

**Fact Sheet:**  
**Ensuring the Cost-Effective Marketing of TRICARE Programs and Services**

**Background:**

- The purpose of this study was to gather information from TRICARE beneficiaries about their TRICARE information needs, sources, and preferences.
- The study was undertaken on behalf of the Director, C&CS to collect data that would help TMA develop effective communication strategies and meet beneficiary needs for health plan information.

**Data:**

- Telephone interviews were conducted between January 21 and February 13, 2004 among users of TRICARE services within the past year. This user population consisted of five beneficiary groups of interest: Active duty, Spouses of active duty, Retirees under age 65 and spouses, Retirees 65 and older and spouses, and Spouses of activated reservists.
- 4,170 beneficiaries completed the survey.

**Descriptive Results:**

- The findings indicate a high level of awareness: About three fourths or more of TRICARE users are aware of at least one of the following TRICARE information sources: Toll-free numbers, Printed materials, Service centers, and Internet sites.
- TRICARE beneficiaries using TRICARE services look for many types of information. The top three types of information include: Scheduling an appointment (43.6%), Phone numbers for health care providers or MTFs (41.6%), Referrals to specialists or other doctors (35.4%)
- More than three of every four (78.7%) users of TRICARE services who look for information about TRICARE are satisfied or very satisfied with available information. Satisfaction levels range from 75.9 percent among active duty Service members to 87.9 percent of the 65-and-over retiree group.
- Overall, TRICARE users most prefer getting answers face to face (30.8%). Next, similar numbers of them most prefer getting needed information by telephone (23.2%) or mail (22.1%). Relatively few beneficiaries most prefer using the Internet to get TRICARE information (16.1%).
- Preferences for information vary across beneficiary groups:
  1. Active duty are more likely to prefer getting information face to face.
  2. Age 65-and-over retirees and spouses are more likely to prefer getting answers by mail.
  3. Spouses of active duty and activated reservists prefer using the telephone to get answers.

**Predictive Results:**

- A statistical model was constructed to identify the relative strength of factors that predict overall satisfaction with TRICARE marketing. Variables in the model included age, gender, enrollment, TRICARE region, beneficiary group, and other factors associated with TRICARE marketing.
- Results indicate that beneficiaries who are enrolled in Prime, are aware of all sources of TRICARE information, or used at least four different sources of information were nearly 75% more likely to express satisfaction with available information about TRICARE.
- Beneficiaries over age 65 were three times more likely to express satisfaction.
- Those who report that they have a primary source of TRICARE information and that it met all of their needs were over five times more likely to report satisfaction with TRICARE information.

**Conclusion:**

- Most TRICARE user beneficiaries are both aware of and satisfied with the health plan information they need.
- Marketing efforts should recognize that preferences and satisfaction with TRICARE information differs between beneficiary groups. Marketing programs can be targeted to meet those needs.