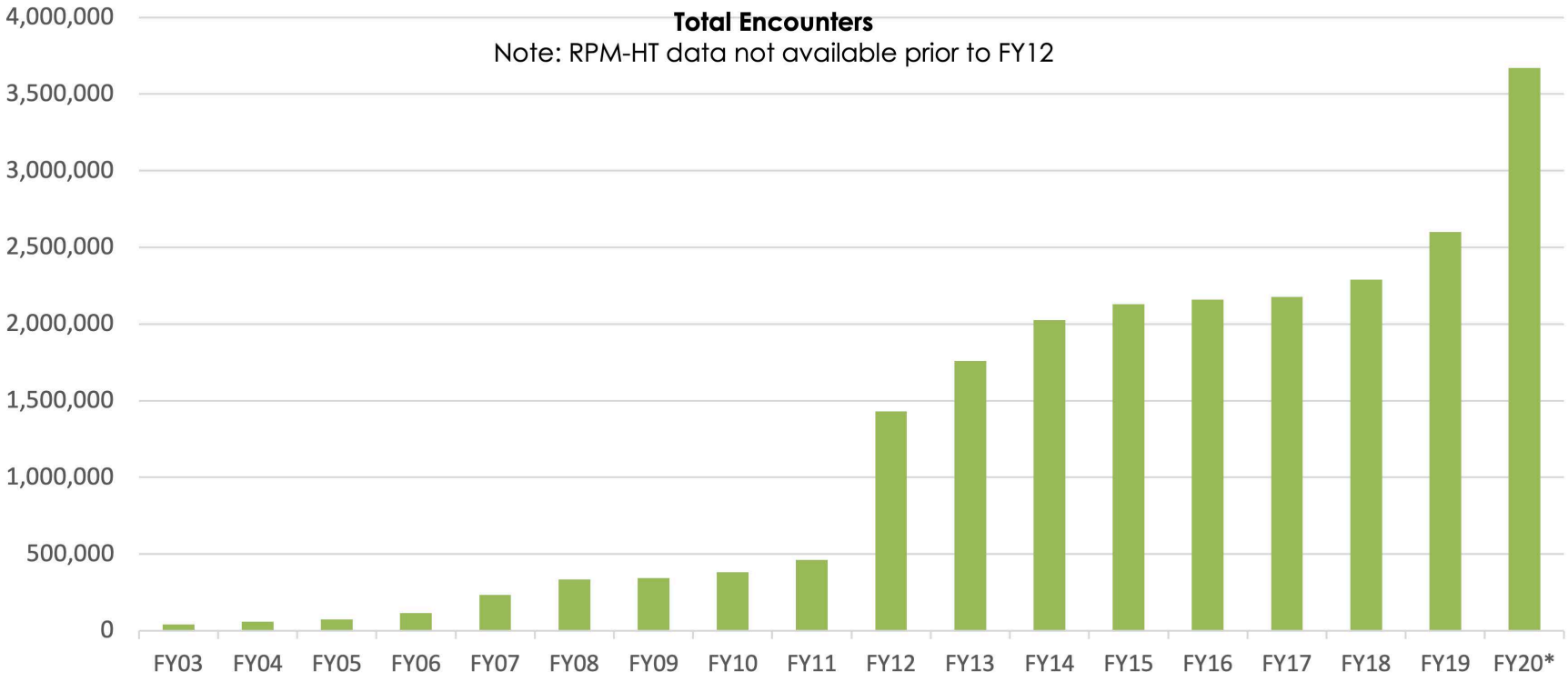
- Expert consultation & coordination of services that are difficult to find, expensive to manage, or low volume in any given market.
- Promote self-management of health and proactively engage patients using digital health tools that leverage analytics
- Reduce hospitalizations & emergency visits through remote monitoring

COVID

Changing VA & Healthcare

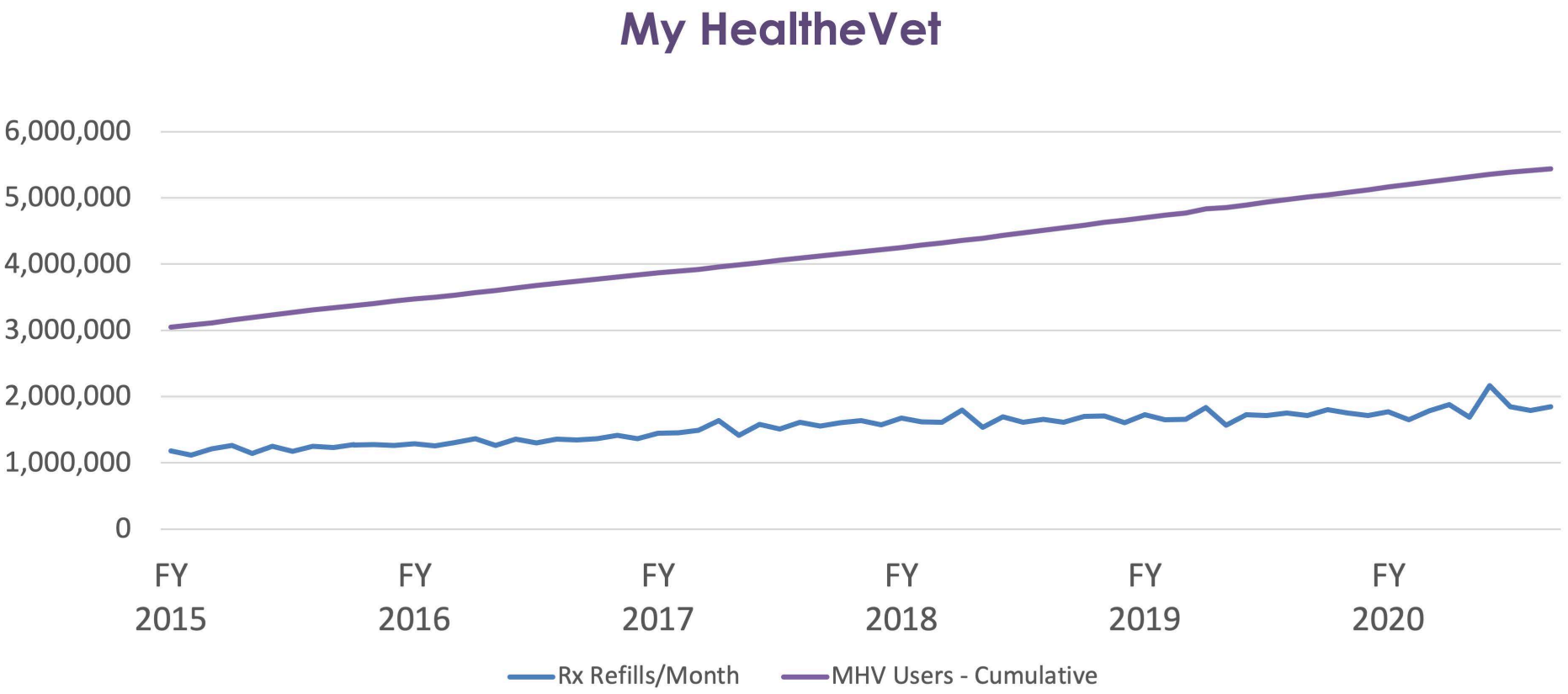
Growth in VA Connected Care Services

Telehealth



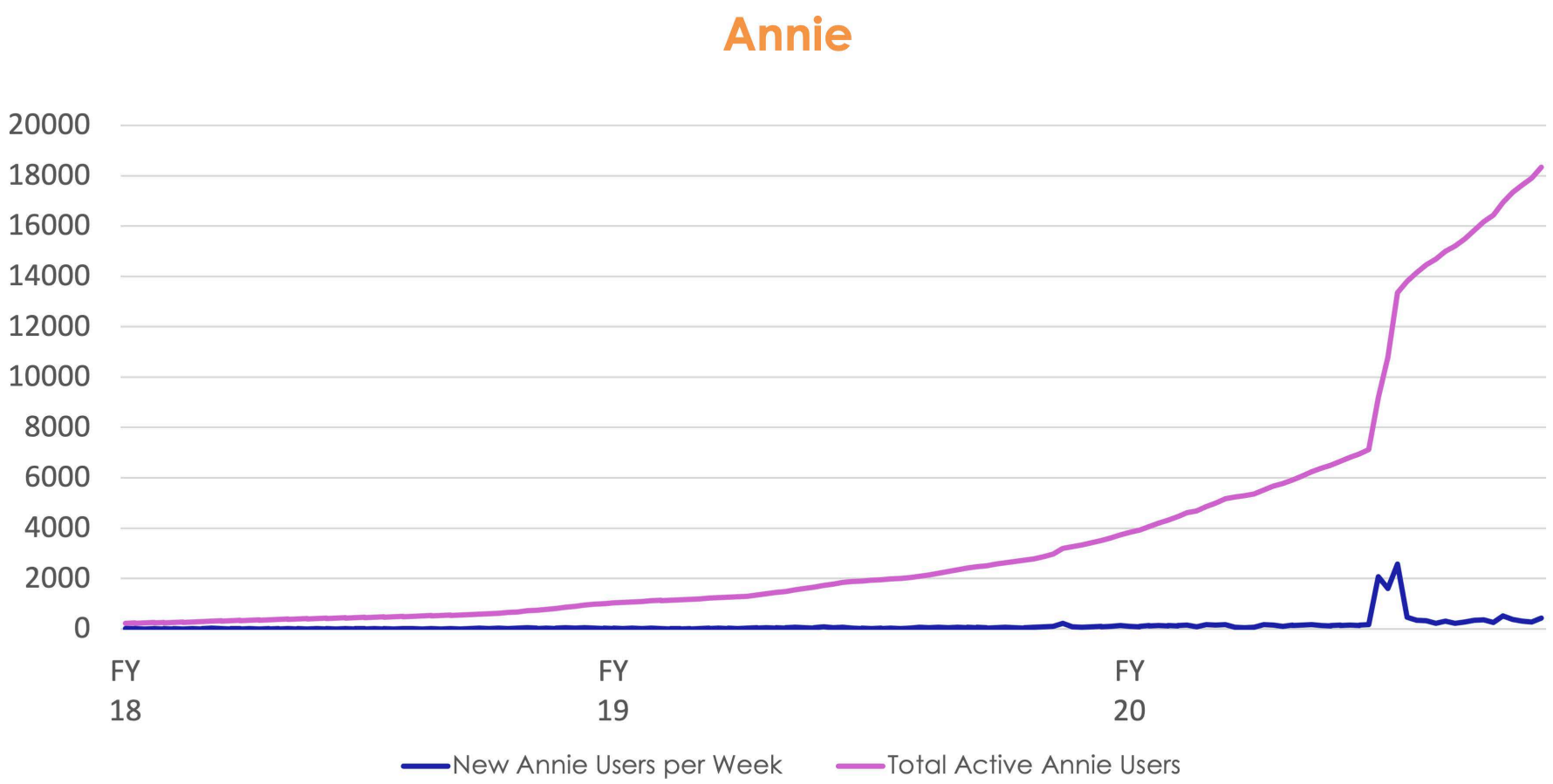
(Department of Veterans Affairs, 2021)

Growth in VA Connected Care Services



(Department of Veterans Affairs, 2021)

Growth in VA Connected Care Services



(Department of Veterans Affairs, 2021)

Increase in Provider Utilization

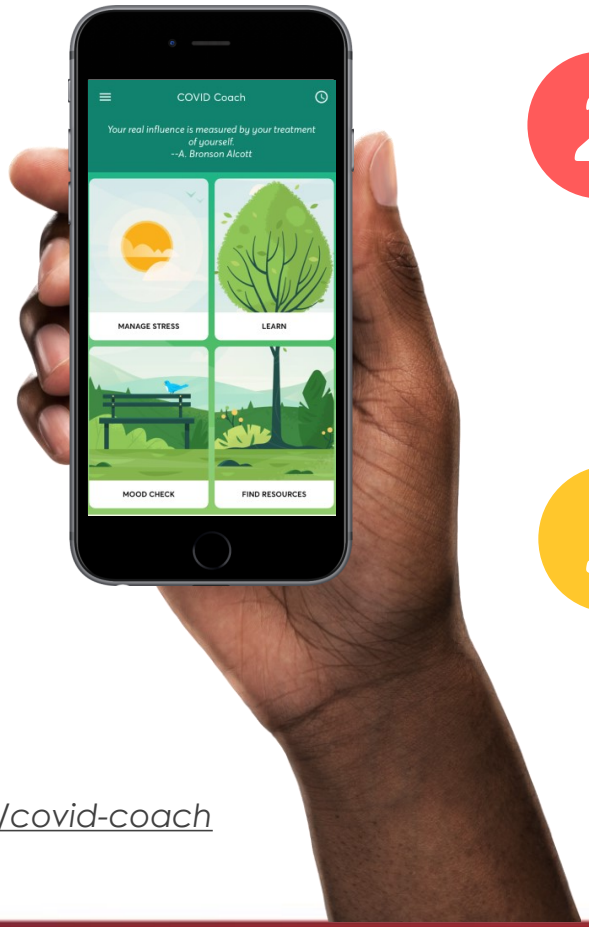
- **64% to 94%** - % of VA primary care providers that had conducted at least 1video telehealth visit before and after COVID

- **67% to 98%** - % of VA mental health providers that had conducted at least 1video telehealth visit before and after COVID

Our Tools and Our Lessons

COVID Coach

Managing Stress related to COVID



Learn more at:

www.mobile.va.gov/app/covid-coach

1

Education

Education on impact of COVID, how to stay safe and healthy, and ways to build resilience

2

Tools for Managing Stress

Tools for self-care and to improve emotional well-being and trackers to check mood and measure growth toward personal goals.

3

Resources

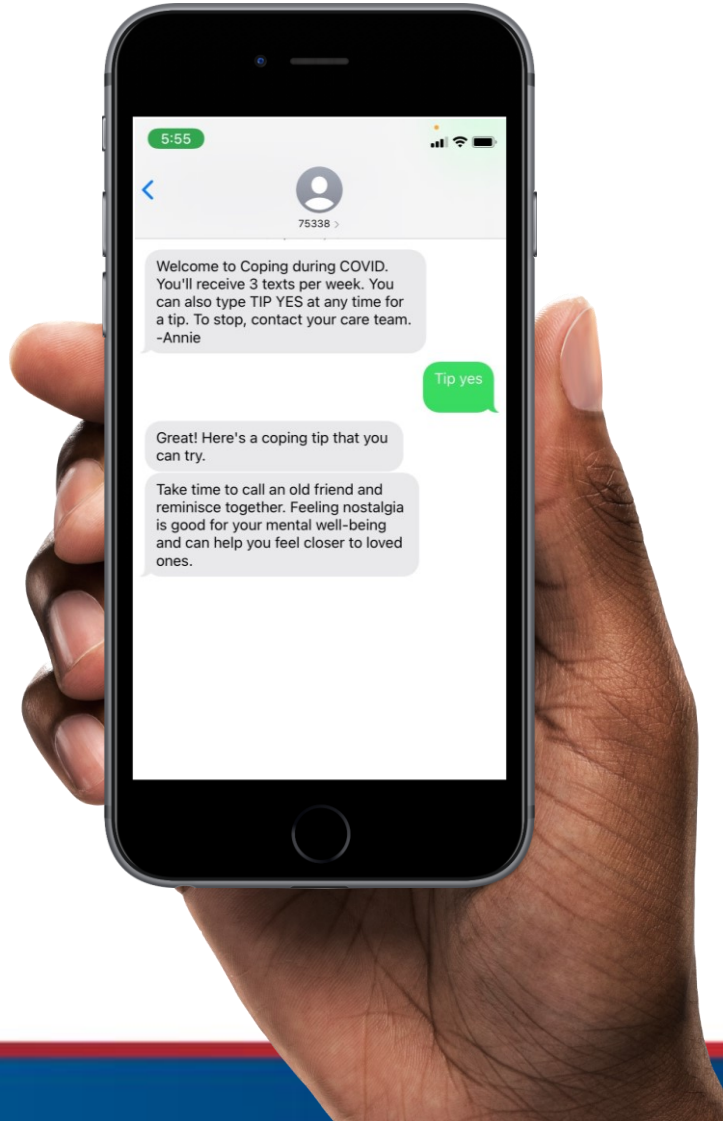
Wide range of resources including crisis support, substance use support, meeting food and housing needs, local COVID information, support for parents, caregivers, healthcare workers, veterans and service members

Automated text messages for COVID

"Annie" is the VA's automated text message platform

Learn more at:

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

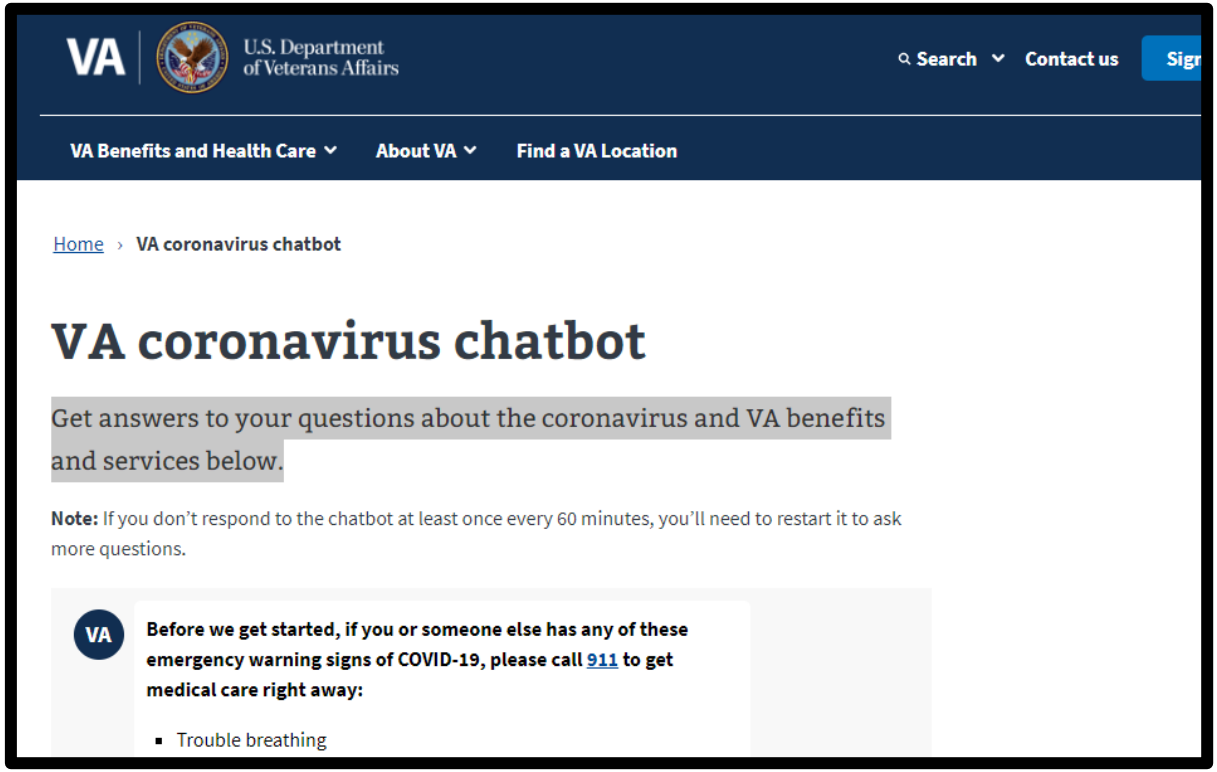


Let's Test Annie

Text keyword ANNIE to 1-844-480-0303

VA Coronavirus Chatbot

Get answers to questions about COVID, VA benefits and services.



Learn more at:

www.va.gov/coronavirus-chatbot/

VA Video Connect Now

Streamlined access

VVC NOW provides VVC links via a text message and/or by email to both the Veteran and clinician.

Learn more at:

www.staff.apps.va.gov/vvc-now/

Connected Care Academy

One stop access to all virtual care training

Learn more at:
https://vaots.blackboard.com/

Telehealth Expansion in 2020

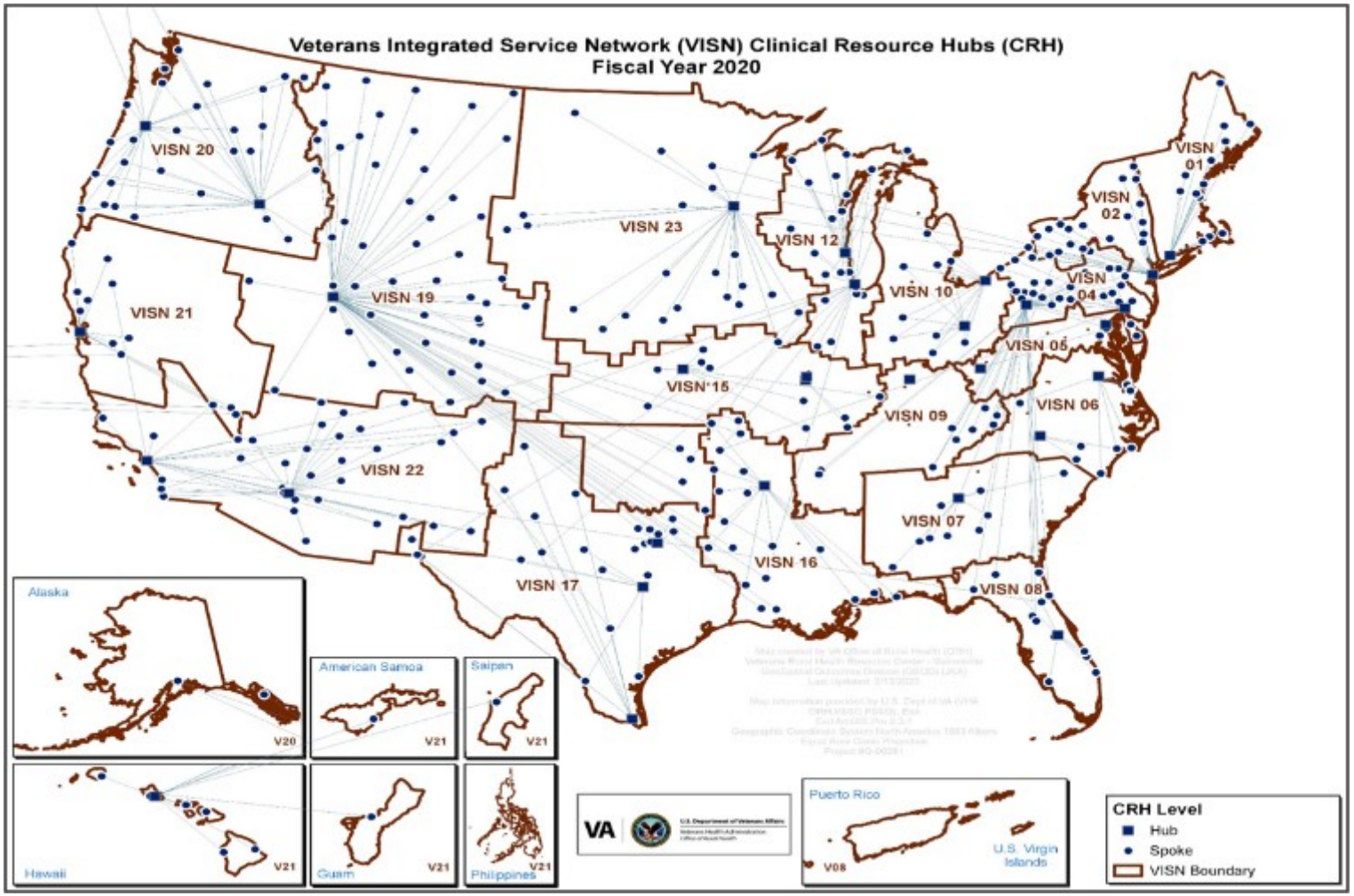
- Maintaining continuity of care – quickly shifting to remote delivery of care and remote work for staff
- Increasing access to tools/resources – quickly deploying necessary hardware and software for staff and patients
- Expanding workforce trained in virtual care – quickly ramping up virtual care training for healthcare staff

VA Tele-Critical Care

Resource sharing across the enterprise to increase access and quality

Clinical Resource Hubs

Resource sharing across the enterprise to increase access and quality



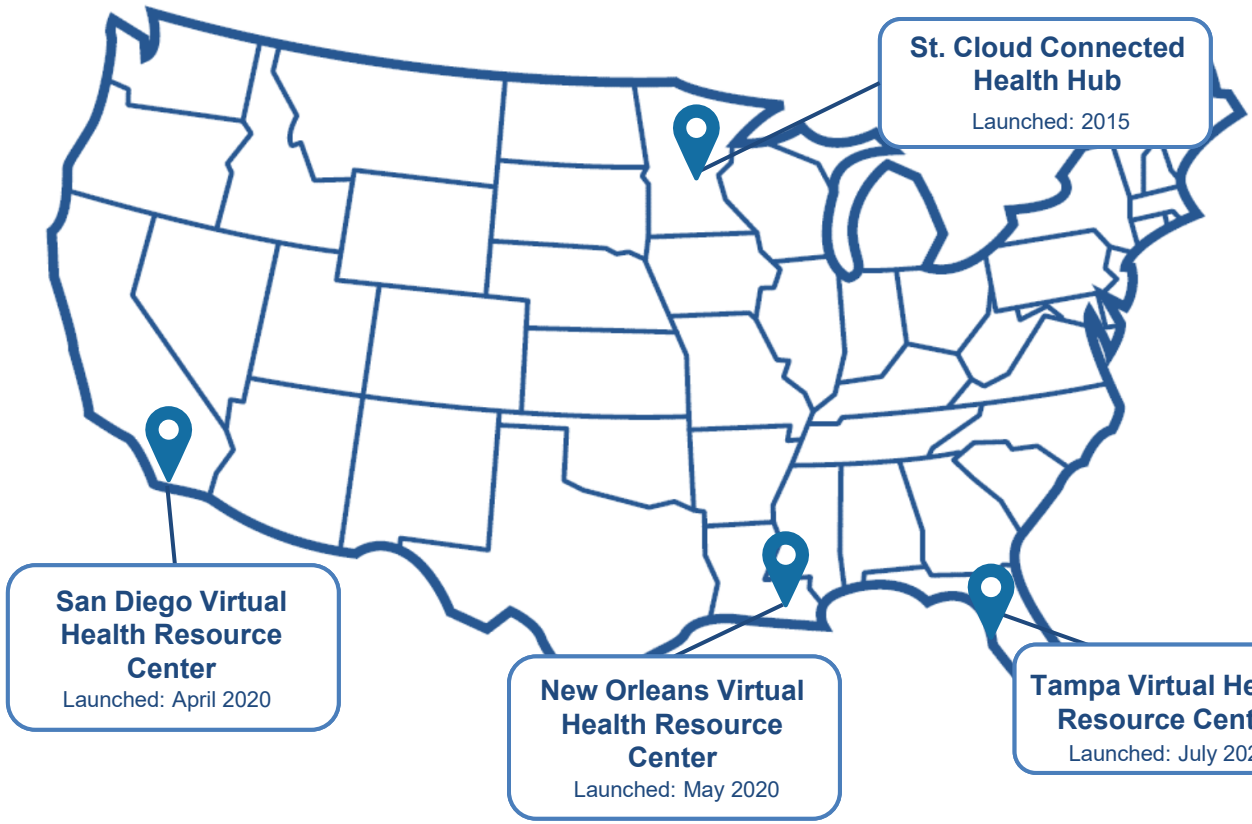
VA Virtual Health Resource Centers

Provide support to Veterans, Veteran Families and Caregivers, and VA staff in the set up and use of virtual care tools.

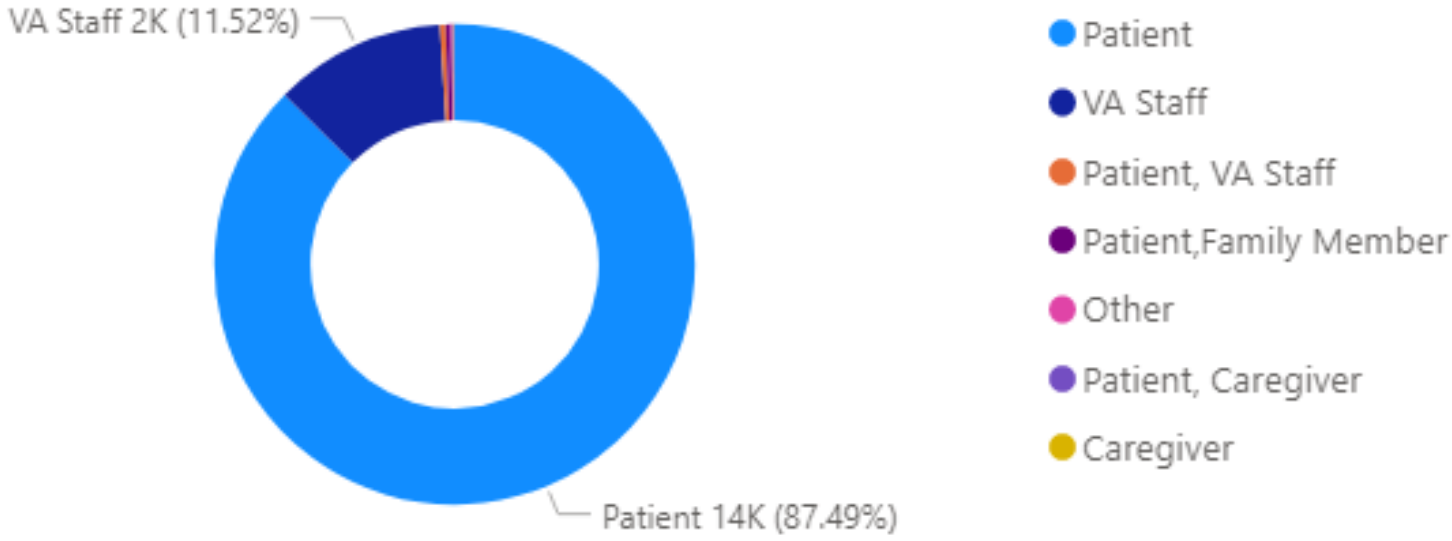
Goals:

1. Provide education and training to Veterans and VA staff to increase knowledge and skills for use of virtual health care tools
2. Provide Veterans and VA staff consultations, coaching and hands-on experience using virtual health tools
3. Provide access to materials and resources to increase awareness and use of virtual health care tools to Veterans and VA Staff

VHRC Phone Line:
1-844-813-4361

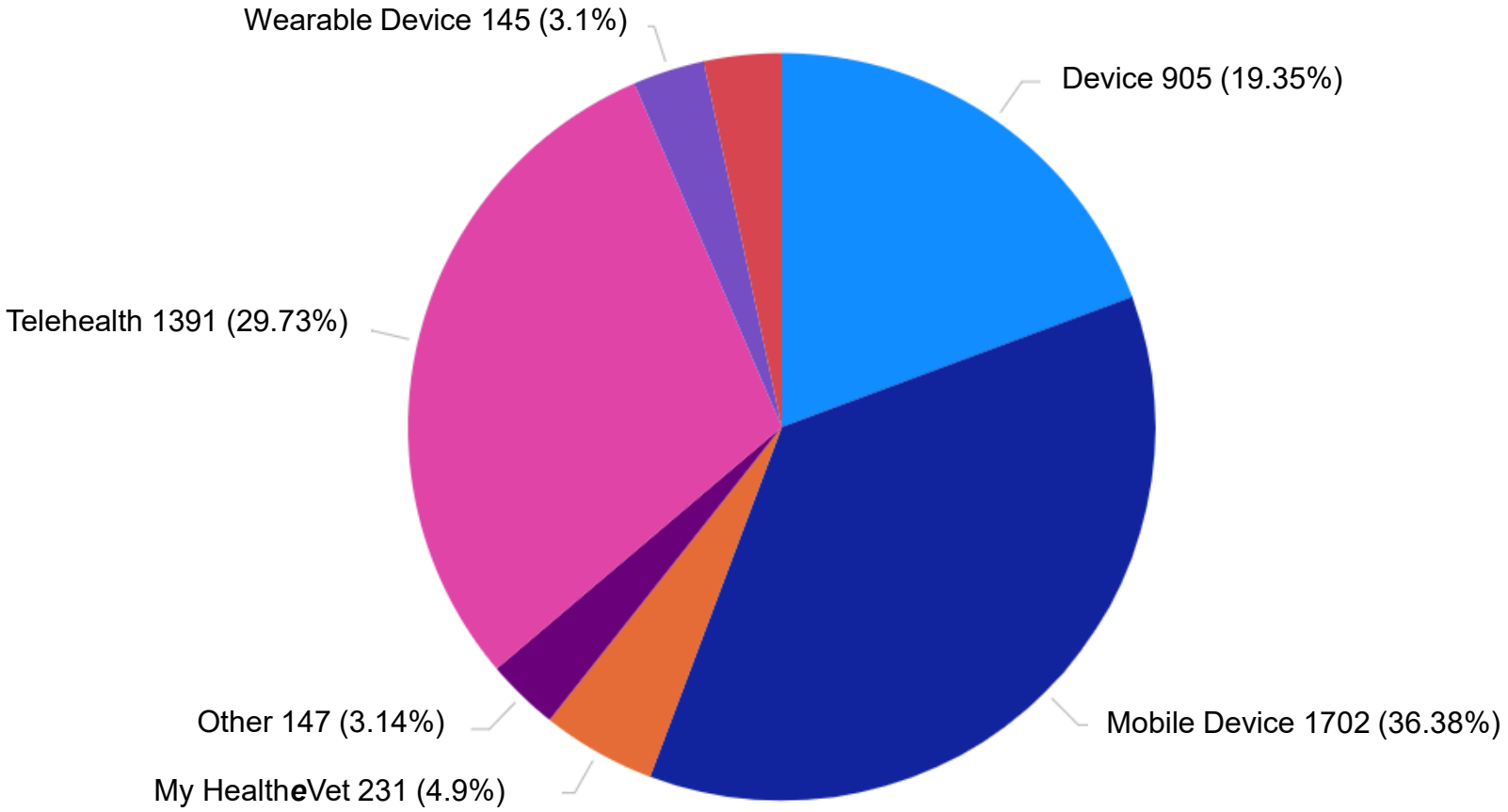


Who accesses services at VHRCs?



Open in Power BI
COE & MOVE! Dashboard
Filtered by **Encountee (groups)** (is not (Blank) or Blank), **Facility** (is New Orleans, San Diego, St Cloud, or Tampa)

What services are being provided at VHRCs?



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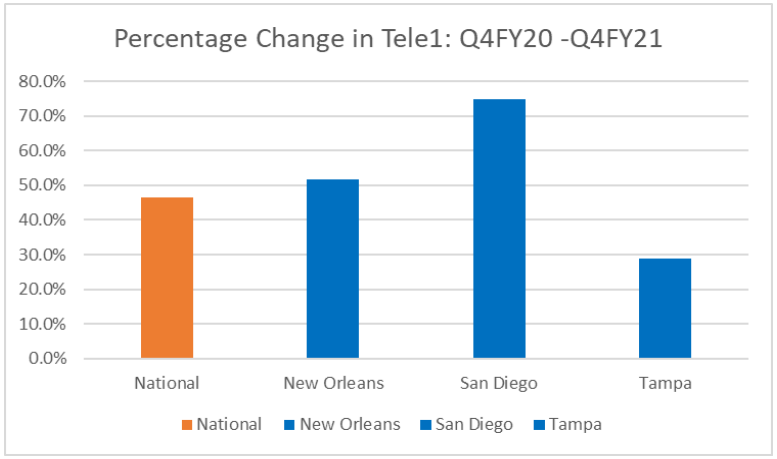
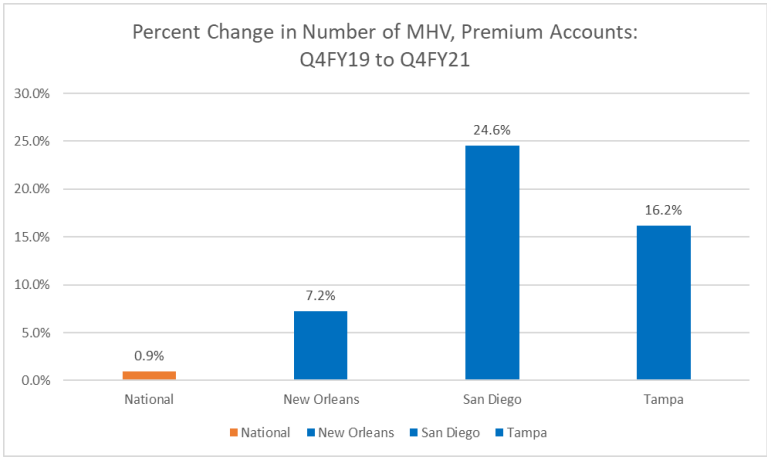
Filtered by **Encountee (groups)** (is not (Blank) or Blank), **Facility** (is New Orleans, San Diego, St Cloud, or Tampa

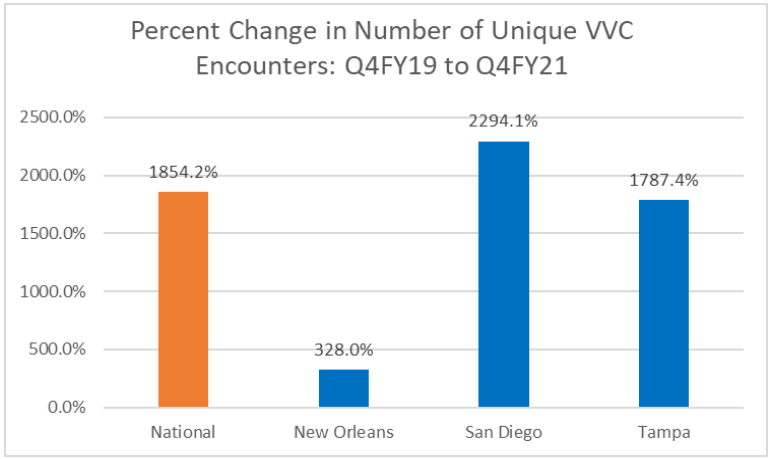
Impact of VHRCs on Virtual Tool/Technology Utilization



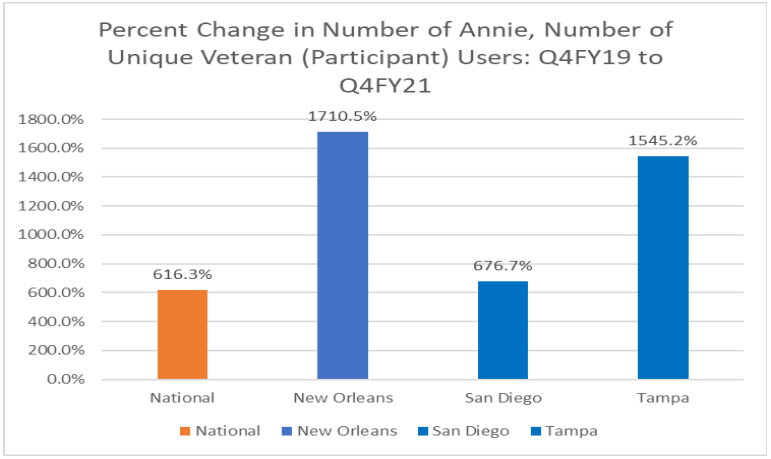
Source: VSSC, Connected Care Report



Source: VSSC, My HealtheVet/Secure Messaging Statistics



Source: VSSC, VVC Encounter Report



Source: Metrics_Annie_Power BI

Growing the VHRC Model Across the VA

- To meet the need for the development of VHRCs across the VA, the Office of Connected Care is creating a VHRC Implementation Consult Service (VHRC ICS), providing guidance to facilities in the development of additional VHRCs

- The VHRC ICS program will leverage best practices in implementation science and lessons learned in the establishment of current VHRCs to support the development of additional VHRCs across the VA.

VHRC ICS Services

Partner with VAMCs to provide:

- Short term intensive facilitation implementation consultation
- 6-month implementation cycle, new cohorts starting quarterly as of January 2022
- Long term support and partnership with VA VHRC ICS team
  - sustainment support x12 months

Goals:

- Enhance innovative, world class health care delivery in support of our Veterans life journey
- Enrich staff and Veteran virtual care experience(s)
- Support VA's Strategic Plan, 2018-2024 priorities and goals 1-4

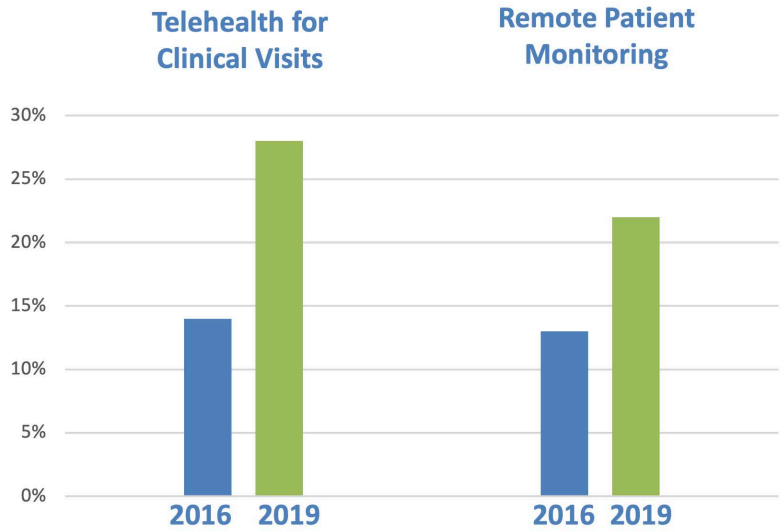
Objective:

Employ evidence based best practices in implementation science including lessons learned from the field to support virtual health utilization and positive care outcomes

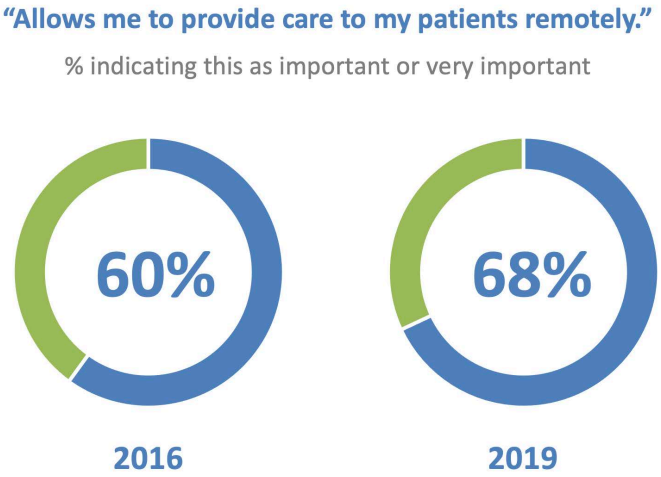
Population Trends in Virtual Care

Reference: Safavi & Kalis, 2020.

Physicians Using:



Motivation for Using Sensors and Wearable Devices



Reference: American Medical Association, 2020.

VHRC Resources

- VHRC public facing website
- VHRC Promotional Video
- VHRC ICS Leaf Request site
- VHRC Microsoft Teams shared document site (pending)
- VHRC Power BI Data Dashboard
- VHRC Phone Number: 1-844-813-4361
- VHRC Implementation Consult Team: VHAVHRC@va.gov

“Virtual Care Best Practices” Provider Toolkit

“Virtual Care Best Practices” Community

Scan this with your VA or personal mobile device to access the Virtual Care Best Practices Community while you are away from your VA computer.

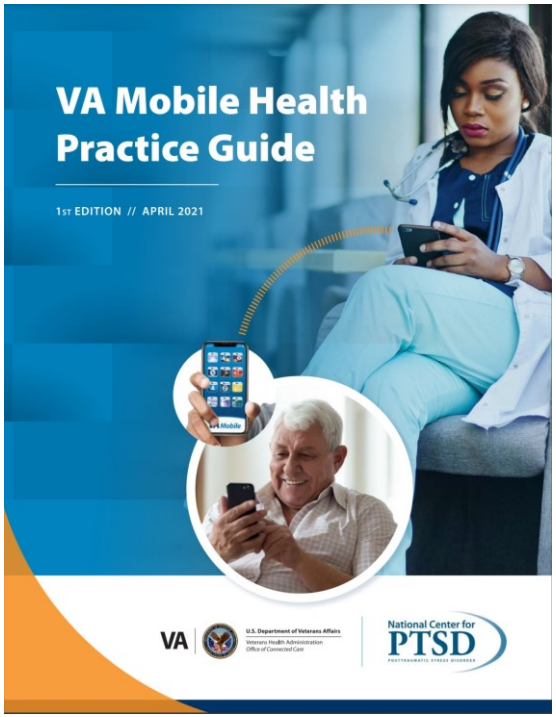
‘VA Virtual Care Best Practices’ Series

- Part 1: Virtual Care Basics (TMS course # VA 45280)
- Part 2: Virtual Care to Improve Patient Care (TMS course # 45307)
- Part 3: Assessing Patient Readiness for Use (TMS course # 45107)
- Part 4: Integrating Virtual Care Tools into Clinical Workflow (TMS course # 46020)
- Part 5: Prescribing Virtual Care (TMS course # 45988)
- Part 6: Security and Privacy Issues with Virtual Care (TMS course # 44604)
- Part 7: Ethical and Legal Issues with Virtual Care (TMS course # 46019)
- Part 8: Increasing Technological Cultural Competency to Meet Patient Needs (TMS course # 45989)

Click the links to the left for direct access to these trainings.

Continuing Education available for: ACCME - Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education | ACCME-NP - Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education . for non-physicians | Accredited Training | ANCC - American Nurses Credentialing Center | APA - American Psychological Association | ASWB - Association of Social Work Boards | JAIPCE - Joint Accreditation Interprofessional Continuing Accreditation | NBCC - National Board for Certified Counselors | NYSED-P - New York State Education Department for Psychology | NYSEDSW - New York Social Work | Patient Care Processes | Patient Health Education

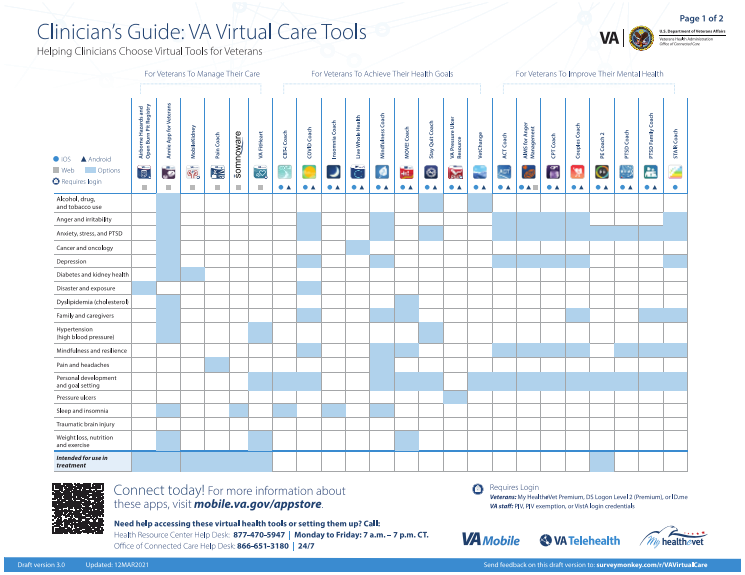
VA Mobile Health Practice Guide



- Guide for integrating VA virtual care tools into clinical practice
- Provides further information on 5 core knowledge areas for integrating virtual care into clinical practice
- Activity sheet examples:
  - Increasing Your Technological Cultural Competence
  - Introducing a Mobile Health App in Clinical Care
  - Prescribing a Mobile Health App in Clinical Care
- Script for assessing Veteran readiness to use VA apps

Available at: **connectedcare.va.gov/outreach-toolkit**

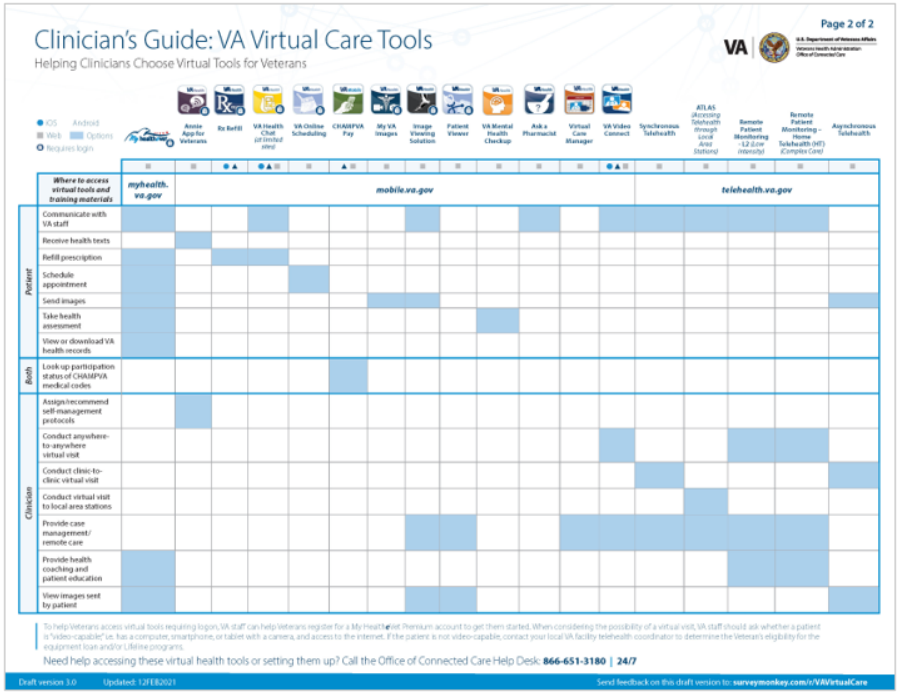
Clinician's Guide: VA Virtual Care Tools



Provides VA health care staff with a way to choose which virtual care tool to use based on symptoms, platform, and functions.

Available at: **connectedcare.va.gov/outreach-toolkit**

Clinician's Guide: VA Virtual Care Tools (cont.)



Available at: **connectedcare.va.gov/outreach-toolkit**

Prescription for VA Virtual Care

Prescription for VA Virtual Care Tools

Expanding Veteran Access to Care Through Virtual Technologies

Page 1 of 2

iOS ▲ Android ■ Web Requires login

Achieve Your Health Goals	Improve Your Mental Health	Connect With Your Care Team	Manage Your Care
CBT-I Coach ● ▲ Receive support for cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) for insomnia.	ACT Coach ● ▲ Practice lessons learned during acceptance and commitment therapy (ACT) in your daily life.	Annie App for Veterans ■ Receive text reminders to help you manage your care.	Airborne Hazards and Open Burn Pit Registry Access information and resources for deployment-related exposures.
COVID Coach ● ▲ Receive tools to support self-care and mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic.	AIMS for Anger Management ● ▲ ■ Better track, address, and manage your anger with AIMS.	Ask a Pharmacist ■ Access information about VA pharmacies and medication easily.	MobileKidney ■ Monitor your kidney health and access educational resources.
Insomnia Coach ● ▲ Guided training and tips to help you track insomnia and improve sleep.	Couples Coach ● ▲ Explore ways to improve your relationship with your partner.	My VA Images ■ Submit and track dermatology and health photos and videos in response to requests from your VA provider.	VA Mental Health Checkup for Veterans ■ Monitor, assess, and access information for mental health conditions.
Live Whole Health ● ▲ Learn skills to help you reach your whole health goals.	CPT Coach ● ▲ Enhance your cognitive processing therapy (CPT) treatment for PTSD.	Pain Coach ■ Receive helpful tools for tracking and managing chronic pain.	VA Pressure Ulcer Resource ● ▲ Learn to prevent and care for pressure ulcers and injuries.
Mindfulness Coach ● ▲ Learn mindfulness to reduce stress and improve emotional balance.	PE Coach 2 ● ▲ Use this app during prolonged exposure (PE) therapy with a health professional.	SomnoGym ■ Pair this app with your CPAP machine to track your sleep apnea at home.	Rx Refill ● ▲ Request, refill, and track VA prescriptions with ease.
MOVE! Coach ● ▲ Lose weight with this app's 19-week weight loss program.	PTSD Coach ● ▲ Get the info, support, and tools you need to manage PTSD.	VA Health Chat ● ▲ ■ Chat with VA staff members through easy online access (available at limited sites).	
Stay Quit Coach ● ▲ Create a tailored plan to quit smoking and stay smoke-free.	PTSD Family Coach ● ▲ Receive the support you need for living with someone who has PTSD.	VA Online Scheduling ■ Schedule, request, and track VA appointments with ease.	
VetChange ● ▲ Develop healthier drinking habits through this app's tools and guidance.	STAIR Coach ● Enhance your in-person STAIR psychotherapy with interactive tools and education.	VA Video Connect ● ▲ ■ Secure video visits with your VA care team from anywhere.	

Connect today!

To browse more tools that may fit your needs, visit **mobile.va.gov/appstore**.

Most apps are available on the Apple App Store and Google Play, however, some apps are available only on the VA App Store through a desktop version.

If you need technical assistance with these tools, call:

Health Resource Center Help Desk:
877-470-5947 | Monday to Friday: 7 a.m. –7 p.m. CT.

Office of Connected Care Help Desk:
866-651-3180 | 24/7

VA Mobile · VA Telehealth · health.vet

Draft version 3.0 Updated: 12MAR2021 Send feedback on this draft version to: surveymonkey.com/r/VAVirtualCare

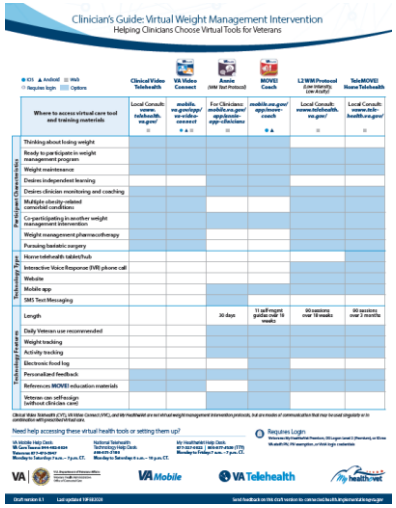
Share with Veterans:

- What virtual care tool to use
- The goal of the virtual care tool
- How to use and access the tool
- The expected frequency of use

Available at: **connectedcare.va.gov/outreach-toolkit**

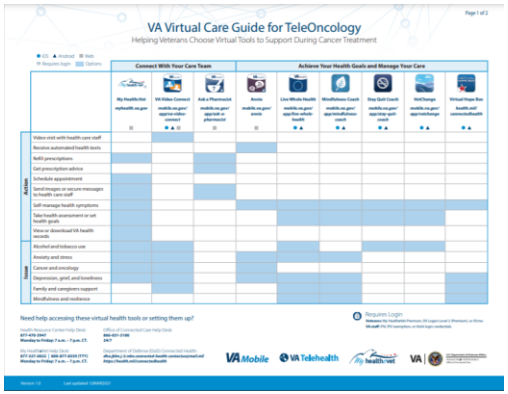
Video Demonstrating Integration into Clinical Care

Additional Resources for Prescribing Virtual Care



Clinician's Guide: Virtual Weight Management Intervention

Clinician's Guide: Virtual Pain Management



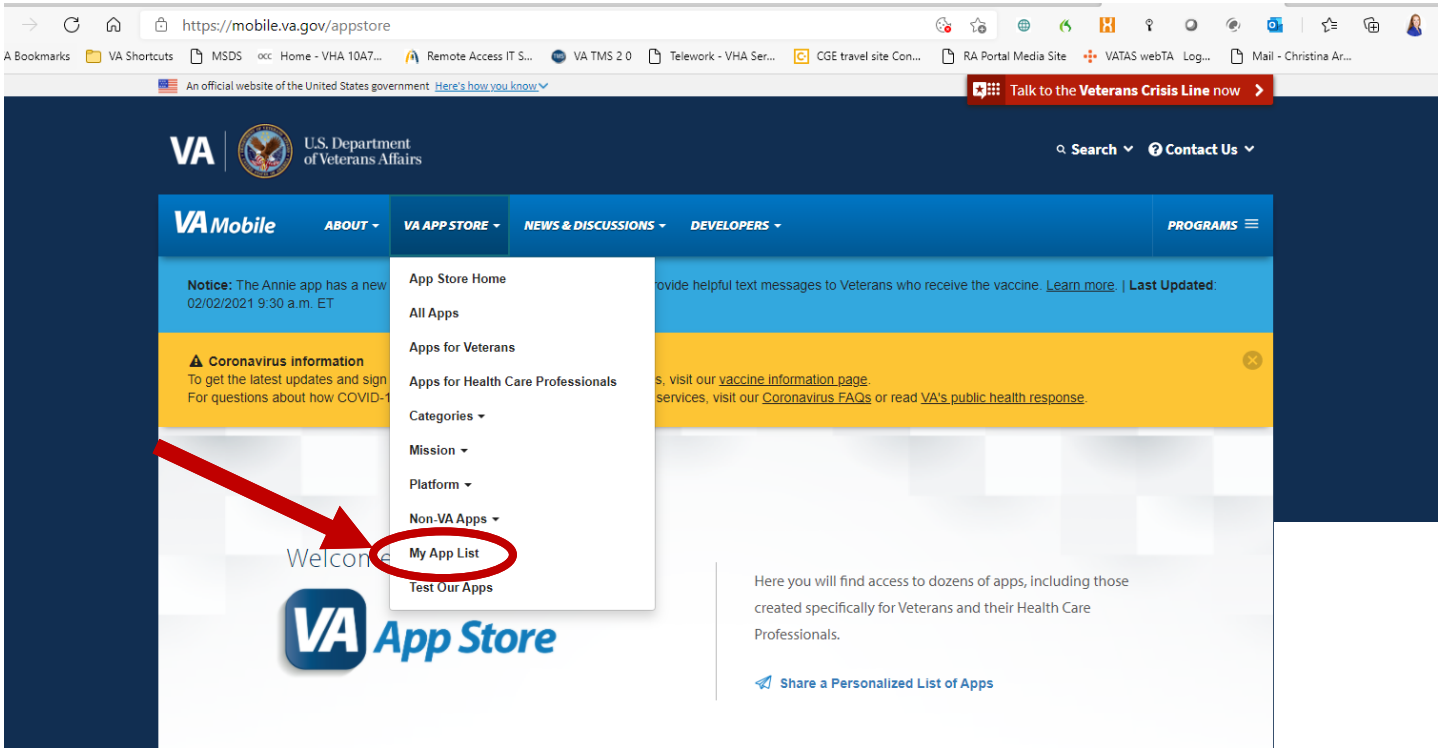
VA Virtual Care Guide for TeleOncology

Available at: **connectedcare.va.gov/outreach-toolkit**

Custom Prescription Pad

- ‘My App List’ can be accessed at: https://mobile.va.gov/my-app-list
- Find it on the dropdown menu in the VA App Store:

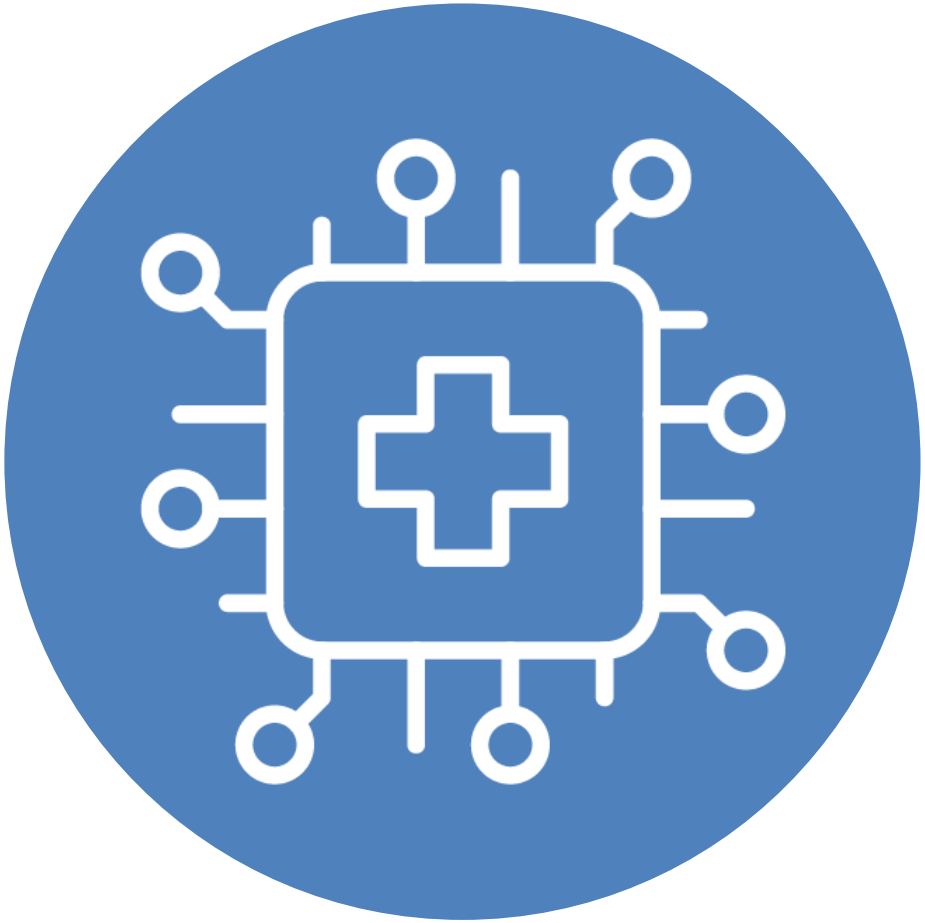
VA Mobile
My App List



What's Next?

The healthcare system is forever changed

- The healthcare system will be feeling the direct impact for the next five to ten years we're going to continue feel the effects. To prepare we need:
  - Further the development and integration of emerging virtual care tools
  - Changes in policies and practices to ensure continuity of operations and prepare for future emergencies
  - To invest in workforce expansion trained in virtual care and in infrastructure improvements to support virtual care



Developing and Implementing Virtual Care Technologies

- Sensors, Wearables, and Remote Patient Monitoring
- Patient-Generated Health Data
- Prescribing Virtual Care
- Rolling out new EHR and creating interoperability with existing infrastructure

Changes in Policies and Practices

Pre-pandemic

- MISSION Act

During pandemic

- CARES Act
- VHA Directive 1914
- SAVES Lives Act
- VHA Directive 6506
- American Recovery Plan Act

Patient-Generated Health Data (PGHD)

Current PGHD toolkit:

- PGHD Introductory Video (YouTube)
- PGHD in VCM Introductory Video (YouTube)
- VHA Directive 6506 – Review and Use of PGHD
- PGHD Communications SharePoint
- PGHD Fact Sheet
- PGHD in Virtual Care Manager Fact Sheet
- PGHD and Shared Vitals in My Health*e*Vet Fact Sheet
- Published Competencies for Sensor, Wearable and Remote Patient Monitoring

In development: PGHD section in Connected Care Academy (vaots.blackboard.com), as well as several on-demand continuing education training modules (Introduction to PGHD (this should be available by the end of October); Clinical Use of PGHD in Virtual Care Manager (this should be available by the end of December); What VA Healthcare Staff Need to Know about Veteran Use of PGHD in VA Health Hub (this should be available by the end of February)).

Connected Care Training Resources

- Connected Care Academy
- Connected Care Outreach Toolkit
- Connected Care Discussion Series
- Attend our monthly VA Connected Care Community of Practice (email CHImplementation@va.gov to be put on distribution list)

Questions?

Thank you!

Office of
CONNECTED CARE

connectedcare.va.gov

VA | U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Veterans Health Administration
Office of Connected Care