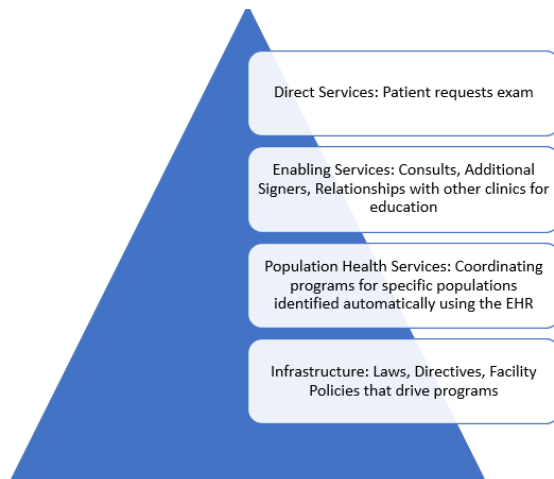


# Audiology's Strategic Vision in VA Augusta Health Care System: The role of eHealth for Population Health Management of Patients at Risk for Hearing Loss, Tinnitus, and Imbalance

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## INTRODUCTION

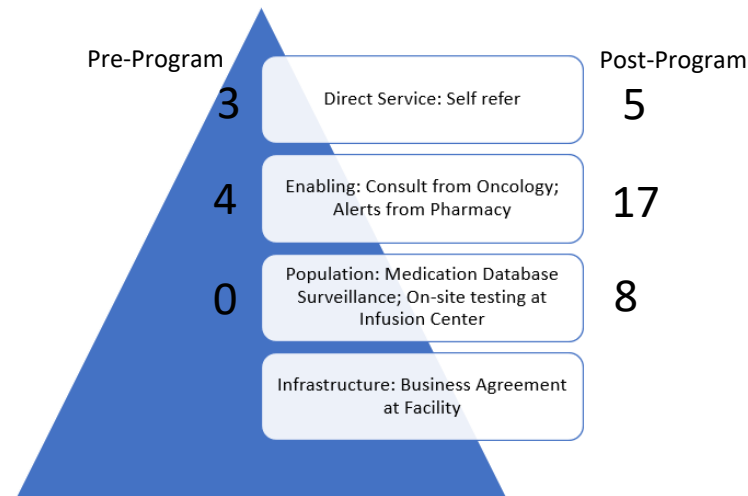
- Tinnitus (#1) and Hearing loss (#2) Service-connected conditions (VBA 2020)
- Veterans have other comorbidities that increase their risk of auditory and balance disorders
  - Ototoxicity
  - Blasts/TBI
  - Low Vision
  - Diabetes (in development)
  - Parkinson's Disease (in development)
- Population Health Management provides concepts to promote proactive surveillance programs to patients with risk factors for health conditions
- The Public Health Pyramid provides a model to show the number of people that a program may reach at different levels of program outreach



## IMPLEMENTATION STEPS

- Identify the at-risk population that the clinic wishes to create a program
- Use tools in the Electronic Medical Record (CPRS) to promote programs at different levels of the pyramid. Systems Redesign and Data Analytics teams at your facility can build dashboards that show patients with at-risk criteria
- Perform a Needs assessment by using data to determine 1. The number of patients with a specific diagnosis and 2. The number of patients who have previously had a hearing exam. 3. The different will show if there is a need for the program, the greater the gap, the greater the need.

### Example: OtoM



## RESULTS

- Increase patient caseloads within the identified populations and provide services earlier than if patient self-referred
- Within our OtoM program, we had 30 participants, 51 hearing exams, 9 hearing aid fittings, 25 phone follow ups and 1 Gait and Balance Exam
- Within our TBI program, 167 consults, 66 new hearing aid orders, 37 balance abnormalities; 24 Tinnitus referrals, 6 APD diagnoses

## Discussion

Self-referrals for patients at risk for hearing loss and imbalance have been generally low compared to patients presenting when referred by other providers or contacted directly by the clinic.

