



In Case You Missed it

TRICARE® West Region e-Updates

October 2023

- 1. Cancer and children's hospitals move to outpatient prospective payment system billing.** Per the Defense Health Agency (DHA), outpatient services provided by cancer and children's hospitals will be subject to the TRICARE Outpatient Prospective Payment System (OPPS) for services dates on or after Oct. 1, 2023. Previously, cancer and children's hospitals were exempt from OPPS billing. Find complete details in the TRICARE Reimbursement Manual (TRM), Chapter 13. You can also review some of the [commonly asked questions and answers](#).
- 2. Ambulatory surgery center (ASC) reimbursement update.** Effective for service dates on or after Oct. 1, 2023, [TRICARE has adopted the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services' \(CMS\) ambulatory surgery center \(ASC\) reimbursement system for freestanding ASCs](#). You can find complete details about this change in the TRICARE Reimbursement Manual Chapter 9, Section 2. Freestanding ASCs will be reimbursed the lesser of CMS' ASC payment rate (or your negotiated rate with HNFS, if applicable) or billed charges.
- 3. Attend a live webinar on TRICARE basics or using CareAffiliate®.** If you are a new TRICARE provider or just want to review some TRICARE basics, we've got you covered. Attend a live webinar presented by one of our TRICARE educators to learn details about TRICARE or how to submit pre-authorization and referral requests using CareAffiliate. View our [current schedule](#) today!
- 4. Telehealth option for speech therapy.** TRICARE West Region beneficiaries now have access to virtual speech therapy through [Great Speech](#), a recent addition to the West Region network. Virtual speech therapy can help people of all ages overcome speech and communication challenges, including Alzheimer's and dementia-related skill loss, autism spectrum disorder, traumatic brain injury, Parkinson's disease, head and neck cancers, hearing loss, and more. Visit our [Telehealth Options](#) page to get connected. See our [Benefits A-Z "Speech Therapy"](#) page for benefit details and referral guidelines.
- 5. Are you submitting consultation reports?** If you are treating a TRICARE patient who was referred by a military hospital or clinic, you will need to submit consultation documentation – also known as patient encounter reports or clear and legible reports (CLRs) – to the referring provider within required time frames. We know that as a provider, you are busy, so don't forget about our [short self-paced course](#) to easily learn what you need to know about returning consultation documentation to military hospitals and clinics.
- 6. Let us know if a provider is added to or leaves your practice.** Keeping your information up to date is essential in helping TRICARE beneficiaries get the care they need and to help prevent billing issues. One update of importance is notifying Health Net Federal Services, LLC (HNFS) when a [provider is added to or leaves your group's practice](#). We can then update our provider directory and other applications that house provider data.
- 7. Encourage flu and COVID-19 vaccines.** With flu season approaching, remind patients the COVID-19 vaccine does not protect against the flu, and that the flu vaccine and COVID-19 vaccine can be given together. Get the latest Centers for Disease Control Prevention (CDC) recommendations by visiting the [CDC website](#). Encourage your patients to protect themselves this fall and winter season.
- 8. Need to change an existing referral or authorization?** If you are [treating a patient who was referred by a military hospital or clinic](#), there are certain steps to take. First, please contact HNFS and not the military hospital or clinic. Many changes can be requested online using our [Outpatient Authorization Change Request Form](#) or you can contact our customer service line. In some cases, we'll ask you to submit a new request.
- 9. Personalized coaching for your patients.** Do you have patients that could use help managing a chronic condition? Consider our Chronic Care/Disease Management programs. TRICARE beneficiaries under 65 and not on Medicare are eligible to participate in individualized coaching on anxiety, asthma, CAD, COPD, diabetes, depression, and heart failure. Coaching is provided by a disease management specialist, and you are kept informed of your patient's progress. Visit the [Chronic Care/Disease Management](#) Provider page to nominate a patient today.
- 10. October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month.** Encourage your patients to make mammograms a regular part of their health care. Find resources for your office and patients from CDC, such as handouts, posters, videos, podcasts, and shareable graphics [here](#). You can also find additional handouts and web resources in the Cancer Prevention section of our [Provider Toolkit](#).