

## DOD/VA Data Synchronization Program Wins 2010 Defense Logistics Best Technology Implementation Award

*The Department of Defense/Department of Veterans Affairs Data Synchronization Program has won the 2010 Defense Logistics Best Technology Implementation Award for its use of the Medical Product Databank (MEDPDB). Funded by DOD/VA joint incentive funds, MEDPDB is managed by DOD's Defense Health Services Systems program office in partnership with the Medical Directorate of the Defense Logistics Agency and the VA's Procurement and Logistics Office.*

The federal government is developing MEDPDB to create an authoritative, accurate, and synchronized source of product information to serve as a "data backbone" for the federal health care supply chain. MEDPDB provides federal hospitals with accurate and consistent product and pricing data resulting in reduced costs, improved business processes, and increased patient safety.

The DOD/VA Data Synchronization Program has identified nearly \$70 million to date in documented savings with MEDPDB. This savings includes the move of more than \$36 million in manual purchases to MEDPDB's more efficient electronic capabilities. Built with

over 1.2 million certified and synchronized DOD and VA supply records, MEDPDB is believed to be the largest medical/surgical product database in health care.

MEDPDB is an innovative tool used by DOD and VA to support contingency operations and facilitate smoother supply chain operations. It allows the medical supply chain to be more transparent by improving visibility to vital product information. It also allows logisticians from across all services and the VA to share important information to bring down costs and improve product distribution efficiency.

Using MEDPDB, DOD and VA are uncovering savings opportunities that

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*Accepting the award during the 2010 Defense Logistics Conference in Washington, D.C. on Dec. 1, are (above) VA Chief Logistics Officer Michelle Whitehead, left, and Defense Logistics Agency Deputy Program Manager John Charalabidis.*



*Attending the ceremony on behalf of TEWLS are subject matter experts U.S. Army Lt. Col. Judith Buchanan, left, Charles Strite and Regina Girouard.*

# TRICARE Online Blue Button Featured During Federal Health Care Forum

*The TRICARE Online Blue Button initiative was featured during a federal health care forum in Washington, D.C. on Dec. 9. The Federal Health Care Solutions: Empowering the Patient, Payer, and Provider was sponsored by Federal Computer Week and opened with a keynote address by Dr. Peter Levin, Chief Technology Officer for the Department of Veterans Affairs. Dr. Levin praised the cooperation between the Department of Defense Military Health System and VA in launching the Blue Button initiative on its beneficiary Web sites. He said the work being done by DOD and VA to create a virtual lifetime electronic record will benefit the entire nation.*

Following Dr. Levin's address, Meredith Taylor of the Markle Foundation moderated a three-member panel discussion on the Blue Button initiatives offered by DOD, Medicare/Medicaid, and Adobe Systems. The panel included Jenna Noble, DHSS Deputy Program Manager for Clinical Support, David Walsh, Chief Executive Officer of eServices Group, and Michael Jackson of Adobe Systems.

Ms. Noble described TRICARE Online and its use as the health portal for the MHS's 9.6 million beneficiaries. Launched in 2002, TRICARE Online implemented a personal health record for its beneficiaries in 2008 and has launched two versions of the Blue Button initiatives; first as a PDF download and most recently as a text download.

She described the most popular capabilities of TRICARE Online such as online appointing, online prescription refills, and its individual health assessment tools. She briefly discussed new capabilities for TRICARE Online such as secure messaging between patients and their provider teams. "We are very proud to be supporting our men and women, both active and retired, and we continue to work hard to make their experience (on TRICARE Online) pleasant," she said.



*DHSS Deputy Program Manager for Clinical Support, Jenna Noble, seated left, speaks with a forum attendee about TRICARE Online.*

"This is part of our patient-centered medical home initiative," she said. "Where we're bringing patients and beneficiaries into the decision-making processes for their health care. Our beneficiaries can only access their health data on TRICARE Online once they have gone through an extensive set of checks and balances where they choose to download the information and where they acknowledge consent, saying that once it is downloaded they have control over it. It is a very fine line we follow to make sure that only those who should have access to their health data do have access."

Discussion then turned to the recent meaningful use mandate. Ms. Noble described how DOD was well positioned when the mandate was published saying, "We found that a lot of the hard-won battles we had fought previously were goals in the FY11 meaningful use strategy. One we had not yet implemented was secure messaging and we're working through that implementation now."

Ms. Noble also briefly described additional meaningful use initiatives being led by the DOD, such as eForms, so TRICARE beneficiaries can complete online the information they typically would have to manually write at any new provider visit.

# DHSS Launches New Web site

DHSS recently unveiled a new Web site, <http://health.mil/mhscio/dhss>, featuring an innovative design as well as DHSS organizational and product information including:

- Mission and vision statements
- Organizational information
- Leadership biographies
- Current and archived editions of the eXpresso
- Product specific Web pages and fact sheets
- DHSS and MHS Help Desk contact information



The new Web site consolidates information from the following legacy Web sites: Defense Medical Logistics Standard Support, Resources Information Technology Program Office, Executive Information Decision Support, Joint Medical Logistics Functional Development Center, Special Needs Program Management Information System and Nutrition Management Information System.

For questions or concerns about the new DHSS Web site, please contact Sarah Marcinko at [sarah.marcinko.ctr@tma.osd.mil](mailto:sarah.marcinko.ctr@tma.osd.mil) or 703-575-4624. To view the Web site, please click <http://bit.ly/eqw4CG>.

## DoD/VA Data Synchronization Program Wins

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previously would have been impossible to find. For example:

- The average price per unit for a certain intravenous set shows \$115 for the DOD and \$75 for the VA, representing a potential savings to the DOD of \$240,000 a year, or 35% on that one item alone.
- The average price per unit for pre-washed sterile gauze shows \$110 for the VA and \$65 for the DOD, representing an opportunity for VA to save up to \$350,000 a year, or 40% on that one item alone.

Also recognized during the ceremony were award finalists for the successful development and transfer of the Theater Enterprise-Wide Logistics System (TEWLS) application from the U.S. Army Medical Research and Materiel Command to Defense Health Services Systems. The TEWLS team was lauded in the category of Military-Military Collaboration of the Year: Rewarding the Joint Effort.

Now in its seventh year, the Defense Logistics Awards honor, recognize and promote the logisticians in the DOD and the defense industry who have made significant contributions to military logistics through their support of interoperability and transformation through logistics initiatives, programs and processes.

# eXpresso

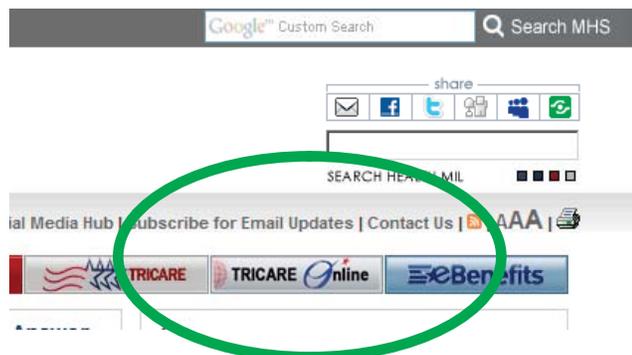
## TRICARE Online Tab Live on Health.mil

*A new tab linking beneficiaries to TRICARE Online, a health care services, benefits, and health information portal for the Department of Defense Military Health System, was added to <http://www.health.mil> on Dec. 8.*

Visitors to <http://www.health.mil> can find the tab with the TRICARE Online logo at the top right corner of the page between the existing TRICARE and eBenefits tabs. Beneficiaries who click onto the tab will be directed to <http://www.tricareonline.com> where they can:

- Schedule appointments for themselves and their family members
- Refill prescriptions
- Review and download personal health data
- Complete and submit health risk assessments
- Obtain information about medical benefits
- Research general health information

The prominent location of the TRICARE Online tab on [health.mil](http://www.health.mil) seeks to better serve our 9.6 million beneficiaries by promoting awareness and facilitating easier access to the many services and information available on TRICARE Online.



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eXpresso is distributed electronically, and recipients are encouraged to share it with others. To subscribe, submit a story idea or correct an e-mail address, please contact Jo Carol Torrez, at 703-575-7461 or [jocarol.torrez.ctr@tma.osd.mil](mailto:jocarol.torrez.ctr@tma.osd.mil).

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