



THE OPPORTUNITY

- » As described in [The Playbook: Digital Healthcare Edition](#), opportunities abound to create value for the patient, providers, and healthcare systems using immersive digital tools, such as XR (AR, MR, and VR), including:
 1. Creating a safe experiential learning environment.
 2. Providing learners with hard skills (motor functioning) and soft skills (empathy) through virtual interactions.
 3. Scaling solutions to reach a more extensive network of patients compared to traditional brick-and-mortar.
- » Along the care delivery continuum, providers deploy XR tools for various purposes, including treating anxiety and depression, addressing acute and chronic pain, augmenting rehabilitation, and more.

XR is changing how the VA delivers care – one way is by augmenting and increasing access to care for Veterans. We've seen it decrease pain, decrease anxiety, and provide positive distraction for patients. We can bring relief in a non-pharmacological, non-invasive way that brings joy to and invigorates the healthcare system.

— **Anne Lord Bailey, PharmD, BCPS**,
Director, Clinical Tech Innovation at
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

THE SOLUTION IN ACTION

- » [Veterans Health Administration](#) (VA) is America's largest integrated health care system, providing care at 1,298 facilities to 9 million Veterans yearly.
- » In 2017, several VA sites began to explore opportunities to incorporate XR in care delivery. Staff members at three sites began to share lessons learned about implementing XR, namely VR solutions, on a monthly Community of Practice call.
- » Since 2017, increased interest in VR led the VA to establish the VHA XR Network dedicated to sharing resources across more than 164 sites and over 1,200 front-line staff (as of August 2022) leveraging XR at VAs across the country.
- » Drivers of continued adoption of XR at the VA include:
 1. **Outcomes:** Improved and sustained adherence compared to mobile apps.
 2. **Cost:** XR equipment is becoming increasingly affordable.
 3. **Accessibility:** Headsets are available with pertinent content already downloaded to the device
 4. **Privacy:** The VA uses headsets designed for health care, with data privacy as a priority; the VA utilizes two options – 1) the headset is not connected to wifi or an external device and 2) the headset's connection to external devices is subject to information security and privacy review, as well as Veteran consent.

The Playbook Resource to Use

The VA exemplifies how to harness the opportunities and mitigate the risks and challenges outlined in *The Playbook's* [AR/MR/VR micro-playbook](#). Use the micro-playbook to learn more about the opportunities and challenges associated with XR solutions, as well as case studies and evidence about using XR solutions.

