

# TRICARE® Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder Services

## An Overview of TRICARE Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder Services and Resources

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- **Presenter Tips:**
  - Review the briefing with notes prior to your presentation.
  - Remove any slides that don't apply to your audience.
  - Review the *Other Important Information* briefing slides and the *Costs* briefing slides at [www.tricare.mil/briefings](http://www.tricare.mil/briefings) to identify any additional slides to include in your presentation.
  - Launch the briefing in the “slide show” setting for your presentation.
- **TRICARE Resources:** Visit [www.tricare.mil/publications](http://www.tricare.mil/publications) to view, print, or download copies of TRICARE educational materials. Suggested resources include *Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder Services Fact Sheet*.
- **Estimated Briefing Time:** 30 minutes
- **Target Audience:** TRICARE beneficiaries stateside and overseas who use or may use mental health and substance use disorder services for themselves or their family members.
- **Briefing Objectives:**
  - Increase awareness and understanding of the mental health services covered by TRICARE and inform beneficiaries about when and how to access these services.
- **Optional Presenter Comments:** Welcome to the *Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder Services* briefing. The goal of today's presentation is to give you a general understanding of the various TRICARE mental health and substance use disorder services available to you and your family. We'll discuss when and

how to access these services, as well as other important information regarding your TRICARE benefit. Contact information is included at the end of the presentation.

# Today's Agenda

- Mental Health Overview
- Covered Services
- Getting Care
- For Information and Assistance

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- During today's briefing, we'll discuss what mental health is, the various TRICARE mental health and substance use disorders services and resources available to you and your family members, and when and how to get care.
- Finally, we'll provide resources for getting assistance and finding answers to any additional questions.
  - To learn more about TRICARE options, visit [www.tricare.mil](http://www.tricare.mil).
  - You can receive TRICARE news and publications by email. Sign up at [www.tricare.mil/subscriptions](http://www.tricare.mil/subscriptions).

# Mental Health Overview

- **Optional Presenter Comment:** First, we'll discuss what mental health is.

## What Is Mental Health?

*“A state of well-being in which a person realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community.”*

– World Health Organization

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- The World Health Organization defines mental health as “a state of well-being in which a person realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community.”
- Everyone needs to take care of their mental health.
- Establishing healthy habits early on and taking care of your mental health can make it easier to cope with the highs and lows of military life and to respond appropriately to challenges.

## What Are Mental Health Disorders?

*“Health conditions that are characterized by alterations in thinking, mood, or behavior (or some combination of those) associated with distress and/or impaired functioning.”*

– U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

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- The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services defines mental health disorders as “health conditions that are characterized by alterations in thinking, mood, or behavior (or sometimes a combination of those) associated with distress and/or impaired functioning.”
- Mental health disorders include anxiety disorders, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, eating disorders, mood disorders to include bipolar disorder and depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, schizophrenia, and substance use disorder, to name a few.
- Mental health and substance use disorders can interfere with your life and overall physical health.
- Mental health symptoms can be mild or more serious, and brief or more persistent. They may result from a combination of biological and environmental factors.
- Mental health and substance use disorders are treatable. TRICARE beneficiaries are urged to seek help as soon as they can when they notice something doesn’t feel right, or symptoms begin to present themselves. Early intervention is ideal but ask for help at any point.

## Covered Services

- **Optional Presenter Comment:** We'll now discuss the TRICARE mental health and substance use disorder resources and services available to you and your family members.

## Covered Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder Services

- TRICARE covers mental health and substance use disorder services that are medically or psychologically necessary.
  - TRICARE covers both:
    - Outpatient services (including via virtual health)
    - Inpatient services (emergency and nonemergency)
- How you get care may depend on your beneficiary category and your health plan.
- Check with your regional contractor to see if you need a referral or pre-authorization.
- **Note:** Not all services are available in all service areas.

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- All TRICARE-eligible beneficiaries may access the mental health benefit.
- TRICARE mental health and substance use disorder—which you’ll hear me refer to as SUD—services are available for you and your family during times of stress, depression, grief, anxiety, mental health crisis, or misuse or abuse of alcohol or drugs.
- TRICARE offers a variety of services for beneficiaries diagnosed with mental health and substance use disorders.
  - TRICARE covers care that is medically or psychologically necessary.
  - Overseas, there may be limited access to mental health services.
  - All TRICARE-eligible beneficiaries may access the mental health benefit; however, how you get care may depend on your beneficiary category and your health plan.
  - Check with your regional contractor to see if you need a referral or pre-authorization. And keep in mind that not all services are available in all service areas.
  - For more information, visit [www.tricare.mil/mentalhealth](http://www.tricare.mil/mentalhealth).
- There are two types of services: outpatient and inpatient.
- Office-based outpatient services are offered in a clinical setting and provided by psychiatrists, certified psychiatric nurse specialists, psychologists, social workers, and other mental health professionals. TRICARE covered outpatient services may include individual, family, and group psychotherapy; psychoanalysis; and psychological testing.
  - Referrals and pre-authorizations may be required for certain outpatient services.
  - Physician referral and supervision may be required when seeing mental health counselors and is always required when seeing pastoral counselors.
  - Under some conditions, mental health services may be provided via virtual health services, which uses secure video conferencing or audio-only technology to connect beneficiaries to providers. Virtual health services have the same requirements for referrals and pre-authorizations as face-to-face services.
  - **Note:** Psychological testing for academic/job placement or child custody isn’t covered.
- Inpatient services include emergency and nonemergency services.

- Pre-authorization is required for all nonemergency inpatient mental health services. Psychiatric emergencies don't require pre-authorization, but authorization is required for continued stay.

**Note:** Certain mental health and SUD services may not be available overseas.

## Covered Outpatient Services

- Psychotherapy
  - Individual, family, and group
- Psychological Testing and Assessment
- Medication Assisted Treatment
  - Opioid Treatment Program
  - Office-Based Opioid Treatment
- Intensive Outpatient Program
  - SUD or Psychiatric (Mental Health) Disorder
- Partial Hospitalization Program
  - SUD or Psychiatric (Mental Health) Disorder
- Medication Management

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- TRICARE covers the following outpatient services:

- **Psychotherapy:** Office-based outpatient psychotherapy is covered when medically or psychologically necessary to treat a mental health disorder. Individual, family, and group psychotherapy are covered.

**Note:** Marriage counseling isn't a TRICARE covered benefit unless it's medically necessary for the treatment of an underlying mental health disorder in a member of the couple.

- **Psychological Testing and Assessment:** Testing and assessment are covered when medically or psychologically necessary and provided in conjunction with otherwise covered psychotherapy or as a required part of the process for applied behavior analysis services under the Autism Care Demonstration.
- **Medication Assisted Treatment:** Medication assisted treatment combines drug and mental health therapies to treat a SUD.
  - **Opioid Treatment Program:** An opioid treatment program is recommended when a qualified mental health provider believes it's necessary to provide a comprehensive, individually tailored program of medication therapy integrated with psychosocial and medical treatment and support services.
  - **Office-based Opioid Treatment:** Office-based opioid treatment may be provided by TRICARE-authorized providers acting within the scope of their country-specific licensure or certification to prescribe outpatient supplies to assist with detoxification and/or maintenance.
- **Intensive Outpatient Program:** An intensive outpatient program, or IOP, is recommended when a mental health provider believes it's necessary to provide an organized day or evening program that includes assessment, treatment, case management, and rehabilitation for individuals who don't require 24-hour care for mental health and substance use disorder. An IOP provides between six and nine or more hours of mental health services per week (minimum two hours per treatment day).
- **Partial Hospitalization Program:** A partial hospitalization program, or PHP, is recommended when a mental health provider believes it's necessary to stabilize a critical mental health disorder that doesn't require 24-hour care in an inpatient psychiatric setting, or to transition from an inpatient program to an outpatient program. A PHP provides more than nine hours of mental health services per week.
- **Medication Management:** If you take prescription medications for a mental health disorder, you must be under the care of a provider who is authorized to prescribe those drugs. Your provider will manage the dosage and duration of your prescriptions.

## Covered Inpatient Services

- Acute Inpatient Psychiatric Care
- Psychiatric Residential Treatment Center Care for Children and Adolescents
- Inpatient and Residential Substance Use Disorder Rehabilitation Facility Care
  - Inpatient Management of Withdrawal Symptoms (Detoxification)
  - Residential Substance Use Disorder Rehabilitation

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- TRICARE covers acute inpatient psychiatric care, psychiatric residential treatment center, or RTC, care, which is limited to children and adolescents up to age 21, and inpatient/residential substance use disorder rehabilitation facility, also known as SUDRF, care. Acute inpatient psychiatric care, RTC care, and SUDRF care require an overnight stay.
  - Nonemergency inpatient admissions, RTCs, and residential SUDRFs always require pre-authorization.
  - TRICARE covers inpatient and emergency hospital services for the treatment of the acute phases of substance use withdrawal, also called detoxification, when the patient's disorder requires the personnel and facilities of a hospital or SUDRF.
- TRICARE defines a psychiatric emergency as when an individual is at immediate risk of serious harm to self or others based on a psychiatric evaluation performed by a health care provider and requires immediate continuous skilled observation and treatment at the acute inpatient psychiatric level of care.
  - Referrals and pre-authorizations aren't required for emergency care.
  - Authorization is required for continued stay.
- A patient may be referred to acute inpatient psychiatric care if a health care provider believes the patient has a mental health or substance use disorder that threatens the patient's physical well-being or the well-being of others, to the extent that medical and psychiatric care is needed on a 24-hour-a-day basis for safety and stabilization. Acute inpatient psychiatric care may be covered on a nonemergency or emergency basis.
- Psychiatric RTCs provide extended care for children and adolescents who have mental health disorders (other than SUDs) requiring treatment in a therapeutic environment 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
  - Residential treatment may be required for children and adolescents who are stable enough to not require acute inpatient psychiatric care, but do require a structured, therapeutic residential setting to stabilize their condition so they can function at home and in an outpatient setting in the future. RTC placement is never a psychiatric emergency.
- TRICARE covers inpatient and emergency hospital services for the treatment of the acute phases of substance use withdrawal (detoxification) when the patient's disorder requires the personnel and facilities of a hospital or residential SUDRF.

**Note:** Pre-authorization is required for all nonemergency acute care hospitalization and inpatient/residential SUDRF levels of care.

**Note:** Certain mental health and SUD services may not be available overseas.

## Getting Care

- **Optional Presenter Comment:** We'll now discuss when and how to get mental health and SUD services.

## Active Duty Service Members

- Outpatient Care
  - Visit a military hospital or clinic. Find the nearest one at [www.tricare.mil/mtf](http://www.tricare.mil/mtf).
- Emergency Care
  - Call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room.
  - No referrals or pre-authorizations are required.
  - Obtain a continued-stay authorization if admitted.
- Nonemergency Inpatient Care
  - Get pre-authorization.

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- Active duty service members, or ADSMs, must have a referral and pre-authorization for any civilian mental health services.
- ADSMs should always seek outpatient mental health services at military hospitals and clinics, when available.
  - Your primary care manager, or PCM, can provide an initial assessment—and possibly treatment—and can refer you to an appropriate mental health services provider, if necessary.
  - If services aren't available at a military hospital or clinic, you must obtain a referral and pre-authorization, which your PCM coordinates, before receiving civilian care for outpatient services.
- In the event of an emergency, call **911** or go to the nearest emergency room. If you need emergency care overseas, go to the nearest emergency care facility or call the Medical Assistance number for the overseas area where you're located.
  - Referrals and pre-authorizations aren't required for emergency care.
  - If you're admitted for emergency care, work with the inpatient unit to obtain a continued-stay authorization from your PCM, the Defense Health Agency—Great Lakes, or your TRICARE Overseas Program, or TOP, Regional Call Center within 24–72 hours of admission.
- Pre-authorization is required for all nonemergency inpatient admissions, RTCs, and residential SUDRFs. ADSMs who receive care at military hospitals or clinics don't require pre-authorization.
  - All institutional facilities (inpatient psychiatric hospitals, RTCs, SUDRFs, PHPs, IOP, OTPs) must be TRICARE-authorized.

**Note:** To coordinate referrals and pre-authorizations overseas, TRICARE Prime Overseas beneficiaries should contact their PCMs or military hospitals or clinics. TRICARE Prime Remote Overseas beneficiaries should contact their TOP Regional Call Center.

## All Other Beneficiaries (1 of 2)

- Outpatient Care
  - In most situations, referral and pre-authorization aren't required for outpatient mental health or SUD visits for TRICARE Prime beneficiaries.
  - Some outpatient services require a referral.
  - Psychoanalysis always requires pre-authorization.
  - Referral is always required to see pastoral counselors and may be required to see certain mental health counselors.

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- In most situations, referral and pre-authorization aren't required for certain office-based outpatient mental health or SUD visits for TRICARE Prime beneficiaries to see a network provider.
- Referrals may be required for certain outpatient services such as psychoanalysis.
  - TRICARE Prime beneficiaries need a referral for PHP, IOP, and OTP services.
  - All other beneficiaries can schedule an appointment with any TRICARE-authorized provider but will minimize out-of-pocket costs by visiting a TRICARE-authorized network provider.
  - A physician referral is always required to see pastoral counselors and may be required to see certain mental health counselors. Contact your regional contractor to find out if a mental health counselor requires physician referral and supervision before getting services.

## All Other Beneficiaries (2 of 2)

- Emergency Care
  - Call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room.
  - No referrals or pre-authorizations are required.
  - Notify your primary care manager, regional contractor, or TRICARE Overseas Program Regional Call Center if admitted.
- Nonemergency Inpatient Care
  - Get pre-authorization.
- RTC and Residential SUDRF Care
  - Get pre-authorization.

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- In the event of an emergency, call **911** or go to the nearest emergency room. If you need emergency care overseas, go to the nearest emergency care facility or call the Medical Assistance number for your overseas area.
  - Referrals and pre-authorizations aren't required for emergency care.
  - If you're admitted for emergency care, notify your PCM, regional contractor, or TOP Regional Call Center within 24–72 hours of admission.
- Pre-authorization from your regional contractor is required for all nonemergency inpatient admissions, RTCs, and residential SUDRF care.
  - RTC and PHP facilities must be TRICARE-authorized.

**Note:** To coordinate referrals and pre-authorizations overseas, TRICARE Prime Overseas beneficiaries should contact their PCMs or military hospitals or clinics. TRICARE Prime Remote Overseas beneficiaries should contact their TOP Regional Call Center.

**For Information and Assistance**

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- **Optional Presenter Comment:** The next few slides provide resources and contact information that may be helpful to you for using your TRICARE benefit.

## Finding a Provider

- TRICARE contractors have established provider networks in each region, including mental health providers.
- Go to your regional contractor's network provider directory to find a TRICARE-authorized mental health network provider in your area:  
[www.tricare.mil/GettingCare/FindDoctor/AllProviderDirectories](https://www.tricare.mil/GettingCare/FindDoctor/AllProviderDirectories).

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- The TRICARE contractors have established provider networks in each region to include mental health providers.
- You can go directly to your TRICARE contractor's network directory to find a TRICARE mental health provider in your area.
- Go to the TRICARE website for links to provider directories at <https://www.tricare.mil/GettingCare/FindDoctor/AllProviderDirectories>.

## Virtual Health Services

- To find a provider who offers virtual health services, use TRICARE's Find a Doctor tool at [www.tricare.mil/finddoctor](http://www.tricare.mil/finddoctor), or reach out to your TRICARE contractor.
- East Region: Humana Military
  - Call: 800-444-5445
- West Region: TriWest Healthcare Alliance
  - Call: 888-TRIWEST (888-874-9378)
- Overseas Region: International SOS Government Services, LLC
  - Call: Find country-specific numbers at [www.tricare-overseas.com/contact-us](http://www.tricare-overseas.com/contact-us).
- For more information about virtual health services, visit [www.tricare.mil/coveredservices](http://www.tricare.mil/coveredservices).

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- Under some conditions, you may receive mental health services through virtual health services. TRICARE covers secure video conferencing and audio-only telemedicine visits.
  - Virtual health visits have the same requirements for referrals and pre-authorizations as face-to-face services.
  - To request telemental health services, you can reach out to your TRICARE contractor:
    - In the East Region, call Humana Military at 800-444-5445.
    - In the West Region, call TriWest Healthcare Alliance at 888-TRIWEST (888-874-9378)Overseas, call International SOS Government Services, LLC. Contact information is available at [www.tricare-overseas.com/contact-us](http://www.tricare-overseas.com/contact-us).
- Note:** If you're overseas, the country where you live must allow virtual health. For more information, you can reach out to your TRICARE Overseas Program Regional Call Center.
- For more information, visit [www.tricare.mil/coveredservices](http://www.tricare.mil/coveredservices).

## Mental Health and SUD Resources

- Military Health System Nurse Advice Line
  - Call 800-874-2273.
  - Visit [www.mhsnurseadviceline.com](http://www.mhsnurseadviceline.com).
- Military OneSource
  - Call 800-342-9647.
  - Visit [www.militaryonesource.mil](http://www.militaryonesource.mil).
- Veterans Crisis Line
  - Call 988.
  - Text 838255.
  - Visit [www.veteranscrisisline.net](http://www.veteranscrisisline.net).
- Visit [www.tricare.mil/mentalhealth](http://www.tricare.mil/mentalhealth) for more resources.



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- There are a variety of counseling services and related resources available to you and your family during times of difficulty. This slide lists just a few of the free programs that are available.
  - The Military Health System Nurse Advice Line is available 24/7 by phone, web chat, and video chat. In the U.S., you can call **800-TRICARE (874-2273)**. Registered nurses can provide advice on how and when to seek help for mental health concerns. The Nurse Advice Line supports nearly all TRICARE beneficiaries in the United States, including Alaska and Hawaii (except beneficiaries enrolled in the US Family Health Plan). To learn more about the Nurse Advice Line, visit [www.mhsnurseadviceline.com](http://www.mhsnurseadviceline.com).
  - Military OneSource is a Department of Defense program that provides a safe space to speak confidentially with a licensed mental health provider. Free, short-term non-medical counseling is available in person, by phone, via secure chat, and by secure video sessions. For more information, call **800-342-9647** or visit [www.militaryonesource.mil](http://www.militaryonesource.mil).
    - For overseas phone numbers, visit the Military OneSource website.
  - If you or your family member is in crisis and needs immediate help, call the Veterans Crisis Line (also known as the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline) at 988. Learn more at [www.veteranscrisisline.net](http://www.veteranscrisisline.net).
    - For overseas phone numbers, visit the website.
- Visit [www.tricare.mil/mentalhealth](http://www.tricare.mil/mentalhealth) for additional mental health resources.

## More Information

### Regional Contractors

- TRICARE East Region  
Humana Military  
800-444-5445  
[www.tricare.mil/east](http://www.tricare.mil/east)
- TRICARE West Region  
TriWest Healthcare Alliance  
888-TRIWEST (888-874-9378)  
[www.tricare.mil/west](http://www.tricare.mil/west)
- TRICARE Overseas Program  
International SOS Government Services, LLC  
Find toll-free contact information at  
[www.tricare-overseas.com/contact-us](http://www.tricare-overseas.com/contact-us).

### Resources

- TRICARE Website: [www.tricare.mil](http://www.tricare.mil)



- TRICARE Publications:  
[www.tricare.mil/publications](http://www.tricare.mil/publications)
- milConnect:  
<https://milconnect.dmdc.osd.mil/>

- This slide shows contact information for stateside and overseas regional contractors, as well as other important information sources.
- Remember, your contractor point of contact is based on where you live.