**PROVEN**
**Coordinating Hub to Promote Research Optimizing Veteran-centric EHR Networks**

# PROVEN Hub Newsletter                February 2024

## Welcome to the PROVEN Hub Newsletter!

The PROVEN Hub is designed to provide a single point of contact for the VA research community to design, conduct, and disseminate cutting-edge, operationally prioritized research and evaluation in support of a safe, effective, and efficient implementation of Oracle Health EHR throughout VA.

## HSR&D Research and EHR Synergy Cyberseminar Series

**Delivering Care for Women Veterans After Transitioning from One Electronic Health Record to Another: Perspectives from Staff in the Veterans Health Administration**

Wednesday, March 27, 2024
12:00pm ET/9:00am PT

**[Register now](#)**

*Presenters: Samantha Benson, MPH and Kristen Gray, PhD*

Considering that women Veterans are a numeric minority in VA, the specific impacts of VA's electronic health record modernization on this population may be obscured without focused evaluation. This cyberseminar will present findings from interviews with staff involved in women's health care delivery and coordination at three VA healthcare systems within the year following their transition to Oracle Health. While some participants perceived that the new electronic health record held promise—including the potential to improve documentation for sex-specific services like mammograms—participants also highlighted challenges with rollout, implementation, and functionality, leading to staff burnout and negative impacts on Veteran care, including some issues disproportionately affecting women Veterans.

Check out the archive of previous presentations in this series.

# Highlighting the VHA EHR National Research Council (NRC)

The Electronic Health Record Modernization Integration Office (EHRM-IO) established National Councils to provide functional oversight of the EHRM initiative to deploy the Electronic Health Records (EHR) system developed by Oracle Health (formerly the Cerner Corporation). The Research Sub-Council, established in 2018 as part of the Quality, Safety, Value council, oversaw the integration of research into the new EHR and related business processes. In 2023, governance of the National Councils transitioned from EHRM-IO to the Veterans Health Administration (VHA), and the National Research Council (NRC) was established to continue and expand on the work of the Research Sub-Council. The NRC has seven voting members: two national co-chairs (currently Drs. Molly Klote and Maria Souden) and five members from across VA research programs, appointed by the Assistant Undersecretary of Health (AUSH) for Discovery, Education and Affiliate Networks (DEAN). Staff and logistical support for the NRC are provided by the Office of Health Informatics.

In 2019, Rachel Ramoni, the VA's Chief Research and Development Officer, approved the formation and funding of the Office of Research and Development (ORD) Strategic Initiative for Research-EHR Synergy (OSIRES) to provide additional resources and support for research across the EHRM transition. Originally created under the Research Sub-Council, OSIRES now supports the NRC by staffing workgroups; coordinating with the field, Oracle Health, and EHRM-IO; and bringing issues to the NRC for council input, guidance, and approval.

The NRC's purpose is to serve as an advocate to ensure that VA maintains its reputation as a national leader in research during and after the EHR transition by protecting relationships with sponsors, researchers, academic affiliates and, most importantly, veterans. The NRC makes decisions that allow research to be conducted in the new EHR safely, with policy compliance and scientific integrity. Past and current work includes developing research roles and permissions, maintenance and building of investigational medications, and options and guidance for researchers surrounding the Oracle Health research solution (PowerTrials). The NRC and OSIRES have also worked to support 11 sites with active research programs as they prepared to transition to the new EHR, including advocating for research needs that were not being met in the existing deployment processes and system configuration. The NRC also participates in the Federal Research Working Group (established in collaboration between the Research Sub-Council and Department of Defense research administration), a venue for shared decision-making and guidance regarding research configuration and policy decisions across the Federal enclave. The NRC provides subject-matter expertise to ORD and others across VHA and DoD regarding research and research business processes in the new EHR.

# VA EHRM Researcher Spotlight

**Brianne Molloy-Paolillo, PhD**
**Center for Healthcare Organization & Implementation Research (CHOIR)**
**VA Bedford Healthcare System**

Dr. Brianne Molloy-Paolillo is a trained applied social psychologist with a PhD from The George Washington University and Research Specialist at VA Bedford Healthcare System's Center for Healthcare Organization and Implementation Research (CHOIR). She is the Program Director of EMPIRIC, a partnered quality improvement evaluation that is focused on understanding and improving clinician and staff experience during VA's electronic health record (EHR) transition. EMPIRIC is led by Drs. Seppo Rinne, Sarah Cutrona, and Michael Matheny in partnership with the Simulation Learning, Evaluation, Assessment, and Research Network (SimLEARN), the National EHRM Supplemental Staffing Unit (NESSU), and the Clinical Informatics and Data Management Office (CIDMO) to address priorities and inform improvements related to electronic health record modernization (EHRM).

Dr. Molloy-Paolillo is a former contributor on SCHOLAR, another EHRM evaluation aimed at optimizing trainee experience. Prior to joining CHOIR, Brianne worked for Whole Health at VA Boston Healthcare System where she met directly with Veterans to support their health and well-being in coordination with their healthcare teams. She has a strong interest in enhancing employee experience and developing strategies to improve implementation efforts, such as EHR modernization and Whole Health, at VA.

Dr. Molloy-Paolillo currently leads a PROVEN rapid pilot project examining EHR use patterns at existing EHR transition sites. This project will establish procedures for accessing Oracle Health analytic databases for EHR use data and conduct preliminary analyses of EHR use over time at live EHRM sites.

# VA EHRM Partners in Focus
# The Office of Nursing Services (ONS)

The Office of Nursing Services (ONS) provides leadership, guidance and strategic direction on all issues related to nursing practice, education, research & workforce for clinical programs across the continuum of care and care delivery sites that impact our Veterans. As outlined in the [VHA Nursing Workforce Strategic Plan](#) (SharePoint link requires VA intranet access), ONS seeks to: 1) optimize and inform nursing practice, 2) strengthen the nursing workforce, 3) reimagine lifelong learning and career development, and 4) inspire an industry-leading culture.

ONS has partnered with HSR&D investigators to evaluate the impact of EHRM on outpatient nursing, alongside a pilot project funded by PROVEN to identify nursing-relevant lessons from EHR transitions outside VA. Other high-priority EHRM research question for ONS include:
- Does the EHRM improve communication and associated patient outcomes?
- Does the EHRM increase, decrease, or not impact administrative (non-clinical) burden for end-users?
- In what ways could EHRM be modified to improve communication, promote better patient outcomes and safety, and reduce administrative burden for all end-users?

# VA EHRM Research Resources

The PROVEN Project Registry contains current information on EHRM projects.

The EHRM-IO Intranet web page provides updates on the deployment schedule when they become available.

Access VIReC's VA Millennium EHR Data Documentation & Resources on the Intranet.

VIReC's Summary Documentation Tables include detailed information about data found in the Corporate Data Warehouse. (Intranet site)

VA Millennium EHR Data on the VHA Data Portal contains information about the data available, and how to access data for research, quality improvement, and operations projects. (Intranet site)

EHRM-IO Data Migration and Management team SharePoint site links to resources related to data syndication. (Intranet site)

EHRM & Research SharePoint has research resources related to the Oracle Health EHR implementation. (Intranet site)

*Are you conducting an EHRM research or quality improvement project?*
*Let us know at provenhub@va.gov*

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