

PRIMARY CARE MANAGERS (PCM) (PRIME)

ISSUE DATE: August 20, 1997

AUTHORITY: [32 CFR 199.17](#)

I. POLICY

A. TRICARE Overseas Program (TOP) Prime enrollees shall select or have assigned to them Primary Care Managers (PCMs) according to guidelines established by the TOP Military Treatment Facility (MTF) Commander, TRICARE Area Office (TAO) Director, or designee. The TOP PCM:

1. May **only** be an individual professional provider (**not** a Partnership Provider). **These services may be provided in an overseas military facility, other** treatment site, or other health care delivery arrangement that is part of the MTF. **PCMs may be organized into teams for the purpose of ensuring patient continuity and accountability in the event that the individual's assigned PCM is absent or unavailable. For the purposes of referral management and authorization for TRICARE Prime episodes of care, both the TGRO and TPRC call centers are considered PCMs.**

2. May be an internist, family practitioner, pediatrician, general practitioner, obstetrician/gynecologist, physician assistant, nurse practitioner, or certified nurse midwives when determined by the TOP MTF commander, TAO Director, or designee, to meet governing country rules and licensure.

3. May also act as a **Health Care Finder (HCF)**, when dual responsibility is necessary, as determined by the MTF commander or TAO Director.

B. A TOP Prime enrollee must seek all his or her primary health care from the TOP PCM with the exception of care listed in [Chapter 12, Section 2.2](#), "TOP Clinical Preventive Services." If the TOP PCM is unable to provide the care, the TOP PCM is responsible for referring the enrollee to another primary care provider.

C. A TOP Prime enrollee must have a referral/authorization from the TOP PCM for routine care, specialty care or for inpatient care.

D. Failure to obtain a TOP PCM referral/authorization when one is required for care may result in the service being paid under TOP Point of Service procedures **for an active duty family member (ADFM)** with a deductible for outpatient services and cost-shares for in- and outpatient services.

TRICARE POLICY MANUAL 6010.54-M, AUGUST 1, 2002

CHAPTER 12, SECTION 6.1

PRIMARY CARE MANAGERS (PCM) (PRIME)

E. The TOP PCM is responsible for notifying the TOP HCF that a referral is being made/requested. The TOP HCF will assist the TOP Prime enrollee and other DoD beneficiaries in locating an MTF or host nation TOP network provider to provide the care and in scheduling an appointment. The HCF will conduct a benefit determination review and provide authorization for service for which the referral was made. The Managed Care Support Contractor (MCSC) (hereinafter known as "claims processing contractor") shall accept an electronic care authorization issued under the Enterprise-Wide Referral and Authorization Program (EWRAP) (NAS function) or a locally produced document that contains HCF/PCM referral/approval. If the claims processing contractor has no record of referral/authorization, prior to denial/payment, the claims processing contractor will follow the TOP Point of Service rules, assuming the service would otherwise be covered under the provisions of TRICARE Standard.

NOTE: The NAS function in EWRAP is currently used by TRICARE Europe and Pacific. (For a listing of countries, see Chapter 12, Section 8.1, paragraph I.C.).

F. TOP MTF PCMs may be delegated authority by the TOP MTF Commander to authorize referrals within the MTF. All referrals/authorizations to civilian host nation providers and all referrals/authorization made by a TOP designated civilian PPN-PCM must be made through the TOP HCF and must receive an authorization.

- END -