

TRICARE BENEFICIARY BULLETIN – AUGUST 24, 2012 – 651 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: LORRAINE CWIEKA REPORTS ON THE TRANSITION TO A NEW WEST REGION CONTRACTOR.

FOLLOWING THE RECENT ANNOUNCEMENT THAT UNITEDHEALTHCARE MILITARY & VETERANS WILL REPLACE TRIWEST HEALTHCARE ALLIANCE AS THE TRICARE WEST REGION HEALTH CARE CONTRACTOR, BENEFICIARIES AND HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS HAVE BEEN ASKING HOW THIS CHANGE WILL AFFECT THEM.

ONE THING DOESN'T CHANGE: THE TRICARE BENEFIT. TRICARE REMAINS COMMITTED TO PROVIDING THE BEST POSSIBLE HEALTH CARE FOR THE 9.7 MILLION MILITARY MEMBERS, RETIREES AND THEIR FAMILIES THAT USE THE BENEFIT.

BENEFICIARIES CURRENTLY USING THE TRICARE CIVILIAN HEALTH CARE

NETWORKS ARE EXPECTED TO FIND THAT MOST TRIWEST PROVIDERS WILL ALSO HAVE AGREEMENTS WITH UNITEDHEALTHCARE. IF A PROVIDER CHANGE IS NEEDED, UNITEDHEALTHCARE WILL WORK WITH BENEFICIARIES TO FIND THE RIGHT PROVIDER TO ENSURE CONTINUITY OF THEIR HEALTH CARE.

UNITEDHEALTHCARE SHARES TRICARE'S COMMITMENT TO PROVIDE SUPERIOR SERVICE AND HEALTH CARE TO BENEFICIARIES.

DURING THE CONTRACT TRANSITION PERIOD, TRIWEST CONTINUES TO SERVE WEST REGION BENEFICIARIES UNTIL THE TRANSITION TO UNITEDHEALTHCARE IS COMPLETE BEGINNING APRIL 1, 2013. TRICARE'S TOP PRIORITY IS TO ENSURE A SMOOTH TRANSITION BETWEEN UNITEDHEALTHCARE AND TRIWEST FOR SERVICE MEMBERS, RETIREES AND THEIR FAMILIES.

MORE DETAILS WILL BE AVAILABLE AS THE TRANSITION MOVES TOWARD COMPLETION. FOR DETAILS AND THE LATEST UPDATES ABOUT THE CONTRACT CHANGE, VISIT TRICARE.MIL/WESTTRANSITION.

FOR TRICARE MANAGEMENT ACTIVITY, I'M LORRAINE CWIEKA.

NEXT: ANNEMARIE FELICIO 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 BENEFICIARIES DO NOT NEED REFERRALS OR PRIOR AUTHORIZATION FOR THE FIRST EIGHT OUTPATIENT BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CARE VISITS PER FISCAL YEAR TO A NETWORK PROVIDER FOR A MEDICALLY DIAGNOSED AND COVERED CONDITION. 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 TELEMENTAL HEALTH PROGRAM IS AVAILABLE TO ALL STATESIDE TRICARE BENEFICIARIES. AT TELEMENTAL HEALTH-PARTICIPATING TRICARE FACILITIES, BENEFICIARIES CAN USE SECURE AUDIO-VISUAL CONFERENCING TO CONNECT WITH OFF-SITE TRICARE NETWORK PROVIDERS. COSTS, LIMITATIONS, AND REFERRAL AND AUTHORIZATION REQUIREMENTS APPLY.

THE MOST IMPORTANT MESSAGE IS THAT HELP IS AVAILABLE. COPING WITH STRESS OR DEPRESSION IS A BATTLE NO BENEFICIARY HAS TO FIGHT ALONE. DON'T WAIT UNTIL A LOVED ONE IS IN A CRISIS. SEEKING COUNSELING OR TREATMENT EARLY MAY BE THE BEST WAY TO AVOID SERIOUS PROBLEMS DOWN THE ROAD.

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

FOR TRICARE MANAGEMENT ACTIVITY, I'M ANNEMARIE FELICIO.

PSORIASIS IS A CHRONIC DISEASE THAT CAUSES SCALING AND INFLAMMATION OF THE SKIN AFFECTING NEARLY 7.5 MILLION AMERICANS. ANYONE CAN GET PSORIASIS AND TRICARE WANTS BENEFICIARIES TO KNOW MORE ABOUT ITS SYMPTOMS AND TREATMENT.

PSORIASIS IS A COMMON SKIN DISEASE CAUSED BY AN OVERACTIVE IMMUNE SYSTEM THAT CAUSES SKIN IRRITATION AND REDNESS. THE MOST COMMON FORM, PLAQUE PSORIASIS, APPEARS AS RAISED, RED PATCHES OR LESIONS COVERED WITH A SILVERY WHITE BUILDUP OF DEAD SKIN CELLS CALLED SCALES. MOST COMMONLY IT IS FOUND ON THE ELBOWS, KNEES, SCALP, BACK,

FACE, PALMS AND FEET, THOUGH IT CAN OCCUR ON ANY PART OF THE BODY. THE TIMES WHEN THE SKIN WORSENS ARE CALLED FLARES. PSORIASIS CAN BE MILD, MODERATE OR SEVERE. DOCTORS GENERALLY TREAT PSORIASIS IN STEPS BASED ON THE SEVERITY OF THE DISEASE, SIZE OF THE AREAS INVOLVED, TYPE OF PSORIASIS AND THE PATIENT'S RESPONSE TO INITIAL TREATMENTS.

TREATMENT OPTIONS FOR MILD PSORIASIS INCLUDE OVER-THE-COUNTER OR PRESCRIPTION TOPICAL MEDICATIONS, INCLUDING STEROIDS, AND LIGHT THERAPY. THERE IS NO CURE FOR PSORIASIS, BUT FOR SOME SUFFERERS SYMPTOMS MAY DISAPPEAR FOR YEARS WHILE OTHERS MAY HAVE FLARE-UPS EVERY FEW WEEKS. ANYONE WITH PSORIASIS SHOULD PAY ATTENTION TO STRESS, DRY SKIN, INFECTIONS AND CERTAIN MEDICATIONS. THESE FACTORS CAN CAUSE SYMPTOMS TO WORSEN. BENEFICIARIES SHOULD TALK WITH THEIR PRIMARY CARE MANAGER OR DOCTOR TO FIND A TREATMENT, OR TREATMENTS, TO REDUCE OR ELIMINATE SYMPTOMS.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON WHAT TRICARE COVERS VISIT
TRICARE.MIL/COVEREDSERVICES.

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

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