

Inquiry Services Department - General

1.0 INQUIRY SERVICE DEPARTMENT OBJECTIVES

Contractors shall implement an inquiry processing service which ensures that all inquiries received from TRICARE beneficiaries, providers, and other interested parties are processed in a timely and consistent manner and that information delivered about the TRICARE program is accurate. The services department shall be able to assist in settling TRICARE claims and provide program information whether the inquiry is by telephone, letter, electronic media, or walk-in. For inquiries regarding active duty claims, contractors shall follow the procedures as outlined in the [Chapter 17](#).

2.0 WRITTEN INQUIRIES

The contractor shall process both routine and priority correspondence in accordance with the standards and requirements set forth in [Chapter 1, Section 3](#).

3.0 TELEPHONES

The contractor shall provide trained personnel to answer all TRICARE inquiries [beneficiaries, Regional Directors (RDs), providers, Assistant Secretary of Defense (Health Affairs) (ASD(HA)), TRICARE Management Activity (TMA), Beneficiary Counselling and Assistance Coordinators (BCACs), Debt Collection and Assistance Officer (DCAO), Health Benefit Advisors (HBAs), and congressional offices]. TRICARE has established the TRICARE Information Service (TIS), reachable by a series of 1-800-XXXX telephone numbers. The TIS will refer incoming calls to the appropriate contractor for action. The Managed Care Support Contractor (MCSC) and TRICARE Dual Eligible Fiscal Intermediary Contract (TDEFIC) contractor and the TRICARE Pharmacy (TPharm) contractor shall provide the Procuring Contracting Officer (PCO) with the single telephone number to which these calls shall be routed No Later Than (NLT) 150 calendar days prior to the start of services.

4.0 WALK-IN INQUIRIES

The contractor shall provide for appropriate space and trained staff to enable it to handle walk-in inquiries promptly and accurately. The facility shall include a reception area to accommodate persons visiting its offices about TRICARE matters. The work area shall provide sufficient privacy to reasonably prevent violation of the Privacy Act or Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). The contractor staff shall be trained to meet with, and properly respond to, all visitors giving prompt, accurate answers to their concerns. Because personal interviews are difficult to monitor for quality of the contact, only the most skilled persons should be assigned.

5.0 TRAINING OF SERVICE REPRESENTATIVES

All representatives must be knowledgeable with a high level of communication skills. Online access to claims history and all other necessary information shall be provided. Service representatives must be thoroughly trained in the areas outlined in [Chapter 1](#). Special emphasis should be placed on medical terminology, program benefit policies (including both TRICARE Standard, Extra, and Prime) and how the programs are applied in processing, Privacy Act and Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requirements, contractor claims processing system capabilities, and training in the identification and reporting of potential fraud and abuse situations. All personnel shall receive communications training including how to listen for content, ensure customer courtesy and effectively manage time.

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