



TRICARE HELP E-MAIL SERVICE (THEMS) NEWSLETTER

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“Helping to Understand”



TRICARE Help Newsletter

This newsletter is a publication of the TRICARE Help E-mail Service, operated by the U.S. Army Medical Command in San Antonio, Texas.

THEMS

What is THEM S?

THEMS is a free e-mail service that provides quick answers to TRICARE questions. Clinical issues should be referred to your primary care provider. The e-mail address is: TRICARE_help@amedd.army.mil.



Click here to send your TRICARE questions, concerns, or comments.

When the Active Duty Sponsor Deploys from CONUS

This information applies to CONUS-based active duty family members (ADFMs) (not activated Reserve Component family members) who temporarily relocate while the sponsor is deployed.

Normally, ADFMs are enrolled in either TRICARE Prime or TRICARE Prime Remote (TPR). If the sponsor is deployed, the family may (1) remain in the current location awaiting return of the deployed sponsor, (2) leave the local area for a short period (normally less than 30 days) and return to the local area, or (3) leave the local area for a longer period (normally greater than 30 days).

Here are some important points to consider:

(1) In many situations, the family chooses to remain in the same home, particularly if the spouse is employed in the local area, or the children are enrolled in school. In this case, nothing will change. If the family resides in an area where Prime is available, they can continue their enrollment in Prime. If the family continues to reside in a remote area at the same address as their TPR-eligible sponsor prior to his/her deployment, the family can continue enrollment in TPR for ADFMs (TPRADFMs).

(2) Many families choose to return home to visit friends or family while the sponsor is deployed. If the family is away from the local area for a short time (normally less than 30 days), they should leave their TPR or Prime enrollment intact. Any routine or urgent care required by the family members requires a call to their health care finder (HCF) or primary care manager (PCM) at the home location to request preauthorization for that care. No preauthorization is required for emergency care, although the PCM at the home location should be notified of any emergency care as soon as reasonably possible. If you have any difficulty contacting your PCM, call 1-888 DOD Care (1-888-363-2273).

(3) If a family is going to leave the local area for an extended period (normally more than 30 days), they have two options. If they are moving to a location where Prime is available, they can execute a portability transfer of their Prime enrollment to a PCM at the new location. If they are moving to an area where Prime is not available, they should

disenroll from TPRADFM or Prime and use TRICARE Standard/Extra. Before leaving, family members are encouraged to visit or call the HCF at the closest TRICARE Service Center (TSC) or the Beneficiary Counseling and Assistance Coordinators (BCACs) at the closest military treatment facility (MTF) to seek advice and information about how to access care at the temporary location.

(4) Those family members who choose to go to a location far from a military installation may find that Standard/Extra is more responsive to their needs. Although they will be subject to deductibles and cost shares associated with Standard/Extra, these ADFMS may find the convenience of using a local provider makes the small deductibles and cost shares the best way to get health care. Once the family returns to the home station, they are technically subject to lockout from Prime for 1 year. During this time, they would continue to use either Standard or Extra. Family members concerned about the possibility of lockout should contact their servicing TSC to discuss local policies about this provision.

It is important to remember that TPRADFM is not an option for the military family that did not reside with a TPR-eligible sponsor prior to deployment. If the family chooses to go to a remote area while the sponsor is deployed, they should plan to use Standard/Extra.

Dental care is a separate concern with unique issues to consider. If the active duty family is already enrolled in the TRICARE Dental Program (TDP), they may continue their enrollment and start using dentists in the new location. Here is a link with enrollment and other information on the TDP: <http://www.ucci.com/was/uccweb/tdp/tdp.jsp>. If you prefer to use the telephone, the number for enrollment information is 1-888-622-2256.

Prior to deployment, the sponsor should discuss proposed health care alternatives with the family. The personnel at the TSC can help with any questions and facilitate either transfer or disenrollment if that is your choice.

If either the sponsor or a family member has a problem or a question, it is very important to quickly seek assistance. One source of help is the BCAC located at each MTF.

Another useful source is the TRICARE Help E-Mail Service (THEMS). You can reach THEMS by sending an e-mail to: TRICARE_Help@amedd.army.mil.

Copies of this newsletter and earlier issues are available online 24/7 in MS Word and text format at <ftp://thems:newsletter@139.161.156.101/>