



February 3, 2020

Dr. Richard Stone
Executive in Charge
Veterans Health Administration
810 Vermont Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20420

Dear Dr. Stone:

IAVA has long advocated for the modernization of VHA's IT system, including the development of a seamless electronic health record (EHR) between DoD and VA, both critical to providing exemplary services to the military and veteran population.

IAVA appreciates the complexity of VA's EHR modernization efforts. However, IAVA is deeply concerned to learn that when CERNER initiates its EHR pilot this March, there will be a reduction in services and features that veterans will be able to access on MyHealthVet. While the new CERNER portal will be able to pull some critical data from the legacy system, I understand that there may be some important information and medical data that will not be transferred, that veterans will lose the ability to request prescriptions online and access to their complete medical record, and that veterans will need to access two separate platforms - MyHealthVet and the CERNER portal to obtain all of their data.

IAVA is deeply worried that these new processes may place an undue burden on veterans, many of whom will not be sufficiently proficient on the new platform. Requiring the use of two different platforms to access complete data violates the promise of a single health record and lifetime of seamless care.

While MyHealthVet is not perfect, many IAVA members and staff use it and appreciate the ability to schedule appointments, request prescriptions, and access their health records online. Using separate systems will be confusing and place unnecessary barriers between veterans and medical care.

IAVA strongly urges that VHA use one standardized platform to ensure that record sharing is as easy as possible and that veterans affected by this change be given proper notice and time to download and secure their complete medical record. Further, IAVA recommends that prior to the rollout of the CERNER pilot that online tutorials and training are made available for all affected veterans on changes and how to best use the CERNER and MyHealthVet platforms.

IAVA commends VHA on its efforts to reform the EHR and other IT modernization efforts. However, it is important to ensure that during this process veterans do not suffer or lose access to their benefits. IAVA respectfully requests that VHA provide veteran service organizations and other relevant stakeholders with a briefing on the CERNER pilot rollout plan, any loss of functionality, and intended plans on how to best minimize disruption to veteran healthcare.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Butler', is written over the typed name and title.

Jeremy Butler
CEO

Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America (IAVA)