

## CONTRACTOR RELATIONSHIP WITH THE MILITARY HEALTH SYSTEM (MHS) NATIONAL QUALITY MONITORING CONTRACTOR (NQMC)

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**1.0.** The National Quality Monitoring Contractor (NQMC) conducts reviews to validate the appropriateness of the contractor's quality of care and utilization review decisions. The Managed Care Support Contractors (MCSCs), Designated Providers (DPs), and the TRICARE Dual Eligible Fiscal Intermediary Contractor (TDEFIC) shall transmit copies of the medical record and all case documentation to the NQMC for each case or category of case requested by the NQMC. The estimated number of cases (including inpatient and outpatient care) to be selected on a monthly basis will vary depending upon the health care region involved and the case selection criteria. The estimated quantities per region could range from 300 to 630 cases per month for the MCSCs, 10 to 30 cases per month for the DPs and 100 to 200 cases per month for TDEFIC.

**2.0.** The MCSCs, DPs, and TDEFIC shall transmit 95% of the requested records to the NQMC within 45 calendar days and 98% within 60 days from the date the MCSCs, DPs, and TDEFIC receive the request for records from the NQMC. Records to be transmitted shall include the complete medical record, the MCSC's, DP's, and TDEFIC's utilization review decision, rationale for that decision, and quality of care determinations. The MCSCs, DPs, and TDEFIC shall forward a monthly Contractors Records Accountability Report via the <https://tma-ecomextranet.ha.osd.mil> by the 10th day of the month following the month being reported (see [Chapter 15, Section 3](#)) for Contractor Records Accountability Reporting requirements. *Transfer of records shall adhere to procedures specified in paragraphs 2.1. and 2.5. Adherence to these procedures is essential for compliance with the Privacy Act of 1974, the Department of Defence (DoD) Privacy Program (DoD 5400.11-R), the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA), the DoD Health Information Privacy Regulation (DoD 6025.18-R), the DoD Health Information Security Regulation (DoD 8580.02-R), and other Federal laws protecting the privacy and security of Personally Identifiable Information (PII), including health information.*

**2.1.** *The records shall be packaged in boxes containing a single month of records and a Box Inventory Document (see [Figure 7-3-1](#)) stating the number of patient records contained therein and identifying each record by patient name and TRICARE Management Activity (TMA) Internal Control Number (ICN), which should be clearly shown on each patient's record. Because the Box Inventory Document contains PII, that document (in both its paper and electronic versions) shall be protected from unauthorized use and disclosure in the same manner as the patient records themselves. The MCSC, DP, and TDEFIC shall notify the designated Point Of Contact (POC) at the NQMC, via e-mail, each day that a box or boxes have shipped, stating the number of boxes (with tracking numbers) in that day's shipment (see [Figure 7-3-2](#)). The MCSC, DP, or TDEFIC shall track the shipment, including delivery, using the shipping vendor's tracking method including delivery and retain documentation of such.*

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**2.2.** *Within one business day of receipt, the NQMC, using the MCSC, DP, or TDEFIC Box Inventory Document(s), shall match the number of boxes received with the corresponding e-mail shipment notification. Then the NQMC shall confirm the number of records in each box, and a match between each patient record and ICN for the patient names listed on the Box Inventory Document no later than the Close of Business (COB) on the fifth business day after receipt of the shipment. By that date, the NQMC shall send an e-mail back to the MCSC/DP/TDEFIC confirming the number of boxes, number of records in each box and match of all ICNs. Upon receipt of the NQMC confirmation e-mail, no further action is required by the MCSC, DP, or TDEFIC.*

**2.3.** *Using the Box Inventory Document, if the NQMC identifies:*

**2.3.1.** *A count discrepancy in either the number of boxes or number of charts in each box;*

**2.3.2.** *Absence of a record; or*

**2.3.3.** *A mismatch of the record with the ICN; and*

**2.3.4.** *If the NQMC concludes that records are or may be missing, the NQMC shall notify by e-mail the MCSC, DP, or TDEFIC of the discrepancy including details of the discrepancy by COB of the fifth business day from receipt of shipment. Upon notification of the count discrepancy, the MCSC, DP, or TDEFIC shall investigate the discrepancy, take appropriate steps and notifications, and be in telephone, fax and e-mail communication to resolve the potential violations of applicable law as soon as possible.*

**2.4.** *The NQMC shall send a "non-receipt" e-mail to the MCSC, DP, or TDEFIC POC by COB of the fifth business day if no shipment was received from the MCSC, DP, or TDEFIC following notification that a shipment was sent. Upon receipt of a "non-receipt of a shipment" e-mail from the NQMC POC, the MCSC, DP, or TDEFIC shall immediately track the shipment and notify the NQMC POC, by e-mail, of the status of the shipment. The MCSC, DP, or TDEFIC shall be in telephone, fax or e-mail communication with the NQMC POC to determine the appropriate steps and notifications, based upon the investigation to resolve the potential HIPAA violation.*

**2.5.** *If no e-mails from the NQMC indicating either confirmation of receipt, confirmation of receipt with discrepancy, or a non-receipt of shipment, are received by the MCSC, DP, or TDEFIC by the morning of the sixth business day after the shipment, the MCSC, DP, or TDEFIC shall notify, by COB on the same day, all parties required to receive notice under the breach notification provisions of [Chapter 1, Section 5](#) and applicable law. These parties include the TRICARE Regional Office (TRO) or Designated Provider Program Office (DPPO) and the TMA Privacy Office. The notifications shall provide available details about the shipment and the circumstances. The NQMC shall verify that these notifications are sent, and shall provide the notifications itself if the sender of the records fails to do so. Thereafter, the MCSC, DP, or TDEFIC shall comply with breach response requirements of [Chapter 1, Section 5](#) and applicable law.*

**3.0.** *The MCSCs, DPs, and TDEFIC shall provide the appropriate [TRO](#)/[DPPO](#) and TDEFIC Contracting Officer's Representative (COR) written responses to all NQMC findings within 45 calendar days of receipt of the NQMC Monthly Findings Report. The MCSC's, DP's, and TDEFIC's responses shall state agreement, partial agreement, or nonconurrence*

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with each discrepancy found by the NQMC, and include supporting rationale, and proposed follow-up actions to address the issues.

**4.0.** At the direction of the TRICARE Management Activity (TMA) Healthcare Operations Division (HCO), the MCSCs, DPs, and TDEFIC shall attend two face-to-face meetings annually, of one to two days duration, at a location chosen by HCO. Additionally, contractors shall participate in two teleconference meetings not to exceed one day per meeting.

**FIGURE 7-3-1 BOX INVENTORY DOCUMENT (SAMPLE)**

*(Logo or Letterhead of Company)*

*Inside mailing address identifying Organization and Person Shipping POC*

*Privacy/HIPAA Warning Notice:*

*The information in the enclosed documents may be subject to the Privacy Act of 1974, the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and other Federal Laws protecting the privacy and security of Personally Identifiable Information (PII), including health information. Personal information contained in this inventory and in the enclosed documents may be used and disclosed only by authorized persons in the conduct of official business and only in accordance with the Privacy Act, HIPAA and other applicable Federal law. Any unauthorized use or disclosure of personal information may result in criminal and/or civil penalties. If you are not the intended recipient of this correspondence, you must notify the sender upon receipt and transfer the documents in accordance with the sender's instructions. If you inspect, copy or transfer the enclosed documents other than as instructed, a violation of applicable law may occur.*

*This is Box X of Y mailed on MM/DD/YEAR*

*Record Request Received by Contractor: Month & Year*

*Recommended Per Box Inventory Letter Example (to be included in each box)*

<i>Name of Contractor:</i>	<i>Date Mailed: M/D/YR</i>	<i>Month of Chart Request: M/YR</i>	<i>Number of records in box =</i>	
<i>ICN</i>	<i>Patient Name</i>	<i>Patient Year of Birth</i>	<i>Admission Date</i>	<i>Discharge Date</i>

**FIGURE 7-3-2 ROUTINE E-MAIL (SAMPLE)**

*Information to include:*

*Universal*

*Date Shipment to be "picked up"*

*Number of boxes in shipment*

*For Each Box in Shipment*

*Tracking number for box: 1ZV300Y4019919XXX*

*Audit Month (05/2009)*

*Number of records in box (XY)*

*Signatory*

*References:*

- 1. OASD/HA Memorandum, Use of Digital Signature on Official TMA Electronic Mail (e-mail), June 13, 2007.*
- 2. OASD/HA Memorandum, Protection of Sensitive Information in Electronic Mail, August 13, 2007.*
- 3. OASD/HA Memorandum, Guidelines on Protection of Sensitive Information in Electronic Email, June 25, 2008.*
- 4. OASD/HA Memorandum, Updated Guidelines on Protection of Sensitive Information in Electronic Mail, September 19, 2008.*
- 5. DoD Memorandum, "DoD Guidance on Protecting Personally Identifiable Information (PII)," August 18, 2006.*
- 6. DoD Regulation 6025.11-R, "DoD Health Information Privacy Regulation," January 24, 2003, and*
- 7. DoD Regulation 8580.02-R, "DoD Health Information Security Regulation," July 12, 2007.*