

§ 1074f. Medical tracking system for members deployed overseas

(a) System Required.—The Secretary of Defense shall establish a system to assess the medical condition of members of the armed forces (including members of the reserve components) who are deployed outside the United States or its territories or possessions as part of a contingency operation (including a humanitarian operation, peacekeeping operation, or similar operation) or combat operation.

(b) Elements of System.—(1)(A) The system described in subsection (a) shall include the use of predeployment medical examinations and postdeployment medical examinations (including the assessment of mental health and the drawing of blood samples) and postdeployment health assessments to—

(i) accurately record the health status of members before their deployment;

(ii) accurately record any changes in their health status during the course of their deployment; and

(iii) identify health concerns, including mental health concerns, that may become manifest several months following their deployment.

(B) The postdeployment medical examination shall be conducted when the member is redeployed or otherwise leaves an area in which the system is in operation (or as soon as possible thereafter).

(C) The postdeployment health reassessment shall be conducted at an appropriate time during the period beginning 90 days after the member is redeployed and ending 180 days after the member is redeployed.

(2) The predeployment medical examination, postdeployment medical examination, and postdeployment health assessment of a member of the armed forces required under paragraph (1) shall include the following:

(A) An assessment of the current treatment of the member and any use of psychotropic medications by the member for a mental health condition or disorder.

(B) An assessment of traumatic brain injury.

(C) An assessment of post-traumatic stress disorder.

(3)(A) The Secretary shall establish for purposes of subparagraphs (B) and (C) of paragraph (2) a protocol for the predeployment assessment and documentation of the cognitive (including memory) functioning of a member who is deployed outside the United States in order to

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facilitate the assessment of the postdeployment cognitive (including memory) functioning of the member.

(B) The protocol under subparagraph (A) shall include appropriate mechanisms to permit the differential diagnosis of traumatic brain injury in members returning from deployment in a combat zone.

(c) Recordkeeping.—The results of all medical examinations and assessments conducted under the system, records of all health care services (including immunizations and the prescription and administration of psychotropic medications) received by members described in subsection (a) in anticipation of their deployment or during the course of their deployment, and records of events occurring in the deployment area that may affect the health of such members shall be retained and maintained in a centralized location to improve future access to the records.

(d) Quality Assurance.—(1) The Secretary of Defense shall establish a quality assurance program to evaluate the success of the system in ensuring that members described in subsection (a) receive predeployment medical examinations, postdeployment medical examinations, and postdeployment health assessments and that the recordkeeping requirements with respect to the system are met.

(2) The quality assurance program established under paragraph (1) shall also include the following elements:

(A) The types of healthcare providers conducting postdeployment health assessments and reassessments.

(B) The training received by such providers applicable to the conduct of such assessments and reassessments, including training on assessments and referrals relating to mental health.

(C) The guidance available to such providers on how to apply the clinical practice guidelines developed under subsection (e)(1) in determining whether to make a referral for further evaluation of a member of the armed forces relating to mental health.

(D) The effectiveness of the tracking mechanisms required under this section in ensuring that members who receive referrals for further evaluations relating to mental health receive such evaluations and obtain such care and services as are warranted.

(E) Programs established for monitoring the mental health of each member who, after deployment to a combat operation or contingency operations, is known—

(i) to have a mental health condition or disorder; or

(ii) to be receiving treatment, including psychotropic medications, for a mental health condition or disorder.

(F) The diagnosis and treatment of traumatic brain injury and post-traumatic stress disorder.

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(e) Criteria for Referral for Further Evaluations.—The system described in subsection (a) shall include—

- (1) development of clinical practice guidelines to be utilized by healthcare providers in determining whether to refer a member of the armed forces for further evaluation relating to mental health (including traumatic brain injury);
- (2) mechanisms to ensure that healthcare providers are trained in the application of such clinical practice guidelines; and
- (3) mechanisms for oversight to ensure that healthcare providers apply such guidelines consistently.

(f) Minimum Standards for Deployment.—(1) The Secretary of Defense shall prescribe in regulations minimum standards for mental health for the eligibility of a member of the armed forces for deployment to a combat operation or contingency operation.

(2) The standards required by paragraph (1) shall include the following:

(A) A specification of the mental health conditions, treatment for such conditions, and receipt of psychotropic medications for such conditions that preclude deployment of a member of the armed forces to a combat operation or contingency operation, or to a specified type of such operation.

(B) Guidelines for the deployability and treatment of members of the armed forces diagnosed with a severe mental illness, traumatic brain injury, or post traumatic stress disorder.

(3) The Secretary shall take appropriate actions to ensure the utilization of the standards prescribed under paragraph (1) in the making of determinations regarding the deployability of members of the armed forces to a combat operation or contingency operation.

NOTES

Source

(Added Pub. L. 105-85, div. A, title VII, Sec. 765(a)(1), Nov. 18, 1997, 111 Stat. 1826; amended Pub. L. 109-364, div. A, title VII, Sec. 738(a)-(d), Oct. 17, 2006, 120 Stat. 2303; Pub. L. 110-181, div. A, title XVI, Sec. 1673(a)(1), (b), (c), Jan. 28, 2008, 122 Stat. 482, 483; Pub. L. 111-84, div. A, title X, Sec. 1073(a)(9), Oct. 28, 2009, 123 Stat. 2472; **Pub. L. 111-383, div. A, title VII, Sec. 712, Jan. 7, 2011, 124 Stat. 4247.**)

Amendments

2011—Subsec. (b)(1). Pub. L. 111-383, Sec. 712(a), amended par. (1) generally. Prior to amendment, par. (1) read as follows: “The system described in subsection (a) shall include the use of predeployment medical examinations and postdeployment medical examinations (including an assessment of mental health and the drawing of blood samples) to accurately record the medical condition of members before their deployment and any changes in their medical condition during the course of their deployment. The postdeployment examination shall be conducted when the

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member is redeployed or otherwise leaves an area in which the system is in operation (or as soon as possible thereafter)."

Subsec. (b)(2). Pub. L. 111-383, Sec. 712(b), substituted "medical examination, postdeployment medical examination, and postdeployment health reassessment" for "and postdeployment medical examination" in introductory provisions.

Subsec. (c). Pub. L. 111-383, Sec. 712(c), inserted "and reassessments" after "medical examinations" and "and the prescription and administration of psychotropic medications" after "including immunizations".

Subsec. (d)(1). Pub. L. 111-383, Sec. 712(d)(1), substituted "; postdeployment medical examinations, and postdeployment health reassessments" for "and postdeployment medical examinations".

Subsec. (d)(2)(A). Pub. L. 111-383, Sec. 712(d)(2)(A), inserted "and reassessments" after "postdeployment health assessments".

Subsec. (d)(2)(B). Pub. L. 111-383, Sec. 712(d)(2)(B), inserted "and reassessments" after "such assessments".

2009—Subsec. (f)(3). Pub. L. 111-84 substituted "contingency" for "continency".

2008—Subsec. (b)(2)(C). Pub. L. 110-181, Sec. 1673(a)(1)(A), added subpar. (C).

Subsec. (b)(3). Pub. L. 110-181, Sec. 1673(a)(1)(B), added par. (3).

Subsec. (d)(2)(F). Pub. L. 110-181, Sec. 1673(b), added subpar. (F).

Subsec. (f). Pub. L. 110-181, Sec. 1673(c)(1), struck out "Mental Health" after "Minimum" in heading.

Subsec. (f)(2)(B). Pub. L. 110-181, Sec. 1673(c)(2), substituted "; traumatic brain injury, or" for "or".

2006—Subsec. (b). Pub. L. 109-364, Sec. 738(a), designated existing provisions as par. (1) and added par. (2).

Subsec. (d). Pub. L. 109-364, Sec. 738(d), designated existing provisions as par. (1) and added par. (2).

Subsec. (e). Pub. L. 109-364, Sec. 738(b), added subsec. (e).

Subsec. (f). Pub. L. 109-364, Sec. 738(c), added subsec. (f).

Sharing Between Department Of Defense And Department Of Veterans Affairs Of Records And Information Retained Under The Medical Tracking System For Members Of The Armed Forces Deployed Overseas

Pub. L. 112-239, div. A, title VII, Sec. 723, Jan. 2, 2013, 126 Stat. 1805, provided that:

"(a) In General.—The Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall jointly enter into a memorandum of understanding providing for the sharing by the Department of Defense with the Department of Veterans Affairs of the results of examinations and other records on members of the Armed Forces that are retained and maintained with respect to the medical tracking system for members deployed overseas under section 1074f(c) of title 10, United States Code.

"(b) Cessation Upon Implementation of Electronic Health Record.—The sharing required pursuant to subsection (a) shall cease on the date on which the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of Veterans Affairs jointly certify to Congress that the Secretaries have fully implemented an integrated electronic health record for members of the Armed Forces that is fully interoperable between the Department of Defense and the Department of Veterans Affairs."

Comprehensive Policy On Consistent Neurological Cognitive Assessments Of Members Of The Armed Forces Before And After Deployment

Pub. L. 111-383, div. A, title VII, Sec. 722, Jan. 7, 2011, 124 Stat. 4251, provided that:

“(a) Comprehensive Policy Required.—Not later than January 31, 2011, the Secretary of Defense shall develop and implement a comprehensive policy on consistent neurological cognitive assessments of members of the Armed Forces before and after deployment.

“(b) Updates.—The Secretary shall revise the policy required by subsection (a) on a periodic basis in accordance with experience and evolving best practice guidelines.”

Mental Health Assessments For Members Of The Armed Forces Deployed In Connection With A Contingency Operation

Pub. L. 111-84, div. A, title VII, Sec. 708, Oct. 28, 2009, 123 Stat. 2376, which required the Secretary of Defense to issue guidance for the provision of mental health assessments for members of the Armed Forces deployed in connection with a contingency operation, was repealed by Pub. L. 112-81, div. A, title VII, Sec. 702(b), Dec. 31, 2011, 125 Stat. 1471.

Administration And Prescription Of Psychotropic Medications For Members Of The Armed Forces Before And During Deployment

Pub. L. 111-84, div. A, title VII, Sec. 712, Oct. 28, 2009, 123 Stat. 2379, provided that:

“(a) Report Required.—Not later than October 1, 2010, the Secretary of Defense shall submit to the congressional defense committees [Committees on Armed Services and Appropriations of the Senate and the House of Representatives] a report on the implementation of policy guidance dated November 7, 2006, regarding deployment-limiting psychiatric conditions and medications.

“(b) Policy Required.—Not later than October 1, 2010, the Secretary shall establish and implement a policy for the use of psychotropic medications for deployed members of the Armed Forces. The policy shall, at a minimum, address the following:

- (1) The circumstances or diagnosed conditions for which such medications may be administered or prescribed.
- (2) The medical personnel who may administer or prescribe such medications.
- (3) The method in which the administration or prescription of such medications will be documented in the medical records of members of the Armed Forces.
- (4) The exam, treatment, or other care that is required following the administration or prescription of such medications.”

Pilot Projects

Pub. L. 110-181, div. A, title XVI, Sec. 1673(a)(2), Jan. 28, 2008, 122 Stat. 482, provided that:

“(A) In developing the protocol required by paragraph (3) of section 1074f(b) of title 10, United States Code (as amended by paragraph (1) of this subsection), for purposes of assessments for traumatic brain injury, the Secretary of Defense shall conduct up to three pilot projects to evaluate various mechanisms for use in the protocol for such purposes. One of the mechanisms to be so evaluated shall be a computer-based assessment tool which shall, at a minimum, include the following:

- (i) Administration of computer-based neurocognitive assessment.
- (ii) Pre-deployment assessments to establish a neurocognitive baseline for members of the Armed Forces for future treatment.

“(B) Not later than 60 days after the completion of the pilot projects conducted under this paragraph, the Secretary shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress [Committees

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on Armed Services, Veterans' Affairs, and Appropriations of the Senate and the House of Representatives] a report on the pilot projects. The report shall include—

- (i) a description of the pilot projects so conducted;
- (ii) an assessment of the results of each such pilot project; and
- (iii) a description of any mechanisms evaluated under each such pilot project that will be incorporated into the protocol.

“(C) Not later than 180 days after completion of the pilot projects conducted under this paragraph, the Secretary shall establish a means for implementing any mechanism evaluated under such a pilot project that is selected for incorporation in the protocol.”

Implementation

Pub. L. 109-364, div. A, title VII, Sec. 738(f), Oct. 17, 2006, 120 Stat. 2304, provided that: “The Secretary of Defense shall implement the requirements of the amendments made by this section [amending this section] not later than six months after the date of the enactment of this Act [Oct. 17, 2006].”

Interim Standards For Blood Sampling

Pub. L. 108-375, div. A, title VII, Sec. 733(b), Oct. 28, 2004, 118 Stat. 1998, as amended by Pub. L. 109-364, div. A, title X, Sec. 1071(g)(9), Oct. 17, 2006, 120 Stat. 2402, provided that:

“(1) Time requirements.—Subject to paragraph (2), the Secretary of Defense shall require that—

“(A) the blood samples necessary for the predeployment medical examination of a member of the Armed Forces required under section 1074f(b) of title 10, United States Code, be drawn not earlier than 120 days before the date of the deployment; and

“(B) the blood samples necessary for the postdeployment medical examination of a member of the Armed Forces required under such section 1074f(b) of such title be drawn not later than 30 days after the date on which the deployment ends.

“(2) Contingent applicability.—The standards under paragraph (1) shall apply unless the Joint Medical Readiness Oversight Committee established by section 731(b) [10 U.S.C. 1074 note] recommends, and the Secretary approves, different standards for blood sampling.”