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News Release

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**Ralph H. Johnson VA Medical Center Launches
Electronic Records Exchange**
*Partnering with Roper Health and South Carolina Health Information Exchange
to Enhance Patient Care*

Charleston, S.C. – The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) today announced a new pilot site in the Charleston area to improve the delivery of services to Veterans.

This pilot is part of the broader Virtual Lifetime Electronic Record (VLER) initiative. VLER is a multi-faceted business and technology initiative that includes a portfolio of health, benefits, personnel, and administrative information sharing capabilities. The Ralph H. Johnson VA Medical Center will partner with Roper Health and South Carolina Health Information Exchange (SCHIE) to exchange health information electronically for Veterans who participate in the pilot.

“The Ralph H. Johnson VA Medical Center is committed to offering new technologies that enhance our ability to provide Veterans in greater Charleston area with high quality health care and services,” said Scott Isaacks, Acting Director.

VA selected the Charleston area because it has a high concentration of Veterans, military retirees, and members of the Guard and Reserve. There are now four Roper provider facilities in the Charleston area participating in the VLER pilot in the local exchange.

Adding Charleston VA health information exchange builds on the success of the VLER pilot in places like San Diego; Hampton Roads in Virginia; and Spokane, Wash. Participants exchange information using the Nationwide Health Information Network.

Veterans in the area will be invited to participate in the health information exchange pilot, which will launch on Sept. 30. Veteran enrollment for the VLER pilot is currently ongoing.

Veterans who choose to participate will authorize their public and private sector health care providers to share specific health information electronically, safely, securely, and privately. No

exchange of information will occur without the permission of participating Veterans. Veterans may opt in or opt out of the VLER pilot at any time.

The VLER pilot does not affect VA benefits, no cost to Veteran, and no affect on care provided in the private sector.

“The benefit of VLER to the Veteran is that it will help ensure that all the different providers involved in their health care have knowledge of the care provided to that Veteran as they are seen in more than one medical center,” explained Isaacks.

More detailed information on the pilot program is available by calling 1-877-771-VLER (8537).

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Interviews with Ralph H. Johnson VA Medical Center Acting Director Scott Isaacks are available upon request. Please contact Kevin Abel at (843) 789-6415 or kevin.abel@va.gov.