

Future Technology Laboratory

*Frequently Asked
Questions (FAQs)*

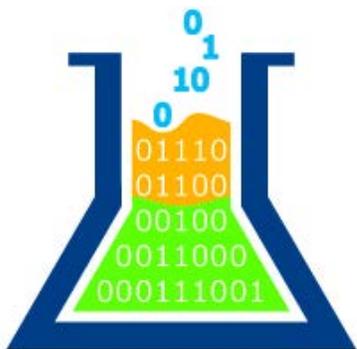


VA



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Veterans Health Administration
Office of Connected Care



Future Technology Lab

Frequently Asked Questions

The VHA Innovation Program's Future Technology Laboratory (FTL) is the "VA's sandbox cloud," a development infrastructure and software used as a service platform that is publicly accessible and external to the VA's internal network. The FTL provides many useful services and now hosts instances of the Enterprise Health Management Platform (eHMP). The FTL is a valuable technical resource for VA employees, contractors, and third party developers, whose goals are to develop software to improve healthcare for Veterans.

This document includes the answers to a number of frequently asked questions about the Future Technology Lab and its many resources.

Q: What can I do in the Future Technology Laboratory (FTL)?

A: Develop and test healthcare software, get technical support and advise.



Q: Who can use the FTL?

A: Anyone developing solutions to benefit the Veteran.



Q: How do I sign up for a FTL account?

A: Visit <http://vaftl.us> and click the 'Create Account' link.



Q: What if I forgot my FTL password, how can I reset my FTL password

A: Visit <http://vaftl.us> and click the 'Reset Password' link.



Q: Can I have real patient data in the FTL (can we have PII and PHI?)

A: Apologies but no, not under any circumstance at this time. To maintain our level of operation and to allow us the flexibility to support all manner of idea exploration, we need to restrict the data to only that which is sanitized and fictitious. If the data cannot be provided on a public web link (public web page, public FTP) we cannot have the data in the FTL. Please see the VA Cloud [Data](#) wiki and its subpages for more information.



Q: Does the FTL have any patient data to use in testing and or writing software?

A: Yes! We have over 200 patients and the related medical records in our VistA database.



Q: Can we add patient data for our own purposes?

A: Yes, as long as it is publicly consumable data. It must be sanitized or fictitious and most of all, you are responsible for it. While possibly not obvious, lawsuits can occur over using popular cartoon characters as patients in your public data. Safe names are names like "1Patient Patient1" (note first and last names vary this way). Also, there are rules for what kind of data exists in key fields such as the Social Security Number. For more information, please see [De-Identification of Data](#) within the [VA Cloud Data wiki](#).



Q: How can I search the VA Cloud -wiki system?

A: There is a search field in the top right of each wiki page. You can search tags, titles, content of wiki pages, content of embedded documents and even search all wikis in the system. For full disclosure on how the search works, go to the help system and then search for 'search'.



Q: How can I learn more about the Help Desk?

A: The [WebHelpDesk Introduction](#) introduces the WebHelpDesk through the process of creating your account.



Q: I want set up a Virtual Machine. Where can I find information on this?

A: The [Virtual Machine Introduction](#) has information about what a virtual machine is and how to set it up. To jump right to the instructions and installers for the virtual machine client software (for Windows, Mac and iPad), visit the [Virtual Machine - Client Software Installation Instructions](#). Once you have installed your virtual machine software, learn how to use it by reading the [Rules of Behavior and General Usage Instructions](#).



Q: Is there a list of software that is available inside the FTL?

The [Software Available in the FTL](#) is a list of software that the VA either has licensed or has developed, which may be installed on the sandbox cloud virtual machines or in some cases physical development machines.



Q: Is the VA Cloud wiki easy for groups to use?

A: Yes, in fact it's meant to be a collaborative editing environment for groups. Depending on how the wiki administrator sets permissions, anyone who can view wiki content can also add or edit content. To read more about how the wiki can be used to collaborate, check out the [Collaboration System Introduction](#) as well as the [Idea Management System](#) and [MicroBlogging](#).



Q: My team is new to developing for the VA. Is there any documentation for the VA software and systems?

A: Yes, we have developer guides. Note that you need to be logged into the FTL to access them.

- [Innovation VistA Developer's Guide](#) - VistA & CPRS development guide for open source and innovation developers. *(requires VA Cloud account)*
- [MyHealtheVet Source Code](#) *(requires VA Cloud account)*
- [eHMP Development](#) - The replacement to the CPRS VistA GUI



Help and Additional Information

Visit our website at <http://vaftl.us/> to find more information about any of the topics discussed during today's webinar.

Submit a question for us via the FTL Help Desk at <https://help.vaftl.us>. Remember that you'll need to create an account to enter the web portal.