



INSURANCE COVERAGE

TRICARE Poised to Cover Acupuncture

Editorial Staff

If you aren't already familiar with TRICARE, here's the scoop: It's the government-managed health care insurance program for U.S. uniformed service members, retirees and their families worldwide, currently providing coverage for *9.4 million* – yes, you read that correctly – eligible beneficiaries.

Here's another scoop, and it's a huge one for the AOM profession: TRICARE appears poised to include acupuncture services in its coverage, according to Military.com, which cites "a document distributed to military support organizations this week."

According to Military.com, the document stipulates that the new policy providing acupuncture coverage will be proposed within the next few months, "issued in an official regulation change notice no later than early next year."



Currently, acupuncture is not covered by TRICARE; neither is chiropractic, which is also mentioned in the document as a service that will be covered per the proposed policy change.*

It is unclear which specific acupuncture (and chiropractic) services will be covered if and when the policy change takes effect, although according to Military.com, the document says covered services "must be proven safe and effective."

Acupuncture Today Columnist Bill Reddy is currently researching this exciting development and will provide further details in an upcoming issue. Stay tuned.

*While TRICARE does not cover acupuncture or chiropractic (yet), both services are available at a limited number of Veterans Administration and Department of Defense facilities. TRICARE is particularly important because if the Military Health System, overseen by the DoD, or the VA cannot accommodate the demand for care, TRICARE provides coverage at civilian hospitals and health care facilities.

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