**VHA INNOVATION ECOSYSTEM (VHA IE)**

# Data Playbook

May 2020

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

CHANGING LIVES. SAVING LIVES.

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# Introduction

We are so delighted that you are interested in learning how to use data to help support your innovation efforts. This playbook will be broken down into several sections to allow you to navigate more easily to the parts that are of interest to you. The first section is for data that is available for internal users behind the VA firewall only (sorry partners), and the second section is data that is freely available for any user. In each instance, we aim to describe the kind of question you might be asking that might lead you to that data source to help you navigate to the right information. The Data Playbook is a living document that will continue to be edited as more resources become available or known to us.

# Abbreviations

The following acronyms will assist in familiarizing yourself to the data processes:

| Term | Acronym |
| --- | --- |
| Reports and Measures Portal | RAMP |
| Report and Analytics Field Training | RAFT |
| VHA Data Portal Support | VINCI |
| Application Programming Interface | API |
| VHA Office of Quality Safety & Value | QSV |
| Strategic Analytics for Improvement and Learning | SAIL |
| VHA Office of Productivity, Efficiency & Staffing | OPES |

# Data Sources within the VA Firewall

## VHA Reports and Measures Portal (RAMP)

Want to remember one place to go for reports and analytic tools that have already been developed?

VHA RAMP is your place. It is a searchable database. If you aren't sure what report might have the information you need, you can type in keywords related to your area of interest to see what reports and measures might be helpful to you. Depending on your position, you may need to request access to specific tools. Click on the image below to see what you can find in VHA RAMP.



**VHA Reports and Measures Portal**

*RAMP – Your One Stop Shop. A search engine allowing you to find VHA reports and data from one central location!*

## What's in VHA RAMP? Pretty much everything!

- Are you curious about how different VA Medical centers compare in terms of *quality* or how your medical center ranks of various quality metrics?
- Do you want to know more about *productivity* and *business models* for various hospital units?
- Is *patient or employee satisfaction* part of your project?
- Do you want to know more about VA *inpatient* and *surgical* care?
- Is *VHA Community Care* the topic of your curiosity?
- Are you trying to understand VHA *nursing* practice?
- Do you want to know more about specific *patient care outcomes* at the PHI level, and how to better care for your *assigned panel* of patients?
- Is *telehealth* utilization the area you want to take action on?

As you can see, VHA RAMP is a great first place to start on your data journey. Click on the image to the right to learn more.

## Reporting and Analytics Field Training (RAFT)

Want to learn more about how to use all of those data tools in VHA RAMP? VHA RAFT is your place. You can find training in basic and advanced analytics, statistics, and applied work. We know that learning how to use data tools can be intimidating for new users. We want to assure you that you can learn how to make use of VHA data, and this site has a variety of resources for different kinds of users! Click on the image below to learn more about how you can develop your data skills to support the VHA mission.
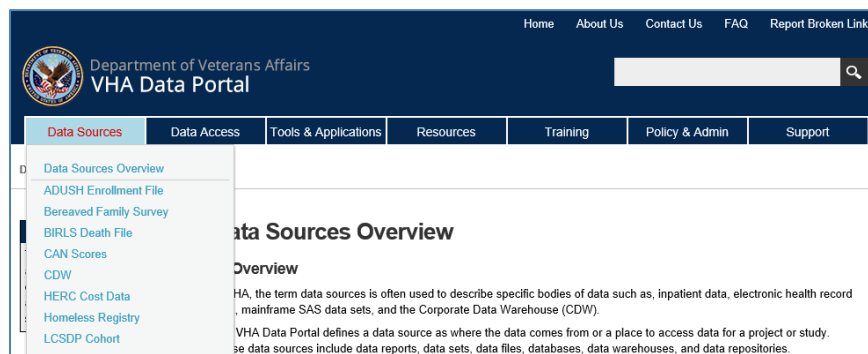


## VHA Data Portal

What if the information you want isn't available in VHA RAMP? What if the data you need isn't a report or measure (yet)? Want to remember one place and obtain accurate, high quality data about the VHA? VHA Data Portal is your place. Click on the image below to explore what's available at the VHA Data Portal.

## VHA Data Portal Sources

Want to know what data is included in the VHA Data Portal? You can find out by clicking on the image below to learn more about all the data elements that are housed in the portal. There is a wide variety of data sources available. Click on the image below to learn more.



## VHA Data Portal Support (VINCI)

It's ok if you need more help to access and understand the information you want to get from the VHA Data Portal! There is a variety of support set up to help you navigate the VHA Data Portal from self-service forms and FAQs to 1:1 data concierge support.
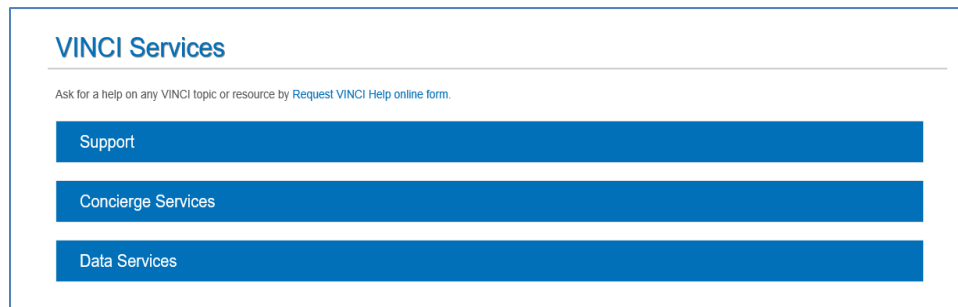
# Open Access Data Sets

The VHA is currently seeking out partnerships with academic institutions, researchers, and industry. We know that for those partnerships to have impact, access to meaningful data is essential. We want to highlight the data sources we believe might be the most useful and impactful to external and internal users.

## Application Programming Interface (API)

Want an API for EHR, Benefits, Facilities, Forms, and Veteran Verification (synthetic data) to safely and securely test out ideas and learn? We are always looking for how we can provide even better service and support.  If you'd like to work on any of these areas and want to test your idea before getting access to PHI, Lighthouse API is your place.
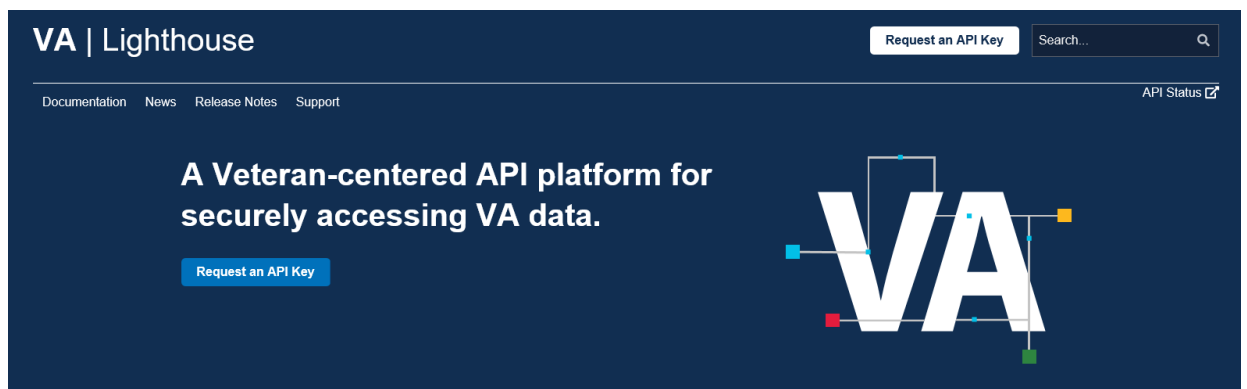


## Quality and Access Data

Want to learn more about access and quality metrics at various VA facilities, being able to compare VA facilities to other VA and non-VA facilities? On this site you can compare VA to non-VA care and within VA care.  You can learn more about access data across the nation and for your local facility. You can also look at Veteran Satisfaction data.
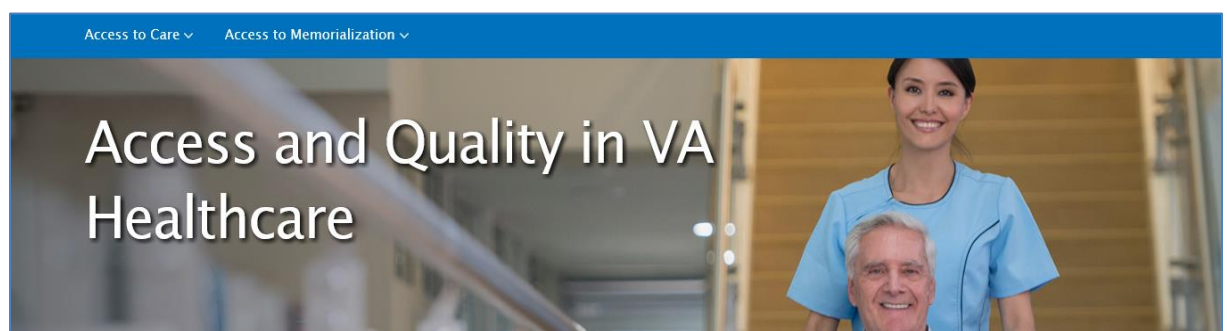


## Population Level Statistics

Want to learn generally about the Veteran population including where Veterans live, population changes, demographic shifts, use of VA services? The National Center for Veterans Analysis and Statistics is a great resource for current data about the Veteran population as well as projections for the future.
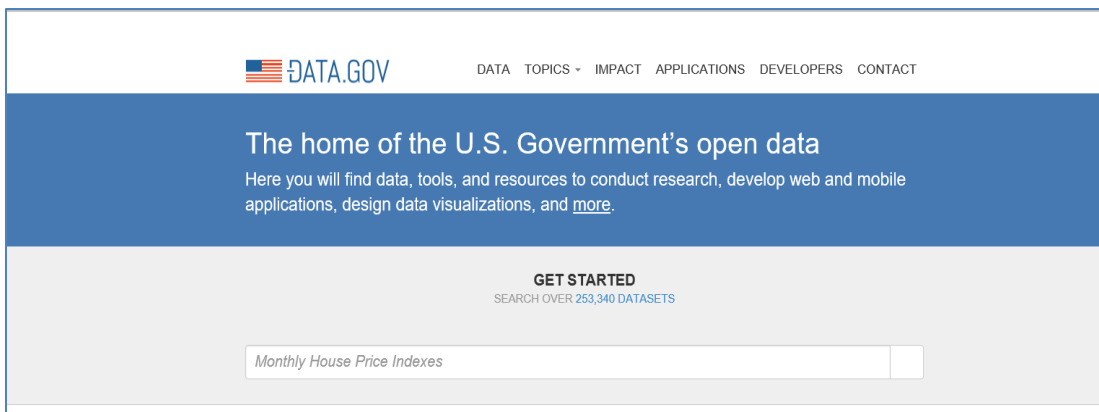


## Open Data Sets

Want access to open data sets across the government and that include challenges that government agencies are trying to solve for now? If you are comfortable with data and have a sense of the kind of information you might want to use, this source might be for you. You can simply type in a keyword to see what kinds of datasets might be available to answer your questions and help you develop understanding.



## Maps and Visualizations

Want to be able to see the change in quality ratings over time? Curious about access to care at a variety of VA sites and prefer to see rather than read? This site visualizes information to help you understand the state of VA care and where there are opportunities to improve care.

Want to see even more maps? This site includes maps of facilities, Veteran demographic data including education, income, age and sex; and population level data on where Veterans are living.
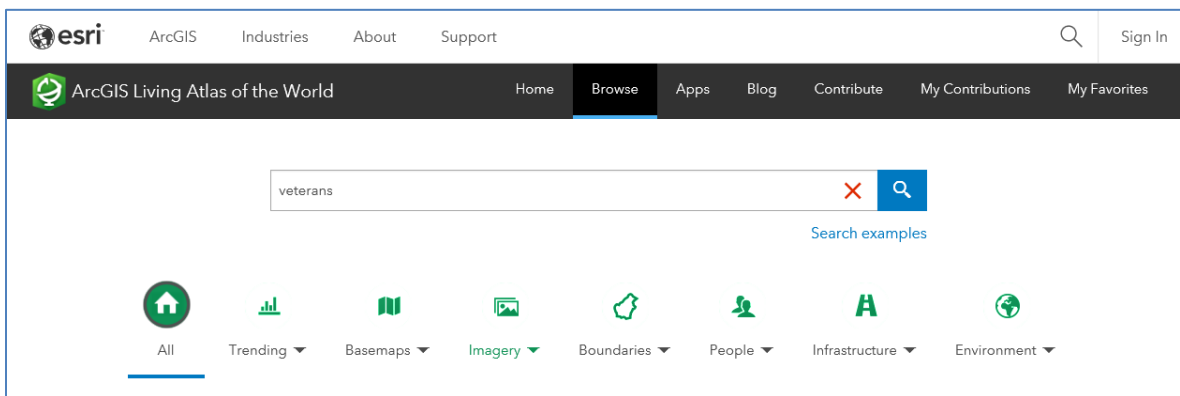


## Conclusion

We hope you found this playbook useful in finding the information you need.

If you have suggestions for how we can make this playbook even better, don't hesitate to Contact Us .

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# Appendix A

*The following serves as additional resources when looking to learn about data within the VHA Innovation Ecosystem:*

- VHA RAMP http://vharamp.vssc.med.va.gov/Pages/default.aspx
- Data Sets in VHA RAMP
  - VHA Support Service Center (VSSC) http://vssc.med.va.gov/
  - VHA Office of Quality Safety & Value (QSV) http://vaww.oqsv.med.va.gov/
  - Strategic Analytics for Improvement and Learning (SAIL) https://sail.vssc.med.va.gov/
  - VHA Office of Productivity, Efficiency & Staffing (OPES) http://opes.vssc.med.va.gov/Pages/Default.aspx
  - Allocation Resource Center http://vaww.arc.med.va.gov/
  - Managerial Cost Accounting https://mcareports.va.gov/
  - VA Dentistry https://spsites.cdw.va.gov/sites/CO_DENTAL/Pages/DRASHome.aspx
  - VA Inpatient Evaluation Center http://ipec.vssc.med.va.gov/Pages/default.aspx
  - Office of Performance Measurement http://vaww.car.rtp.med.va.gov/default.aspx
  - Office of Community Care (formerly Chief Business Office) http://vhaarcweb2.arc.va.gov:9704/analytics/saw.dll?Dashboard&nqUser=plus&nqPassword=Power
  - National Surgery Office http://vaww.dushom.va.gov/surgery/index.asp
- VHA RAFT http://raft.vssc.med.va.gov/Pages/GettingStarted.aspx
- VHA Data Portal http://vaww.vhadataportal.med.va.gov/
- Data sources in VHA Data Portal
  - Assistant Deputy Under Secretary for Health (ADUSH) Enrollment Files
  - Austin Information Technology Center (AITC) Mainframe
  - Beneficiary Identification & Records Locator System (BIRLS) Death File
  - Bereaved Family Survey (BFS) Database
  - Care Assessment Need (CAN) Scores
  - Corporate Data Warehouse (CDW)
  - Health Economics Resource Center (HERC) Cost Data
  - Homeless Registry
  - Lung Cancer Screening Demonstration Project (LCSDP) Cohort
  - Managerial Cost Accounting National Data Extracts (MCA NDEs)
  - Managerial Cost Accounting (MCA) Web Reports
  - Medical SAS Inpatient & Outpatient Data Sets
  - National Patient Care Database (NPCD)
  - National Prosthetics Patient Database (NPPD)
  - Operation Enduring Freedom/ Operation Iraqi Freedom/ Operation New Dawn (OEF/OIF/OND) Roster
  - Patient Aligned Care Team (PACT) Implementation Index (Pi2)
  - Patient Treatment File (PTF)
  - Pharmacy Benefits Management (PBM) Database
  - Planning Systems Support Group (PSSG) Geocoded Enrollee Files
  - Resident Assessment Instrument/ Minimum Data Set (RAI/MDS)



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- - Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) Screening and Evaluation Data
  - VA/CMS Data
  - VA Surgical Quality Improvement Program (VASQIP) Data
  - Veterans Services Network Corporate Mini Master (VETSNET) File
  - Vital Status File (VSF)
  - VHA Support Service Center (VSSC) Self Service Web Reports
- VHA Data Portal Support
  http://vaww.vhadataportal.med.va.gov/Support/SupportOverview.aspx
- Lighthouse API  https://developer.va.gov/
- VA Quality and Access Data https://www.accesstopwt.va.gov/
- Veteran Populations Statistics https://www.va.gov/vetdata/
- Open Data https://www.data.gov/