Successful strategies to improve care for HF patients need to assist health care providers with rapid recognition and early aggressive treatment, while creating a reliable process that ensures continuity of care\textsuperscript{4}. This critical pathway for management of Acute HF at the VASDHCS provides computerized order sets that guide health care providers through accepted treatment regimens, providing documentation of treatment and assists with compliance data collection. Obviously, co-morbidities and individual patient events may force health care providers to deviate from the pathway; however once the diagnosis of HF is made, risk stratification occurs using clinical signs and symptoms along with lab values discerning BNP levels and renal function. Implementation of a critical pathway and HF algorithm aimed at rapid evaluation and treatment of patients presenting to the ED with shortness of breath, will facilitate effective patient triage, which will not only benefit the patient, but will ease crowding of the emergency department. Finally, the algorithm provides documentation for health care providers and patients; and assists as a measuring tool in tracking adherence.

As a healthcare leader and proponent of putting quality first and building healthier communities, the Veterans’ Health Administration (VHA) participates in publicly shared