



HEALTH AFFAIRS

**THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE**

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WASHINGTON, DC 20301-1200

AUG 26 2008

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

SUBJECT: Credentialing and Authorization of Providers on Foreign Humanitarian Missions

References: (a) DoDD 5136.1, "Assistant Secretary of Defense (Health Affairs)," May 27, 1994  
(b) DoD 6025.13-R, "Military Health System (MHS) Clinical Quality Assurance (CQA) Program Regulation," June 11, 2004

From time to time, Department of Defense (DoD) provides humanitarian assistance to foreign countries to relieve or reduce the results of natural or man-made disasters or other endemic conditions that might present a serious threat to life or that can result in great damage to or loss of property. For humanitarian assistance involving the delivery of medical care and under the authority outlined in Reference (a), this policy specifies the responsibilities and documentation required for providers to be credentialed and authorized to participate in foreign humanitarian missions.

The military Senior Medical Department Representative (SMDR) assigned to a foreign humanitarian mission is responsible for monitoring the quality and safety of the medical care rendered by all providers participating in the DoD mission. The SMDR is required to review the credentials of all providers assigned to the DoD mission and to authorize those qualified providers to practice their specialties. The SMDR is the final authority on which healthcare providers participate in the DoD foreign humanitarian mission.

All DoD providers (Active Duty, Reserve Component, DoD civilian employee) as well as employees of DoD contractors carrying out contract work, will report as assigned with a current medical readiness certification and a complete DoD Credentials Transfer Brief per paragraph C4.6.1 *et seq.*, of Reference (b) for review and authorization by the SMDR. A Medical Readiness Certificate is not required if a uniformed services member was deployed through a Service-specific deployment program. Reserve Component providers will supply the additional information specified in Reference (b).

**HA POLICY: 08-009**

- In medical humanitarian missions, a host nation may require documentation and/or copies of medical school diplomas and state licenses as a condition to medical personnel practicing in that country. If required by a host nation, such documentation may be provided to the host nation. The host country should be requested to return the documents after review and/or agree to protect the documents from further release.
- If a copy of the DoD Credentials Transfer Brief is also provided to a host country, sensitive personal identifying information (e.g. Social Security number, date of birth, home address, and Drug Enforcement Administration number) shall be redacted prior to release.

The Medical Director of a non-governmental organization (NGO) is responsible for providing appropriate information/documentation verifying education, training, licensing, and current clinical competence to the SMDR for all its participating members when requesting authorization for the NGO to be a participant in the DoD humanitarian mission.

- In medical humanitarian missions, a host nation may require documentation and/or copies of medical school diplomas and state licenses as a condition to medical personnel practicing in that country. In this event, NGO providers will not be permitted to practice in the host nation unless they provide the requested documents. The host country should be requested to return the documents after review and/or agree to protect the documents from further release.
- The withholding or withdrawal of authorization for a NGO provider to participate in a DoD foreign humanitarian mission is not an adverse privileging action, and no due process requirements are to be initiated.

An NGO may be a cooperating party with a DoD humanitarian mission but not become part of the DoD mission if the NGO is not providing health care services in or on a DoD facility or platform (such as a field hospital or hospital ship), but rather is providing services independently, while receiving logistical support from DoD. For example, an NGO might be providing services ashore independent of DoD but operating from a DoD hospital ship. In such cases, the SMDR is not responsible for verifying education, training, licensing, and current clinical competence of the NGOs participating members or monitoring their professional services, but shall obtain assurance from the Medical Director of the NGO that the Medical Director accepts that responsibility. The SMDR shall also ensure host nation officials have no misunderstanding regarding the relationship between DoD and the NGO with respect to the humanitarian mission.

All foreign providers (i.e., providers not licensed in any jurisdiction of the United States) shall meet the credentialing and licensing standards of their respective country.

- A foreign provider's request for authorization to participate as part of a DoD humanitarian mission should include to the extent practicable supporting documentation of: medical training, country certification/licensure, education, practice/specialty, and current clinical competencies.
- There is no standard for the type of documentation that can be accepted. The SMDR should be guided by the accepted practices of an individual's country.
- A period of observed practice should ordinarily be performed to assess skill level prior to assignment of clinical duties.
- The withholding or withdrawal of authorization for a foreign provider to participate in a DoD humanitarian mission is not an adverse privileging action, and no due process requirements are to be initiated.

Ensuring that all medical care provided as part of DoD foreign humanitarian missions meets applicable quality and safety standards is the responsibility of the assigned SMDRs. NGOs involved as a cooperating party, but not becoming a participant in the DoD humanitarian mission, are to accept comparable responsibilities. The role of the NGO as either a participant in the DoD humanitarian mission or a cooperating party with a DoD humanitarian mission, should be clearly expressed in the Memorandum of Understanding between DoD and the NGO for that mission.

The SMDRs are to be guided by the above policy, which will be incorporated into the next revision of Reference (b).

My point of contact for this policy is Commander Patrick R. Laraby, 5113 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church, Virginia, 22041. He may be reached at (703) 578-8497.



S. Ward Casscells, MD

cc:  
Surgeon General of the Army  
Surgeon General of the Navy  
Surgeon General of the Air Force  
Joint Staff Surgeon

DOCUMENT MANAGEMENT DIVISION

REQUEST FOR POSTING OFFICIAL GUIDANCE ON THE WEB

Subject: Credentialing and Authorization of Providers on  
Foreign Humanitarian Missions

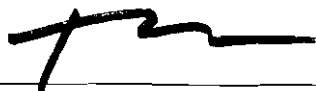
DOCS Open: 150354, 151223

Action Office/Action Officer: CDR Lareby

Phone: 578-8497

CHIEF OF STAFF DECISION:

Upon signature, post official guidance on the MHS Web site.

Approved:  8.15.08

Disapproved: \_\_\_\_\_