



# *Bar Code Resource Office* (BCRO)



**The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)** was one of the first organizations to develop and pilot bar code technology for medication administration, setting the National stage for patient safety in this area. Bar Code Medication Administration (BCMA) began when a VA medical center nurse observed a bar code scanner being used for rental car check-in. She wondered why the same tool could not be used to increase safety when dispensing medications. Her innovation led to VA health care providers' use of bar code scanners to verify and ensure each Veteran patient receives the correct medication, in the correct dose, at the correct time. It also visually alerts clinicians when the proper conditions are not met. VA has reduced the occurrence of medication errors significantly through the use of BCMA. To date, VA has administered over 1.3 billion medication doses.



**The Bar Code Resource Office (BCRO)** supports the Food and Drug Administration's regulatory language for drug labeling and works with the National Center for Patient Safety to reduce and prevent medication errors. The BCRO:

- ★ Champions clinical and business best practices to improve and support clinical bar code systems
- ★ Staffs a talented team of administrative, technical and clinical experts who provide VA with guidance and support on bar code technology and innovation



**Bar Code Expansion (BCE)** will further improve Veteran safety by leveraging existing bar code scanning technology for blood administration and laboratory specimen collection. This technology will ensure Veterans receive safe blood transfusions and accurate laboratory results. BCE will:

- ★ Create positive patient identification at the point of care
- ★ Decrease errors and vulnerabilities when administering blood products
- ★ Decrease errors and vulnerabilities when collecting and labeling laboratory specimens, both clinical laboratory and anatomic pathology
- ★ Introduce scanning technology to all clinical areas and staff where specimens are collected and blood products are administered

*Ensuring the delivery of safe, effective, and high quality patient care and technological innovation*