

U.S.C. 1712 note], section 618 of Pub. L. 100-440 [5 U.S.C. 6302 note], or section 1829 [now 3729] of this title, by contract or otherwise, during the period beginning Oct. 1, 1989, and ending Oct. 6, 1989.

INTERIM EXTENSION OF RESPITE CARE PROGRAM

Pub. L. 101-110, §1(a), Oct. 6, 1989, 103 Stat. 682, provided that: "Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (c) of section 620B [now 1720B] of title 38, United States Code, the authority provided by such section shall terminate on November 30, 1989."

REPORT

Pub. L. 99-576, title II, §201(b), Oct. 28, 1986, 100 Stat. 3254, provided that if the Administrator of Veterans' Affairs furnished respite care under this section, the Administrator was to conduct an evaluation of the health efficacy and cost-effectiveness of furnishing such care and submit to the Committees on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and House of Representatives not later than Feb. 1, 1989, a report containing the results of such evaluation and appropriate recommendations.

§ 1720C. Noninstitutional alternatives to nursing home care

(a) The Secretary may furnish medical, rehabilitative, and health-related services in non-institutional settings for veterans who are eligible under this chapter for, and are in need of, nursing home care. The Secretary shall give priority for participation in such program to veterans who—

(1) are in receipt of, or are in need of, nursing home care primarily for the treatment of a service-connected disability; or

(2) have a service-connected disability rated at 50 percent or more.

(b)(1) Under the program conducted pursuant to subsection (a), the Secretary shall (A) furnish appropriate health-related services solely through contracts with appropriate public and private agencies that provide such services, and (B) designate Department health-care employees to furnish case management services to veteran furnished services under the program.

(2) For the purposes of paragraph (1), the term "case management services" includes the coordination and facilitation of all services furnished to a veteran by the Department of Veterans Affairs, either directly or through contract, including assessment of needs, planning, referral (including referral for services to be furnished by the Department, either directly or through a contract, or by an entity other than the Department), monitoring, reassessment, and followup.

(c) The Secretary may provide in-kind assistance (through the services of Department of Veterans Affairs employees and the sharing of other Department resources) to a facility furnishing services to veterans under subsection (b)(1)(A). Any such in-kind assistance shall be provided under a contract between the Department and the facility concerned. The Secretary may provide such assistance only for use solely in the furnishing of appropriate services under this section and only if, under such contract, the Department receives reimbursement for the full cost of such assistance (including the cost of services and supplies and normal depreciation and amortization of equipment). Such reimbursement may be made by reduction in the

charges to the United States or by payment to the United States. Any funds received through such reimbursement shall be credited to funds allotted to the Department facility that provided the assistance.

(d)¹(1) Except as provided in paragraph (2), the total cost of providing services or in-kind assistance in the case of any veteran for any fiscal year under the program may not exceed 100 percent of the cost that would have been incurred by the Department during that fiscal year if the veteran had been furnished, instead, nursing home care under section 1710 of this title during that fiscal year.

(2)(A) The total cost of providing services or in-kind assistance in the case of any veteran described in subparagraph (B) for any fiscal year under the program may exceed 100 percent of the cost that would otherwise have been incurred as specified in paragraph (1) if the Secretary determines, based on a consideration of clinical need, geographic market factors, and such other matters as the Secretary may prescribe through regulation, that such higher total cost is in the best interest of the veteran.

(B) A veteran described in this subparagraph is a veteran with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, a spinal cord injury, or a condition the Secretary determines to be similar to such conditions.

(e) The authority of the Secretary to enter into contracts under this section shall be effective for any fiscal year only to the extent that appropriations are available.

(f) In furnishing services to a veteran under the program conducted pursuant to subsection (a), if a medical center of the Department through which such program is administered is located in a geographic area in which services are available to the veteran under a PACE program (as such term is defined in sections 1894(a)(2) and 1934(a)(2) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395eee(a)(2); 1396u-4(a)(2))), the Secretary shall seek to enter into an agreement with the PACE program operating in that area for the furnishing of such services.

(Added Pub. L. 101-366, title II, §201(a)(1), Aug. 15, 1990, 104 Stat. 437, §620C; renumbered §1720C and amended Pub. L. 102-83, §5(a), (c)(1), Aug. 6, 1991, 105 Stat. 406; Pub. L. 103-452, title I, §103(c), Nov. 2, 1994, 108 Stat. 4786; Pub. L. 104-110, title I, §101(c), Feb. 13, 1996, 110 Stat. 768; Pub. L. 105-114, title II, §206(a)-(b)(2), Nov. 21, 1997, 111 Stat. 2289; Pub. L. 118-210, title I, §§120(a), 121, Jan. 2, 2025, 138 Stat. 2723, 2724.)

APPLICABILITY OF AMENDMENT

Amendment of subsection (d) of this section by section 120(a) of Pub. L. 118-210 applicable with respect to fiscal years beginning on or after Jan. 2, 2025. See 2025 Amendment note below.

Editorial Notes

AMENDMENTS

2025—Subsec. (d). Pub. L. 118-210, §120(a), designated existing provisions as par. (1), substituted "Except as provided in paragraph (2), the total cost" for "The total cost" and "100 percent" for "65 percent", and added par. (2).

¹ See Applicability of Amendment note below.

Subsec. (f). Pub. L. 118-210, §121, added subsec. (f).
 1997—Pub. L. 105-114, §206(b)(2), struck out “: pilot program” after “home care” in section catchline.
 Subsec. (a). Pub. L. 105-114, §206(a), substituted “The Secretary may furnish” for “During the period through December 31, 1997, the Secretary may conduct a pilot program for the furnishing of”.
 Subsec. (b)(1). Pub. L. 105-114, §206(b)(1), substituted “Under the program” for “Under the pilot program”.
 Subsec. (d). Pub. L. 105-114, §206(b)(1), substituted “under the program” for “under the pilot program”.
 1996—Subsec. (a). Pub. L. 104-110 substituted “December 31, 1997” for “September 30, 1995” in introductory provisions.
 1994—Subsec. (a). Pub. L. 103-452, in introductory provisions, substituted “During the period through September 30, 1995,” for “During the four-year period beginning on October 1, 1990,” and “care. The Secretary shall give priority for participation in such program to veterans who” for “care and who”.
 1991—Pub. L. 102-83, §5(a), renumbered section 620C of this title as this section.
 Subsec. (d). Pub. L. 102-83, §5(c)(1), substituted “1710” for “610”.

Statutory Notes and Related Subsidiaries

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 2025 AMENDMENT

Pub. L. 118-210, title I, §120(b), Jan. 2, 2025, 138 Stat. 2724, provided that: “The amendments made by subsection (a) [amending this section] shall apply with respect to fiscal years beginning on or after the date of the enactment of this Act [Jan. 2, 2025].”

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 1994 AMENDMENT

Pub. L. 103-452, title I, §103(c)(1), Nov. 2, 1994, 108 Stat. 4786, provided that the amendment made by that section is effective Oct. 1, 1994.

RATIFICATION OF ACTIONS DURING PERIOD OF EXPIRED AUTHORITY

Any action taken by Secretary of Veterans Affairs before Feb. 13, 1996, under provision of law amended by title I of Pub. L. 104-110 that was taken during period beginning on date on which authority of Secretary under such provision of law expired and ending on Feb. 13, 1996, considered to have same force and effect as if such amendment had been in effect at time of that action, see section 103 of Pub. L. 104-110, set out as a note under section 1710 of this title.

REPORT TO CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES

Pub. L. 101-366, title II, §201(b), Aug. 15, 1990, 104 Stat. 438, as amended by Pub. L. 102-83, §5(c)(2), Aug. 6, 1991, 105 Stat. 406; Pub. L. 103-452, title I, §103(g), Nov. 2, 1994, 108 Stat. 4787, required the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, not later than Feb. 1, 1995, to submit to Congress a report setting forth the Secretary’s evaluation, findings, and conclusions regarding the conduct, through Sept. 30, 1993, of the pilot program required by this section and the results of the furnishing of care under the pilot program for the participating veterans.

§ 1720D. Counseling and treatment for sexual trauma

(a)(1) The Secretary shall operate a program under which the Secretary provides counseling and appropriate care and services, to include care for physical health conditions, as appropriate, to former members of the Armed Forces who the Secretary determines require such counseling and care and services to treat a condition, which in the judgment of a health care professional employed by the Department, resulted from a physical assault of a sexual nature, battery of a sexual nature, or sexual har-

assment which occurred while the former member of the Armed Forces was serving on duty, regardless of duty status or line of duty determination (as that term is used in section 12323 of title 10).

(2)(A) In operating the program required by paragraph (1), the Secretary may, in consultation with the Secretary of Defense, provide counseling and care and services to members of the Armed Forces (including members of the National Guard and Reserves) to treat a condition described in that paragraph that was suffered by the member while serving on duty, regardless of duty status or line of duty determination (as that term is used in section 12323 of title 10).

(B) A member described in subparagraph (A) shall not be required to obtain a referral before receiving counseling and care and services under this paragraph.

(3) In furnishing counseling to an individual under this subsection, the Secretary may provide such counseling pursuant to a contract with a qualified mental health professional if (A) in the judgment of a mental health professional employed by the Department, the receipt of counseling by that individual in facilities of the Department would be clinically inadvisable, or (B) Department facilities are not capable of furnishing such counseling to that individual economically because of geographical inaccessibility.

(b)(1) The Secretary shall give priority to the establishment and operation of the program to provide counseling and care and services under subsection (a). In the case of a former member of the Armed Forces eligible for counseling and care and services under subsection (a), the Secretary shall ensure that the former member of the Armed Forces is furnished counseling and care and services under this section in a way that is coordinated with the furnishing of such care and services under this chapter.

(2) In establishing a program to provide counseling under subsection (a), the Secretary shall—

(A) provide for appropriate training of mental health professionals and such other health care personnel as the Secretary determines necessary to carry out the program effectively;

(B) seek to ensure that such counseling is furnished in a setting that is therapeutically appropriate, taking into account the circumstances that resulted in the need for such counseling; and

(C) provide referral services to assist former members of the Armed Forces who are not eligible for services under this chapter to obtain those from sources outside the Department.

(c) The Secretary shall provide information on the counseling and treatment available under this section. Efforts by the Secretary to provide such information—

(1) shall include availability of a toll-free telephone number (commonly referred to as an 800 number);

(2) shall ensure that information about the counseling and treatment available under this section—

(A) is revised and updated as appropriate;

(B) is made available and visibly posted at appropriate facilities of the Department; and