THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-1200

HEALTH AFFAIRS

MAR - 3 2009

The Honorable Ben Nelson
Chairman, Subcommittee on Personnel
Committee on Armed Services
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Mr. Chairman:

This letter responds to Section 712 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2009 that requires the Secretary of Defense to conduct a demonstration project to evaluate the efficacy of providing incentives to encourage healthy behaviors on the part of eligible beneficiaries. The demonstration project shall include a wellness assessment on a self-reported health risk assessment (HRA) and physiological and biometric measures, including at least – blood pressure, glucose levels, lipids, nicotine use and weight. The population enrolled would consist of non-Medicare eligible retired beneficiaries of the Military Health System (MHS) and their dependents from at least three geographic areas within the United States. Subsequently, programs would be developed to assist enrollees to improve healthy behaviors. An incentive will be offered to enrollees.

In response to the request, the Department has identified four phases of implementation: 1) a baseline assessment; 2) a development phase; 3) a deployment phase; and 4) outcome measures. Based on an initial baseline assessment, it appears that a self-reported HRA is currently available in the MHS' electronic medical record system (AHLTA). Further review is needed to determine if any of the current provider-level and/or enterprise-level reports in AHLTA meet the reporting requirements, and if the HRA can be exported for use in the purchased care network. The initial focus of the demonstration project will be on the Direct Care system, and will subsequently expand to include the purchased care sector. Service leads from the MHS Clinical Quality Forum (CQF) will recommend military treatment facilities with sufficient resources and eligible populations to support the initial phase of the demonstration project. The Managed Care Support Contractors and Designated Providers will assist in identifying locations and facilities for the subsequent phases of the demonstration. The results of this demonstration project will serve to enhance current programs already developed and available via the Department. Finally, the Department recommends waiving part of the enrollment fee as an incentive to enrollees for participation.

The demonstration project is expected to take three years and during this period the TRICARE Management Activity will evaluate its effectiveness. After completion of the demonstration project in March 2012, the Department will review the final outcomes of the project and submit future recommendations to Congress.

Thank you for your continued support of the Military Health System.

Sincerely,

S. Ward Casscells, MD

cc:
The Honorable Lindsey O. Graham
Ranking Member

THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
1200 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-1200

HEALTH AFFAIRS

MAR - 3 2009

The Honorable Ike Skelton
Chairman, Committee on Armed Services
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

This letter responds to Section 712 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2009 that requires the Secretary of Defense to conduct a demonstration project to evaluate the efficacy of providing incentives to encourage healthy behaviors on the part of eligible beneficiaries. The demonstration project shall include a wellness assessment on a self-reported health risk assessment (HRA) and physiological and biometric measures, including at least – blood pressure, glucose levels, lipids, nicotine use and weight. The population enrolled would consist of non-Medicare eligible retired beneficiaries of the Military Health System (MHS) and their dependents from at least three geographic areas within the United States. Subsequently, programs would be developed to assist enrollees to improve healthy behaviors. An incentive will be offered to enrollees.

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Sincerely,

S. Ward Casscells, MD

cc:
The Honorable John M. McHugh
Ranking Member

THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

1200 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-1200

HEALTH AFFAIRS

MAR - 3 2009

The Honorable Daniel K. Inouye
Chairman, Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Mr. Chairman:

This letter responds to Section 712 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2009 that requires the Secretary of Defense to conduct a demonstration project to evaluate the efficacy of providing incentives to encourage healthy behaviors on the part of eligible beneficiaries. The demonstration project shall include a wellness assessment on a self-reported health risk assessment (HRA) and physiological and biometric measures, including at least – blood pressure, glucose levels, lipids, nicotine use and weight. The population enrolled would consist of non-Medicare eligible retired beneficiaries of the Military Health System (MHS) and their dependents from at least three geographic areas within the United States. Subsequently, programs would be developed to assist enrollees to improve healthy behaviors. An incentive will be offered to enrollees.

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Thank you for your continued support of the Military Health System.

Sincerely,

S. Ward Casscells, MD

cc:
The Honorable Thad Cochran
Ranking Member

THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
1200 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-1200

HEALTH AFFAIRS

MAR - 3 2009

The Honorable David R. Obey
Chairman, Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

This letter responds to Section 712 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2009 that requires the Secretary of Defense to conduct a demonstration project to evaluate the efficacy of providing incentives to encourage healthy behaviors on the part of eligible beneficiaries. The demonstration project shall include a wellness assessment on a self-reported health risk assessment (HRA) and physiological and biometric measures, including at least – blood pressure, glucose levels, lipids, nicotine use and weight. The population enrolled would consist of non-Medicare eligible retired beneficiaries of the Military Health System (MHS) and their dependents from at least three geographic areas within the United States. Subsequently, programs would be developed to assist enrollees to improve healthy behaviors. An incentive will be offered to enrollees.

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Thank you for your continued support of the Military Health System.

Sincerely,

Sir
Still looking in the glow of the hospital construction funds!
Ward

S. Ward Casscells, MD

cc:
The Honorable Jerry Lewis
Ranking Member

THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
1200 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-1200

HEALTH AFFAIRS

MAR - 3 2009

The Honorable John P. Murtha
Chairman, Subcommittee on Defense
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

This letter responds to Section 712 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2009 that requires the Secretary of Defense to conduct a demonstration project to evaluate the efficacy of providing incentives to encourage healthy behaviors on the part of eligible beneficiaries. The demonstration project shall include a wellness assessment on a self-reported health risk assessment (HRA) and physiological and biometric measures, including at least – blood pressure, glucose levels, lipids, nicotine use and weight. The population enrolled would consist of non-Medicare eligible retired beneficiaries of the Military Health System (MHS) and their dependents from at least three geographic areas within the United States. Subsequently, programs would be developed to assist enrollees to improve healthy behaviors. An incentive will be offered to enrollees.

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Thank you for your continued support of the Military Health System.

Promising innovation SN

Semper Fi

Ward

Sincerely,

S. Ward Casscells, MD

cc:
The Honorable C. W. Bill Young
Ranking Member

THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
1200 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-1200

HEALTH AFFAIRS

MAR - 3 2009

The Honorable Susan Davis
Chairwoman, Subcommittee on Military Personnel
Committee on Armed Services
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Madam Chairwoman:

This letter responds to Section 712 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2009 that requires the Secretary of Defense to conduct a demonstration project to evaluate the efficacy of providing incentives to encourage healthy behaviors on the part of eligible beneficiaries. The demonstration project shall include a wellness assessment on a self-reported health risk assessment (HRA) and physiological and biometric measures, including at least – blood pressure, glucose levels, lipids, nicotine use and weight. The population enrolled would consist of non-Medicare eligible retired beneficiaries of the Military Health System (MHS) and their dependents from at least three geographic areas within the United States. Subsequently, programs would be developed to assist enrollees to improve healthy behaviors. An incentive will be offered to enrollees.

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Thank you for your continued support of the Military Health System.

Sincerely,

Susan & hope you agree this is promising! all best ward

S. Ward Casscells, MD

cc:
The Honorable Joe Wilson
Ranking Member

THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-1200

HEALTH AFFAIRS

MAR - 3 2009

The Honorable Carl Levin
Chairman, Committee on Armed Services
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Mr. Chairman:

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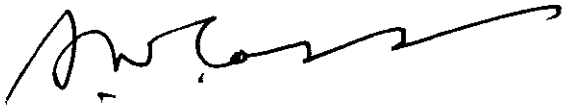

S. Ward Casscells, MD

cc:
The Honorable John McCain
Ranking Member