

MEETING SUMMARY
IHS/VHA Steering Committee Meeting
January 4, 2005 – 3:00-4:30 pm

ATTENDEES

	(Staff)	(Members)
Present:	Keith Longie Jim Garvie Candace Jones Clayton Curtis Amy Hertz Sherrie Hans Rob Kolodner Leo Nolan	Craig Vanderwagen Frances Murphy Randy Petzel Jim Toya Elmer Brewster Tammy Cannady

Meeting Summary from 8/5/04

Change Date on document to 2004 (from 2003)

IT (Presented by Keith Longie and Rob Kolodner)

- Have established regular meetings between the agencies with phone calls each month and quarterly face-to-face meetings with the next meeting in Tucson.
- First item to tackle is the MOU which is up for renewal. Plan to include greater specificity within the MOU about the obligations of each agency.
- Each agency recognizes that there remains a “number of crisis” that will require “further work.” (Specifics not stated although the written summary provided by the IT work group describes a number of these. See the barriers listed in the spread sheet provided).
- Dr. Vanderwagen asked how the Steering Committee can help VHA and IHS support the President’s National health information technology agenda.
- Dr. Kolodner stated that VHA and IHS are engaged on all of the Health IT workgroups and have played an important part in developing and improving the Health IT standards and defining the requirements for an electronic health record. At some point in the future, an “electronic health information highway” will result from this effort that allows for the exchange of electronic health records and the data they contain. VHA and IHS IT leads have determined that we should not take the lead in developing such an exchange protocol. Rather, the two agencies should be poised to take advantage of such a development, once implemented by the private sector. However, VHA and IHS are developing an inter-connectivity agreement that would allow the agencies to exchange information – on a limited basis now and broaden when the NHII is in place. Primarily at this time we would like to share project information and applications between work group members through a common sharing platform.

- Mr. Curtis added that the Steering Committee could help us to move this agreement along with the Cyber Security Officers within both Departments.
- Dr. Vanderwagen asked Ms. Cannady if she had advice on how to help support the tribes in their implementation of EHR. MOVE Ms. Cannady's response within bullet. Ms. Cannady replied that it has been slow – a stepwise progression.
- Mr. Longie stated that there is a backlog of EHR updates. The demand far outstrips their resources and assistance is needed. There are really two issues with IHS facilities and with the Tribes.
 1. helping to stand up today's version of CPRS at these sites and;
 2. creating a new joint product with VHA that is more similar to VISTA and then standing those up.
- We are still many years from having this new product. Therefore, help should be given to Tribes to assist them in standing up today's product.
- Mr. Curtis stated that the contractor that supports IHS IT can and has been helping Tribes with technological issues – hardware/software requirements, programming, updates. VHA can help best by providing training and technical assistance to implement EHR in the clinical setting and re-configure workflow and responsibility as a result. Both Drs. Murphy and Hans agree.

Updates

Behavioral Health (2005 Focus)

(Action: Send copies of completed tool kit to the committee when it is ready to go.)

- Dr. Murphy reviewed progress of the workgroup. The workgroup is completing the process of selecting tools. This tool kit and the project will be the basis for beginning to discuss opportunities with Tribal partners. The intent is for Tribal community groups to modify these tools for their own use. The next steps are to:
 1. finalize the tool kit within the next couple of weeks;
 2. begin outreach to the specific Tribes identified. After the pilots, materials will be available to other Tribes and communities.
- Mr. Nolan asked if this kind of information is shared with mobilizing defense personnel. Dr. Murphy answered that Military Medicine has a large effort before, during and after deployment to get this kind of information out to military personnel and their families. However, it bears repeating since there is selective uptake for the information – sometimes you don't hear the information until you find that you need it.
- Mr. Toya stated that we should be sure to connect our efforts to National Guard and DoD commands.

Diabetes (2005 Focus)

Dr. Hans presented the diabetes plan and outlined next steps for the project. The Workgroup developed criteria for selecting potential partnership sites and identified the following five cities for an initial effort to develop programs: Albuquerque, NM; Greater Los Angeles (West LA focus), CA; Metropolitan NY; Dallas-Ft. Worth, TX; Seattle-

Tacoma, WA and; San Diego, CA. A two step selection criteria was used. First cities with a significant population of American Indian / Alaska Native veterans were identified. Then, those cities with both an Urban Indian Diabetes Program and potential strong clinical and prevention partners at VHA were noted.

A schedule has been developed for the solicitation and review of proposals. A brief program announcement has been developed and is ready to distribute to the field once FY2005 budget decisions are finalized in VHA. The RFP will be completed within the next month in preparation for release in March. Applications are due back June 1.

Solicitation of projects is dependent on the final approval and release of FY05 budget plan and specific purpose funds previously approved by the USH.

Field Based Planning Instructions

Dr. Hans presented the implementation guide asking for input on whether the document addressed relevant issues, was comprehensive enough and whether any of the content might appear to be problematic. The plan will be presented to the Network Directors for discussion and the final plan will be presented for approval to the Strategic Planning Committee, the NLB and the Under Secretary for Health.

Mr. Toya stated that flexibility in working together needs to be built into the plan.

Activities Update

Dr. Vanderwagen mentioned the IHS Area Directors Summary Report which was culled from Area Director's Annual Performance Report and the VHA Summary of Network Plans report which was based on reports submitted to VA Central Office in July 2004.

CAPT Jones reviewed the Director's meeting from October 19, 2004 and summarized the 5 topics addressed at the meeting. Ms. Hertz outlined the discussion planned for the VISN Directors Meeting on January 13, 2005.

Dr. Murphy asked for new topics or issues that the Steering Committee should address. Mr. Toya stated that at the next joint VA/IHS meeting, the two agencies should present more shared successes.

Next Meeting

The next quarterly meeting will be in April 2005 (March was mentioned during the call). An email will be sent out to the Steering Committee members with the proposed date and time.