

TRICARE for Kids Coalition Meeting

August 8, 2020

Residential Eating Disorders Consortium

Center Road Solutions

The TRICARE for Kids Coalition met on Tuesday, August 8, to discuss updates regarding the coronavirus pandemic and the House and Senate NDAA. Many provisions in each version were highlighted, with eating disorders treatment appearing in both.

Key Takeaways

- Little has changed regarding coronavirus and the coalition.
- The Senate and House NDAA included several important provisions that the Coalition will be supporting.
- TRICARE for Kids Coalition will be sending a letter to HASC & SASC about the provisions in the House & Senate bill, including supporting the SERVE Act related provisions.
- Two provisions pertain directly to eating disorders treatment.

COVID-19 Updates

- There hasn't been much discussion on anything new, but there has been some discussion on audio only coverage.
- In speaking with congressional contacts about possible vaccines and the next COVID package, no one seems to have any idea when anything will be finalized.
- Updates on DHA:
 - Capt. Simmer was supposed to retire, but there hasn't been any indication of changes of leadership right now.

National Defense Authorization Act: House Related Provisions

- Adult Residential Treatment for Eating Disorders:
 - This is a response to the SERVE Act and calls for a report on whether it will be feasible to cover. This is not what was initially called for in the SERVE Act.
 - The Coalition is supportive of this provision, but a GAO study saying basically the same thing will be released soon.
- Behavioral Health Requirements of the Department of Defense:
 - This provision calls for a study on the subject, as such the Coalition will likely not weigh in one way or another.
- ECHO Improvement Act:
 - This program is for special needs dependents with current state offerings available under Medicaid HCBS waivers.
 - The coalition will support this, but recent meetings have indicated that this will be a hard battle.

- This has been a year of unexpected need and cost and has created heavy burdens for families.

National Defense Authorization Act: Senate

- Procedures of the Office of Special Needs for the Development of Individualized Services Plans for Military Families with Special Needs:
 - This particular provision has been introduced before, but this one seems to be improved somewhat. It requires the development of and continuous updating by an appropriate office of an individualized service plan.
 - This creates a question of families needing to request something that they don't know exists.
 - Trying to make a point or establish metric to reflect what Individualized Service Plans are intended for – but all families need *something*.
 - Essentially, these are the same concerns that the Coalition had last year about this.
- Mental Health Resources for Members of the Armed Forces and Their Dependents During the COVID-19 Pandemic:
 - Children's hospitals are very concerned about the mental health of children during and after the pandemic.
 - This provision seems to be a little late, but it is bringing up important services.
- Ensure Eating Disorder Treatment for Servicemembers and Dependents:
 - This is the SERVE Act but it uses 'encourages' rather than 'requires'.
- Study and Report on Increasing Telehealth Services across Armed Forces:
 - This requires a study and report to Congress on increasing telehealth and telemedicine services across all military departments.