

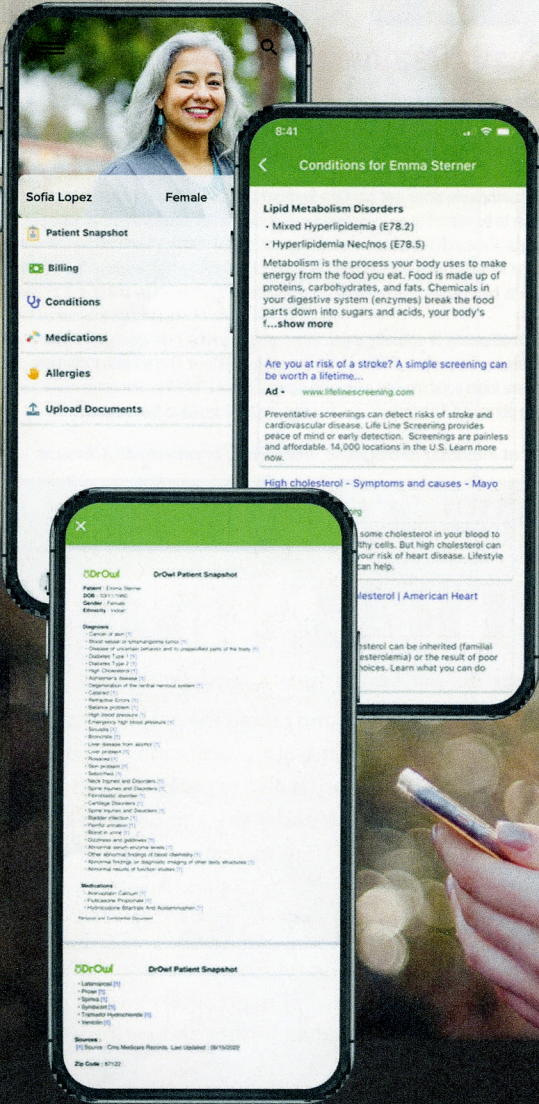
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Making Life just a Little Easier

New **DrOwl** mobile platform makes military medical records more available and accessible

Special Feature

6888th Central Postal Directory Battalion

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By DONNA BOYLE SCHWARTZ

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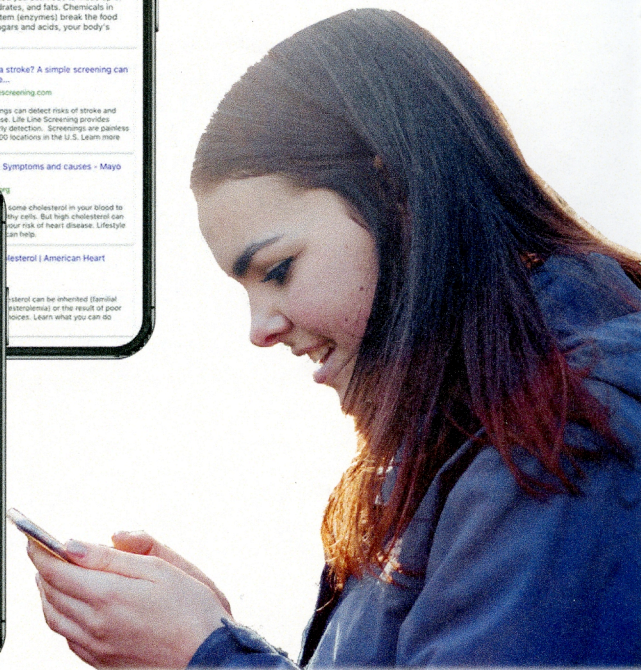
New **DrOwl** mobile platform makes military medical records more available and accessible

Anyone who has ever tried to access their medical records knows that the process can be time-consuming, frustrating, and downright maddening. Now, for the first time, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs is giving direct access to veterans' health records through a new partnership with a third-party mobile app, DrOwl.

"DrOwl was created to help patients navigate the complex healthcare system by giving them the ability to access their medical records from their various providers," explains David Friede, vice president of strategy for DrOwl. "The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services first contacted DrOwl to help its members access and understand their medical records and after seeing how successful this project was, the VA reached out directly to DrOwl to do the same for veterans."

The new partnership connects medical records from the VA, Medicare, and thousands of other medical providers to the HIPAA-compliant mobile platform, DrOwl. The relationship will help veterans who need to gather their medical history and apply for physical or mental disability benefits. The app does not collect any personally identifiable information on its users in order to ensure complete privacy and comply with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA), which protects sensitive patient health information from being disclosed without the patient's consent or knowledge.

Friede said the technology firm received




numerous requests from veterans to access records using the app. "Our main goal with the mobile app is to help empower people to become their own healthcare advocates," he asserts. "Historically accessing medical records has been a tedious, difficult, confusing undertaking and our app helps solve these problems. Within five years every American – including veterans – will have a copy of their medical records on their phone."

The advertiser-supported DrOwl app is free to download from the App store and Google Play. Users download the app, set up a free account, and look for the provider from whom they want to access records.

"For veterans, they choose 'access records from the VA,' enter one of the four credentialing options and the app does the rest," Friede says. "The system will connect to the VA system, bring in the medical records and present them in an easy-to-understand format. Conditions and medications are explained in layman's terms and records can be shared with providers and family members."

The DrOwl app is already making a dif-

ference in the lives of veterans who are using it. "One particularly rewarding story is that of U.S. Navy veteran, Tim Quinn of New Orleans, who had been trying to access his medical information for years," Friede relates. "After a significant amount of time and effort, he simply gave up. When he downloaded the app, he was able to gather the information he needed to file for additional benefits he was entitled to from his military service."

"Medical records belong to the patient and not the provider or insurers," Friede asserts. "Patients now have the right to access their information and DrOwl gives them a free, convenient way to do so. The healthcare system has gotten more and more complex every year and the only way for patients to receive better care is to start advocating for themselves. By partnering with Medicare, the VA and thousands of other systems, DrOwl is empowering people to start advocating for themselves." 

For more information, please visit the company website: <https://www.drowl.com/>