



Agency Priority Goal Action Plan

Veteran Customer Experience

Goal Leaders:

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Overview

Goal Statement

- VA will increase Veteran trust in VA. By September 30, 2019, Veterans' positive responses will increase from 67 percent (September 30, 2017) to 90 percent to the statement, "I trust VA to fulfill our country's commitment to Veterans."

Challenges

- VA must incorporate Veteran experience data in all business processes to drive performance improvements in health care and benefits to increase Veterans' trust in VA

Opportunities

- VA will deploy data science analytics based on near real time Veteran feedback:
- To detect trending concerns and predict emerging topics before they intensify
- To ensure that Veteran experience insights are actionable to improve Veterans' experience in the receipt of health care and benefits
- To increase trust in VA

Goal Structure & Strategies

- In Fiscal Year (FY) 2019, VA will leverage customer experience (CX) data analytics capabilities used by the private sector to detect trending feedback and predict emerging topics before they intensify in order to enhance the Veteran experience and increase trust in VA.
- VA is bringing private sector best practices to the Department by building CX and data analytics as core competencies, and initial goals in 2019 are to monitor, track, and analyze overall Veteran Trust in VA and Outpatient Trust, which is comprised of 3 elements: Outpatient Ease (“It was easy to get the services I needed”), Outpatient Effectiveness (“I got the service I needed”), and Outpatient Emotion (“I feel like a valued customer”). Outpatient Trust is one factor of many contributing to overall VA Trust.

Strategy 1: Deploy capability for leadership and employees to see trending concerns and predictions on emerging topics in specific Veterans Health Administration (VHA) lines of business (i.e., outpatient services, such as mental health, primary care, optometry, physical therapy, cardiology, etc.) before they intensify

Strategy 2: Conduct and continually expand performance improvement training using Veterans experience insights to help inform for opportunities in service delivery and systems improvements across VHA outpatient services

Key External Factors Impacting Goal Achievement: VA must engage Veterans and demonstrate responsiveness to their concerns by institutionalizing the voice of the Veteran across business lines to drive performance improvements and increase trust in VA

Proposed Mitigation Actions: VA will engage Veterans through key initiatives (e.g., Hotline; Post 9/11 Veteran engagement strategy; Choose Home Initiative; Contact Center Modernization) to drive performance improvement based on Veteran experience data and monitor impact of initiatives based on Veteran experience drivers (ease, effectiveness, and emotion)

Summary of Progress – FY19Q4

- Since July 2017, VA Trust and VHA Outpatient scores for Trust, Ease, Effectiveness, and Emotion have all increased
- VA Trust survey results show constant scores for Trust and Emotion from the previous quarter (FY19 Q4). Ease increased and Effectiveness decreased. When comparing to the previous quarter:
 - Ease is now 71% (from 70% in FY19 Q4), Emotion remained at 73%, Effectiveness is now at 76% (from 78% in FY19 Q4), and overall Trust remained at 72%.
 - A greater understanding of what most influences these results will be gained as we continue to add additional lines of business.
- VEO applied the industry best practice of human-centered design to map the Veteran’s Emergency Medicine journey with VHA, which was used to identify the key moments that matter to Veterans in order to measure VA’s performance in those areas.
- The Red Coat Ambassador Program has been implemented in VA medical centers across the nation. Red Coat Ambassadors are stationed at hospital entrances to assist patients and visitors with navigation, information, and provide the first culture of care impression.
 - <https://www.blogs.va.gov/VAntage/55562/veteran-experience-red-coat-ambassadors/>
- VA held the largest viewed Secretary Town Hall, which focused on customer experience improvements at VA. 60,000 watched live, and the content reached 3.75M via e-mail opens.
 - <https://www.blogs.va.gov/VAntage/55510/va-secretary-robert-wilkie-host-live-community-town-hall-online-january-17th/>

Overall Summary of Progress

- Completed measurement and implementation process for multiple survey instruments, such as MISSION ACT Comment Card, Community Signals (CSignals), Emergency Medicine.
- VEO's Office of Advanced Analytics trained over 500 VHA, Board of Veterans' Appeals, VBA, NCA, and internal VEO staff in the use of Veterans Signals (VSignals) for analysis, routing, and triaging of insights.
- VEO's Office of Advanced Analytics produced 181 comprehensive reports from VSignals-based insights to provide descriptive and predictive analytics to help inform for immediate to short-term service recovery and long-term program and system-wide improvements.
- Since deployment in January 2018, VEO's artificial intelligence (AI) capability, which was implemented to catch potential suicide/homeless/mental health crises, has led to early interventions for 1,652 at-risk veterans.
- In February 2019, VEO launched a number of new CX surveys, including:
 - survey and associated dashboard to solicit Veteran feedback about their experience with National Cemetery Administration (NCA) Contact Centers; and
 - first ever VA Telehealth providers survey
- In February 2019, VA's Patient Experience Symposium brought more than 450 VA healthcare decision-makers and clinicians, including all VA medical center directors together for one purpose – *Improving the Patient Experience at VA*. More than 5,000 watched online as well.
 - The 2019 inaugural VA Patient Experience Symposium allowed VA employees to share best practices and align in support of Secretary Wilkie's prime directive, customer experience.
 - <https://www.blogs.va.gov/VAntage/56472/va-continues-work-improve-patient-experience-commitment-customer-service/>

Overall Summary of Progress

- Directed and coordinated an enterprise-wide Social Media Working Group that catalogued all data tools, features, and functional capabilities found in VA Social Media listening tools and provided leadership with recommendations for the social media management, service recovery, and analytic business requirements that should be included in a consolidated Social Media listening tool across VA.
- Patience Experience (PX) Customer Experience Own the Moment (OTM) training reached 85,000+ employees.
- More Veterans see improvements in VA Health Care recent Veterans of Foreign Wars survey found when seeking Department of Veterans Affairs health care, according to the annual “Our Care” survey released by VFW. The survey of nearly 7,000 VFW members showed 74% reported seeing improvements at their local VA, compared to 64% in 2018. And 91% said they would recommend VA care to other Veterans, compared to 80% in 2018.
- A recent Partnership for Public Service study credits VA for customer experience improvements, citing reduced wait times for appointments, same-day mental health access at all medical centers, and an improved online experience. The insights recognized the establishment of the Veterans Experience Office as a catalyst to launch major efforts aimed at improving online and in-person customer experiences. VA is one of two agencies of those reviewed that has a senior executive focused primarily on customer experience.

Key Milestones

In order to achieve VA's goal of increasing Veteran trust in the VA to 90% by 2019, VA established strategic milestones to improve service delivery efforts and performance.

Milestone Summary					
Key Milestones	Milestone Due Date	Milestone Status	Change from last quarter	Owner	Anticipated Barriers or Other Issues Related to Milestone Completion
Enable role-based access to Veteran experience COTS platform for all VA employees	June 30, 2018	Completed		OIT	Integration between Veteran experience platform and VA's global access list (GAL) to enable automated role-based access; stakeholder support to use Veteran experience data to drive performance improvement decisions
Automate measurement and reporting across VHA's outpatient lines of business	Sept 30, 2018	Completed		VEO	Stakeholder availability and engagement; data availability/access
Provide capability to see trending concerns and predictions on emerging topics before they intensify	Sept 30, 2018	Completed		VEO	Continued availability of OIT staff; following VA's 'VIP' approach to agile delivery (3-month delivery cycle, which we have adjusted to release every 1-month)
Complete automation of measurement and reporting across additional lines of business, such as benefits	Sept 30, 2019	Completed		VEO	Stakeholder availability and engagement; data availability/access

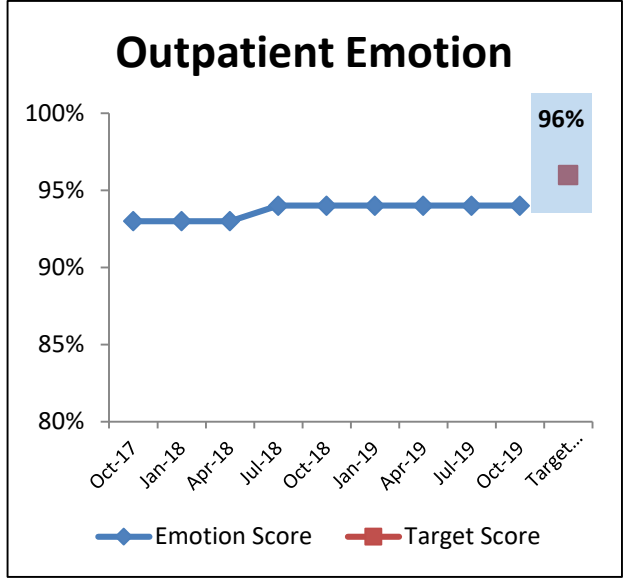
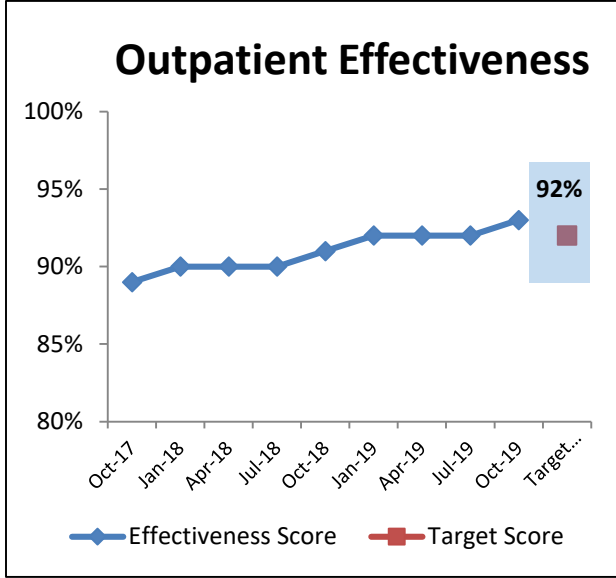
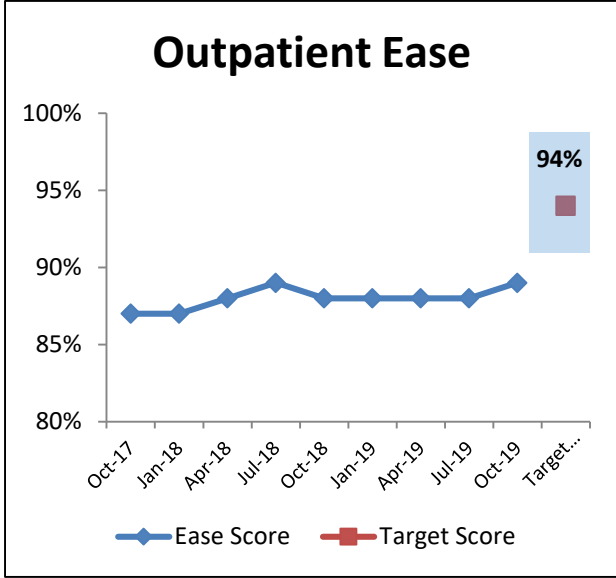
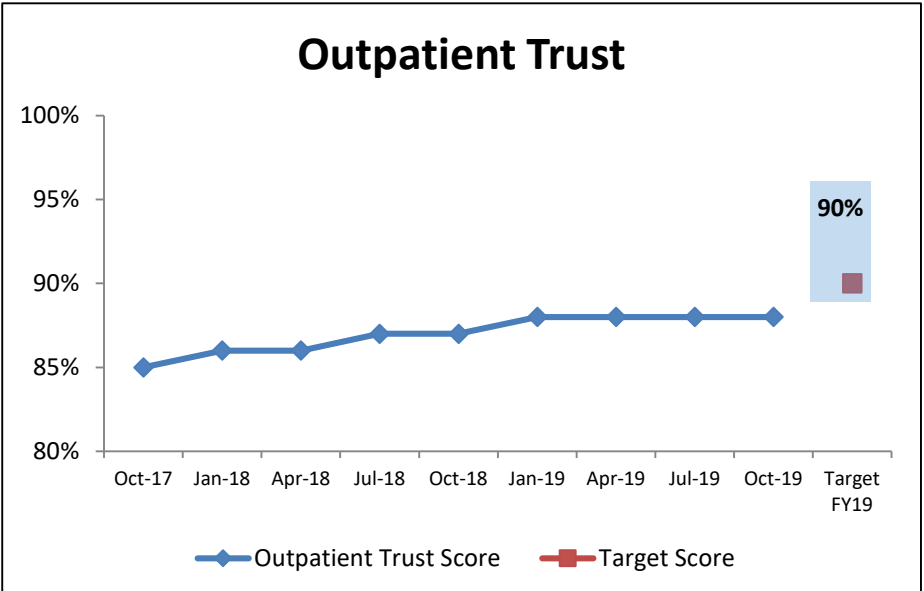
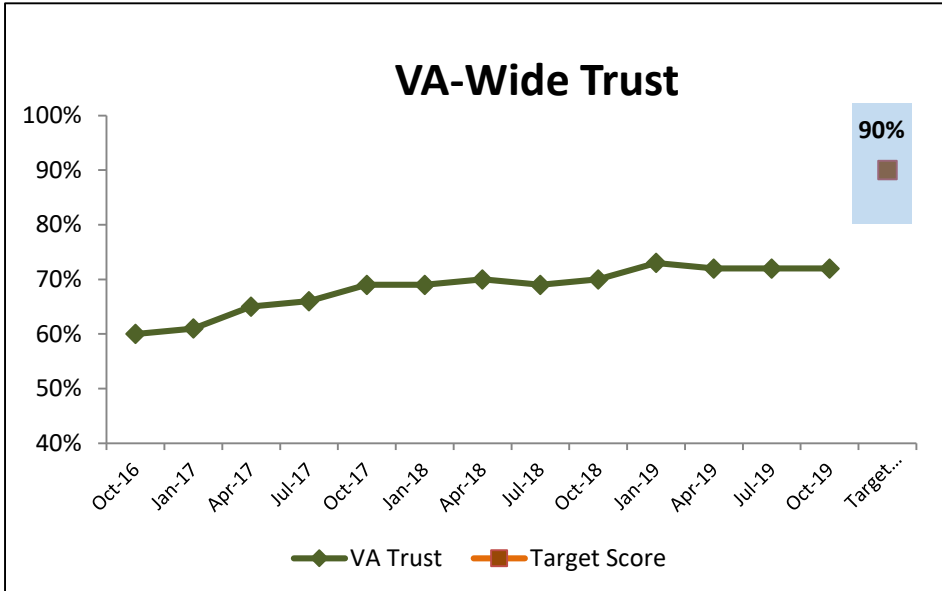
Key Indicators for VA-Wide Trust and Outpatient Surveys

- Factors that contribute to and impact a Veteran’s overall perception of trust in VA include ease, effectiveness, and emotion
- VA analyzes what Veterans are saying about their outpatient experiences (including mental health, primary care, optometry, physical therapy, cardiology, etc.), and levels of outpatient ease, effectiveness, and emotion are anticipated to drive increases in outpatient trust

	Jul 2016	Oct 2016	Jan 2017	Apr 2017	Jul 2017	Oct 2017	Jan 2018	Apr 2018	Jul 2018	Oct 2018	Jan 2019	Apr 2019	Jul 2019	Oct 2019	2019 Target
VA Trust	59%	60%	61%	65%	66%	69%	69%	70%	69%	70%	73%	72%	72%	72%	90%
Outpatient Trust	-	-	-	-	85%	85%	86%	86%	87%	87%	88%	88%	88%	88%	90%
Outpatient Ease	-	-	-	-	87%	87%	87%	88%	89%	88%	88%	88%	88%	89%	94%
Outpatient Effectiveness	-	-	-	-	89%	89%	90%	90%	90%	91%	92%	92%	92%	93%	92%
Outpatient Emotion	-	-	-	-	93%	93%	93%	93%	94%	94%	94%	94%	94%	94%	96%

SINCE JULY 2017, VA TRUST AND VHA OUTPATIENT SCORES FOR TRUST, EASE, EFFECTIVENESS, AND EMOTION HAVE ALL INCREASED

VA-Wide Trust and Outpatient Surveys: Scores and Targets



Data Accuracy and Reliability

Data Sources

- Internal VA database Dependencies: VA Enterprise Data Warehouse (EDW) and Corporate Data Warehouse (CDW)
- VA-Wide Trust Measure Survey Methodology:
 - **Number of Respondents:** Since March 31, 2017, VA invited 3.6 million VA customers to participate in a survey, to which 606k responses were received (17% response rate).
 - **Survey Pool:** Veterans, eligible dependents, survivors, caregivers, and other advocates, such as Funeral Home Directors, with a valid email address on record and who received one or more health, benefit, or memorial service within a quarter
 - **Mode of Administration:** Web survey through email invitation; open for two-weeks with a reminder email after one week
 - **Sampling Approach:** Stratified sampling approach to determine survey population based on most recent service received, gender, and age
 - **Frequency of Response:** Quarterly since March 31, 2017 (respondents weighted back to full population; records with missing age or gender data excluded in demographic analyses)
- Service-Level Patterns (Outpatient Survey) Methodology:
 - **Number of Respondents:** Since July 2017, surveyed over 18.1 million Veterans and received 3.4 million responses (~19% response rate); 1.7 million respondents left comments
 - **Survey Pool:** Individuals who received VA outpatient services within 7 days prior to the fielding period
 - **Mode of Administration:** Web survey with email invitation
 - **Frequency of Response:** Twice weekly (respondents not surveyed more than once in a 30 day period)
- Sampling Approach:
 - Ensures responses represent target population
 - Provides analytical rigor and mitigates survey fatigue
 - Ensures VA complies with OMB guidelines on Paper Reduction Act

Additional Information

Contributing Programs

VA Organizations:

- **Office of Information & Technology (OIT):** VA's Veterans Experience Office (VEO) partners with OIT, which operates the Veteran experience software platform, to develop and deliver the Veteran experience data analytics capabilities
- **Office of Enterprise Integration (OEI):** Continuing to participate in the Open Data effort to support expanding access to data across VA
- **Office of Public & Intergovernmental Affairs (OPIA):** Continuing coordination with OPIA to integrate social media listening capability
- **Veterans Health Administration (VHA):** Partnering with VHA to seamlessly refer Veterans in crisis (i.e., suicide, homelessness) to appropriate action groups

Regulations:

- In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act, VEO is working to gain OMB approval for every survey deployment, which includes non-bias response phone surveys

Additional Information

Stakeholder / Congressional Consultations

Internal VA Stakeholders

- Veterans Affairs (VA) Leadership
- Veterans Health Administration (VHA)
- Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA)
- National Cemetery Administration (NCA)
- Board of Veterans' Appeals (Board)
- Office of Information & Technology (OIT)
- Staff Offices (including the Center for Women Veterans, Center for Minority Veterans, etc.)

External Stakeholders

- Veterans, their families, caregivers, and survivors
- Veterans Service Organizations/Military Service Organizations
- Congress
- Media