



THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

MAY 28 2008

1200 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-1200

HEALTH AFFAIRS

MEMORANDUM FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE ARMY (M&RA)
ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE NAVY (M&RA)
ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE (M&RA)

SUBJECT: Baseline Pre-deployment Neurocognitive Functional Assessment - Interim Guidance

Commanders and leaders at all levels look to the medical community for additional data to assess a Service member's ability to return to duty after a brain injury inducing event. Data from a neurocognitive assessment may be used to aid in this determination. To provide the best possible support to our Service members, the Department of Defense is implementing a program to collect baseline neurocognitive data on Active and Reserve Forces before their deployments.

Until ongoing studies to obtain evidence-based outcomes of various neurocognitive assessment tools are completed, the Services will use the Automated Neuropsychological Assessment Metrics (ANAM) to fulfill this requirement. A comprehensive review of available tools has revealed that the ANAM has the best empirical data to support its use in this interim program. Assessments will eventually be implemented when individuals enter the Service, periodically during the Service career, and after any traumatic brain injury.

Effective immediately, begin implementing baseline pre-deployment neurocognitive assessments for your Service members. Within 60 days of the date of this memorandum, your program should ensure that each deploying Service member has received a neurocognitive assessment within 12 months before deployment.

This guidance will be reviewed on a quarterly basis. My point of contact for the Pre-deployment Neurocognitive Assessment program is Ms. Kathy Helmick, Deputy Director for Clinical and Educational Affairs, Defense and Veterans Brain Injury Center, Department of Defense Center of Excellence for Psychological Health and Traumatic Brain Injury, who can be reached at (202) 782-3252 or Katherine.helmick@na.amedd.mil.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "S. Ward Casscells".

S. Ward Casscells, MD