

TRICARE BENEFICIARY BULLETIN – JUNE 2, 2011 – 656 WORDS

LEAD MUSIC (:03)

THIS IS THE TRICARE BENEFICIARY BULLETIN, AN UPDATE ON THE LATEST NEWS TO HELP YOU MAKE THE BEST USE OF YOUR TRICARE BENEFIT. I'M AUSTIN CAMACHO. (:10)

FIRST UP: ANNEMARIE FELICIO REPORTS ON TRICARE'S EXTENDED HEALTH CARE OPTION.

FOR BENEFICIARIES WITH SPECIFIC MENTAL OR PHYSICAL DISABILITIES, TRICARE'S EXTENDED CARE HEALTH OPTION, OR ECHO, PROVIDES BENEFITS, INCLUDING FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE THAT IS NOT AVAILABLE THROUGH THE BASIC TRICARE PROGRAM.

ECHO DOES NOT REPLACE BENEFITS FROM OTHER TRICARE PROGRAMS; IT SIMPLY OFFERS SUPPLEMENTAL BENEFITS, SUCH AS POSSIBLE COVERAGE FOR ASSISTIVE SERVICES, DURABLE

EQUIPMENT, TRANSPORTATION, SPECIAL EDUCATION, IN-HOME MEDICAL SERVICES AND IN-HOME RESPITE CARE SERVICES.

ECHO IS AVAILABLE TO ACTIVE DUTY FAMILY MEMBERS, INCLUDING FAMILY MEMBERS OF NATIONAL GUARD AND RESERVE MEMBERS ACTIVATED FOR MORE THAN 30 DAYS; FAMILY MEMBERS ELIGIBLE FOR CONTINUED TRICARE COVERAGE THROUGH THE TRANSITIONAL ASSISTANCE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM; CHILDREN OR SPOUSES OF FORMER SERVICE MEMBERS WHO WERE VICTIMS OF PHYSICAL OR EMOTIONAL ABUSE AND FAMILY MEMBERS OF DECEASED ACTIVE DUTY SPONSORS DURING THE PERIOD THEY ARE IN TRANSITIONAL SURVIVOR STATUS.

QUALIFYING CONDITIONS FOR ECHO INCLUDE MODERATE OR SEVERE MENTAL RETARDATION, A SERIOUS PHYSICAL DISABILITY AND A PHYSICAL OR PSYCHOLOGICAL CONDITION THAT CAUSES THE BENEFICIARY TO BE HOMEBOUND.

UNDER THE ECHO PLAN, ACTIVE DUTY SPONSORS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR PAYING A COST SHARE DETERMINED BY THEIR PAY GRADE AND

SEPARATE FROM COST SHARES ASSOCIATED WITH OTHER TRICARE PROGRAMS. THE MAXIMUM TRICARE COST SHARE FOR ALL ECHO BENEFITS COMBINED, EXCLUDING ECHO HOME HEALTH CARE BENEFITS, IS \$36,000 PER FISCAL YEAR. COMPREHENSIVE SERVICES OFFERED THROUGH THE ECHO HOME HEALTH CARE BENEFIT HAVE THEIR OWN SEPARATE REIMBURSEMENT RATES.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ABOUT ECHO CAN BE FOUND AT TRICARE.MIL/ECHO. IF BENEFICIARIES BELIEVE A QUALIFYING CONDITION EXISTS, THEY SHOULD TALK TO THEIR REGIONAL HEALTH CARE CONTRACTOR. IF STATIONED OVERSEAS, BENEFICIARIES CAN CONTACT THEIR TRICARE AREA OFFICE OR MILITARY TREATMENT FACILITY.

FOR TRICARE MANAGEMENT ACTIVITY, I'M ANNEMARIE FELICIO.

NEXT: LORRAINE CWIEKA REPORTS ON MENTAL HEALTH OPTIONS FOR TRICARE BENEFICIARIES.

MILITARY FAMILIES MAKE GREAT SACRIFICES AND FACE EXTRAORDINARY CHALLENGES AND UNCERTAINTY THAT CAN TAKE A HEAVY TOLL. TRICARE BENEFICIARIES SHOULD KNOW THE PROGRAMS AND TOOLS AVAILABLE TO HELP MILITARY FAMILIES COPE WITH THE BURDENS OF MILITARY LIFE.

TRICARE COVERS MEDICALLY OR PSYCHOLOGICALLY NECESSARY INPATIENT AND OUTPATIENT MENTAL HEALTH CARE. THIS INCLUDES SUBSTANCE ABUSE TREATMENT, ONE-ON-ONE COUNSELING, GROUP THERAPY AND A VARIETY OF OTHER SERVICES. NON-ACTIVE DUTY TRICARE PRIME BENEFICIARIES DO NOT NEED A REFERRAL OR PRE-AUTHORIZATION FOR THEIR FIRST EIGHT VISITS PER YEAR TO A TRICARE AUTHORIZED MENTAL HEALTH PROVIDER. ACTIVE DUTY SERVICE MEMBERS MUST ALWAYS SEEK NONEMERGENCY MENTAL HEALTH CARE AT A MILITARY TREATMENT FACILITY WHEN AVAILABLE OR GET A REFERRAL BEFORE RECEIVING CIVILIAN CARE.

THE TRICARE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM OFFERS BENEFICIARIES

INTERNET VIDEOCONFERENCING WITH A LICENSED BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CLINICIAN FROM THE COMFORT OF THEIR HOME. THIS SHORT-TERM, SOLUTION-FOCUSED AND NON-MEDICAL COUNSELING IS DESIGNED TO HELP BENEFICIARIES COPE WITH CHALLENGES SUCH AS DEPLOYMENT STRESS, RELATIONSHIPS, PERSONAL LOSS AND PARENT-CHILD COMMUNICATIONS.

TRICARE'S TELEMENTAL HEALTH CARE NETWORKS PROVIDE CARE THROUGH MEDICALLY SUPERVISED VIDEOCONFERENCING WITH OFF-SITE TRICARE-AUTHORIZED BEHAVIORAL HEALTH PROVIDERS. WHILE TELEMENTAL HEALTH CARE IS OPEN TO ALL TRICARE BENEFICIARIES, IT IS NOT CURRENTLY AVAILABLE IN ALL GEOGRAPHICAL AREAS AND IS NOT A SUBSTITUTE FOR FACE-TO-FACE THERAPY WHEN THAT IS AVAILABLE.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON TRICARE'S MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAMS AND RESOURCES, VISIT TRICARE.MIL/MENTALHEALTH.

FOR TRICARE MANAGEMENT ACTIVITY, I'M LORRAINE CWIEKA.

NEARLY THREE OUT OF FOUR AMERICANS DO NOT TAKE THEIR MEDICATIONS AS DIRECTED, A PROBLEM KNOWN AS MEDICATION NON-ADHERENCE. TRICARE IS JOINING THE NATIONAL CONSUMER LEAGUE AND OTHER PARTNERS IN LAUNCHING THE “SCRIPT YOUR FUTURE” CAMPAIGN TO ENCOURAGE PATIENTS TO TAKE THEIR MEDICATIONS AS DIRECTED.

THE SCRIPT YOUR HEALTH CAMPAIGN’S PRIMARY GOAL IS PATIENT EDUCATION AND AWARENESS, FOCUSED ON PATIENTS WITH THREE SERIOUS CHRONIC CONDITIONS – DIABETES, RESPIRATORY DISEASE AND CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE.

MESSAGES FOR PATIENTS INCLUDE:

- PROPER USE OF MEDICATION AND MEDICAL DEVICES, LIKE ASTHMA INHALERS;
- STRATEGIES FOR MAKING IT EASIER TO REMEMBER TO TAKE MEDICATIONS;

- COMMUNICATION WITH THEIR DOCTOR AND PHARMACIST ABOUT ALL THEIR OVER-THE-COUNTER AND PRESCRIPTION MEDICATIONS; AND
- NEGATIVE HEALTH AFFECTS OF POOR MEDICATION ADHERENCE.

FOLLOWING THE LABELED DIRECTIONS FOR PRESCRIPTION MEDICATIONS IS ONE OF THE EASIEST WAYS TO HELP PROTECT AND IMPROVE OVERALL WELLNESS. BENEFICIARIES SHOULD READ THE INSTRUCTIONS CAREFULLY AND CONTACT A DOCTOR OR PHARMACIST WITH ANY QUESTIONS.

THE SCRIPT YOUR FUTURE CAMPAIGN IS ONLINE AT SCRIPTYOURFUTURE.ORG. YOU CAN LEARN MORE ABOUT TRICARE PHARMACY AT TRICARE.MIL/PHARMACY.

AND THAT'S TODAY'S TRICARE BENEFICIARY BULLETIN. WE'LL HAVE MORE NEWS YOU CAN USE NEXT WEEK. (:03)

TAIL MUSIC (:03)