ELECTRONIC HEALTH RECORDS

Ongoing Stakeholder Involvement Needed in the Department of Veterans Affairs’ Modernization Effort

Why GAO Did This Study

VA’s existing EHR system is antiquated, costly to maintain, and does not fully support VA’s need to exchange health records with other organizations, such as the Department of Defense. As a result, VA has undertaken a modernization effort to replace it. As VA prepares to transition from its existing EHR system to a commercial system, it has the opportunity to design standardized work processes to support the delivery of care and ensure information on veterans’ care is consistently captured, regardless of site of care.

GAO was asked to review VA’s EHR system configuration process. This report examines, among other objectives: (1) how VA made EHR system configuration decisions and assessed the compatibility of the commercial EHR system with its work processes; and (2) the effectiveness of VA’s decision-making procedures, including ensuring key stakeholder involvement.

GAO observed national and local workshop meetings; visited planned initial implementation sites; reviewed documentation on the processes and schedule; and interviewed VA, DOD, and contractor officials.

What GAO Recommends

GAO is recommending that VA ensure the involvement of all relevant medical facility stakeholders in the EHR system configuration decision process. VA concurred with GAO’s recommendation.

View GAO-20-473. For more information, contact Debra A. Draper, 202-512-7114 or DraperD@gao.gov or Carol C. Harris at 202-512-4456 or HarrisCC@gao.gov