Background & Objective
Journey maps are a type of alignment diagram that allow for visual representation of different aspects of an experience in a life-like map for easy comparison across stakeholders. The aspects of the journey (such as touchpoints, emotional states, etc.) collect information from patients, health information technologists, designers, software developers, and executives (HIT). By collecting this information at the same time, designers can identify and prioritize opportunities for improvement.

Center the Journey on the Person
A persona is a specific individual (but not a real person) who is used to understand a user group (or specific group). A persona is a combination of real and fictional elements and is used to understand the user experience. A persona can be a useful way to understand a user, but it is important to remember that the persona is a representation of a user rather than an actual person.

Methods
This project employed literature consultation, rapid ethnography, interviews, and impact interviews to gather and analyze data. The data was collected through semi-structured interviews and was used to develop the journey maps for the project. The data was used to create the journey maps and was also used to validate the journey maps.

Visualize Service Flow of the Touchpoints
A "touchpoint" is an exchange occurring at a specific instigation that is sufficiently noticeable to the user as to guide their sense of progression or regression through the service flow.

Designing a Better Experience for Veterans and Their Providers
For each persona, the "as is" maps can be aligned with the "to be" maps to identify gaps or opportunities. These opportunities can be explored to fully understand the experience over the journey and to identify opportunities for improvement.

Results
The visual representation of "as is" journey maps identified solutions to touchpoints that demonstrated opportunities for improvement. The visual representation also gathered the perceptions of the different stakeholders and was used to develop the future vision of "to be" state, including identification of opportunities for improvement.

Conclusions & Steps Next
Our team hopes to use the outcome of this work to create long-term strategies for HIT. This work can be expected to influence future HIT projects in other areas of the VHA, including health information technology development. This work can also be leveraged to influence other work in the VHA, such as software engineering and software development.

References