My HealtheVet: Secure Messaging

User Manual

Version 5.0
January 2011

Department of Veterans Affairs
Veterans and Consumer Health Informatics Office
# Revision History

The most recent entries in this list reflect changes made to this document.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Change</th>
<th>Project Manager</th>
<th>Technical Writer</th>
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<tr>
<td>07/31/2009</td>
<td>Throughout manual</td>
<td>Updates per SM enhancement release (June 27, 2009)</td>
<td>Theresa Hancock</td>
<td>Jaime Nasuti</td>
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<tr>
<td>04/26/2010</td>
<td>Throughout manual</td>
<td>Updates</td>
<td>Theresa Hancock</td>
<td>Jaime Nasuti</td>
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<tr>
<td>06/23/2010</td>
<td>Throughout manual</td>
<td>Updates</td>
<td>Theresa Hancock</td>
<td>Jaime Nasuti</td>
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<tr>
<td>12/09/2010</td>
<td>Throughout manual</td>
<td>Updates per SM enhancement release (October 2010)</td>
<td>Theresa Hancock</td>
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Introduction

What is My HealtheVet?

My HealtheVet is the gateway to Veteran health benefits and services. My HealtheVet provides:

- Access to trusted health information,
- Links to Federal and Veterans Affairs (VA) benefits and resources,
- Personal Health Journals,
- Online VA prescription refill,
- VA Wellness Reminders,
- Viewing VA Appointments and
- Secure Messaging.

In the future, My HealtheVet registrants will be able to view other key portions of their VA medical records online as they become available.

My HealtheVet is a powerful tool to help Veterans better understand and manage their health.

Using My HealtheVet Documentation

Related Manuals

*My HealtheVet User Manual*

The Organization of this Manual

This manual is organized in the way most people will use My HealtheVet Secure Messaging. It begins with how to log into Secure Messaging and then covers how to use the various features.

We hope the organization of this manual will help Veterans understand the basic layout of My HealtheVet Secure Messaging and provide them with information about the specific features they may use to communicate with their participating VA Health Care Teams.
Getting Started with My HealtheVet Secure Messaging

The My HealtheVet Secure Messaging feature is being introduced in a phased release, and is expected to be available at each VA medical facility by the end of September, 2011. Your health care team must be set up and participating in order for you to communicate with them through Secure Messaging. If you have questions about when Secure Messaging will be available to you, ask to speak to the My HealtheVet Coordinator at your VA facility.

To participate in My HealtheVet Secure Messaging Veterans must be receiving health care services from VA, register on My HealtheVet as a VA Patient, and complete the In-Person Authentication (IPA) process at their local VA facilities.

In-Person Authentication (IPA) is a process by which the VA verifies Veterans’ identities before allowing access to their personal VA health information. VA patients must:

- Create a personal My HealtheVet account and identify themselves as a VA Patient,
- Visit a local VA facility and present a government-issued photo identification (Veteran Identification Card or VIC card can be used to meet this requirement),
- View the My HealtheVet Orientation video (either online or a VA facility), and
- Complete and sign VA’s Release of Information Form #10-5345a-MHV.

Many VA facilities conduct In-Person Authentication (IPA) at registration, during regular clinic visits or by request.

Secure Messaging is a communication channel for patients and VA Health Care Teams, allowing them to collaborate and build a partnership in order to improve patient health outcomes. Secure Messaging should be only used for non-urgent, non-critical communication.

Login to My HealtheVet Secure Messaging

To access My HealtheVet Secure Messaging, go to www.myhealth.va.gov, login to your personal account (Member Login box on right side of the screen), and click the Secure Messaging tab.
Click the orange Open Secure Messaging button to begin using Secure Messaging.
**Opt In to My HealtheVet Secure Messaging**

When you open Secure Messaging for the first time, you will be presented with the Terms and Conditions for using My HealtheVet Secure Messaging.

Read the Terms and Conditions and accept by clicking the radio button next to “I have read the Terms and Conditions and would like to Opt In.” Then, click the Submit button to open a Secure Messaging account.
Navigating Secure Messaging Inbox

Secure Messaging opens to your Inbox. From the Inbox you can do several things:

1. You can create a new message by clicking the New Message button on the left side of the screen.

2. You can open your Inbox, Drafts, Sent, and Deleted folders for your Secure Messaging account. Under the New Message button, click the link for the desired folder. Secure Messaging will open the folder you selected. Notice: The number in parenthesis ( ) next to the links tells you how many messages are currently in this folder.

3. You can create your own folders within your Secure Messaging account. Under My Folders click the Add New Folder link and enter a name for your folder. Later, if you want to make changes to a folder you have created (for example rename the folder), click the Edit link next to My Folders and then make the desired changes.

The Inbox contains all the new messages that you have received. For each message listed you will know:

- who the message is From
- the Subject of the message
- the Date and time of the message

You have the ability to search for messages within your Inbox.
4. Click the Search… button. Enter Search Criteria - From, Subject, and Date Range, and then click the Search button.

You also have the ability to select certain messages – click on the box □ next to the message in the From column – and then you can:

5. Delete the selected messages by clicking the Delete Selected button. **Note:** Deleted messages will remain in the Deleted folder for 14 months; After 14 months; they will be saved to a Secure Messaging database indefinitely.

6. Move the selected messages to a folder within your Secure Messaging account by clicking the drop-down arrow ▼ next to Move Selected to… to select from a list where you want to move the message (Deleted or one of your other personal folders under My Folders) and then click the Move button.

**Open Messages from the Inbox**

To open a message in your Inbox, click on the message link under the Subject column.
Message Management

My HealtheVet Secure Messaging allows you to communicate with your participating VA Health Care Team in a secure environment within the My HealtheVet portal. You have the ability to send and receive messages from your Health Care Team, as well as manage and maintain your messages within your Secure Messaging account.

Create a New Message and Send

Create a new message by clicking on the New Message button in your Inbox.

To create a new message, fill in the appropriate information:

1. Select the Health Care Team for whom the message is for by clicking the drop-down arrow for To – only your participating VA Health Care Team will appear in the list.

2. Select the Subject of your message by clicking the drop-down arrow for Subject – you have 4 options to choose from:
   - Appointment: Choose this to ask about a future or existing appointment.
   - Medication: Choose this to renew a medication or ask a question about medication.
   - Test: Choose this to ask about a test result or about a future test or procedure.
   - General: Choose this for all other non-urgent issues. **Note:** If you choose General, use the space next to the Subject field to type in additional information about your subject.
3. Type your message.

4. When you have completed the message, click the Send button. **Note:** You also have the options to save the message as a draft (click the Save as Draft button) or cancel the message (click the Cancel Message button).

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**Read Messages**

After clicking on a message to view (click on the link in the **Subject** column), you can read the entire message.

1. If there are any previous messages within this thread of messages they will be viewable at the bottom of the message in the Previous Messages in Thread section.
2. If your Health Care Team has sent you a file you will see an attachment icon and a link next to the Subject fields. To open the attachment, click on the link next to the Subject fields (follow your computer’s instructions for opening or saving the attachment).

3. You have the ability to print messages. Click on the Print Message button and then click the **Print** link at the top of the page (follow your computer’s instructions for printing). When you have completed printing the message click the **Done** link at the top of the screen.

**Reply / Send Messages**

After reading a message, click the Reply button.

After clicking the Reply button, type a response, and then click the Send button.
Delete / Close Messages

After reading a message you can choose to delete or close the message.

- To delete a message, click the Delete Message button. Secure Messaging will move the message to the Deleted folder located under the New Message button on the left side of the screen. **Note**: Deleted messages will remain in the Deleted folder for 14 months. After 14 months, they will be saved to a Secure Messaging database indefinitely.

- To close a message, click the Close button on the right side of the screen. Secure Messaging will close the message (it will remain in your Inbox).
Save Messages as Draft

After writing a new message or a response to a message (you must have selected a recipient, Subject, and typed a message), you can save the message as a draft.

1. Click the Save as Draft button.

2. Secure Messaging will save the message in the Drafts folder. In order to retrieve the draft message, click on the Drafts link under the New Message button on the left side of the screen.
User Preferences / Settings

My HealtheVet Secure Messaging allows you to set various preferences within your account.

To access the Preferences section, click the Preferences link.

New Message Notification

You have the ability to receive an email letting you know when a new message has arrived in your My HealtheVet Secure Messaging account. The email will be a simple message stating you have a message waiting in My HealtheVet Secure Messaging.

1. On the Preferences page under New Message Notification, type your email address in the Email field. (If you provided an email address when you registered with My HealtheVet this field will be filled in with that email address. You can make changes to the email address if you wish.)

2. Click the drop-down arrow under Notify Me to select your preference for when to be notified by My HealtheVet – select either All messages to receive a notification with the arrival of every message in your Secure Messaging account, or select Once Daily to only receive a notification once a day for any messages that arrive in your Secure Messaging account.

3. Click the Apply button to save your preferences.
Participation Status

You have the ability to change your participation status from Opt In to Opt Out.

On the Preferences page, click the Opt Out of Secure Messaging button to change your participation status.
You will be re-directed to the Terms & Conditions page. You must click the radio button next to Opt out and then click the Submit button. **Note:** You will be asked to confirm your decision to opt out (click the Confirm button).

Once you opt out of Secure Messaging, you will no longer be able to send secure messages to your Health Care Team through My HealtheVet. **Note:** If you decide to opt out and then opt back in, any previous messages in your account will not be retrievable.
Signature

You also have the ability to add a signature block to all messages that you send through Secure Messaging.

1. Type your name as you wish it to appear in the signature block (required field).
2. Type a title to be included in your signature (required field).
3. Click the check box next to Include Signature.
4. Click the Apply button.
**Additional Information on Secure Messaging**

***Remember:*** Secure Messaging should be only used for non-urgent, non-critical communication.

As with all My HealthVet pages, if you need additional help with using Secure Messaging click the [Help](#) link located at the top of every screen within Secure Messaging.

And, you can use the [Contact Us](#) link to submit a question / suggestion to the My HealthVet Help Desk.
**Remember:** Always log out of your account when you are finished using My HealtheVet.

To log out of Secure Messaging, click the Close Secure Messaging X button located at the top of the screen. When you close Secure Messaging, you will be returned to the My HealtheVet website. Make sure your Logout of your My HealtheVet account before walking away from your computer.