

TRICARE Overseas Program (TOP) Medical Benefit Variations

Issue Date:

Authority: [32 CFR 199.17\(u\)](#)

1.0 GENERAL

1.1 TRICARE Overseas Program (TOP) medical benefits are based upon the scope of services and items which may be considered for coverage by TRICARE within the intent of [32 CFR 199.4](#) and [32 CFR 199.5](#). Specifically, TRICARE may cost-share a procedure that is determined to be appropriate medical care, is medically or psychologically necessary, is not unproven as defined in [32 CFR 199.2](#), and the TRICARE Policy Manual (TPM) does not explicitly exclude or limit coverage of the service or supply.

1.2 Unique health care issues and challenges may arise in locations outside of the 50 United States and the District of Columbia. In some situations, TRICARE may authorize coverage for a specific service or supply under the TOP, even though the service or supply would normally be excluded from coverage by TRICARE. Such situations are expected to be rare and must be approved by the government.

2.0 AUTHORIZED TOP MEDICAL BENEFIT VARIATIONS

2.1 Tick Borne Encephalitis (TBE) Vaccine

Cost-sharing of the TBE vaccine is authorized in endemic areas of Europe and Asia when an at-risk Active Duty Family Member (ADFM), retiree, or retiree family member receives the vaccine from a TRICARE authorized provider. When covered, the TBE vaccine shall be cost-shared as a clinical preventive service. See [Chapter 7, Sections 2.1](#) and [2.2](#).

2.2 Medicare Certification of Organ Transplant Facilities

Medicare certification for organ transplant centers is only required for transplants performed in the 50 United States, the District of Columbia, and U.S. territories where Medicare is available. Organ transplantation is within the range of TRICARE covered benefits and is covered in overseas locations when it is medically necessary, reasonable, and commonly accepted practice in the country where the transplant is performed.

2.3 Non-U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Approved Drugs

Non-FDA approved prescription drugs may be cost-shared if the TOP contractor has substantiated that the drug is commonly used for the intended purpose in the host nation. The TOP contractor shall substantiate that the drug is commonly used in the host nation based on past

claims/country experience or by a web search on the drug in question. If a claim for a non-FDA approved drug is submitted by a provider that is required to comply the National Drug Coding (NDC) requirements as outlined in TRICARE Operations Manual (TOM), [Chapter 24, Section 14](#), the TOP contractor shall contact TRICARE Management Activity (TMA) for assistance prior to processing the claim.

2.4 Therapeutic Mud Baths

Therapeutic mud baths (a form of balneotherapy which is used in some foreign countries to treat back pain, arthritis, or other medical conditions) is not a covered TRICARE benefit unless it can be established that pharmacological or other non-pharmacological treatments are unavailable in that particular country. Such cases are expected to be very rare and will require government review and approval prior to payment.

2.5 Private Hospital Room Charges

Effective January 1, 2013, Active Duty Service Members (ADSMs) in Haiti, Cuba, Venezuela, Columbia, Peru, and Brazil are authorized to receive private accommodations in a hospital or other authorized institution, regardless of whether semiprivate accommodations are available.

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