

Project Summary

The goal of this project was to provide the VNA of Chittenden & Grand Isle Counties, Central Vermont Home Health and Hospice, and Franklin County Home Health Agency with a custom HL7 Outbound interface to transfer data from tele-monitoring devices to their EMRs. By establishing this interface we could effectively coordinate care related to chronic disease management across those agencies.

During the project design period, multiple exploratory meetings were held between McKesson, Honeywell, and VITL to identify the components, responsibilities, and deliverables of the successful interface. The design was finally completed with two distinct components: 1) To get patient vital signs from the tele-monitoring devices to McKesson and Allscripts, which would be available to the agencies' laptop users in the home; 2) To make that data also available to VHIE for access by providers who have access to VITL's data through VITLAccess portal.

Arsi Namdar of the VNA of Chittenden & Grand Isle provided technical coordination among the parties and participated in the design, implementation, testing and debugging of the interface for the McKesson agencies. Jim Manahan of the VNA of Chittenden & Grand Isle Counties was the project manager and oversaw the reporting activities.

Since the interface was officially run in the production environment (going live), our clinicians have reported a high degree of satisfaction in being able to see the patient tele-monitoring data in the EMR. Previously that data was not available on the laptops and often the clinicians had to contact the office to get the pertinent data verbally, so they could manually enter it in the EMR. The interface has automated that data update, therefore eliminating the manual process and increasing accuracy, timeliness and integrity of the data.

During the design process we encountered some minor issues regarding the data structure among the systems. However, all vendors worked to resolve those issues without jeopardizing the integrity of the interface. We also encountered some issues after the initial interface was installed when we rebooted the servers, but with the proper documentation and training, as the first step, the system administrators at the agencies are able to restart and troubleshoot the interface when it fails.