

TRICARE Medical Implements New Dental General Anesthesia Benefit

Effective July 1, 2007, TRICARE medical began covering general anesthesia services and institutional costs for dental treatment provided to beneficiaries with developmental, mental or physical disabilities, and to children age 5 or under.

Established by the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year 2007, this change specifically affects TRICARE beneficiaries' dental coverage through the **TRICARE medical benefit**. Reimbursement for general anesthesia and institutional costs will be based on beneficiaries' selected TRICARE program option (i.e., TRICARE Prime, TRICARE Standard, TRICARE Extra, etc.). Members should contact their TRICARE regional contractor for prior authorization before seeking these services.

Although general anesthesia is also a TDP-covered benefit, the TDP does not cover the institutional, or facility fee and there is a 40% cost share. If you use your medical benefit for these services, it will not affect your annual TDP maximum of \$1,200. You should make an informed decision as to which coverage will provide you with the best benefit.

"This change helps to enhance the benefits offered by the TRICARE program and enables beneficiaries with special needs to receive the dental care they need," said Dr. Gary Martin, an Air Force Colonel, dentist and TRICARE Dental Care Division Director.

Dr. Martin encourages parents to use the preventive care benefits offered by the TDP. "To avoid costly and extensive dental procedures requiring general anesthesia, remember to take your children to the dentist when they get their first tooth. This will help prevent tooth decay."

If you incurred an institutional (facility) charge related to your child's general anesthesia for his/her dental care between 1 October 06 – 30 June 07, please contact your regional TRICARE medical contractor for possible reimbursement. You will need to provide a receipt as a record for this expense.

North Regional Contractor
Health Net Federal Services, LLC
1-877-TRICARE (1-877-874-2273)
www.healthnetfederalservices.com

West Regional Contractor
TriWest Healthcare Alliance
1-888-TRIWEST (1-888-874-9378)
www.triwest.com

South Regional Contractor
Humana Military Healthcare Services, Inc.
1-800-444-5445
www.humana-military.com