



Provider Updates

In Case You Missed It | February 2021

- COVID-19 vaccine information.** As the rollout of COVID-19 vaccines continues across the nation, you may get questions from TRICARE patients as to availability and coverage. The Department of Defense has launched a program to provide COVID-19 vaccines to service members, retirees and their families at military hospitals and clinics. You can direct TRICARE patients to www.tricare.mil/COVIDVaccine for details. Outside of military hospitals and clinics, TRICARE beneficiaries may receive no-cost COVID-19 vaccines through the civilian provider and pharmacy network, as they become available. *Are you interested in becoming a COVID-19 vaccine provider? [Find out how.](#)*
- New low back pain physical therapy demonstration.** On Jan. 1, 2021, the Defense Health Agency (DHA) launched a new [Low Back Pain Physical Therapy Demonstration pilot](#). This demonstration will waive cost-sharing for up to three physical therapy (PT) visits for patients with low back pain (LBP) and is limited to beneficiaries in 10 states, including the following states in the West region: Arizona, California and Colorado. The purpose of this demonstration is to evaluate whether waiving the cost-sharing responsibility increases beneficiary participation in PT; decreases low-value care; and/or decreases the overall cost of care for treating patients with LBP. Certain eligibility and requirements apply.
- CareAffiliate® and Internet Explorer 11.** Due to Adobe's support of Flash Player recently ending, providers who use Internet Explorer (IE) 11 as their web browser **will need to disable the "Shockwave Flash Object" application** in order to continue submitting attachments in CareAffiliate. This does not apply if you use Chrome. CareAffiliate is HNFS' preferred referral and authorization submission tool. Learn more about submitting authorizations on our [How to Submit](#) page.
- COVID-19 clinical trials.** Participation in clinical trials can offer eligible TRICARE beneficiaries more options for COVID-19 treatment and recovery support. TRICARE benefits are available to beneficiaries selected to participate in Phase I, II, III and IV National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID)-sponsored COVID-19 clinical trials. Coverage will continue through the end of the President's National Emergency. [Learn more about how to locate trials, what is covered and who is eligible.](#)
- Evaluation and Management (E/M) office visit CPT® code update.** In an effort to lessen the administrative burden for providers, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) implemented revisions to the [E/M office visit CPT® codes \(99201–99215\)](#), effective Jan. 1, 2021. The American Medical Association (AMA) 2021 E/M updates include deletion of CPT® code 99201 and new guidelines specific to CPT® codes 99202–99215.
- Telehealth options for your patients.** Access to virtual health care appointments is important, especially during these uncertain times. If you offer telemedicine, submit an updated TRICARE Group Roster to let us know! We offer a telemedicine filter in our directory to help patients easily locate providers who offer this service. TRICARE beneficiaries can also use [Telemynd](#) and [Doctor On Demand](#) for telehealth. Learn more on our [Network Provider Directory](#) page.
- Buckley Prime Service Area (PSA) Pilot.** On Jan. 1, 2021, HNFS launched a value-based care pilot in the Buckley Air Force Base (AFB), Colorado area, known as the Buckley Prime Service Area (PSA) Pilot. Core to the Pilot is ensuring enhanced provider support and care programs, and incentives for high-performing providers. There is no beneficiary enrollment or action required, and the TRICARE benefit remains the same. Beneficiaries who live in the Buckley PSA, are enrolled in TRICARE Prime and have a civilian primary care manager will automatically be a part of the Pilot. Visit www.tricare-west.com/go/Buckley-provider for details.
- New Technology Add-On Payments for DRG hospitals.** [New Technology Add-On Payments](#), or NTAPs, allow for more appropriate reimbursement for new medical services and technology not yet included in Diagnosis Related Group (DRG) rates. As of Feb. 9, 2021, TRICARE is adopting the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid (CMS) NTAPs reimbursement methodology for new services/technology not yet in the DRG, under the hospital Inpatient Prospective Payment System. TRICARE's adoption of NTAPs applies to hospital discharges on or after Jan. 1, 2020.
- Heart Health Month.** Wrap up Heart Health Month by recommending our newly-recorded [Heart Healthy Living](#) class to TRICARE patients. They will learn ways to reduce the risk of heart disease and tips to improve their heart health. We also offer [The Essentials of Diabetes Management](#) as a recorded class. Patients can learn about the four cornerstones of diabetes self-management: medications, monitoring, meal planning, and movement. More recorded classes and online programs are available in our [Learning Center](#).
- Health resources for 2021.** As the pandemic continues, we want to remind you of wellness resources we offer to help patients take charge of their health during times of uncertainty. Patients can learn how to improve communication with their doctors through our [Take Charge of Your Health](#) program; learn to be proactive about [Life Care Planning](#) and how they can start working on advanced care directives at any time; or they can view a recorded class on topics like stress management in times of uncertainty, anxiety or depression. Visit our [Learning Center](#) for these classes and more.

COVID-19 Updates: Go to www.tricare-west.com/go/COVID19.