

Chapter 3

Military Health System

This chapter contains an overall description of the Military Health System (MHS) to include the Aeromedical Evacuation System. It also contains a description of the associated programs of TRICARE, the Civilian Health and Medical Program of the Uniformed Services (CHAMPUS), Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS) and the Real-Time Automated Personnel Identification System (RAPIDS). The intent of this chapter is to provide an understanding of the MHS and associated programs. Eligibility for these programs is discussed in Chapter 4.

A. MHS - The MHS is the DoD organization that provides health care to eligible beneficiaries. It consists of military hospitals, medical and dental clinics augmented by civilian health care through the TRICARE/CHAMPUS programs, and an Aeromedical Evacuation System. Extracts from MILDEP regulatory publications can be found in Appendix H.

1. **CHAMPUS** - That part of the MHS under which the U.S. Government pays a portion of the specific health service those eligible individuals receive from civilian health care providers.¹²

2. TRICARE

a. TRICARE combines care provided in military medical treatment facilities and CHAMPUS while adding a third option which allows the beneficiary to select their own health care providers. Several of the options require the beneficiary to pay a deductible and copayments. The new health care program consists of three options: TRICARE Prime, TRICARE Extra and TRICARE Standard.

- (1) TRICARE Prime. In this option, most health care will come from the military health care providers. Care is guided by a Primary Care Manager (PCM). The PCM provides routine medical care and authorizes referrals for specialty care. This option requires enrollment.
- (2) TRICARE Extra. Under this option the individuals choose an authorized civilian network provider. It is much like a civilian health plan in which the individual pays a deductible and copayment. The health care provider has negotiated fees that are lower than the TRICARE Standard rate. The provider also processes all of the claim-related paperwork.
- (3) TRICARE Standard. This is a new name for the traditional CHAMPUS. In this option, individuals pay current CHAMPUS deductibles and cost shares and abide by current CHAMPUS rules. The individual may choose a civilian health care provider that does not have to be a network provider.

b. Individuals must be eligible for CHAMPUS to be eligible for enrollment in TRICARE.

1. **Aeromedical Evacuation System** - That part of the MHS, which provides control of patient movement by air transport with specialized medical attendants and equipment for in-flight medical care. It also provides facilities, on or in the vicinity of airstrips and air bases for the limited medical care of in-transit patients entering, en route via, or leaving the system.

B. Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System/Real-Time Automated Personnel Identification System

¹10 USC Chapter 55

² Title 32 CFR (Appendix A).

1. In the past, IMS and their authorized family members were not enrolled in DEERS. However, the new ID Card on DD Form 2765 and the use of a Foreign Identification Number (FIN) automatically enrolls IMS and family members in DEERS when ID Card is issued. This eliminates the need for authorizing officials to determine benefits. RAPIDS will automatically determine benefits (Appendix C). In the transitional period, some IMS and family members still have the old ID cards and are not enrolled in DEERS. Enrollment in DEERS in no way changes benefits.
2. DEERS and RAPIDS are operational programs in support of resources/benefits management, critical defense missions, the Uniformed Services Identification (ID) Card program, and awareness regarding benefits to which Uniformed Services personnel and their family members are entitled.
 - a. DEERS is designed to provide confirmation of eligibility for medical benefits.
 - b. RAPIDS application provides on-line access to DEERS information to verify and update beneficiary information. Also, the RAPIDS application supports the automated identification card function, producing the tamper-resistant, machine-readable ID card.