



DEFENSE HEALTH AGENCY
7700 ARLINGTON BOULEVARD, SUITE 5101
FALLS CHURCH, VIRGINIA 22042-5101

January 31, 2025

To Our Beneficiaries,

I know that many of our military families have experienced challenges in the TRICARE West region with the transition of managed care responsibilities to the incoming contractor, TriWest Healthcare Alliance.

My overriding focus is on you -- our beneficiaries. We have taken a series of actions to ensure you are insulated as much as possible from any adverse effects from these performance issues detailed below; we are putting corrective actions in place to fix shortcomings for the long-term; and we are working closely with TriWest to ensure we deliver on the contractual requirements to meet your health care needs.

First and foremost, we are ensuring that every beneficiary can access the healthcare they need. I issued a blanket waiver last week that allows **all** TRICARE Prime beneficiaries referred for outpatient specialty care by their primary care manager to proceed with the needed care without requiring a TriWest approval. Patients may continue to use their existing providers, regardless of whether the provider has joined the TriWest network. Individuals who need healthcare should get that care regardless of TriWest's ability to manage this process. This waiver is effective through March 31, 2025. If the process for managing referrals has not been fixed by March 31st, I will ensure beneficiaries can continue to access specialty care.

Furthermore, beneficiaries who have referrals for care from the previous contractor, HealthNet Federal Services, will be honored through June 30, 2025, or the last date on the authorization, whichever comes first. These referrals are covered by the same approval waiver process as described in the preceding paragraph.

Second, I have also issued an extension for beneficiaries to set up new premium payment processes with TriWest until February 28, 2025. My promise is this – no beneficiaries will lose their healthcare coverage due to challenges with transferring their premium payments from the previous contractor to TriWest. We will exhaust all options to reach every beneficiary by email, mail, text and phone and ensure they understand the process for setting up these payments. TriWest has improved the web portal challenges for processing these payments, so individuals can also go to <https://tricare-bene.triwest.com/signin> to set these payments up.

Third, the call center hold times remain unacceptably high with frustrated individual callers hanging up before having their problems resolved. The referral approval waiver and premium payment extensions should reduce some call volume. In addition, TriWest has established a call-back capability, and they are onboarding additional staff now. Our DHA team is monitoring call center performance daily, and continuing to explore additional avenues to get beneficiaries' questions answered.

We have implemented daily synchronization meetings, which include representatives from TriWest and across the Department, to ensure solutions are implemented in a timely and coordinated fashion. I will not rest until I am confident that we are delivering on all of our obligations so that beneficiaries can access their healthcare information quickly and easily.

I have asked our TRICARE Team to set up bi-weekly telephone calls with military and veteran service organization to keep them apprised of our progress and address any issues that require additional steps.

I am deeply appreciative of your sacrifices to our nation – and we will uphold our obligations to you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Telita Crosland', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

TELITA CROSLAND
LTG, USA
Director