



U.S. COAST GUARD



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NEW TRICARE CONTRACTS

The TRICARE health plan is implementing significant changes designed to make health care benefits easier to access, more customer focused, and more responsive to patients. Commanding Officers can play a key role in educating beneficiaries about the new TRICARE health plan by ensuring that members and their spouses are aware of TRICARE information that is available through numerous sources: websites, e-mail newsletters, TRICARE Service Center, toll free telephone numbers, Health Benefit Advisors and Patient Advisory Council meetings.

The TRICARE Management Activity (TMA) is in the process of transitioning to the new contracts. (Specific transition dates are noted in the table below.) The TRICARE next generation of contracts merge the former 11 stateside TRICARE regions into three, that should result in better customer service, improved portability, and access to quality health care. However, the benefits, cost, and enrollment process remain the same for all eligible beneficiaries.

BENEFIT: The new contracts are expected to enhance access to health care and simplify the administrative process for beneficiaries and providers. The retail pharmacy benefit will be a single nationwide plan.

COST: There will be no change to deductibles, enrollment fees, co-payments, catastrophic caps, or cost shares.

ENROLLMENT: Patients desiring to change their enrollment to TRICARE Prime should contact their current contractor until the transition date indicated in the table below occurs. After the transition date, they should contact their appropriate new contractor responsible for the area where they reside. Patients currently enrolled in TRICARE Prime and desiring to remain enrolled in TRICARE Prime don't need to take any action. Their records will *automatically* be transferred from the current regional contractor to the new regional contractor.

PRIMARY CARE MANAGER (PCM): TMA will strive to retain civilian health care providers who serve as PCMs in the existing TRICARE network. However, this may not be possible 100 % of the time. TMA also intends to attract new providers to join the TRICARE network. The TRICARE contractors will assist patients in identifying a new PCM if the current PCM does not wish to remain in the new TRICARE network. Patients' records will be updated with their new PCMs information.

CLAIMS: Claims should continue to be filed with the current claims processor until transferred to the new claims contractor. There will be a mechanism in place to ensure that claims sent to the old claims processing address are

forwarded to the new claims processor. TRICARE Prime providers will electronically submit claims to the new TRICARE contractor address.

The national healthcare information line will not be available under the new regional TRICARE contracts. The Managed Care Support Contractors' information numbers in the table below offer options for accessing information about the TRICARE benefit, as well as healthcare information, including an audio health library. Beneficiaries may also contact their respective Health Care Benefits Advisor or the 1-800 9HBA-HBA information line. For information 24 hours a day, seven days a week, beneficiaries may access the following Web sites:

For healthcare information: TRICARE online at <http://www.tricareonline.com>

For benefit information: TRICARE Web site at <http://www.tricare.osd.mil>

CURRENT REGION	NEW REGION	DATE OF TRANSITION	CONTRACTOR	PHONE #
Region 11 (Pacific Northwest)	West	01 June 2004	Tri West	888 874-9378
Regions 9, 10, 12 & AK (California, Hawaii & Alaska)	West	01 July 2004	Tri West	888 874-9378
Regions 7 & 8 (Central)	West	01 Oct 2004	Tri West	888 874-9378
Regions 2 & 5 (Mid-Atlantic & Heartland)	North	01 July 2004	Health Net	877 874-2273
Region 1 (Northeast)	North	01 Sept 2004	Health Net	877 874-2273
Regions 3 & 4 (Southeast & Gulfcoast)	South	01 Aug 2004	Humana	800 444-5445
Region 6 (Southwest)	South	01 Nov 2004	Humana	800 444-5445

Regards,

RADM Kenneth T. Venuto
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