

Mission Accomplished: ‘CAP Health’ Achieves Electronic Records Goal

More than two years ago, as COVID pandemic challenges began to recede, Cadet Programs and Health Services began to collaboratively look more deeply into a longstanding challenge within Civil Air Patrol: Every year, encampments and cadet special activities bring together larger groups requiring a more efficient approach to managing their health needs at these events.

Traditionally, CAP-based health-related decisions involved access to handwritten forms that members would complete and keep. These forms often would become lost, damaged, or unreadable or were left incomplete.

While this proved sufficient for most local missions or activities, where members were closely associated with one another, an increasing number of significant and potentially preventable health challenges were possible at larger events, such as encampments and cadet special activities.

Officials recognized that nationally the standard method of collecting and making personal health information available when needed had shifted from written to electronic medical forms. National youth-oriented organizations and the American Academy of Pediatrics published strong recommendations for incorporating such programs into all youth overnight camps and activities.

Several software packages were investigated, with a few CAP wings successfully using these tools. As options were presented, national leaders tasked Information Technology and Health Services, with support from Cadet Programs, Safety, and Operations, with the challenge of building a secure and comprehensive CAP-specific health platform that would meet the organization's unique needs.

National Health Services staff found the proposal to build a health platform from the ground up a daunting prospect, but a multidisciplinary team from IT, Cadet Programs, and Safety, Health Services accepted the challenge and began working on the software needed.

Health Services has now succeeded in meeting its goal of developing a secure and unique CAP Health platform that has been thoroughly tested and protects members' health information.

Since its publication on eServices, CAP Health has been used in about 75% of encampments and other major activities and continues to be improved and polished in line with feedback from encampment commanders and health services officers around the country.

As Lt. Col. John Burrows, a full-time healthcare administrator who commands the Missouri Wing's Legislative Squadron, said, "An electronic health record is a critical risk management tool for commanders, activity directors, and health

services officers to use when working to ensure the safety and well-being of all participants during activities, encampments, and other events."

CAP Health is a critical risk management tool that allows Health Services to identify and address issues related to cadet medications, dietary restrictions, allergies, and accommodations for chronic conditions. CAP Health represents a fundamental change in how CAP manages health information. It allows health services officers to respond to emergencies quickly and accurately and to prepare reports for emergency medical staff and parents as well as direct integration into the CAP Safety Information System to help prevent future health-related issues.

More information on CAP Health is available online.