

GOVERNMENT CONTRACTOR TO WATCH

MEET ABLEVETS

Dr. Wyatt Smith was a Navy physician stationed in San Diego when he won a grant to design a tertiary care center for breast cancer treatment. He needed data to assess how well the center was doing, so he created an electronic health record.

Eventually, the Surgeon General of the Navy asked Smith to move to D.C. to work on e-health records for the Military Health System, bringing clinical practices to the digital delivery of health care — consolidating data and taking friction out of the system.

“A lot of companies go at [health care] IT from a technological point of view,” Smith said. “I wanted to focus on health care so we really built a company of clinical leadership. ... Our approach to problems is really understanding what’s the health care objective, what are the business constraints, and then we have the advantage of we know how to communicate with the clinical [subject-matter experts] with the departments.”

That approach resulted in his formation, in 2012, of AbleVets, a Chantilly company that garnered \$47 million in revenue in 2017, quadruple the company’s sales the year before.

► **What does AbleVets do, exactly?**



Dr. Wyatt Smith, a former Navy physician and practicing oncologist, was previously deputy chief information officer of the Military Health System before starting AbleVets in 2012.

It’s a consulting and systems engineering company with a specialty in health IT, helping federal agencies — particularly the Department of Defense and the U.S. Veterans Administration — use technology to improve access to care, services and benefits for active-duty service members and vets.

► **Who is behind it?** The company was launched by Smith, an oncologist, after a 26-year career as a Navy physician and deputy chief information officer of the Military Health System.

► **What are its big contract vehicles?** AbleVets said in March it was one of 70 service-disabled, veteran-owned small businesses picked to compete for work under the Veterans Technology Services (VETS 2) vehicle, a 10-year, \$5 billion IT

services governmentwide acquisition contract (GWAC) used by the U.S. General Services Administration. It’s also one of 38 companies qualified for Chief Information Officer-Solutions and Partners (CIO-SP3), another small-business GWAC with a \$20 billion contract ceiling.

► **What are its challenges?**

Continuing to utilize tech to improve the continuity of care, particularly when health care takes place in fixed facilities owned by the government and also facilities managed by outside contractors. AbleVets also needs to find talent to do this work, especially people with cyber and analytics skill sets.

► **What’s next?** AbleVets plans to hire — a lot, targeting an additional 150 employees to its current headcount of 235.

▲ This is a regular feature spotlighting Greater Washington companies winning lucrative contracts and rolling out interesting new capabilities. Know of a government contractor to watch? **Contact Robert J. Terry at rterry@bizjournals.com**