

ignite a person to serve, as a primary or collateral duty, as beneficiary counseling and assistance coordinator for beneficiaries under the TRICARE program served at that facility.

(b) DUTIES.—The Secretary shall prescribe the duties of the position of beneficiary counseling and assistance coordinator in the regulations required by subsection (a).

(Added Pub. L. 106–65, div. A, title VII, §715(a)(1), Oct. 5, 1999, 113 Stat. 690; amended Pub. L. 108–136, div. A, title VII, §707, Nov. 24, 2003, 117 Stat. 1529.)

Editorial Notes

AMENDMENTS

2003—Subsec. (a)(1). Pub. L. 108–136 added subpar. (B) and redesignated former subpar. (B) as (C).

Statutory Notes and Related Subsidiaries

DEADLINE FOR INITIAL DESIGNATIONS

Pub. L. 106–65, div. A, title VII, §715(b), Oct. 5, 1999, 113 Stat. 690, directed that each beneficiary counseling and assistance coordinator required under the regulations described in subsec. (a) of this section be designated not later than Jan. 15, 2000.

§ 1095f. TRICARE program: referrals and preauthorizations under TRICARE Prime

(a) REFERRALS.—(1) Except as provided by paragraph (2), a beneficiary enrolled in TRICARE Prime shall be required to obtain a referral for care through a designated primary care manager (or other care coordinator) prior to obtaining care under the TRICARE program.

(2)(A) The Secretary may waive the referral requirement in paragraph (1) in such circumstances as the Secretary may establish for purposes of this subsection.

(B) The Secretary shall waive the referral requirement in paragraph (1) in the case of a member of the armed forces serving on active duty who seeks to obtain any of the following kinds of care in a military medical treatment facility:

- (i) Physical therapy.
- (ii) Nutritional.
- (iii) Audiological.
- (iv) Optometric.
- (v) Podiatric.

(3) The cost-sharing amounts for a beneficiary enrolled in TRICARE Prime who does not obtain a referral for care under paragraph (1) (or a waiver pursuant to paragraph (2) for such care) shall be determined under section 1075a(c) of this title.

(b) PREAUTHORIZATION.—A beneficiary enrolled in TRICARE Prime shall be required to obtain preauthorization only with respect to a referral for the following:

- (1) Inpatient hospitalization.
- (2) Inpatient care at a skilled nursing facility.
- (3) Inpatient care at a rehabilitation facility.
- (4) Inpatient care at a residential treatment center.

(c) PROHIBITION REGARDING PRIOR AUTHORIZATION FOR CERTAIN REFERRALS.—The Secretary of Defense shall ensure that no contract for man-

aged care support under the TRICARE program includes any requirement that a managed care support contractor require a primary care or specialty care provider to obtain prior authorization before referring a patient to a specialty care provider that is part of the network of health care providers or institutions of the contractor.

(Added Pub. L. 106–398, §1 [[div. A], title VII, §728(a)(1)], Oct. 30, 2000, 114 Stat. 1654, 1654A–189; amended Pub. L. 114–328, div. A, title VII, §701(c), Dec. 23, 2016, 130 Stat. 2186; Pub. L. 115–91, div. A, title VII, §739(e)(1), Dec. 12, 2017, 131 Stat. 1447; Pub. L. 118–159, div. A, title VII, §703, Dec. 23, 2024, 138 Stat. 1942.)

Editorial Notes

AMENDMENTS

2024—Subsec. (a)(2). Pub. L. 118–159 designated existing provisions as subpar. (A) and added subpar. (B).

2017—Subsec. (b)(4). Pub. L. 115–91 added par. (4).

2016—Pub. L. 114–328 amended section generally. Prior to amendment, text read as follows: “The Secretary of Defense shall ensure that no contract for managed care support under the TRICARE program includes any requirement that a managed care support contractor require a primary care or specialty care provider to obtain prior authorization before referring a patient to a specialty care provider that is part of the network of health care providers or institutions of the contractor.”

Statutory Notes and Related Subsidiaries

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 2016 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 114–328 applicable with respect to the provision of health care under the TRICARE program beginning on Jan. 1, 2018, see section 701(k) of Pub. L. 114–328, set out as a note under section 1072 of this title.

EFFECTIVE DATE

Pub. L. 106–398, §1 [[div. A], title VII, §728(c)], Oct. 30, 2000, 114 Stat. 1654, 1654A–189, provided that: “Section 1095f of title 10, United States Code, as added by subsection (a), shall apply with respect to a TRICARE managed care support contract entered into by the Department of Defense after the date of the enactment of this Act [Oct. 30, 2000].”

STREAMLINING OF TRICARE PRIME BENEFICIARY REFERRAL PROCESS

Pub. L. 115–232, div. A, title VII, §714, Aug. 13, 2018, 132 Stat. 1812, as amended by Pub. L. 117–263, div. A, title VII, §703(a), Dec. 23, 2022, 136 Stat. 2647, provided that:

“(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Defense shall streamline the process under section 1095f of title 10, United States Code, by which beneficiaries enrolled in TRICARE Prime are referred to the civilian provider network for inpatient or outpatient care under the TRICARE program.

“(b) OBJECTIVES.—In carrying out the requirement in subsection (a), the Secretary shall meet the following objectives:

“(1) The referral process shall model best industry practices for referrals from primary care managers to specialty care providers.

“(2) The process shall limit administrative requirements for enrolled beneficiaries.

“(3) Beneficiary preferences for communications relating to appointment referrals using state-of-the-art information technology shall be used to expedite the process.

“(4) There shall be effective and efficient processes to determine the availability of appointments at

military medical treatment facilities and, when unavailable, to make prompt referrals to network providers under the TRICARE program.

“(c) DEADLINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION.—The requirement in subsection (a) shall be implemented for referrals under TRICARE Prime in calendar year 2019.

“(d) EVALUATION AND IMPROVEMENT.—After 2019, the Secretary shall—

“(1) evaluate the referral process described in subsection (a) not less often than annually; and

“(2) make appropriate improvements to the process in light of such evaluations.

“(e) IMPROVEMENT OF SPECIALTY CARE REFERRALS DURING PERMANENT CHANGES OF STATION.—In conducting evaluations and improvements under subsection (d) to the referral process described in subsection (a), the Secretary shall ensure beneficiaries enrolled in TRICARE Prime who are undergoing a permanent change of station receive referrals from their primary care manager to such specialty care providers in the new location as the beneficiary may need before undergoing the permanent change of station.

“(f) DEFINITIONS.—In this section, the terms ‘TRICARE program’ and ‘TRICARE Prime’ have the meaning given such terms in section 1072 of title 10, United States Code.”

§ 1095g. TRICARE program: waiver of recoupment of erroneous payments caused by administrative error

(a) WAIVER OF RECOUPMENT.—The Secretary of Defense may waive recoupment from an individual who has benefitted from an erroneous TRICARE payment in a case in which each of the following applies:

(1) The payment was made because of an administrative error by an employee of the Department of Defense or a contractor under the TRICARE program.

(2) The individual (or in the case of a minor, the parent or guardian of the individual) had a good faith, reasonable belief that the individual was entitled to the benefit of such payment under this chapter.

(3) The individual relied on the expectation of such entitlement.

(4) The Secretary determines that a waiver of recoupment of such payment is necessary to prevent an injustice.

(b) RESPONSIBILITY OF CONTRACTOR.—In any case in which the Secretary waives recoupment under subsection (a) and the administrative error was on the part of a contractor under the TRICARE program, the Secretary shall, consistent with the requirements and procedures of the applicable contract, impose financial responsibility on the contractor for the erroneous payment.

(c) FINALITY OF DETERMINATIONS.—Any determination by the Secretary under this section to waive or decline to waive recoupment under subsection (a) is a final determination and shall not be subject to appeal or judicial review.

(Added Pub. L. 114–92, div. A, title VII, §711(a), Nov. 25, 2015, 129 Stat. 864.)

§ 1096. Military-civilian health services partnership program

(a) RESOURCES SHARING AGREEMENTS.—The Secretary of Defense may enter into an agreement providing for the sharing of resources between facilities of the uniformed services and fa-

cilities of a civilian health care provider or providers that the Secretary contracts with under section 1079, 1086, or 1097 of this title if the Secretary determines that such an agreement would result in the delivery of health care to which covered beneficiaries are entitled under this chapter in a more effective, efficient, or economical manner.

(b) ELIGIBLE RESOURCES.—An agreement entered into under subsection (a) may provide for the sharing of—

(1) personnel (including support personnel);

(2) equipment;

(3) supplies; and

(4) any other items or facilities necessary for the provision of health care services.

(c) COMPUTATION OF CHARGES.—A covered beneficiary who is a dependent, with respect to care provided to such beneficiary in facilities of the uniformed services under a sharing agreement entered into under subsection (a), shall pay the charges prescribed by section 1078 of this title.

(d) REIMBURSEMENT FOR LICENSE FEES.—In any case in which it is necessary for a member of the uniformed services to pay a professional license fee imposed by a government in order to provide health care services at a facility of a civilian health care provider pursuant to an agreement entered into under subsection (a), the Secretary of Defense may reimburse the member for up to \$500 of the amount of the license fee paid by the member.

(Added Pub. L. 99–661, div. A, title VII, §701(a)(1), Nov. 14, 1986, 100 Stat. 3894; amended Pub. L. 103–337, div. A, title VII, §712, Oct. 5, 1994, 108 Stat. 2801; Pub. L. 108–375, div. A, title VI, §607(b), Oct. 28, 2004, 118 Stat. 1946.)

Editorial Notes

AMENDMENTS

2004—Subsec. (c). Pub. L. 108–375 inserted “who is a dependent” after “covered beneficiary” and substituted “shall pay the charges prescribed by section 1078 of this title.” for “shall pay—

“(1) in the case of a dependent, the charges prescribed by section 1078 of this title; and

“(2) in the case of a member or former member entitled to retired or retainer pay, the charges prescribed by section 1075 of this title.”

1994—Subsec. (d). Pub. L. 103–337 added subsec. (d).

Statutory Notes and Related Subsidiaries

DEVELOPMENT AND UPDATE OF CERTAIN POLICIES RELATING TO MILITARY HEALTH SYSTEM AND INTEGRATED MEDICAL OPERATIONS

Pub. L. 117–81, div. A, title VII, §724, Dec. 27, 2021, 135 Stat. 1793, provided that:

“(a) IN GENERAL.—By not later than October 1, 2022, the Secretary of Defense, in coordination with the Secretaries of the military departments and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, shall develop and update certain policies relating to the military health system and integrated medical operations of the Department of Defense as follows:

“(1) UPDATED PLAN ON INTEGRATED MEDICAL OPERATIONS IN CONTINENTAL UNITED STATES.—The Secretary of Defense shall develop an updated plan on integrated medical operations in the continental United States and update the Department of Defense Instruction 6010.22, titled ‘National Disaster Medical System (NDMS)’ (or such successor instruction) accordingly. Such updated plan shall—