

## Frequently Asked Questions

# VA's EPS for Community Care Providers



The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is committed to enhancing efficiency and streamlining processes across our vast health care network. To support that goal, VA has implemented a new program – Enterprise Patient Scheduling (EPS) – which enables VA Schedulers to make appointments directly into participating community providers' scheduling systems.

### Enterprise Patient Scheduling (EPS)

#### How does EPS improve scheduling?

VA is implementing EPS to reduce the time and number of steps it takes to schedule appointments by eliminating the need for multiple faxes and phone calls to confirm your availability and Veterans' time and location preferences. EPS enables VA staff to interact with your scheduling system and leaves you in control of your available time. EPS has successfully facilitated quicker access to care for Veterans, increased VA staff productivity, and eased the administrative burden related to scheduling updates and cancellations.

#### Do I have to sign up to continue getting referrals from VA?

Participation in EPS is completely optional. You can continue receiving Veteran referrals for care through your current process. However, EPS offers a streamlined approach that saves time and reduces duplicative work, leaving you more time to care for your patients.

#### Do I decide what availability is shared with VA?

Yes, you have full control over your schedule. EPS ensures real-time connectivity and process automation, allowing you to share only the days and times that work for your schedule with the VA. This means you can maintain complete control over your availability, ensuring that your scheduling preferences are always respected.

Learn more: [EPS | VA.gov](https://www.va.gov/eps)



## FAQs | EPS for Community Care Provider Scheduling

### **Are there any specific protocols or features for managing recurring appointments for Veterans with chronic conditions in EPS?**

VA staff use EPS to schedule an initial consult for a new referral. Follow-up appointments will be scheduled directly between you and the Veteran.

### **Do community providers need to be part of Epic, Cerner, or Athena Health to participate?**

No. EPS has over 150 integrations with community electronic health records (EHR) and scheduling systems in addition to partnerships with health care industry leaders ensuring we are able to seamlessly connect with your schedule.

### **How does EPS impact VA's referral process? Will I still get a referral packet and authorization number?**

EPS-scheduled appointments include the authorization referral number for your convenience. You will continue to receive a referral packet as part of the typical Community Care Network (CCN) referral process. The primary change is how VA Schedulers book appointments for Veterans – online versus by phone. Once the appointment is booked, VA will deliver the referral packet via your preferred method.

### **How will the referral packet be sent from VA to the community provider?**

A VA Scheduler will fax the entire referral package and the appropriate medical documents as requested to the provider.

### **Are follow up appointments scheduled via EPS or directly with the provider?**

After the first appointment, the provider can work with the Veteran to schedule follow up care (but of course we're always here if you want us to work with scheduling with the Veteran).

### **Will providers have a way to communicate back to the Veteran's primary care provider to coordinate care?**

EPS offers an opportunity for us to be more efficient with scheduling, while still coordinating closely with our community network, so we have our direct messaging program as well as Care Chiefs and our VA Schedulers available to handle questions and concerns, and to make sure that we are coordinating care.

### **What steps should I follow to cancel or reschedule appointments using EPS?**

Contact VA to cancel or reschedule an appointment scheduled through EPS using the contact information within the associated referral packet. Following up with a VA Scheduler directly ensures rescheduling and all necessary updates to the Referral Authorization are done right away.

Learn more: [EPS | VA.gov](https://www.va.gov/epsgov)



## FAQs | EPS for Community Care Provider Scheduling Cont.

### **Can I access Veteran records and medical history within EPS to ensure accurate appointments?**

No. VA will deliver all Veteran records and medical history within Referral Authorization packets via your preferred means (e.g., fax, secured email, VHIE, HSRM).

### **How does EPS handle reminders and notifications for Veterans and community providers?**

VA staff delivers appointment details to the Veteran once the appointment is scheduled. Initial data shows that EPS reduces “no shows”. Any additional appointment reminders or confirmations should be handled through your current processes and workflows.

### **What security measures are in place to protect Veteran confidentiality and sensitive information within EPS?**

EPS process complies with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) Privacy and Security Rules to ensure an organizational understanding of best practices that ensure patient privacy and security of patient data.

**Learn more: [EPS | VA.gov](https://www.va.gov/eps)**