

# QUERINational Program

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## MedSafe QUERI

Optimizing Appropriate Use of Medications for Veterans

Palo Alto, CA

### Overview

While VA has implemented many interventions to improve medication safety, medication management has significant room for improvement. Moreover, there is variation in quality of medication prescribing across disease states in the VA healthcare system. Thus, optimization of medication use is the main theme of our MedSafe QUERI Program, with decision support and provider networks as the focus of its implementation research. MedSafe QUERI will only recommend expansion or design interventions for care strategies that are considered to be of “reasonable” value (ratio of benefit and cost). The focus is on improving the use of high-value medications, decreasing low-value medications and improving the safety of high-risk medications use through the following projects.

- Optimization and expansion of Pharmacy Benefits Management’s (PBM) existing Medication Use Evaluation Tracker (MUET) Program across all facilities in the 18 VISNs for five MUET Programs: Dimethyl Fumarate White Blood Count Monitoring; Potassium Follow-Up in Heart Failure with New Mineralocorticoid Receptor Antagonist; Prasugrel or Ticagrelor >12 months; Women of Childbearing Age on Warfarin; and Direct Oral Anticoagulants (Project–MUET).

- Implementation of Clinical Decision Support system for medications commonly prescribed in Primary Care for chronic diseases by patient-aligned care teams (PACTs) at facilities in VISN 21 (Project–CDS).
- Determine optimal use of the VISN 21 Pharmacy Dashboard at all eight facilities in VISN 21 for five Dashboards: 1) Spironolactone/Eplerenone (diuretics), 2) Lithium Carbonate, 3) Hypoglycemia Safety Initiative, 4) Oncology Medication Monitoring, and 5) Opioid (Pain Measures) Monitoring.

### Methodology

Through the MUET and VISN 21 Pharmacy Dashboard projects, MedSafe QUERI is evaluating multiple practices to determine effective implementation interventions. These interventions are then promoted through the Community of Practice, which is in the process of being implemented in the Pharmacy Services of all 142 VA facilities.

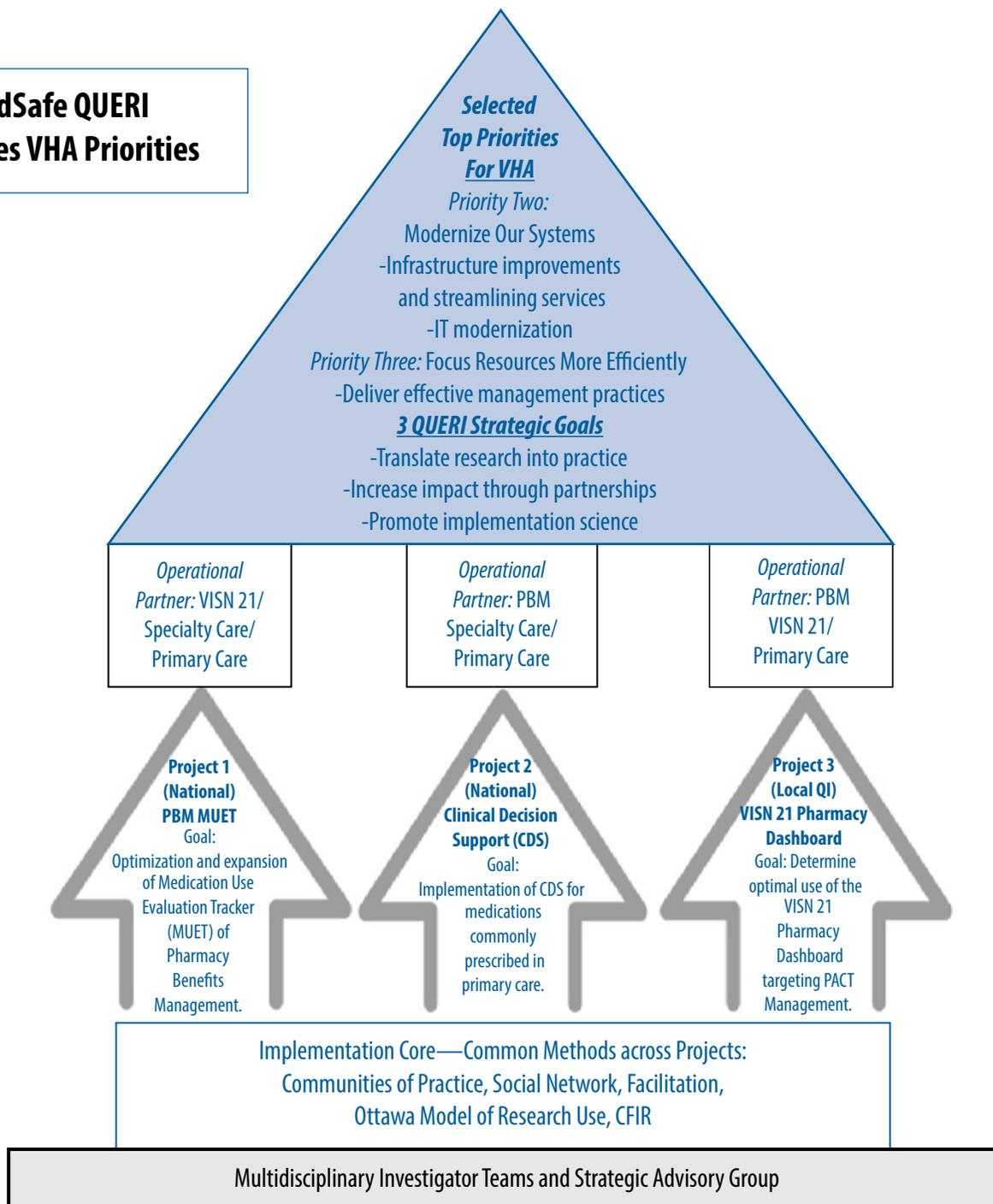
The CDS project is undergoing iterative cycles of change to keep the knowledge base aligned with current VA clinical policies and practice. MedSafe QUERI investigators are gathering data from primary care physicians, nurses in PACT teams, and pharmacists about the use of the VISN 21 Clinical Dashboard and the potential value of CDS in managing care for patients.

### Findings and Anticipated Impacts

MedSafe QUERI investigators evaluated both the MUET Program and VISN 21 Pharmacy Dashboards and are now conducting the next wave of data-collection by conducting qualitative semi-structured interviews. They are developing the CDS system to provide—in the VISN 21 Pharmacy Clinical Dashboard—patient-specific recommendations, such as medication adjustments or necessary lab tests for patients who are not meeting a performance measure.

Conducted in collaboration with the VA PBM, a key impact from the findings for the MUET Project has been joint development of a National Dashboard Advisory Committee for real-time risk identification and risk reduction tools. This Advisory Committee has begun identifying existing dashboards that address the issue for potential roll-out as a national solution. The national DOAC Dashboard is being validated and the Dashboards for AntiCD20 Antibody and Direct-Acting Antivirals are under production. Given the deep interest among VHA leadership and VISN 21 in opioid/pain treatment, recently MedSafe QUERI included the opioid (pain measures) monitoring measure in the VISN 21 Pharmacy Dashboard project.

## How MedSafe QUERI Addresses VHA Priorities



## Operations Partner(s)

VA's Office of Pharmacy Benefits, Management (PBM), VISN 21 PBM, Primary Care Services, and Specialty Care Services.