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PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT PROCESS  
SURROUNDING THE SAFE AND EFFECTIVE USE OF  
ANTICOAGULATION THERAPY IN A VETERAN'S  
HEALTH SYSTEM (C1) Karsten Duncan, VA Sierra  
Nevada Health Care System Reno, NV,  
(karsten.duncan2@va.gov) IRB not needed.

In an effort to ensure the highest level of patient care, compliance with Joint Commission National Patient Safety Goal 3E, and compliance with practice guidelines set forth by the American College of Chest Physicians across the health care continuum, policies and procedures related to antithrombotic therapy were updated both locally and across the Veteran's Integrated Service Network (VISN) 21. The objective was to create a VISN wide set of guidelines, protocols, order sets, and tools for practitioners. The existing outpatient protocol and appendices were revised and updated to meet current guidelines. Appendices to the outpatient protocol included warfarin dosing guidelines, Vitamin K use recommendations, an initial clinic consult, and a patient agreement with clinic. A new inpatient protocol was created and included guidance for low molecular weight heparin monitoring and the incorporation of an existing heparin protocol. Preferred antithrombotic agents were chosen based on clinical utility, safety, and cost effectiveness. Additional chart note templates and decision making tools were then created and shared across the network. Electronic order sets were built and implemented to guide clinical practice. Finally practitioners were informed of changes made and were instructed on the use of newly-implemented tools and

notes. The presenter will discuss the challenges of organizing and coordinating the implementation of a clinically complex set of policies, procedures, and guidelines.