The Department of Veterans Affairs is expanding its pilot for the Virtual Lifetime Electronic Record (VLER), which enables sharing of veterans’ health records.

“The expansion of the VLER pilot program will allow more veterans and facilities to participate in this exciting new technology,” said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki. “I invite veterans to sign up for the program. It will keep health care providers informed, improve continuity and timeliness of care and eliminate gaps in health care information.”

VLER is a multi-faceted business and technology initiative that includes a portfolio of health, benefits, personnel and administrative information sharing capabilities.

This pilot expansion is designed to share veterans’ health information electronically, safely and privately between VA, the Department of Defense (DoD) and selected private health care facilities that are members of the secure Nationwide Health Information Network.

VA is on track to implement health information exchange at 11 VA medical centers and to partner with both DoD and private health care entities by fall 2011. This expansion will enable authorized users to access health information and will provide seamless service to America’s service members and veterans.

VA’s goal is to have 50,000 signed authorizations from veterans who are VA patients to participate in the pilot by the end of the fiscal year.

In addition to other ongoing efforts to share benefits and administrative data, the pilot is an initial step toward a larger capability which will become available throughout VA. VA will expand this pilot to provide these services to service members and veterans nationwide.

Existing Sites
- San Diego VA Medical Center and Kaiser Permanente San Diego, in operation since winter 2009
- Hampton VA Medical Center in Virginia, MedVirginia and DoD, in operation since fall 2010
- Spokane VA Medical Center in Washington, Inland Northwest Health Services and DoD, in operation since spring 2011
- Hunter Holmes McGuire VA Medical Center in Richmond, Va., and MedVirginia, in operation since spring 2011
- Richard L. Roudebush VA Medical Center in Indianapolis, and Indiana hospitals, in operation since summer 2011

Expansion Sites:
- Grand Junction VA Medical Center in Colorado, and rural Utah hospitals, first in Moab, Utah, through the Utah Health Information Network by fall 2011
- Asheville VA Medical Center in North Carolina and Western North Carolina Health Network by fall 2011
- VA Western New York Healthcare System in Buffalo, N.Y. and Buffalo area hospitals through the HEALTHeLINK Health Information Exchange by fall 2011
- Ralph H. Johnson VA Medical Center in Charleston, S.C. and Charleston area hospitals through the South Carolina Health Information Exchange by fall 2011
- Minneapolis VA Health Care System and Minnesota hospitals through the
- VA Puget Sound Health Care System in Washington and MultiCare sites by fall 2011

To learn more about VLER, call toll-free at 877-771-VLER (8537).