



In Case You Missed it

TRICARE® West Region e-Updates

September 2022

- 1. Update to TRICARE manuals in response to COVID-19.** In 2020, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Department of Defense (DOD) implemented many temporary changes to the TRICARE benefit, ranging from increased reimbursement for COVID-19 inpatient stays to covered audio-only office visits to copayment/cost-share waivers for covered telehealth services. The DOD has since [published updates to the TRICARE manuals](#) that terminate, modify or keep in place some of the temporary changes. Regional contractors began implementing these changes on Sept. 6, 2022.
- 2. TRICARE's abortion coverage guidelines.** Following the Supreme Court's decision in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization*, you may have seen an increase in questions about [TRICARE's coverage of abortion services](#). TRICARE covers abortions when the mother's life is in danger or if the pregnancy is the result of rape or incest. While pre-authorization is only required for active duty service members, Health Net Federal Services, LLC (HNFS) recommends providers submit pre-authorization requests for all beneficiary categories so we can do a benefit review. We offer an abortion [Letter of Attestation](#) to attach to requests to help expedite the review.
- 3. Learn the basics about checking patient eligibility.** We understand you are busy and may be partnered with many insurance companies. That's why we developed a self-paced course so you can learn how to easily check eligibility for your TRICARE patients. Check it out 24/7 from our [Online Provider Education](#) page or this [direct link](#).
- 4. Autism Care Demonstration: Comprehensive Care Plans.** Under TRICARE's Autism Care Demonstration (ACD), families who have an assigned Autism Services Navigator (ASN) work with the ASN to develop a [comprehensive care plan \(CCP\) specific to the beneficiary's needs](#). Per TRICARE requirements, we must receive a completed initial CCP within the first 90 days of an ASN having been assigned to a family. As a provider, you offer invaluable assistance helping parents/caregivers understand the CCP requirement to help avoid gaps in care.
- 5. Flu and COVID-19 vaccines.** With flu season approaching, take the time to remind patients the COVID-19 vaccine does not protect against the flu. The flu vaccine and COVID-19 vaccine can be given together. Get the latest Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommendations by visiting the [CDC website](#).
- 6. Reminders for physical and occupational therapy referred by podiatrists.** As of Dec. 17, 2020, TRICARE allows for podiatrists to prescribe physical or occupational therapy (PT or OT) within the scope of their license. HNFS would like to [remind facilities billing claims for PT/OT services](#) referred by podiatrists to please include the ordering/referring provider and the attending/rendering provider information on all outpatient claims. This will allow us to accurately apply copayments and cost-shares.
- 7. Attend a live webinar on TRICARE basics or using CareAffiliate®.** Are you a new TRICARE provider or just want to review some TRICARE basics? We've got you covered. Attend a live webinar presented by one of our TRICARE educators to learn details about TRICARE or how to submit pre-authorization and referral requests using CareAffiliate. View our [current schedule](#) today!
- 8. Right of first refusal for specialty care.** When you refer TRICARE Prime beneficiaries for specialty care, they may be required to receive care at local military hospitals or clinics. [This process, known as TRICARE's right of first refusal](#), gives local military hospitals and clinics the opportunity to provide treatment or refer care out to civilian providers. To help military facilities determine if they have capacity to treat beneficiaries, please include as much clinical documentation as possible when submitting referral requests to HNFS.
- 9. Mental health resources for your patients.** HNFS offers recorded classes on anxiety, depression and stress management. Let your patients know about these helpful tools they can find in our [Learning Center](#). Or, they can search for more information on these issues in our Health Topics section. Providers can also refer patients for one-on-one coaching for anxiety or depression; [learn more](#).
- 10. Wellness and self-care online learning available for patients.** Benefits of online learning include learning from home in a comfortable environment, learning at your own pace, the ability to concentrate more, and saving money on miscellaneous costs. HNFS offers free healthy lifestyle and self-care online courses, telephone-based classes and online health resources for TRICARE West beneficiaries. Encourage your patients to visit our [Learning Center](#) today.

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