

NOTICE TO RESIDENTIAL TREATMENT CENTER, SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER  
REHABILITATION FACILITY, AND PARTIAL HOSPITALIZATION PROGRAM  
APPLICANTS

The Department of Defense (DoD), Defense Health Agency (DHA) appreciates your interest in either submitting an initial application to become a TRICARE certified Residential Treatment Center (RTC), Substance Use Disorder Rehabilitation Facility (SUDRF), or Partial Hospitalization Program (PHP), or in continuing to provide care to TRICARE beneficiaries under your existing certification. Prior to proceeding with the application process, the DHA would like to inform you of some important changes to the TRICARE program that will soon be implemented, and will greatly improve your ability to serve our beneficiaries.

On September 2, 2016, the DoD's Final rule "TRICARE; Mental Health (MH) and Substance Use Disorder (SUD) Treatment" was published in the Federal Register. The rule contains comprehensive revisions to the TRICARE regulation to improve access to MH and SUD treatment for TRICARE beneficiaries and reduces administrative barriers to care. These revisions are consistent with current standards of practice and principles of MH parity in the 2008 Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act (MHPAEA). A key change for RTCs, and free-standing SUDRFs and PHPs was the streamlining of TRICARE requirements for these provider types to become TRICARE authorized providers. The new regulation change also allowed free-standing Intensive Outpatient Programs (IOPs) to become TRICARE authorized providers eligible for reimbursement. Specifically, once changes to the TRICARE manuals are completed and implemented, the DHA will rely upon your organization maintaining accreditation by a nationally recognized accrediting body approved by the Director, DHA as the primary basis for TRICARE authorization. Independent certification by the TRICARE Quality Monitoring Contractor (TQMC) will no longer be required. The TQMC will, however, continue to establish RTC reimbursement rates as has previously been required.

RTCs and free-standing SUDRFs, PHPs and IOPs seeking TRICARE authorized provider status following full implementation of the revised TRICARE manuals should contact the Managed Care Support Contractor in their TRICARE region for further information. Facilities must be fully accredited by a nationally recognized accrediting body, such as the Joint Commission (TJC) or the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) as applicable, to become an authorized provider. The DHA anticipates implementation of the TRICARE manual changes to occur within 60-90 days of this notice, though delays could occur.

Facilities desiring to participate in the TRICARE program may

- complete an application at the present time and follow all existing processes detailed in the application form, or
- wait for the new manuals to become effective and follow the new streamlined application process through their regional Managed Care Support Contractor.

If you have specific questions about DHA's implementation of the revised criteria for TRICARE authorization, please contact John Davison, MBA, PhD, Defense Health Headquarters, 7700 Arlington Blvd, Falls Church, VA 22043 or 703-681-8746. The DHA appreciates your interest in the TRICARE program and your desire to serve our beneficiaries. We look forward to your participation.