**Community Care Research Evaluation & Knowledge (CREEK)**

**Quarterly Call Minutes**

**May 31, 2023**

**WEBSITE:**

[Community Care Research Evaluation & Knowledge (CREEK) Center](https://www.hsrd.research.va.gov/centers/creek/default.cfm)

**Members:** Dr. Kristin Mattocks, Dr. Denise Hynes, Dr. Megan Vanneman, Dr. Michelle Mengeling, Dr. Amy Rosen, and Dr. Melissa Garrido

1. **CREEK Welcome and Announcements (Dr. Kristin Mattocks)** 
   1. If you require letters of support from the Office of Integrated Veteran Care (IVC), please send those letters directly to me and I will facilitate signature. IVC has asked that CREEK collects all needed letters of support from HSR&D investigators and passes them along in bulk to IVC for signature. As you can imagine, there are numerous requests for signature, and rather than deluging IVC with requests over time, we are batching letters and getting them signed efficiently. If you require a letter of support, please do the following:
      1. Send an email to Kristin Mattocks (Kristin.mattocks@va.gov) and include:
         1. A Letter of Support in a Word document. Please be sure to include a paragraph in your Letter of Support clearly outlining how the results of your study will help IVC better understand access and/or community care-related issues for Veterans. This is crucial for HSR&D as they review letters of support.
         2. A specific aims page with the PI name and title of grant at the top of the Aims page. This will help IVC understand the nature of your study.
         3. In your email, please include the date that you need the letter. Allow at least a week for signature.
2. **Communication Hub (Dr. Kristin Mattocks)** 
   1. 2022 Veterans’ utilization of community care in relation to direct care system
      1. *In the last fiscal year, 2022, VHA saw approx. 6.2 million enrolled Veterans through its direct care system and/or community care* 
         1. Out of the 6.27 million Veterans, 2.80 million Veterans or 45% utilized community care in the last fiscal year, 2022
         2. Out of the 2.80 million community care users, 180,000 Veterans exclusively used community care while the remaining 2.62 million utilized both
         3. The 180,000 exclusive users of community care represent a small percentage, less than 3%, of the total 6.27 million seen
         4. In comparison, 3.47 million Veterans exclusively used the direct care system, representing 55% of the total 6.27 million seen
   2. Updates on CREEK pilots (Summaries attached to calendar invitation)
3. **Update on funded HSR&D Community Care grants – Michigan** 
   1. *Assessing Episode-Based Surgical Quality in VA and Community Care Settings* with Dr. Erika Sears
   2. *Assessing Quality of VA and Community Care in the MISSION Era* with Dr. Timothy Hofer
4. **Policy and Implementation Hub (Dr. Michelle Mengeling & Dr. Denise Hynes)**
5. **Data and Measurement Science Hub (Dr. Amy Rosen & Dr. Megan Vanneman)** 
   1. Update on VINCI mapping with Warren Pettey
   2. Updates on Program Integrity Tool (PIT) and Consolidated Data Set (CDS)

**Q&A**

**Q1:** Do you have a sense of whether the updated road maps will flow through to drive time calculations provided by PSSG?

**A1:** PSSG uses a dataset called ArcGIS StreetMap Premium by Esri. StreetMap Premium is continually updated. The new street network data coming online in VINCI is a snapshot of the StreetMap Premium data as it was at, I think, the end of 2021, or at the beginning of 2022, and as a snapshot it doesn’t get updated. So, PSSG will always have the latest version of the road map and what we have in VINCI will be dated a little bit. I would say always default to PSSG and what they have for official reasons, but at least for the next couple of years it should be really close because they're basically using the same data.

**Q2:** Will there be a new variable for drive time?

**A2:** There won’t be a new variable in PSSG files as PSSG is tapping that always-current data set (ArcGIS StreetMap Premium) rather than the street network dataset coming online in VINCI. The main benefit of this new dataset on VINCI is that you can use it to calculate whatever time or distance burdens of travel that you need, for example between a Veteran’s home and a community care clinic or to a store with healthy foods. Those won’t be in PSSG. I haven’t yet seen exactly what the street network dataset coming into VINCI looks like, but if it’s similar to what I’ve seen in the Department of Defense—and I have good reason to believe it’s the same dataset—it not only had drive distance, but it had drive time. I believe it had a couple of other ones like how long it would it take if you were walking. That might allow you to figure out the burden of travel using multiple modes of getting to a facility. Still, if there is a discrepancy between what you calculate and what PSSG has, if it’s for official reasons, I would always default to PSSG.

**Q3:** Do we know when pharmacy data might be added to the CDS?

**A3:** I am not sure about that. IVC is the owner of the CDS data and OIC is the owner of the PIT data. So, I'll work with IVC to learn about any plans for the pharmacy data flowing into CDS.

**Q4:** Is there a clear process to request access to CDS for operations projects?

**A4:** We will follow up on that.

**Q5:** Is there a way to detect the outpatient claims that may have inadvertently been placed in the inpatient table in PIT?

**A5:** We are working to get clarification from OIC.

**Q6:** Did I hear correctly that an operations version of a static copy of PIT will also be released?

**A6:** So the process for that (and we are clarifying with OIC about how exactly they want to do this) is that OIC would like to know when operations projects are using the PIT data so that they can issue a similar kind of guidance like CREEK is doing with their research community for example and you know of course we're happy if it's the same document, but essentially we're working with OIC in order to advertise the process that they want.

Please send any published papers before next meeting date (TBD) to [Valerie.Marteeny@va.gov](mailto:Valerie.Marteeny@va.gov).

**Attachments/Links:**

IVC Meeting Minutes

Recently Published Articles

<https://www.hsrd.research.va.gov/news/video/view.cfm?ID=69> – Video Showcase from 2023 HSR&D National meeting