As published in the July 16, 2009 online edition of the *American Journal of Public Health*:

“Since the start of the Iraq war, mental health problems increased more than fourfold among active-duty personnel and sevenfold for members of the National Guard or Reserve.”
Behavioral health care is an important TRICARE benefit, and we want to make sure you have all the information and resources you need as you care for your TRICARE patients.
Learning Objectives

Upon completion of today’s presentation, you should:

- Understand the basic facts about TRICARE behavioral health benefits.
- Know prior authorization and referral requirements.
- Be familiar with various military-specific programs.
- Be familiar with resources on traumatic brain injury (TBI) and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).
Expanding our network …

- Health Net Federal Services, LLC (Health Net) is increasing the network of professional behavioral health providers for the TRICARE North Region to more than 22,000 providers.
Provider Types

TRICARE behavioral health care providers:

- Psychiatrists and other physicians.
- Clinical psychologists.
- Certified psychiatric nurse specialists.
- Licensed or certified clinical social workers.
- Certified marriage and family therapists.
- Licensed or certified mental health and pastoral counselors *(require physician referral and supervision)*.
Behavioral Health Networks

What are the requirements for behavioral health network providers?

While medical/surgical network providers are contracted through Health Net, most behavioral health network providers are contracted through MHN.

Behavioral health providers should visit www.mhn.com and click on Provider Site for more information about behavioral health network provider contracting.
Partial Hospitalization Program

TRICARE covers limited behavioral health services rendered in a TRICARE-authorized Partial Hospitalization Program (PHP). The following tips should be used to ensure accurate and timely reimbursement for services provided.

Hospital-Based PHPs
When a hospital is a TRICARE-authorized provider (Joint Commission Accreditation required for network), the hospital’s PHP shall also be considered a TRICARE-authorized provider.

Freestanding PHPs
Must be certified and enter into a participation agreement with TRICARE/CHAMPUS and obtain the required preauthorization prior to admitting patients. Applications for freestanding PHP certification may be obtained from KePRO.
TRICARE Behavioral Health Benefits

TRICARE benefits include:

- Psychotherapy
- Family Therapy
- Medication Management
- Hospitalization for Mental Illness
- Sexual Abuse Treatment
- Eating Disorder Treatment *(free-standing eating disorder programs are not covered)*

- Partial Hospitalization Program (PHP) – Mental Health and Chemical Dependency
- Psychological Testing
- Residential Treatment Center
- Substance Use Disorder Treatment *(Individual provider services for outpatient substance abuse/chemical dependency therapy are NOT a TRICARE covered benefit.)*

*Note:* This list is not all-inclusive and is subject to change. Benefit coverage may be limited and varies by beneficiary type and TRICARE program option.
Active Duty Service Members

- Active duty service members (ADSMs) are not limited to these benefits.
- Except for services authorized under Military OneSource, **ADSMs must have a referral** from their primary care manager for all civilian behavioral health services prior to receiving services from a TRICARE-authorized provider.
- TRICARE Prime Remote ADSMs must receive approval from their military medical support office.
- Military OneSource offers confidential counseling sessions for ADSMs and their family members. Visit [www.militaryonesource.com](http://www.militaryonesource.com) or 800-342-9647.
Marriage Counseling

- Marriage counseling is not a covered benefit. A behavioral health diagnosis must exist for behavioral health and psychotherapy benefits to be covered.

Family Therapy

- Family therapy is different than marriage counseling. Family therapy is considered outpatient psychotherapy, and is a TRICARE benefit when determined to be medically or psychologically necessary.
Referrals and prior authorizations may be required for behavioral health care depending on the beneficiary's TRICARE plan. To verify requirements:

- Prior Authorization, Referral and Benefit Tool
- Referral, Prior Authorization and Inpatient Notification Requirements Guide (pdf)

These options can be found at www.hnfs.com.
TRICARE optimizes military treatment facility (MTF) resources.

- Requests for specialty care, including behavioral health care, inpatient admissions or procedures requiring prior authorization, will be directed to the MTF first, followed by TRICARE network providers if the services are not available at the MTF.
TRICARE Prime active duty family members and retirees may self-refer to a network provider for an initial consultation and eight outpatient psychotherapy therapy visits.

- TRICARE Prime beneficiaries must self-refer to a network provider to avoid point of service costs.
- Outpatient psychotherapy requires prior authorization after the initial eight outpatient behavioral health therapy visits per fiscal year (October 1–September 30).
- All services provided by pastoral counselors, licensed professional counselors (LPCs) or mental health counselors (MHCs) must be referred and supervised by a physician (MD or DO) who may or may not be the patient’s primary care manager.
- Behavioral health services rendered by a physician assistant (PA) are not covered under TRICARE.
Inpatient Services

Types of Service

- Acute Inpatient Psychiatric Care.
- Psychiatric Partial Hospitalization (PHP) Program.
- Residential Treatment Care (RTC) Centers.
- Substance Use Disorder Rehabilitation.

Authorization Requirements*

- Prior authorization is required for all non-emergency inpatient behavioral health care services.
- All admissions to PHP and RTC care require prior authorization and must be certified as medically/psychologically necessary prior to admission.
- In emergency situations involving admission to an acute inpatient or PHP level of care, authorization is required for continued stay.

Visit www.hnfs.com for specific benefit information.

*Beneficiaries with other health insurance (OHI) do not require prior authorization. Refer to the OHI’s rules for behavioral health care.
Telemental Health involves secure two-way audio-visual visits between patients and medical professionals. Beneficiaries access these services by visiting TRICARE-authorized Telemental Health-participating facilities to contact TRICARE network providers at remote locations. From their offsite location, Telemental Health providers can evaluate, treat, and refer for further care.

The Telemental Health program provides medically necessary behavioral health services, including:

- Clinical consultation.
- Individual psychotherapy.
- Psychiatric diagnostic interview examination.
- Medication management.

TRICARE behavioral health care referral and authorization requirements, limitations, and applicable cost-shares, copayments and deductibles apply.
Other Resources

**Behavioral Health Provider Locator Line**
877-TRICARE – Helps TRICARE beneficiaries locate civilian behavioral health care providers.

**Online Behavioral Health Resource Center**
www.hnfs.com - Resources for both providers and beneficiaries.
Warrior Care Support Program

Health Net’s **Warrior Care Support Program** provides complete health care planning and coordination services for Warriors who have been severely injured or have a combat-related behavioral health diagnosis and their families.

**There are several ways for a TRICARE beneficiary to join the program:**

- An active duty service member (ADSM) may be identified through the authorization and referral process.
- An MTF may call and refer an ADSM to the program.
- The beneficiary or a family member can call and self-refer to the program.

**Each Warrior enrolled in the Warrior Care Support Program is provided his or her own Health Net Health Care Coordinator.**

- Additional information for this program can be found at [www.hnfs.com](http://www.hnfs.com).
Military Children, Deployment and Behavioral Health

There are more than 1.2 million military children ranging between birth and 23 years of age. Children of active duty service members are potentially at a higher risk to develop behavioral health conditions than children in the general population.

Health Net developed its journal series for military children to help them successfully navigate the unique challenges they face, such as the deployment of a parent, frequent moves and the loss of a loved one. To review these journals or refer your patients, please visit www.hnfs.com and click on Kids Journals under Resources. To order journals within the TRICARE North Region at no cost, please email HNFS.Communications@healthnet.com.

- My Life, a kid’s journal (deployment)
- My Life as I Move (frequent moves)
- My Life Continued (loss of a loved one)
Continuing Medical Education Credits

TRICARE Management Activity’s online training program offers continuing medical education (CME) credits free of charge.

Continuing medical education instruction consists of the following educational units:

- Cognitive-Behavioral Interventions for PTSD
- Combat Stress Injuries
- Mild Traumatic Brain Injury
- Neurobiology and Pharmacotherapy for PTSD
- PTSD Techniques for the Primary Care Clinician: Focusing on Operation Iraqi Freedom/Operation Enduring Freedom (OIF/OEF) Returnees

Visit [www.hnfs.com](http://www.hnfs.com) to learn more.
The Citizen-Soldier Support Program (CSSP) also offers free CME courses. Current classes include:

- Treating the Invisible Wounds of War (English and Spanish)
- Treating the Invisible Wounds of War—A Primary Care Approach
- Treating the Invisible Wounds of War—Issues of Women Returning from Combat
- Treating the Invisible Wounds of War—Recognizing the Signs of Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) During Routine Eye Examinations

Visit the CSSP website, www.aheconnect.com/citizensoldier, for more information.
Questions and Answers