



April 2020

COVID-19: TRICARE® Coverage Updates *Copayment Waivers, ID Cards, Telemedicine*

Dear Provider,

In response to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) outbreak, the Department of Defense (DoD) has implemented temporary changes to the TRICARE benefit. Please review the following updates and reminders:

Copayment/cost-share waiver for COVID-19 testing and related services.

Retroactive to March 18, 2020, TRICARE will waive copayments/cost-shares for COVID-19 testing and related services, and office visits, urgent care or emergency room visits (to include covered telemedicine) during which tests are ordered or administered. COVID-19 diagnostic tests must meet Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) criteria in order to be eligible for the cost-share and copayment waivers.

Providers are expected to refund cost-sharing amounts to beneficiaries as appropriate. Review frequently asked questions about COVID-19 testing and examples of when/when not to apply copayments at www.tricare-west.com/go/COVID19.

Uniformed Services identification (USID) cards.

Due to restrictions in access to military installations and therefore USID card renewal services, the DoD is allowing beneficiaries to use USID cards that expired on or after Jan. 1, 2020 through Sept. 30, 2020. As such, you may encounter expired USID cards. The Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS) continues to be the source of TRICARE eligibility. Our Eligibility & Deductible tool at www.tricare-west.com > *Provider* offers real-time DEERS eligibility verification.

Telemedicine guidelines, updates and reminders.

TRICARE covers medically and psychologically necessary telehealth services. An audio and video component is required, and TRICARE policy guidelines apply. Services provided via telemedicine follow the same approval criteria and limitations that apply to in-person medical and psychological services. You do not need a new or separate approval to render already-authorized care via telemedicine. Certain services are currently not allowed via telemedicine, including those provided in a partial hospitalization program (PHP) setting. TRICARE recently announced it will allow for Autism Care Demonstration parent/caregiver guidance via telehealth, when performed by ABA supervisors (BCBA-Ds, LBAs, BCBAs) or assistant behavior analysts (BCaBAs, QASPs). Additional temporary modifications to the telemedicine benefit are under review by the DoD, including those for intensive outpatient program (IOP) services. Visit www.tricare-west.com for the latest benefit updates. Telemedicine services must be billed with the appropriate GT or GQ modifier and place of service 02.

For up-to-date information on COVID-19, visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website at www.cdc.gov/COVID-19. Find additional provider resources specific to TRICARE at www.tricare-west.com/go/COVID19.

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