

# Healthcare for the Warfighter

By Linda Boles, Business Development Manager  
for Federal Healthcare, Cisco

A point of consensus in the national healthcare debate is our responsibility to deliver high-quality healthcare to people who have served our country. The question is how to extend access and improve outcomes while also lowering costs.

In both the public and private sector, healthcare providers are reporting success in all respects by enabling better collaboration between caregivers, patients, and payers. Indeed, when problems occur in healthcare delivery, the cause is often that people can't obtain the right information at the right time. Consider the fact that veterans with appointments are sometimes sent home without seeing the doctor because information about past treatment is not available.

If we can track a package anywhere in the country, surely we should be able to find a patient's electronic health record (EHR).

## A Vision for Federal Healthcare

Cisco experts in healthcare have collaborated with federal government agencies to develop a vision for federal healthcare that capitalizes on collaboration solutions to improve outcomes and increase efficiency. The vision maps out the healthcare journey of a warfighter step by step, from the moment of injury to recovery at home, sometimes including benefits adjudication.

Following are a sampling of the opportunities to improve healthcare for the warfighter:

- **When injury occurs:** Medics in the field communicate with the field hospital using any type of radio or even a cell phone or laptop, by taking advantage of Cisco IP Interoperability and Collaboration System (IPICS) technology. Admitting personnel use wireless tablet computers to conduct initial triage and to fill out consent forms prior to ordering tests. The nurse scans the patient's medical ID bracelet to ensure that the patient is correctly identified. In fact, the ID bracelet is scanned at every interaction, avoiding erroneous treatment due to mistaken identity, as when soldiers switch beds.
- **In-hospital care:** In the field hospital, clinicians receive lab and radiology results as soon as they are available, on wired or wireless Cisco Unified IP phones or BlackBerry smartphones. When the doctor passes through the doors, an RFID chip in the doctor's phone sends the doctor's picture and name to the patient's digital display, increasing the patient's comfort level. Video surveillance cameras connected to the hospital's IP network are used to monitor areas with high risk potential, such as the obstetrics unit or psychiatric ward.
- **Continuing care:** Physicians can conduct remote consultation with radiologists using a mobile Cisco TelePresence unit or Cisco WebEx technology. When patients press the Nurse Call button, the request goes to the nurse's Cisco Unified wireless IP phone saving the nurse a trip to find out the nature of the request, and freeing more time for patient care.
- **After discharge:** Patient home monitoring systems transmit blood pressure and vital signs to a local physician for review. Cisco's Mobile Health Unit visits veterans' hometowns, equipped with a Cisco TelePresence unit so that a remote doctor can administer a psychological evaluation for post-traumatic stress disorder.
- **Benefits are awarded:** And for more timely decisions about disability claims, veterans and adjudicators can meet using Cisco TelePresence or Cisco WebEx Connect. The Veteran's Benefits Administration (VBA) can use the Cisco Medical Data Exchange Solution (MDES) to exchange meaningful patient health information within and across agency boundaries. Cisco MDES also aggregates information for VBA claims case managers so they can resolve claims in a responsive, timely, and compassionate manner that recognizes a veteran's service to the nation.

Cisco calls the approach Connect to Care. "Connect to Care clearly illustrates how government and the private sector can collaborate to deliver the best possible outcomes to our active military, veterans, and citizens," says Carl De Groote, region manager, Cisco Healthcare Agencies. "By properly connecting all stakeholders and providing better, more timely access, we help to ensure that Americans receive the high-quality, affordable care they need and deserve. To make the vision of Connect to Care a reality, we all need to work together."

To see all steps in the Connect to Care Federal Healthcare Vision, visit: [www.cisco.com/go/healthcare](http://www.cisco.com/go/healthcare)

To read more about the Cisco Medical Data Exchange Solution, visit: [www.cisco.com/go/mdes](http://www.cisco.com/go/mdes)




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