

QUERI Partnered Evaluation Initiative

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eHealth National Partnered Evaluation Initiative

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Overview

The QUERI eHealth National Partnered Evaluation Initiative (QUERI eHealth) aims to demonstrate the impact of VA connected-care technologies on important outcomes, including Veteran perceptions of access and the Veteran experience of care, clinical team member workload and satisfaction, and healthcare processes, while also identifying potentially fruitful strategies that could further the adoption of connected-care technologies among Veterans and clinical team members. Leveraging such technologies to reach and engage Veterans and VHA clinical team members aligns with VHA's highest priorities to (1) modernize VA systems, including health information technology; and (2) improve timeliness of services, including access to care and wait times.

Recently, QUERI eHealth leadership launched a novel effort to develop and maintain a cohort of Veterans willing to provide feedback on the latest VA connected-care technologies to improve their usability, adoption, and meaningful integration into practice. Referred to as the "Veterans Engagement with Technology Collaborative" (VET-C), the long-term purpose of this cohort is to offer new infrastructure for the Office of Connected Care and program evaluators, and to directly engage Veterans in the evaluation of VA technologies that are intended to increase access, enhance coordination, and support self-management. QUERI eHealth investigators are laying the foundation for future, rigorous evaluations, funded through operations or research, to understand the adoption, use, and impact of connected-care technologies—and to inform related policy decisions and funding priorities. Nearly 3,000 Veterans who have joined the VET-C cohort to date—and the associated cohort dataset—serve as the basis for QUERI eHealth's priority aims.

Aim 1: Market VA Connected-Care Technologies

Drawing on lessons learned from last year's QUERI eHealth work to design and test a supported adoption intervention, investigators are implementing a multi-component, multi-channel approach to market new and existing VA connected-care technologies to Veterans who have joined the VET-C cohort.

These marketing efforts are intended to build a user base for select connected-care technologies of interest – and to support evaluations that leverage the VET-C cohort moving forward.

Aim 2: Evaluate Select VA Connected Care Technologies

QUERI eHealth is recruiting Veterans from the VET-C cohort to evaluate particular connected-care technologies that are of the highest priority to VA's Office of Connected Care. These include, but are not limited to the VA Online Scheduling app, the Annie Automated Text Messaging System, and the VA Video Connect app which supports real-time video visits between Veterans and their VA healthcare teams. Evaluations are intended to be rapid in nature and to mix both quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis approaches. Findings will be used to inform refinements to the technologies and their rollout, as well as associated outcomes. Further, recognizing that connected-care technologies also can have reciprocal repercussions for VA clinical teams, these evaluations also target clinical team members as appropriate.

Aim 3: Evaluate Health Coaching Support in Technology-based Interventions for Goal Setting

Using the VET-C cohort, QUERI eHealth will conduct a randomized pilot trial evaluating Veterans who receive automated text messaging compared to those who receive automated text messaging plus health coaching support via a VA Video Connect visit. Primary outcomes will include goal completion, numbers of goals set, and their quality (e.g., adherence to SMART goal principles). Completion of the pilot trial will provide preliminary insights regarding efficacy and feasibility, and will add to the knowledge about how health-coaching enhances the effect of an automated texting system on outcomes. It also will provide data on how best to incorporate health-coaching into the adoption and use of connected-care technologies for health behavior and behavior change.

Operations Partner

VA's Office of Connected Care.



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