## Utilizing Veteran Health Data: Workshop for AZ Researchers and Clinicians

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## Why is a VA Data Workshop Needed?

- America's largest integrated health care system
  - 1,321 health care facilities
  - 172 medical centers
  - 1,138 outpatient sites of care
  - Serving 9 million enrolled Veterans each year.



## **Overview**

- Program Highlights
- Perspectives
  - Clinical
  - Research
  - Education
  - Industry
- Barriers and Opportunities



## **Program Highlights**

- Working with VA and VA Data
  - Collaboration Pathways with VA
  - VA Data Resources (VINCI)
  - Understanding ARCHES/ MD Clone platform
- Voice of the investigators
  - ASU, VA, University of Arizona
- Partnering with Arizona VA Medical Centers for Research
- VA Data Resources VIREC
- Planning for the Future of Arizona Clinical and Health Informatics Research and Training



# **Clinical Perspective**

#### Clinicians are naturally curious

- Ability to rapidly ask questions and find answers
  - Last night: 'How many VA patients nationally were ever prescribed treatment for hereditary polyneuropathy?' Answer: Output after building query in 2 minutes
- Self-service model
  - ATM vs. bank teller
- Supports quality improvement, program building
  - Clinicians with access can iteratively build their ideas



# **Research Perspective**

- Simpler to extract data
  - Do not need study extensive data dictionaries
  - However, understanding of health care data is still important
  - No database programming knowledge is required
- Good user support
- Functionalities are improving
- Approval process to access data is fast (post-IRB approval)
- However,
  - Link to other types of VA datasets (Medicare, progress notes) is not currently in place
  - Bring your own statistical software is a challenge (unless you use R)



#### VA ARCHES Can Support My Research Interests in Heart Failure with CDW Access

**Clinical epidemiology** 

**Outcomes** – clinical

**Disease prediction** 

Quality of care

Quality improvement interventions

Comparative effectiveness - drugs

Cost of care



## **VA Data Challenges**







# **Education Perspective**

- Students face shorter time horizon, limited data analysis skills, smaller team, less experience with VA IRBs
- With VA ARCHES, they can conduct impactful research and quality improvement
- If they have:
  - IRB support
  - Some statistical support
  - Credentialing support
  - Training on data platform



## **Industry Perspective**

#### Generating real world evidence

- However, may need to link to Medicare data
- Mostly limited to males
- Great for diseases prevalent in males prostate cancer, heart failure, etc.



## **Ability to Conduct <u>Chart Review</u>: Voogle**

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https://vincicentral.vinci.med.va.gov/SitePages/Applications-Voogle\_Notes.aspx



## Voogle

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# **<u>Chart Review:</u>** Compensation & Pension Record Interchange (CAPRI) Application

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Figure 2-118. Clinical Documents Tab—Item View.

https://vaww.vhadataportal.med.va.gov/Tools-Applications/CAPRI



## **Barriers and Opportunities**

#### Barriers

- Investment needed to support centralized resources to scale beyond individual researchers, students
- Regulatory approvals are challenging
- Credentials, training must be kept active
  - Some newly credentialed VA researchers will never conduct research

#### Opportunities

- Untapped data 'gold mine,' there is no cost to access data
  - Need more investigators
- Fills a genuine need for researchers, educators
- Massive scale: 25 million longitudinal complete EHR patient records
- Can be utilized for non-VA intramural research, i.e., NIH and industry research



## Thank you

- Christine Talbot, IFH ASU
- ASU Enterprise Technology Live Events
- Speakers

