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National Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Commission

1608 K Street, N.W. • Washington, D.C. 20006

Michael D. Helm, Chairman - Nebraska

Barry A. Searle, Director - Pennsylvania

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## **VA and Kaiser Permanente Invite Veterans to Participate in Health Care Sharing Pilot Program**

On November 25, 2009, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), in collaboration with Kaiser Permanente, introduced a new pilot program to enhance services and care to this Nation's veterans. The pilot program, set to begin mid-December 2009 in San Diego, California, connects Kaiser Permanente Health Connect® and the VA's electronic health record system, VistA, two of the largest electronic health record systems in the country.

The program will be executed by VA and Kaiser Permanente who will submit a joint letter to resident veterans who receive care from both organizations. The letter invites veterans to participate in this pilot program, which is a first of its kind. Veterans who respond to the letter will have to permit their public/private health care providers and doctors to share pertinent health information electronically. VA and Kaiser Permanente proclaims that information shared electronically is safe, secure, and categorized as private.


VA and Kaiser Permanente also states that veterans' access to care will not be affected at either organization if they choose not to participate; however, patients who choose to participate will benefit by allowing their doctors at either organization to obtain key health record information from other participating institutions.

According to VA Secretary, Eric K. Shinseki, "Utilization of the NHIN's standards and network will allow organizations like VA and the Department of Defense to

partner with private sector health care providers to promote better, faster and safer care for veterans.”

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BARRY A. SEARLE, Director  
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