

[\[Categorical Listing\]](#) [\[Numerical Listing\]](#)

This policy is supplemented and refined by HA Policy [97-041](#)



THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-1200

MEMORANDUM FOR: ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF ARMY (M&RA)
ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF NAVY (M&RA)
ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF AIR FORCE (MRA&E)

SUBJECT: Policy for Priority Use of Medical Treatment Facilities for Persons Enrolled in TRICARE Prime

Section 712 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1996 revised title 10, United States Code, section 1097(c), regarding the role of military medical treatment facilities in managed care initiatives, including TRICARE. Prior to the revision, section 1097(c) read in part, "However, the Secretary may, as an incentive for enrollment, establish reasonable preferences for services in facilities of the uniformed services for covered beneficiaries enrolled in any program established under, or operating in connection with, any contract under this section." [emphasis added.] The Authorization Act provision replaces may with shall, which has the effect of directing priority access for TRICARE Prime enrollees over persons not enrolled.

We will promulgate a regulatory change to codify the change in access priority. Until the regulation change, this memorandum establishes the Department's policy, pursuant to statutory direction. Effective immediately, in regions where TRICARE is implemented, the order of access priority for services in military facilities shall be as follows: (1) active duty service members; (2) family members of active duty service members enrolled in TRICARE Prime; (3) retirees, their family members and survivors enrolled in TRICARE Prime; (4) family members of active duty service members who are not enrolled in TRICARE Prime; and, (5) all other beneficiaries.

For purposes of access priority (but not for cost sharing), survivors of sponsors who died on active duty, as defined in 10 U.S.C. 1076(a) are to be given the same priority as family members of active duty members. In other words, they are assigned to priority group (2) above, if enrolled in TRICARE Prime, or to priority Group (4) above if not enrolled in TRICARE Prime.



Edward Martin, M.D.
Acting Assistant Secretary

cc:

Surgeon General of the Army

Surgeon General of the Navy

Surgeon General of the Air Force

TRICARE Lead Agents

HA POLICY 96-053

[\[Top\]](#)

Last update: 1/11/1999