§ 17.166 Dental services for hospital or nursing home patients and domiciled members.

Persons receiving hospital, nursing home, or domiciliary care pursuant to the provisions of §§17.46 and 17.47, will be furnished such dental services as are professionally determined necessary to the patients’ or members’ overall hospital, nursing home, or domiciliary care.


§ 17.169 VA Dental Insurance Program for veterans and survivors and dependents of veterans (VADIP).

(a) General. (1) The VA Dental Insurance Program (VADIP) provides premium-based dental insurance coverage through which individuals eligible under paragraph (b) of this section may choose to obtain dental insurance from a participating insurer. Enrollment in VADIP does not affect the insured’s eligibility for outpatient dental services and treatment, and related dental appliances, under 38 U.S.C. 1712.

(2) The following definitions apply to this section:

Insured means an individual, identified in paragraph (b) of this section, who has enrolled in an insurance plan through VADIP.

Participating insurer means an insurance company that has contracted with VA to offer a premium-based dental insurance plan to veterans, survivors, and dependents through VADIP. There may be more than one participating insurer.

(b) Covered veterans and survivors and dependents. A participating insurer must offer coverage to the following persons:

(1) Any veteran who is enrolled under 38 U.S.C. 1705 in accordance with 38 CFR 17.36.

(2) Any survivor or dependent of a veteran who is eligible for medical care under 38 U.S.C. 1781 and 38 CFR 17.271.

(c) Premiums, coverage, and selection of participating insurer. (1) Premiums. Premiums and copayments will be paid by the insured in accordance with the terms of the insurance plan. Premiums and copayments will be determined by VA through the contracting process, and will be adjusted on an annual basis. The participating insurer will notify all insureds in writing of the amount and effective date of such adjustment.

(2) Benefits. Participating insurers must offer, at a minimum, coverage for the following dental care and services:

(i) Diagnostic services.

(A) Clinical oral examinations.

(B) Radiographs and diagnostic imaging.

(C) Tests and laboratory examinations.

(ii) Preventive services.

(A) Dental prophylaxis.

(B) Topical fluoride treatment (office procedure).

(C) Sealants.

(D) Space maintenance.

(iii) Restorative services.

(A) Amalgam restorations.

(B) Resin-based composite restorations.

(iv) Endodontic services.

(A) Pulp capping.

(B) Pulpotomy and pulpectomy.

(C) Root canal therapy.

(D) Apexification and recalcification procedures.

(E) Apicoectomy and periradicular services.

(v) Periodontic services.

(A) Surgical services.

(B) Periodontal services.

(vi) Oral surgery.

(A) Extractions.

(B) Surgical extractions.

(C) Alveoloplasty.

(D) Biopsy.

(vii) Other services.

(A) Palliative (emergency) treatment of dental pain.

(B) Therapeutic drug injection.

(C) Other drugs and/or medications.

(D) Treatment of postsurgical complications.
(E) Crowns.
(F) Bridges.
(G) Dentures.

(3) Selection of participating insurer. VA will use the Federal competitive contracting process to select a participating insurer, and the insurer will be responsible for the administration of VADIP.

(d) Enrollment. (1) VA, in connection with the participating insurer, will market VADIP through existing VA communication channels to notify all eligible persons of their right to voluntarily enroll in VADIP. The participating insurer will prescribe all further enrollment procedures, and VA will be responsible for confirming that a person is eligible under paragraph (b) of this section.

(2) The initial period of enrollment will be for a period of 12 calendar months, followed by month-to-month enrollment, subject to paragraph (e)(5) of this section, as long as the insured remains eligible for coverage under paragraph (b) of this section.

(3) The participating insurer will agree to continue to provide coverage to an insured who ceases to be eligible under paragraphs (b)(1) through (2) of this section and chooses to continue enrollment, so long as VA continues to authorize VADIP.

(e) Disenrollment. (1) Insureds may be involuntarily disenrolled at any time for failure to make premium payments.

(2) Insureds must be permitted to voluntarily disenroll, and will not be required to continue to pay any copayments or premiums, under any of the following circumstances:

(i) For any reason, during the first 30 days that the beneficiary is covered by the plan, if no claims for dental services or benefits were filed by the insured.

(ii) If the insured relocates to an area outside the jurisdiction of the plan that prevents the use of the benefits under the plan.

(iii) If the insured is prevented by serious medical condition from being able to obtain benefits under the plan.

(iv) If the insured would suffer severe financial hardship by continuing in VADIP.

(v) For any reason during the month-to-month coverage period, after the initial 12-month enrollment period.

(3) All insured requests for voluntary disenrollment must be submitted to the insurer for determination of whether the insured qualifies for disenrollment under the criteria in paragraphs (e)(2)(i) through (v) of this section. Requests for disenrollment due to a serious medical condition or financial hardship must include submission of written documentation that verifies the existence of a serious medical condition or financial hardship. The written documentation submitted to the insurer must show that circumstances leading to a serious medical condition or financial hardship originated after the effective date coverage began, and will prevent the insured from maintaining the insurance benefits.

(4) If the participating insurer denies a request for voluntary disenrollment because the insured does not meet any criterion under paragraphs (e)(2)(i) through (v) of this section, the participating insurer must issue a written decision and notify the insured of the basis for the denial and how to appeal. The decision and notification of appellate rights must be issued to the insured no later than 30 days after the request for voluntary disenrollment is received by the participating insurer. The appeal will be decided and that decision issued in writing to the insured no later than 30 days after the appeal is received by the participating insurer. An insurer’s decision of an appeal is final.

(5) Month-to-month enrollment, as described in paragraph (d)(2) of this section, may be subject to conditions in insurance contracts, whereby upon voluntarily disenrolling, an enrollee may be prevented from re-enrolling for a certain period of time as specified in the insurance contract.
§ 17.170  Autopsies.

(a) General. (1) Except as otherwise provided in this section, the Director of a VA facility may order an autopsy on a decedent who died while undergoing VA care authorized by §17.38 or §17.52, if the Director determines that an autopsy is required for VA purposes for the following reasons:

(i) Completion of official records; or

(ii) Advancement of medical knowledge.

(2) VA may order an autopsy to be performed only if consent is first obtained under one of the following circumstances:

(i) Consent is granted by the surviving spouse or next of kin of the decedent; or

(ii) Consent is implied where a known surviving spouse or next of kin does not respond within a specified period of time to VA's request for permission to conduct an autopsy; or

(iii) Consent is implied where a known surviving spouse or next of kin does not inquire after the well-being of the deceased veteran for a period of at least 6 months before the date of the veteran's death; or

(iv) Consent is implied where there is no known surviving spouse or next of kin of the deceased veteran.

(b) Death resulting from crime. If it is suspected that death resulted from crime and if the United States has jurisdiction over the area where the body is found, the Director of the Department of Veterans Affairs facility will inform the Office of Inspector General of the known facts concerning the death. Thereupon the Office of Inspector General will transmit all such information to the United States Attorney for such action as may be deemed appropriate and will inquire whether the United States Attorney objects to an autopsy if otherwise it be appropriate. If the United States Attorney has no objection, the procedure as to autopsy will be the same as if the death had not been reported to him or her.

(c) Jurisdiction. If the United States does not have exclusive jurisdiction over the area where the body is found the local medical examiner/coroner will be informed. If the local medical examiner/coroner declines to assume jurisdiction the procedure will be the same as is provided in paragraph (b) of this section. If a Federal crime is indicated by the evidence, the procedure of paragraph (b) of this section will also be followed.

(d) Applicable law. (1) The laws of the state where the autopsy will be performed are to be used to identify the person who is authorized to grant VA permission to perform the autopsy and, if more than one person is identified, the order of precedence among such persons.

(2) When the next of kin, as defined by the laws of the state where the autopsy will be performed, consists of a number of persons such as children, parents, brothers and sisters, etc., permission to perform an autopsy may be accepted when granted by the person in the appropriate class who assumes the right and duty of burial.

(e) Death outside a VA facility. The Director of a VA facility may order an autopsy on a veteran who was undergoing VA care authorized by §§17.38 or 17.52, and whose death did not occur in a VA facility. Such authority also includes transporting the body at VA’s expense to the facility where the autopsy will be performed, and the return of the body. Consent for the autopsy will be obtained as stated in paragraph (d) of this section. The Director must determine that such autopsy is reasonably required for VA purposes for the following reasons:

(1) The completion of official records; or

(2)…