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News Release

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Indianapolis VA Medical Center Launches Health Information Exchange *Partnering with the Indiana Health Information Exchange To Enhance Patient Care*

Indianapolis, Ind. – The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) today announced a new pilot in the Indianapolis region that will improve the delivery of Veterans health information. The Richard L. Roudebush VA Medical Center in Indianapolis will partner with the Indiana Health Information Exchange (IHIE), the largest health information exchange organization in the United States, to securely exchange electronic health record (EHR) information using the Nationwide Health Information Network.

“This pilot is one more step taken to deliver a Virtual Lifetime Electronic Record for our Nation's Veterans and Servicemembers,” said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki. “This new technology allows safer, more secure, and private access to electronic health information, which, in turn, enhances our ability to continue providing Veterans with the quality care that they have earned.”

VA will invite Veterans who receive health care from VA and from selected hospitals and providers in the Indianapolis area to sign up for the pilot, with the understanding that their information will not be shared without their authorization. Veterans who participate will enable their public and private sector health care providers and doctors to share specific health information electronically, safely, securely and privately.

The pilot is planned to run through 2012 with the goal of advancing EHRs for VA and other community providers.

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Led by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the Nationwide Health Information Network provides a technology “gateway” to support interoperability standards and a legal framework for the secure exchange of health information between treating physicians, when authorized by a patient. Clinicians from the participating organizations can share authorized patient data electronically, securely, and privately, ensuring around-the-clock access to critical health information. This immediate electronic access supports increased accuracy, efficiency, and safety. It also helps to avoid redundant care and testing.

Since more than half of America's Veterans and active duty Servicemembers receive some portion of their health care outside of VA or Department of Defense facilities, interoperability between federal agencies and the private sector is essential to provide the best care for Veterans, Servicemembers, and their dependents.

IHIE is made up of collaborative partnerships with Regenstrief Institute, private hospitals, insurers, local and state health departments, and other health care organizations that impact more than 60 hospitals providing care to more than 6 million patients.

A national effort is underway to promote the important use of EHRs.

More detailed information about the pilot program is available by calling 1-877-771-VLER (8537).

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